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THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2015

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Cartoon helps change govt's mind

Warning: Cartoon contains language that might offend some readers

It's a funny old world. Politicians and governments can ignore public sentiment and they can ignore a small local newspaper like the *Tully Times*; but they can't ignore the power of a major digital media player such as the *Guardian Australia* and a cartoon by First Dog on the Moon (FDMO).

The plight of the cassowary and the closure of the Garners Beach Cassowary Rehabilitation Centre reached the *Guardian Australia* (GA) and on Monday FDMO's cartoon (published this page) went online.

The GA has a readership of two million a month, so quite a few Australians (and more beyond these shores) have read the content, seen the cartoon and responded.

Even the State Environment Minister, Steven Miles, managed to make an early on-line comment, although that now seems to have disappeared.

Good news travels fast, but bad news travels faster – and it doesn't help when you are the butt of the cartoon that's being read by millions of Australians.

By Tuesday afternoon the Palaszczuk Labor Government had caved in and announced it would provide \$50,000 as "an interim solution" for the cassowary facility.

Coincidence in the timing?

The Premier and her ministerial minions might claim so, but few would believe that.

There has been a concerted public and media campaign in support of cassowaries and the Garners Beach Cassowary Rehabilitation Centre. There has even been a political campaign of sorts.

Yet, in the end, the quickest way to get a political response is to hold key players up to public ridicule – and loyal readers are welcome to disagree with that view.

Statements in the Government's media release continued the unseemly stoush between Labor and the LNP, and Tully veterinarian Doctor Graham Lauridsen has made some pointed comments in response.

The main story is on page 3, while some Letters to the Editor that were received before the government announcement remain on page 4.

The *Tully Times* gratefully acknowledges the quick and professional response from the *Guardian Australia* and First Dog on the Moon when they were asked if the cartoon could be made available to the *Times*.

An apology goes out to any loyal readers who find some of the words offensive or descriptions of the cassowary a tad inaccurate.

JOHN HUGHES, Editor

The Southern Cassowary (*Casuarus casuarus*)

Is it Australia's favourite bird or a prehistoric rainforest death monster from outer-space? Or both?!

ARE YOU TALKING TO ME?

U WOT AB?

The Southern Cassowary is a large (almost 2 metre) bird resident in far northern Australia. Scientists say it is a completely excellent bird but also probably some sort of goddam dinosaur I mean look at it.

AROUND HEREISH

Important Cassowary facts:

Apparently it uses that thing on its head (the casque) to listen to other Cassowaries a long way away.

There are fewer than 5000 Cassowaries left in Australia.

A Cassowary will kick the big Quandong trees to see if the fruit is ripe. If no fruit falls, they go and kick another tree. You can hear them kicking the trees kilometres away.

They are the most dangerous bird in the world. They hate you.

The Cassowary's main enemies are:

1. Dogs
2. Pigs
3. Cars
4. The Queensland Government
5. The fact that they are not adorable like koalas, they are arseholes.

PREMIER PALASZCZUK

DALEK JOURNAL GOVT GIVES \$200K TO KOALAS

Recently the QLD government defunded the purpose built Cassowary Rehab. Nobody knows why and the QLD Environment Minister won't respond to any inquiries. Perhaps he was attacked by one as a child?

WELCOME TO CASSOWARY WORLD

Hey look kids! It's Shitty the Short Tempered Cassowary!

STEVEN MILES (AGE 6)

We spoke to Graham the Cassowary Vet*

External fundraising has never really worked for us. The government built the rehab on land bequeathed specifically for the protection of Cassowaries. We just want them to reinstate the funding, reopen the centre and pay for a couple more properly trained Cassowary Rangers.

But the Minister won't return my calls.

GUARDIAN CASSOWARY CORRESPONDENT

VET GUY

These creatures are so fierce only a properly trained ranger in a Cassowary proof suit knows how to deal with an injured bird, otherwise the police just have to shoot them.

Nice Cassowary... I've got panadol and Kardashian DVDs

The Cassowary rehab has saved the lives of over 50 birds over the years.

* Somewhat paraphrased Graham Cassowary Rehab Vet. Other important facts from Paul the Cassowary Guy.



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