

Plastic bag ban inspires community to get creative

■ Jakeb Waddell

Statewide plastic bag restrictions have fired up innovation in the Broome community, with a range of attractive alternatives being offered to shoppers.

Groups and organisations have tapped into their creative sides to produce reusable shopping bags in support of the ban, which legally comes into effect this Sunday.

Roebuck Bay Working Group members have designed and sewn bags showcasing the marine life affected by the plastic pollution on Broome's coast.

RBWG project manager Kandy Curran said the initiative had seen volunteers and students come together for a worthy cause.

"The overall message from the RBWG is get a stack of non-plastic shopping bags and be a part of a great initiative to keep Broome's coastal waters clean and free of plastic," she said.

"The bags will provide a sustainable alternative to plastic shopping bags, frequently seen wrapped around mangroves or floating on Broome's coast."

Also on board is the local Boomerang Bag Group, with members handing out bags sewn from recycled materials to friends, family and "bagless strangers." Ms Cur-



Jesse Murdoch shows off a Boomerang Bag.

ran said the bags could be reused or passed on to others.

And while shopping bags are the talk of the town, Broome Whale Watching has taken a stance on all plastic, bringing a seawater desalinator onto tour vessels to reduce the number of bottles used.

A company spokesperson said the business was "very aware of the urgent need to remove all plastics at the point of origin before damage is done".

"We have seen the damage that plastics can do to our waterways and marine life," they said.

Supermarkets on board with plastic ban

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The Kimberley will join the rest of the State and ditch the plastic bag for good this weekend when a new restriction comes into effect.

From this Sunday, the McGowan Government will officially ban the supply of lightweight, single-use plastic bags, a move that has been welcomed by local branches of the supermarket giants.

Coles Broome Chinatown store support manager Annmarie Dipper said there had been a positive response to trial bans in other stores and was confident of the same result locally.

"There is no doubt that the phasing out of single-use plastic bags will be a big transition for customers," she said.

"However, we think that customers are willing to give it up and use reusable bags for the sake of the environment."

Shoppers will not be short of options at Coles, with a 15 cent recycled material Better Bag and a range of community bags available, with a portion of sales donated to various charities.

While Coles prepares for the big

change, Woolworths got on board with the new law two weeks early, implementing it at all its branches from June 20.

Woolworths Broome store manager Rob Dudas said the company "felt strongly" that it was the right thing to do. "We are really pleased to see customers are behind the change as well," he said.

"What we are trying to do is encourage more customers to bring their own reusable bags when shopping, so we can prevent plastic bags from reaching our waterways and reduce the overall production of plastics.

"We know it may take some time for shoppers to form new habits, which is why we have been working hard to get the message out to local customers to remember to bring their own bags over the past few months."

Broome customers are able to purchase a 15 cent reusable bag, made out of recycled plastic, an "emergency foldable bag" and 99¢ Bag for Good.

Environment Minister Stephen Dawson said it was great that major supermarkets were supportive and moving quickly.



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RSL branch receives plaque

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The Broome RSL has added another neat piece of memorabilia to its collection after a recent visit by the Royal Australian Air Force.

RSL administrator and former Shire president Graeme Campbell was presented an RAAF No. 25 Squadron plaque by Flying Officer Steve Barrett during his tour of the Kimberley town's RSL sub-branch on June 16.

Mr Barrett, who has a long-lasting personal connection with Broome, was representing the Perth-based general reserve squadron and described the venue as "a must during any visit to the West Kimberley". Mr Campbell thanked the squad-



Broome RSL administrator Graeme Campbell is presented the No.25 Squadron RAAF plaque by Flying Officer Steve Barrett.

ron and said he was "extremely appreciative" of the gesture.



Government of Western Australia
Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

Sport and Recreation Facility Grants

Applications are now open for the 2019/20 Annual and Forward Planning funding round of the Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund (CSRFF).

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, on behalf of the Hon Mick Murray MLA, Minister for Sport and Recreation, invites applications from not-for-profit sport, recreation or community groups and local government authorities seeking capital works grants to develop sport and recreation facilities. The Western Australian Government has made \$12 million available in 2019/20.

Applicants must discuss their project with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries prior to applying. Guidelines on eligibility and application forms are available from metropolitan local government authorities, or in regional areas, the relevant Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries regional office.

Gascoyne	9941 0900	Peel	9550 3100
Goldfields	9022 5800	Pilbara	9182 2100
Great Southern	9892 0100	South West	9792 6900
Kimberley	9195 5750	Wheatbelt	9690 2400
Mid West	9956 2100	Metropolitan	9492 9816

Applications to the Department close 4pm Friday 28 September 2018.

Applicants must check with their local government authority for their closing date as they do vary to accommodate council meeting schedules. Further information about CSRFF is available from www.dsr.wa.gov.au/facilitiesfunding