



VOLUNTEERING      SEPTEMBER 2017

# NEWSLETTER



**Volunteers: making a world of difference**

## OUR NEXT GENERATION OF VOLUNTEERS



*Tony McIlroy,  
Chief Executive Officer*

It is hard to imagine a well functioning community without volunteers. We are lucky to have a strong tradition of volunteering and looking out for one another in Benalla Rural City. This issue of Volunteer Connection aims to highlight the volunteer work of young

people in our community. There are many volunteering opportunities for teenagers and young adults across the Council's volunteer programs. Youth specific programs auspiced by the Council include **FReeZA** and **Live4Life**. Young people also volunteer to help with community events, such as the Benalla Festival.

The volunteer contributions of 28 young people were recognised in a celebration on 15 August. The event took place as part of National Student Volunteer Week, which is celebrated annually across the country to highlight the efforts of student volunteers.

Let's invest in our next generation of volunteers. Take the opportunity to chat with a young person you know

about your own volunteering activities and encourage them to seek out volunteering activities that interest them.

On behalf of the Council and staff, I offer a heartfelt thank you to our many volunteers of all ages whose time and efforts help make the Rural City a safer, better place to live and enjoy.

**Tony McIlroy**  
Chief Executive Officer



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### NATIONAL STUDENT VOLUNTEER WEEK

*Rotary representatives John Avery and Eleanor MacNamara, along with Mayor, Cr Don Firth congratulate Grade 6 students from St. Joseph's Primary School for volunteering activities undertaken as part of the Rotary Junior Community Award.*



## VOLUNTEER PROFILE: MEET NATHAN TOLLIDAY - FCJ COLLEGE STUDENT



**Nathan Tolliday**  
Year 9 student, FCJ College Benalla  
Mental Health Ambassador with the Benalla Live4Life program

*What does being a Mental Health Ambassador involve?*

Live4Life Ambassadors meet weekly at the Council offices to organise activities to help break down the stigma associated with youth mental health.

In April we organised the Live4Life program launch and more recently a competition and celebration to raise awareness about youth mental health.

*How did you get involved in the Live4Life program?*

I first heard about the Live4Life program at a school presentation by Council Youth Officers and jumped at the opportunity. I volunteer a lot both

at school and in the community. I am also a volunteer member of the Council's FreeZA committee.

*What skills do you think are important in this role?*

Leadership is a big one. Being a leader is something that I love doing and where possible I will take on leadership roles wherever I can.

*How do you think volunteering might help you with future study or career pathways?*

I think volunteering will lead me a long way in the future. Volunteering can help me as it is something extra to put on a resume and may lead to employment itself.

## LIVE4LIFE PROGRAM BENALLA

The Live4Life program aims to increase the mental health knowledge of Year 8 and Year 11 students, teachers, parents and carers. The program aims to decrease stigma and build community resilience to address common mental health problems. The Live4Life Youth Crew performs a key role in the program. The Crew assists in the delivery of the Live4Life education program

within schools across Benalla. Crew members are supported and mentored through a variety of learning and participatory opportunities. Volunteer crew members develop leadership and advocacy skills. Contact the Youth and Community Development Coordinator on 03 5760 2600 for more information about becoming involved with the Live4Life program.



*The Live4Life Benalla Crew, Mayor, Cr Don Firth and guest speaker Jason Ball at the Live4Life launch in April 2017.*



*FFreeZA members Paddy Cooke, Shaun Jones, Breanna Lancaster and Freyr Hubbard in action.*

## BENALLA FREEZA PROGRAM

FFreeZA is an innovative youth development program that enables young people to enjoy fully supervised drug, alcohol and smoke-free events.

The FFreeZA program is modelled on a youth participation approach. Ten young people have formed the local FFreeZA Committee and lead the planning, development and delivery

of music and cultural events in our community. The FFreeZA committee also provides important performance opportunities for local musicians and young artists.

Contact the Youth and Community Development Coordinator on 03 5760 2600 for more information about becoming involved as a volunteer with the FFreeZA program.

## WORKSHOP ABOUT VOLUNTEERING LEGAL ISSUES



The legal obligations for volunteer-based community groups are not always clear or straightforward. More than 30 community members

attended a three-hour workshop hosted by Benalla Rural City Council to help better understand the legal landscape for managing volunteers. Representatives attended from the community sector, including sport and recreation, community houses, local government, health services, youth, aged and disability services, arts and culture, men's shed, community education and the environment. The Council engaged specialist legal

service, Justice Connect, to deliver the training that covered legal aspects of recruitment, background checks, volunteer safety, insurance and the Australian Volunteer Standards.

A comprehensive range of fact sheets are available on the Justice Connect website [www.justiceconnect.org.au](http://www.justiceconnect.org.au) or contact the Council's Volunteer Development Coordinator on 03 5760 2600 for a copy of the workshop notes.

## COMMUNICATION ACCESS FOR ALL

Did you know that one in seven Australians will have a communication difficulty at some stage in their life? Communication access training aims to raise awareness of communication difficulties and explore a range of simple steps to improve how we communicate.

During July, the Council's Rural Access Officer organised a number of Communication Access training sessions for Council staff, volunteers and interested community members. The interactive sessions, conducted by trainer Meredith Lane from the Regional Communication Service – East Hume region. Participants were provided insight into communication difficulties associated with disability and age-related conditions and explored simple strategies and equipment to improve communication channels.

To read more about communication access, download the booklet **Communication Access For All** from Scope Victoria's website [www.scopeaust.org.au/service/communication-access](http://www.scopeaust.org.au/service/communication-access) or contact the Council's Rural Access Officer on 03 5760 2600.



*Trainer Meredith Lane demonstrates the use of communication boards to Natalie Phillips, Rural Access Officer and June Bezett, Benalla Bowls Club volunteer.*



*Tommy and Jess enjoy the fresh air and get some exercise while doing something worthwhile for the community*

## JESS AND TOMMY LEND A HAND

Thanks to Jess and Tommy, morning show presenters with @hitgv 96.9FM, for volunteering to help keep Lake Benalla litter free. Did you know that the Litter Gatherer volunteers carry out litter patrol from hotspots around Benalla? It is a great way to get out and exercise while making a difference to the community. If you have 1-2 hours per fortnight, contact the Volunteer Development Coordinator on 03 5760 2600.

**Want to know more about volunteering opportunities?**

Visit our website: [www.benalla.vic.gov.au](http://www.benalla.vic.gov.au)

Email: [council@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@benalla.vic.gov.au)

Contact the Customer Service Centre on **03 5760 2600**





## VOLUNTEER VACANCIES

We are currently looking for people who have the passion, skills and time to help with the following programs:

### Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

Volunteers help provide information to tourists and visitors (four hour

shifts weekly, fortnightly or monthly). Contact the VIC on 03 5762 1749

### Meals On Wheels

Volunteers deliver meals and provide a regular check and social interaction for clients who may be socially isolated (one hour per week, fortnight or month).

Contact the Customer Service Centre on 03 5760 2600.

### Benalla Art Gallery

Volunteers play an important role assisting staff with public programs, special events, research and social functions. (four hour shifts weekly, fortnightly or monthly).

Contact the Art Gallery's Customer Relations Officer on 03 5760 2619.

## BAG A BARGAIN AT REDB4 BOOKSHOP

The RedB4 Bookshop, an initiative of the Friends of Benalla Library, continues to raise valuable funds used to enhance the Sir Edwards 'Weary' Dunlop Learning Centre. The Bookshop offers an interesting range of quality second hand books for sale and is open six days a week thanks to a dedicated team of volunteers.

Drop in to 111 Bridge Street to bag a bargain and ask about becoming a volunteer.



Jane Rushworth is one of more than 50 bookshop volunteers

**Newsflash** VOLUNTEER CONNECTION NEWSLETTER NOW AVAILABLE VIA EMAIL.  
Simply email [jane.taylor@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:jane.taylor@benalla.vic.gov.au) and type SUBSCRIBE VCN in the subject line.

## L2P - FAST FACTS



Volunteers with the Council's Learner Driver Mentor Program (L2P) during

the past year have collectively:

- supervised over 1,100 hours of driving
- clocked up more than 48,000 kilometres
- supported 18 young drivers to gain their Probationary Licence.

The L2P team would like to thank the generosity of major sponsor, Value

Auto Group Benalla, for continuing to provide the program with a vehicle. The continued confidence and support of John and his team at Value Auto Group is essential for the program to continue helping young people get their 120 hours of driving and become safe drivers.

**Volunteer! Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.**

The *Volunteer Connection* newsletter is distributed three times a year to volunteers and partner organisations. We invite community groups with volunteer programs to share their news, events and stories.

For further information about *Volunteer Connection*, contact:

Jane Taylor, Volunteer Development Coordinator on **03 5760 2600** or [jane.taylor@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:jane.taylor@benalla.vic.gov.au)

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