

Herd on the Terrace



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Brierty drowning in debt

A report by directors of collapsed civil and mining contractor Brierty shows how high the debts had piled up when the Dalton Gooding-chaired company collapsed.

According to the figures submitted by the undertakers from KPMG, Brierty owes unsecured creditors about \$27 million.

The biggest in this class of creditors is the contractor's own subsidiary — Darwin land developer Bellamack with a claim of \$14.6 million. Bellamack was cited as one of the contributors to Brierty's demise after sales of residential lots in the development dried up. Loans from Brierty directors accounted for \$950,000, while the Australian Taxation Office has a claim of \$1.3 million.

Claims of secured creditors and former employees tallied up to \$33 million and there were \$23 million in contingent liabilities, mostly bank guarantees and performance bonds.

The picture is incomplete as the administrators blacked out valuations of plant and equipment and the amounts owing on them.

TEEN SPIRIT

Big Oil recently got into the heads of scores of WA teenagers, courtesy of the 2017 LNG Exploration Day — although the Bull reckons the



Illustration: Don Lindsay

gas drought on the east coast would have made Sydney and Brisbane more appropriate venues than Perth.

Part of Chevron's Powering Careers in Energy program, students were immersed in science and engineering activities associated with LNG production as well as participating in team challenges.

'We are sure Nigel Hearne is hoping one of them will find a way for Gorgon to go a few weeks without being beset by some kind of expensive drama.

The afternoon's activities kicked off with dozens of Chevron volunteers conducting mock interviews and speed networking sessions with the 150 students who attended.

"By providing a first-hand

insight into what it is like to work at Chevron, we give students in Years 10 to 12 a unique insight into the careers available in the energy industry," Chevron Australia Human Resources general manager Kaye Butler said.

The PCiE program is in its sixth year. When it started a barrel of oil was worth \$US90. Yesterday, that same barrel was worth \$US55.90. Here's hoping one of the kids works out a way to drive down costs ...

SHEAR REWARD

Kojonup sheep and grain farmer Digby Stretch who prefers getting his hands dirty over delegating to someone else, regularly shears his own sheep alongside the shearers.

He's also been spotted on

several occasions rapping and air guitaring through the sheep yards.

But it was for lofty matters that the Pastoralists and Graziers Association gave Stretch its 2017 gong for achievement.

PGA president Tony Seabrook said Stretch had been tireless in his efforts to promote the WA livestock industry. Stretch was chairman of the PGA Livestock Committee for more than 10 years and has been vice president of the PGA since 2014.

The Wellard-sponsored award was presented at the PGA's annual convention dinner last week.

GOOD START

Fortescue Metals Group yesterday celebrated the 10th anniversary of its Vocational Training and Employment Centre program, which has given 774 Aboriginal people a start with the Pilbara iron ore miner.

The program has also provided driver education and health a literacy support services to a further 794 Aboriginal people. VTEC is based on the simple idea that when people successfully complete their training, they are guaranteed a job.

The program was adopted nationally by the Federal Government in 2014.