

# You Make A Difference

## Volunteer Newsletter



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**ISSUE 3**

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### May .... What a month for Volunteers!!

In the volunteer sector May was the month that nationally recognised your contribution. Various organisations with the Wimmera, Wimmera Volunteers & Wimmera Uniting Care included, were 2 of the agencies that conducted events in recognition of the many hours of unpaid work conducted by their volunteers.

Wimmera Volunteers hosted the day long 'Sharing our Strengths' volunteer conference at Longerenong followed by the evening Wimmera Volunteers 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner on the 14<sup>th</sup> May.

Wimmera Uniting Care hosted its 'Volunteer Celebration' on Wednesday evening the 13<sup>th</sup> May as a 'nibble & natter' opportunity for volunteers from across the agency to meet & be collectively recognised. Approximately 40 volunteers attended the event, which represented a sample of the diversity of volunteers within the agency.



Two, four, six, eight ... bog in don't wait! Angela, Heather, Darren (& maybe some other unseen volunteers) from Horizons Services did a great job in preparing the finger food for the event. The catering crew can be contacted on 53825430.

### May .... What a month for Volunteers (cont'd)

Feedback received indicated that the evening was a great opportunity to meet; a fun event & worthy of the efforts of all concerned from both staff & volunteers.

National Volunteer Week is an annual event; usually conducted in May. 'Keep your ears & eyes open' for events next year.

### And now some words from Anne Page

In addition to her nice words placed in Wimmera Uniting Care's article 'Acknowledging our Volunteers at WUC', featuring in the Wimmera Mail Times during Volunteer Week, Anne, as Coordinator of the Wimmera Parent Support Network, requested that the following be included in this newsletter.

'I would like to pay tribute to a group of dedication parents, who all have children with disabilities, who continually volunteer their precious time to make the network what it is today. I alone would be unable to bring together large workshops that reach out to so many other families and professionals within the geographical region that we service, recent ones being Down Syndrome at Halls Gap and Autism in Horsham. At the moment there is another volunteer working party that meets regularly to plan the up-coming INFO/EXPO to be held in Horsham on 5<sup>th</sup> August. It just wouldn't be what it is without their valuable assistance as these are a group of volunteers that already have enough to do caring for their children on a daily basis. Their determination to create community awareness and gain additional information concerning specific disabilities is admirable'.

*"Supporting and strengthening personal, family and community life throughout the Wimmera."*

## Volunteer Profile: David Bowe

David works in the reception area at Darlot House, which accommodates the agency's disabilities programs. Although David is paid in this role, his association with WUC began as a volunteer. To Quote: "I came to the opening [of Darlot House (2007)] and stayed!" He continues to work as a volunteer during the Awakenings Festival.



Q: What was your first volunteering role in WUC?

A: I commenced with the Awakenings Festival in 2007. I was involved with the participant's registrations, preparing the Welcome Packs, compiling the media portfolio and helping out in the administration of the festival.

Q: Has your role as a volunteer developed?

A: I am now doing similar duties: greeting Darlot House visitors, doing the mail-outs, computer work [David is also the 'official' agency photographer], compiling the Darlot House & the Awakenings newsletters but on a regular paid basis.

Q: Is there an unforgettable experience in your work life?

A: Adam Murrays Mock wedding (For those 'not in the know', Darlot House hosted a mock wedding for its Coordinator of Disabilities Services – Adam, prior to his REAL wedding.

Q: What do you enjoy doing the most (in your role)?

A: I enjoy meeting & greeting people & "I love my Footie!!" (Unfortunately a Hawthorn supporter).

Q: If you had a magic wand you would .....

A: I'd turn back time & do some things all over again!



Hardly the blushing bride David! The wedding party with the REAL bride & groom.

## Policy: Volunteers – Rights and Responsibilities

The 'rights & responsibilities' policy is one of a number of policies volunteers you need to be aware of for being comfortable in your role. The policy also informs you about expectations on volunteers by the agency.

### **Volunteer Rights**

- you should feel that you have had appropriate training, support, direction, guidance & debriefing (if necessary);
- there is a clear & understandable position description for you;
- you are provided with relevant & appropriate information that you understand;
- the work environment is conducive to work suitable to both paid & unpaid staff;
- you are made aware of appropriate Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) policies & procedures;
- that you are consulted on relevant matters relating to your work;
- to be treated fairly, with dignity & have your work valued & appropriately recognized;
- to receive regular & timely feedback;
- you have the right to say 'No!'

### **Volunteer Responsibilities**

- your work shows a commitment to the agency's mission & values;
- your work practices abide by OH&S procedures;
- that you report injuries in a timely manner & you are aware of mandatory reporting requirements;
- to undertake appropriate training, discuss your training requirements & participate in your supervision & support activities;
- to read & understand relevant work related material;
- that you clearly communicate feedback & consider constructive criticism.



If you are interested in being part of the Awakenings Festival as a volunteer, feel free to contact Bernie O'Shannessy on 53821919.



If you have a story to tell &/or wish to share some information relevant to volunteers then contact me, Phil Proctor on 53622908 or via email: [philp@wimmera.unitingcare.org.au](mailto:philp@wimmera.unitingcare.org.au)

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