



## Kalgoorlie Miner

Friday 6/11/2009

Page: 5  
Section: General News  
Region: Kalgoorlie WA, AU  
Circulation: 5721  
Type: Regional  
Size: 245.89 sq.cms.



**slice**  
slicemedia.com

press clip

# Norseman accord praised



**FRANCES PRATT**

frances.pratt@kalmminer.com.au

9022 0520

THE Norseman Aboriginal community has received a State award for an initiative that has seen alcohol abuse and anti-social behaviour decrease significantly.

The 2009 Injury Control Council of WA Injury Prevention Awards, announced last week, recognised the town in the Community Injury Prevention category.

The Norseman Liquor Agreement, which restricts the amount and type of takeaway liquor sold in the community, has been in place since March 2008.

Clay Poletti, manager of the town's only licensed venue, the Norseman Hotel, voluntarily took part in the accord and has also been an active advocate of the restrictions. He was applauded by local police officer Senior Constable Craig O'Keefe who said he had seen a noticeable decrease in alcohol-related incidents since the agreement started.

"The community responded to the situation and the Norseman Hotel abided by their wishes," he said.

"There has since been a marked decrease in domestic-related assaults and alcohol-fuelled violence in the town."

The agreement was initially agreed to and signed off on by members of the local Aboriginal community, the Norseman Hotel, Norseman Police, Shire of Dundas chief executive and the regional alcohol and drug coor-

ordinator.

Shire of Dundas chief executive Richard Brooks said the community had put a lot of effort into the project.

"I am very proud for the community to receive the award, it is excellent," he said.

The Shire also has an agreement with the health department, the Better Health initiative employs two part-time officers in healthy lifestyle management and dental hygiene.

Earlier this year an Aboriginal elder said he hoped the Norseman Liquor Agreement would reduce the number of young indigenous people dying at a young age. The agreement, which is in effect from noon to 6pm every day, limits the sale of red and white Lambrusco to one five-litre cask, port wine to one two-litre cask and non-fortified wine to one four-litre cask per person per day. No sales are permitted at any other time.

The limits also extends to one 750ml bottle (king brown) per person and one two-litre cask or flagon per person, or one 750ml bottle per person from Monday to Sunday between noon and 6pm.

The restrictions are applied to everybody in the community.

John Graham, 68, initially approached WA Country Health for support to help his people escape the devastating effects of alcohol.

Mr Graham told the *Kalgoorlie Miner* that since the restrictions had

been in place he had seen a big difference in the community's attitude to alcohol.

"Before, you would see people staggering around at nine and 10 in the morning but now you don't see that, which is really good," Mr Graham said.

"The restrictions give them a bit of a break rather than sitting around and drinking. As they say 'idle hands are the tools of the devil'."

"They are actually sitting down and having a meal and I have seen fewer people going to the hospital. Even the police have seen a difference."

Having battled his own alcohol problems, Mr Graham said he stopped drinking on Good Friday about 26 years ago. "I have been there and done that. I just want more young lives to be saved," he said.

ICCWA chief executive Deborah Costello said the Norseman community had achieved excellent results.

"This is an excellent example of a community identifying issues and working collaboratively together with local key stakeholders for the greater good," she said.

The ICCWA Injury Prevention Awards are held annually and raise awareness about injury prevention and recognise organisations taking extraordinary steps to make their community safer.