

Last month as the paper was being printed for delivery. John Pernu passed away. The June edition celebrated John's achievements with his retirement as President in a couple of articles expressing how valuable a member of the team he was. Little knowing how short a time he had with us. John's influence as President was huge. John cared for the newspaper, he taught himself just about every role in the paper during a tumultuous period that included Covid after longtime practices were caught out wanting. It was the perfect storm for collapse but John was more than up to the task of setting things right. I can now say without fear of contradiction, that if John hadn't taken the reins, you wouldn't be reading this paper today. He not only learned old roles, he improved on them and introduced new innovative practices and methods. He also brought new people to the paper, not by asking but by setting an example that people wanted to be part of his team. The paper to this day has never been in better shape and I believe its future is assured thanks to JP as he was affectionally known. John discovered he had an aggressive late-stage cancer late last year and though he resigned back then he would come to our committee meetings to let us know how he was going. He was always positive, though he was often in and out of hospital.

John was a doer, but not an aggressive, *must-be-done-my-way* person. He was a natural leader who handled things deftly and diplomatically. He was a dedicated family man, a man who felt he owed and gave back to his community, and above all, a really nice guy. John will always be remembered for the two traits that shone through almost from the first time you met him. His patience and kindness. Farwell JP and condolence to Katrina and your family. Whose loss we won't ever be able to comprehend. I only knew you a short time but the impression you left was large. Thank you.

John Pernu BBCN retiring president

by BBCN Committee

John Pernu has been volunteering for the BBCN for about 5 years, connecting with the paper because of his passion for supporting local community initiatives. Very soon after joining the committee, he stepped up in the biggest way possible to become president after Keith Cree.

At that time, the committee was going through a major transition with many of the original founders of the paper retiring and new members had to be found. He introduced significant changes to revitalise the paper which kept it relevant and sustainable. John was instrumental in shifting the organisation of the paper from a group of a few individuals to a collaborative team using updated processes to generate a paper with a strong digital presence. John's efforts led to an enhanced website, with automated uploading of content and advertising, an expanded presence on Facebook, which enables social interactions around the paper, and secured grant funding to provide better support and connection with local clubs and community activities.

Much of this work John figured out himself through self-learning and committing a lot of time. These improvements collectively have



enabled the paper to be self-sustaining and more engaging for the readers.

John is a wonderfully compassionate person. He has an inherent ability to connect with people and enable people to connect with each other. He always treats people with respect and people respect him. He developed relationships with The Basin Community House and organised for The Basin Progress Hall to be used as delivery hub for the printed papers. He felt it was

important not just to thank the committee but to have an end of year function to thank all the volunteers, major sponsors, advertisers, and included our local councillors and politicians. This function, now held yearly, is an event where all those connected with our paper are able to meet with each other.

Even when John had to step away from the BBCN presidency because of ill health, he remained active on the WhatsApp editorial group and in committee conversations. He has been a great leader and mentor for new committee members as we continue to build a new team. His knowledge and passion for the paper has enabled continued smooth operations during our transformation. Because of John's effort in taking the paper forward and improving/digitising the business processes around its publication, we now have a strong foundation for future growth in both physical and digital formats.

Our collective heartfelt thanks are offered to John, and also to Katrina who tolerated the many hours of John's time invested in ensuring the paper got out at the beginning of the month over recent years. Overall, JP (as he is known to us) is just JP and we would like to thank him for doing things his way, which was always the right way, and for being such a great bloke.

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Boronia & The Basin Communi

Thanks John P Danny Nolan

I had been contributing to the Boronia & the Basin newspaper for over ten years before John Pernu became President. In that time, I never once considered becoming involved in any activities that the paper hosted. It wasn't that I didn't like anything the paper did or those involved in putting it together. I just didn't feel the need other than to contribute my silly stories and observations. I had a heap of teenagers at home, and time was a bit wanting. Sometime during COVID, I noticed a shift in the replies to my emails and the articles I submitted. Replies were never that common in the past. I would wait for the paper to come out, and if an article wasn't in that edition, it usually appeared in the next. Or even the one after that. Once I had backed up four, and they all appeared in the same edition together. Suddenly, I was getting feedback. I was being told that my stories were interesting and whether they would be in this or another edition. From these emails, a dialogue had started to form between John and myself. Always friendly, always encouraging. It was this attitude that finally made me realize that maybe I do want to work on the paper and see where it leads me.

I joined the BBCN committee in August 2023. I was instantly impressed with John's leadership and work ethic. There seemed to be no stopping him from making the paper a successful ongoing concern. His attitude and positivity were contagious. John, unfortunately, had to retire from the Presidency and his commitment to the paper, but his legacy remains, through his leadership with a paper that is compiled from start to finish efficiently and competently, with a strong community focus and a vision of growth and prosperity for the future.

Sincerely, thank you JP.