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Volunteers – the spirit of community

The Western Australian Public Sector working with Volunteers



2001

**International Year
of Volunteers**



Foreword

Mal Wauchope, Director General, Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet



In this, the International Year of Volunteers, the Public Sector in Western Australia has welcomed the opportunity to celebrate the contributions of their volunteers and recognise the extraordinary effort they make to their communities.

There are over seventy State public sector organisations working with

volunteers. Their numbers range from 24,000 in the Fire and Rescue Services to just over 20 in the Victim Support Service.

Volunteers are offering their time everywhere, from the large metropolitan centres to the most remote settlements in the State. Yet, whatever the size of the program, and wherever it is, the role volunteers play is crucial to the well being of their communities.

The Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet is proud to sponsor this publication 'Volunteers - the Spirit of Community', particularly as it will provide an overview, for the first time, of a range of exciting volunteer programs currently in place in the Public Sector. It highlights the unique partnerships which have developed between government organisations and volunteers - both volunteers who

work with public sector employees and those public sector officers who are volunteers themselves.

Organisations are increasingly aware of the importance of creating community awareness and displaying good corporate citizenship. Government is no exception to this.

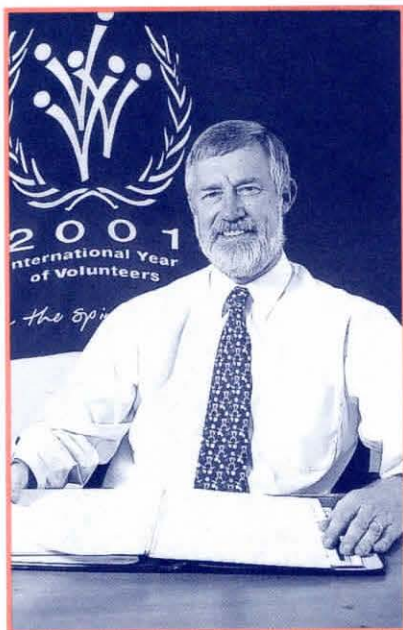
That is why the Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet is taking a lead role in this area.

The work that has taken place in the public sector to develop good relationships with volunteers is reaping remarkable results. Let us build on those results so that the International Year has benefits for the community far beyond 2001.

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Mal Wauchope'.

Volunteering: A Sustainable Vision

Jack Busch, Chairman, CEO's Co-ordination Committee, International Year of Volunteers 2001



The commitment of the eighteen CEO members of the CEO's Coordination Committee for the International Year of Volunteers 2001 epitomises the enthusiastic response throughout the Public Sector for the International Year.

As a result, there are a wide range of initiatives to recognise and thank volunteers and increase support for volunteers.

I believe a key reason for this response is the fact that agencies highly value the unique contribution of their volunteer partners.

Volunteers working with public servants create very special blends

of skills, expertise and passion for the work of the agency and help ensure a very real community involvement.

These partnerships also contribute to stronger communities throughout Western Australia.

Through this publication, and other strategies, we are keen to promote the importance of these volunteer partnerships and encourage their sustained development.

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Jack Busch'.

Art Gallery of Western Australia

Guiding Visitors Through Creative Spaces



The Art Gallery of Western Australia has a long and proud tradition of involvement with volunteers. Currently, there are nearly 150 volunteers at the Gallery helping out in various capacities. In this, the International Year of Volunteers, the Art Gallery is planning to improve the access, support and promotion of its volunteers, and hopes that this workforce will grow to better reflect community diversity.

Visitors to the Art Gallery first meet the Volunteer Visitor Service Officers who work at the front desk. These volunteers provide directions and inform customers of the wide range of activities available at the Gallery. This important role enables them to

gain valuable feedback from customers, which, in turn, helps staff assess the quality of programs on offer. The Volunteer Visitor Services Officers contribute greatly to audience development and help increase audience participation in public programs and events.

The Voluntary Gallery Guides began giving tours in 1978. These volunteers undertake rigorous training to prepare them for the diverse groups who visit the Gallery: pre-primary students (five-year-olds), seniors, people with disabilities, those for whom English is a foreign language, tertiary students and special interest groups. Each year, the Voluntary Guides take over 17,000 people through the Art Gallery.

In September 2001, the Voluntary Gallery Guides will host the biennial conference of the Association of Australian Gallery Guiding Organisations. Between 140 and 160 delegates are expected from the 17 member galleries, both state and regional, throughout Australia. The theme for the conference

is Crossing Cultures, which will highlight the Art Gallery's future initiative for a Living Centre for the Indian Ocean Rim.

The Art Gallery recently launched an exciting new initiative called @rtX which aims to expose more young people to the Gallery and the State Art Collection. As part of the project, Coordinator Andrea Tenger hopes to increase the number of young volunteers working within the Gallery. "Having young people presenting activities and guiding visitors will increase the energy and feel of the Gallery in a positive way - one which will hopefully make younger visitors feel more comfortable."

@rtX has already enlisted a number of young women to work as Volunteer Visitor Service Officers. These wonderful volunteers, Katherine Kappell, Vanessa Margetts and Hayley McLennan (pictured above), all 17 years old, recently guided visitors, including the Governor, through the Year 12 Perspectives Exhibition as part of the Centenary of Federation Youth Festival launch.

Department of CALM

Partnerships: Country & City Volunteers Working Together

The Regional Herbaria Project has been operating since 1996. There are now over 70 Community Groups, most from country areas, in partnership with the CALM Herbarium, assisted by a dedicated group of 25 city volunteers. The collaborative project is adding to Western Australia's State Plant Collection and increasing our knowledge of this State's unique flora. The total value of the contribution made to date by these dedicated volunteers totals in excess of \$1,000,000. They are making a significant contribution to the conservation of Western Australia's unique and diverse flora.

In five years, these very knowledgeable and largely self-taught botanists have collected and processed about 15,000 new, well-documented plant specimens. The country volunteers have collected the plants, recorded the conditions under which they grow, pressed and dried them.

The city volunteers, working in CALM's Western Australian Herbarium, have determined the specimens' scientific names, mounted, attached labels to and incorporated the finished vouchers in the State Collection. Of the 15,000 vouchers, about

600 were Priority species and 80 were Declared Rare Flora. Volunteer work has improved knowledge of some of these very vulnerable species and will certainly help in their management and conservation.

About 12 plant collections from Regional Herbaria are thought to be completely new species not previously collected, named or described. The Herbarium has databased these collections and the information has been added to the authoritative biodiversity information system FloraBase that is available on the Internet.

Regional groups have been taught how to access library details as well as available knowledge of the plants that have been recorded for their district over the past 80 or so years.

The Regional Herbaria provide a valuable resource to local landowners, land care groups, rehabilitation workers, farmers

and schools and anyone concerned about their environment. Various community groups have used their local herbarium to assist them in publishing books and brochures, revegetate degraded lands and watercourses, link remnants of native bush, develop walk trails and organize wildflower shows.

The Regional Herbarium network, run by a partnership of country and city volunteers, is providing a local resource that plays a critical role in the understanding and conservation of Western Australia's unique and endangered flora.



Challenger TAFE

Formal Recognition for Volunteers' Skills

The WA Centre for Leadership & Community Development, part of Challenger TAFE, is giving volunteers skills - and important formal recognition.

Funding from the Lotteries Commission and the Department of Family and Community Services has provided 30 volunteers from 19 different countries the opportunity to attend one of the courses conducted by the Centre.

Many community and public sector organisations with strong volunteer groups—the Red Cross, Fire and Emergency Services Authority, Sport and Recreation WA, and CALM Bush Rangers—have formed a valuable partnership with the Centre, according to its Acting Manager, Marian Taylor.

Marian said leadership skills delivered through the Centre served to enhance community development, life-long learning and ultimately workforce skills, employment and the strengthening of WA industry. But while leadership was already firmly entrenched within the professional and corporate sectors,

there was a strong need for increased leadership training and skills recognition within the community volunteer sector.

Leadership development contributes to the efficient and effective management of community volunteer organisations. These sentiments were echoed by Fire and Emergency Services' Cadets Youth Development Manager, Murray Horbury.

"We have about 24,000 volunteers throughout WA, and they are the backbone of our organisation. Leadership is one of the most important attributes for a young volunteer to carry into life and the wider community.

"The Fire and Emergency Services vision is for a safer community and the program we put our volunteer cadets through at the Centre ensures that they are better citizens as a result of that training - which, in turn, leads to a better community," he said.

The impact of training volunteers on the wider community is also of paramount importance to Gavin Reeves, of the Australian Navy Cadets (ANC).

So passionate is Captain Reeves of volunteer training that the ANC, in partnership with the WA Centre for Leadership & Community Development, has developed an Australian first - accreditation of youth volunteer training.

"Over the next 12 months, hundreds of our volunteer cadets from across Australia will complete a training course conducted by the Centre. This Australia-wide partnership will be run from Western Australia."

The WA Centre for Leadership & Community Development will soon relocate to Murray House, part of the former Heathcote Hospital in Applecross. For more information about the Centre and its courses, contact Challenger TAFE on 9239 8200.

Family & Children's Services

Fathers Helping Fathers

Through two of Family and Children's Services parenting programs - Parenting Information Centres and Parent Link Home Visiting Services over 265 volunteers contribute nearly 17,500 hours to helping parents in their vitally important role of raising children.

While many of the volunteers are women, an increasing number of men are volunteering their time, skills and experience to helping parents.

Mark Smith and Kwame Selormey work as volunteers at the Parenting Information Centre in Lakeside Joondalup Shopping City. Mark also works as a volunteer for the Joondalup Parent Link Home Visiting Service.

Like many volunteers, Mark and Kwame live in the local community and bring a wealth of experience and diverse backgrounds to their volunteering.

Parenting Information Centres are shop fronts offering information on a range of parenting issues. Professional staff and trained volunteers help parents by providing information as well as locating relevant information and resources

within the local community. Each year over 120,000 people visit or contact the 20 centres across Western Australia.

Parent Link Services are offered on a voluntary basis to help parents provide a more supportive environment for their children. Volunteers who are themselves parents and experienced in the issues which concern families with young children, visit parents in their own homes. A professional coordinator supervises volunteers.

Both fathers themselves, Mark and Kwame know about many of the issues facing parents today. Mark has volunteered with the parenting services for the past two years.

"Initially I learnt a lot from Parent Link as a customer," Mark said.

"I used to manage factories and thought I could handle most situations. Then I became a single father. I needed information about parenting because I was tearing my hair out!

"Being a volunteer is a real eye opener. I felt I had a lot to offer parents so I undertook the training to become a volunteer.

"I really enjoy working with children. One day I would like to become qualified and work in the field in a professional capacity - but that's a while off yet."

Most customers visit Parenting Information Centres looking for information on parenting, child development and family issues. Many customers just want to be reassured that their child's behaviour is normal. Many also want to find out about local groups they can join such as playgroups, new mothers' groups and dads' groups.

Kwame came to volunteering at the Parenting Information Centre via a different path.

"I am really interested in working with fathers," said Kwame. "I hope that by volunteering at the Parenting Information Centre, it might help fathers feel more comfortable using this really unique service and encourage them to become more involved in their community.

"I have recently resigned as coordinator of a child care centre so I can finish my Family and Children's Studies qualification at university.

"Being a volunteer is a great way for me to keep in touch with families and the community."

Disability Services Commission

Caring Leads to Life-Long Bond

Geoff Bailey was looking to fill a gap when he responded to a newspaper ad calling for volunteer carers to help out at Geraldton's Holland Street School. It was late in the 1980s. A few years earlier, Geoff had retired following 18 years in Mt Magnet where he and wife Pat had been variously employed running a newsagency, a TAB, a roadhouse, and a hotel.

He was given the role of looking after 16-year-old Koby Lee-Steere—getting him to the Activ Industries workshop from school and home afterwards. According to Koby's mother, Maureen, the two just seemed to "buddy up".

"Soon after Geoff started taking Koby to Activ, he and Pat invited Koby over for lunch," Maureen said. "That developed into occasional overnight stays and weekends.

"Before long, Geoff and Pat had virtually become adoptive grandparents to Koby."

When Koby finished school, Geoff began staying with him throughout the day, taking him to Horrocks Beach to visit his father on alternate weekends, and having Koby at home every Sunday in between.

"Geoff is really sensitive to Koby's needs, and is always full of praise and encouragement for him," Maureen said.

"He is so positive, so supportive. He has become so close to Koby that he picks up little things Koby does that show awareness and recognition, like a mother does. He perseveres with routine and repetition, so that Koby can anticipate what will happen. He feels triumph and satisfaction when Koby makes progress. He really, really cares."

According to Geoff, Koby is just like a member of his family. "We did have a son of our own who was killed in a road crash at the age of 23. We also have a daughter, plus an adopted daughter who lost both her parents. Koby is very special to us and always will be. He has just slotted into our way of life here."

Geoff and Pat also take Koby on a three-week vacation to Moore River every year.

"Geoff and Pat have given so much to Koby, I cannot speak highly enough of both of them, and if he could, I know Koby would say the same thing," Maureen said.

Fire and Emergency Services

FESA Volunteers: Facing Danger

Traffic accidents, devastating bush fires, cliff collapses, floods, cyclones, missing people, burning infernos, hazards at sea, storms, toxic spills... Every day of the year, emergency services volunteers devote their time to protecting members of our community in these types of emergencies.

The Fire and Emergency Services Authority of WA (FESA) supports more than 24,000 volunteers from the Bush Fire Service, Fire and Rescue Service, State Emergency Service and Volunteer Marine Rescue Services. One of the key goals in the establishment of FESA on January 1, 1999, was to improve the services and support provided to emergency services volunteers.

FESA Chief Executive Officer Bob Mitchell says that because of its unique geography and relatively small and mostly urban population, Western Australia could not provide the exceptionally high standard of emergency services that the community has come to expect, without the services of these dedicated volunteers.

"It was essential, therefore, that their contribution was acknowledged and appropriately resourced and supported."

The new FESA organisation was also charged with bringing about overall improvements in the standard, coordination and effectiveness of the

delivery of emergency services to the community.

"The task was to develop a new government agency based on the services of 16,500 Bush Fire Brigade volunteers and a further 2,500 volunteers in each of the Fire and Rescue Service, State Emergency Service and Volunteer Marine Rescue Services—

none of whom have an obligation to turn up in the event of an emergency, but fortunately, do."

In addition to the volunteers, the services that came together under the FESA had a paid staff of 850 career firefighters in the Fire and Rescue Service around 300 support people. The volunteers and career staff of all of the services work alongside each other in major emergencies, such as bush fires, floods and the aftermath of cyclones.

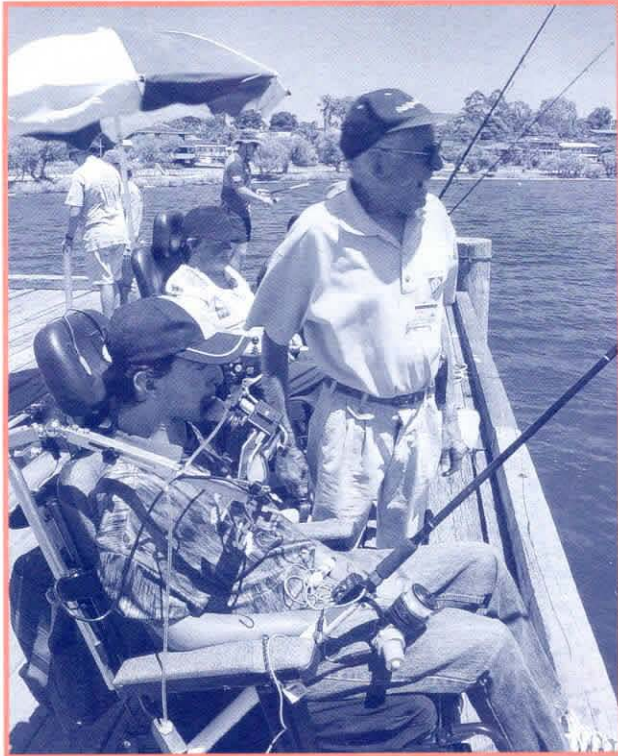
"Now, two years down the track, with our unique partnership of career and volunteer personnel, FESA is recognised nationally as a success story,"



Bob said. "National data shows we continue to be the most cost-effective emergency services organisation in Australia. We have integrated the disparate management, business and financial structures of five separate organisations and have won awards for best practice."

Fisheries WA

Volunteers Help WA Anglers Fish for the Future



In recent years, the valuable work done by Fisheries WA's Volunteer Fisheries Liaison Officers (VFLOs) has made a tremendous contribution to recreational fishing through the promotion of a

strong conservation ethic in both the recreational fishing sector and the general community.

The VFLO program is well known in the WA community, particularly after it won the 1998 Premier's Award for Excellence in Public Sector Management - a remarkable achievement for a volunteer program.

And the latest in a number of awards for both the VFLO program and individuals involved in the program is a Disability Services Commission Action on Access Award for Fisheries WA's Fishing Workshops for People with Disabilities.

The VFLO program has developed many partnerships with other agencies and local communities and businesses over the past seven years. Fisheries WA Executive Director Peter Rogers said the award-winning program is integral

to the lifestyle and community spirit enjoyed in WA.

"The key to the success of the VFLO program is that we continually evaluate and develop the volunteer program," he said. "This ensures that new initiatives are introduced and further targets set so that our precious fisheries resources are safeguarded for the future.

"We realised that this was, and always will be, an important job - one that goes beyond the realms of everyday work tasks.

"Having VFLOs out in the community, protecting our resources and passing on important Fish for the Future messages is invaluable to Fisheries WA.

"In fact, without the VFLOs, we would not be able to reach the large number of recreational fishers and other users of the aquatic environment to ensure that fish stocks and their habitats are protected now and for the future."

Botanic Parks and Gardens

Kings Park Master Gardeners

Kings Park Master Gardeners is the youngest of the Park's three volunteer groups. Under the guidance of Bob Dixon, Biodiversity & Extension Manager at Kings Park, an extensive training course was developed and conducted and a new band of volunteers joined the long-established Friends of Kings Park and Kings Park Guides. The Kings Park Master Gardeners' program is the first of its type in an Australian botanic garden.

The new group's main objective is to assist the agency in providing a Gardening Advisory Service on the cultivation of native plants. Twice weekly, members are rostered to offer a free telephone advisory service. They also staff a Help Desk at events such as the Wildflower Festival and Garden Week.

Members' informal presentations to small groups help increase public knowledge of the beauty, diversity and

importance of preserving Western Australia's unique native flora. Their own botanical and horticultural knowledge and skills are furthered by assisting with research, conservation and restoration projects undertaken by Kings Park and Botanic Garden.

The high level of acceptance and assistance accorded to volunteers by the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, coupled with their varied and stimulating tasks, makes a Master Gardener's hours in the park most rewarding. New members are always welcome.

Further information about the program, the next training course - and growing native plants - can be obtained by phoning (08) 9480 3672.



WA's Graffiti Program

Partnerships

Western Australia's Graffiti Program commits the Government to manage graffiti vandalism in a way that engages the active involvement of the whole community. Graffiti incurs an estimated annual cost of \$6 million. In order to address the problem, a strategy has been developed to focus on both immediate intervention and long-term prevention.

The Graffiti Program has been actively involved in volunteering since 1993. Through the vigilance of the Program's many dedicated volunteers, graffiti is reported and removed within a short timeframe.

"Fundamental to the success of the campaign are the efforts of the community as a whole. Members of the public, schools, church groups, youth groups and service clubs provide volunteer support to the program. Without the support of the volunteers, our task would be insurmountable," said Bob Taddeo, Program Manager.

The issue of graffiti vandalism goes well beyond removing illegal artwork. It is about having pride in the community; helping to maintain property values, beautifying and keeping the general aesthetics of the urban and suburban landscape pleasing to the eye. Volunteers play a major role in assisting with this objective through community education and "Days of Action."

"Days of Action" have a great value for the community by bringing people together in a working environment. These work parties achieve outstanding results by quickly removing graffiti covering large areas. Through this volunteer initiative, a social as well as a financial benefit to the community is realised.

To date, the Graffiti Program has developed partnerships with 12 local governments. Volunteers are recruited to assist in dealing with the graffiti problem in their own communities. Included in these arrangements is the provision by the Graffiti Program of a One-Call Centre and graffiti removal teams.

The One-Call Centre receives graffiti reports, and provides advice and assistance with removal by the work teams. The One-Call Centre may be contacted on 1800 133 443 (freecall from a standard telephone). The Graffiti Program is keen to expand this partnership network to numerous local governments in the near future.

At a recent function to celebrate International Women's Day, Graffiti Program volunteers were presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for their continued efforts on behalf of the Program. Other events are planned to celebrate the International Year of Volunteers, with a large event

aimed at acknowledging all the valued members towards the end of the year.

The Program also encourages the community to take responsibility for its graffiti issues. One way to do this is for individuals or groups to adopt a community asset such as a bus shelter and keep it graffiti free. Program volunteers are happy to assist in dealing with, or showing how community members can deal with graffiti.

The Graffiti Program encourages everyone to be more proactive in assisting with the reduction of graffiti in the community. The Program can provide education and training to any potential volunteers. For further information on how you can become involved, contact the office on 9240 5555.

Please report graffiti in your community on 1800 133 443.



Goldfields Development Commission

Volunteers Speak Up for the Goldfields-Esperance Region

The Goldfields-Esperance Region is as diverse as it is vast. From the azure waters of its southern coast, to the rugged landscape of the Goldfields, it offers a lifestyle that accommodates people from every walk of life. With a population of 60,000 and a weekly income above the Australian average, the region supports a diverse range of industries. A strong sense of community spirit exists alongside a great range of facilities and services.

But any great 'product' - as the Goldfields-Esperance region is - needs effective market positioning. That's the challenge for the Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission and a group of industry, civic and community volunteers who make up the Australia Unlimited Taskforce established in April 2000.

"We realised early on that a regional marketing campaign needed to have strong community ownership", said Colin Purcell, CEO of the Development Commission. "Otherwise, it would have been seen as a 'Government initiative', without the solid grassroots support that it now enjoys. Our decision to get community members involved is really paying dividends."

The Taskforce is positioning the region as **ALIVE...**

Attracting people and industry to...

Live, Work and Play in the Region

Invest in new and existing enterprises

Visitors from all around the world

Exports

Kay Curson, a Kiwi who now calls Kalgoorlie home, and who is a passionate advocate for the region, heads up the Taskforce. "The volunteers on the Taskforce have some great ideas on how to promote the region, but like all busy people, we don't always have the free time to get into the detailed implementation. That's why it's great to be working with the people from the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission, who can flesh out our ideas."

An initial Marketing Plan identified almost 30 initiatives, and while all may be implemented in time, the Taskforce is currently progressing four projects:

- An eleven-minute video has been produced giving a snapshot of each of the towns in the region - from Esperance on the South Coast to Warburton in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. Kay Curson says that the video (which is now in its third 'print run') is proving to be a useful tool for HR Managers and Recruitment agencies to tell prospective employees about the region.
- The establishment of a 'Regional Shopfront' in Perth - a source of information about the Goldfields-Esperance Region and a retail outlet for selected products, produce and services.
- A Feasibility Study has also been completed investigating the development of Heritage

Trails in the region - helping tourists to chart a path from one attraction to another, with increased tourist activity creating terrific opportunities for small businesses throughout the region.

- An architectural competition to come up with a number of 'region-specific' housing designs - the Goldfields-Esperance version of a Queenslander perhaps - designs that are 'climate-friendly', energy efficient and regionally distinctive.

The Australia Unlimited Taskforce volunteers meet on a bi-monthly basis to assist in the implementation of the projects and speak with community and service groups throughout the region promoting Australia Unlimited and explaining the projects.

The enthusiasm of these volunteers, partnered with a committed State Government agency, is helping to promote the Goldfields-Esperance region as a great place to invest, live, work and play. Check it out at www.australiaunlimited.com.au.

Contact: Vicki Bull,
Goldfields Esperance Development Commission
Phone: 90911 166
Email: vicki.bull@gcdc.wa.gov.au
Website: www.australiaunlimited.com.au

Ministry of Housing

Combining Work with Volunteering

Volunteering has been a part of Rosslyn Smith's life for more than two decades. Most nights of the week, you can find the Bond Recovery Officer, who started working in the Records section at the Ministry of Housing 26 years ago, busy organising something for the Brownies - a group she has been volunteering her time for over the past 25 years.

"There's always something to arrange such as a camp or outing," Rosslyn said. "Recently, I got together a group of Brownies to participate in an Anzac Day Parade by Canning/Victoria Park RSL members at the City of Canning Memorial Park."

Rosslyn was presented with the Banksia Award for outstanding service to the Brownies two years ago. She is extremely proud of this honour.

"I've been the Brownie Guide Leader for 3rd Lynwood Brownie Guides for 25 years, and I've

recently been appointed to the Guide Association State Executive Committee," she said.

Rosslyn also organises an annual trip to the Christmas pageant for people with disabilities - a task that can take up to six months to plan.

"In a couple of month's time, I'll begin preparing my Christmas party for pageant night," she said.

"There's a lot of work involved: liaising closely with the City of Perth, organising the guests, transport, parking, security patrols and a number of other things.

"The disabled guests get to watch the Christmas Pageant from the first floor balcony of Forrest Chase while enjoying food and drinks, and they then continue the party afterwards with Fat Cat and other guests."

Rosslyn is also an Executive Member of the Gosnells Senior High School P&C, and a member of the School Council Committee.

With all of her volunteering commitments, it is a wonder Rosslyn has time for her paid position at the Ministry of Housing.

"I really enjoy my job at the Ministry, which over the years, has seen me working in the Ministerial section and also on the front counter," Rosslyn said.

"I've made some terrific friends, and I'm still in touch with many who have long since left the Ministry."

The Ministry of Housing encourages and supports staff to get involved in voluntary activities during Volunteer Week, May 14 to 20.

Office of Seniors' Interests

Age No Barrier to Volunteering

The volunteers at the Office of Seniors' Interests (OSI) are a vital and integral part of day-to-day operations and many achievements would not be possible without their commitment and support.

The Office has some 35 volunteers, mainly seniors, who carry out administrative functions, help with displays and mailouts, provide information to the public, and share their ideas and experience.

Their generosity of spirit and willingness to lend a hand in all kinds of situations has certainly enriched the working environment and they are truly a part of the 'family' at the Office of Seniors' Interests.

One volunteer, Clare, was already on board when the Seniors' Card was initially introduced in 1988 and today she is still helping sort applications. In that time, the number of Seniors' Card members has increased to more than 200,000 and with the ageing population, the applications just keep coming.

Volunteering for Win is a two way street: "The feeling of giving something back to the community makes a big difference, knowing that one can still be of assistance in a fast-changing technical world. It is a real buzz helping contemporaries make their money go further with Seniors' Card discounts and helping them with other information on their welfare."

Five volunteers make up the Volunteer Speakers' Program that provides information to community groups and other organisations on a wide range of



seniors-related issues, including retirement, concessions and benefits offered by government and non- government agencies. Last financial year, the group gave 88 presentations.

The majority of volunteers run the Seniors' Telephone Information Service (STIS), which operates weekdays between 9am and 3pm. Members of the public can ring the toll-free number 1800 671 233 for information and referral advice on issues such as accommodation options, education, finance/business, health and lifestyle. On average, volunteers handle around 2,500 calls a month.

The response from callers is one of delight when they connect to a real person on the end of the phone and find that the person is actually locally-based. An added bonus is when they realise that they are talking to their peers who understand their wants and needs.

For the staff at the Office of Seniors' Interests, working with volunteers has also been a very rewarding experience. They have made new friends, shared new experiences, and gained much wisdom from working alongside these caring and giving people. They truly are the 'spirit of our community'.

West Coast College of TAFE

AMES Volunteers Help New Migrants

The Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) is the section of West Coast College of TAFE that provides English language courses to new migrants and refugees. There is a long history of voluntary service in this area, and the work of over 200 Home Tutor Scheme volunteers is highly regarded by ethnic community groups who recognise its value in the settlement of new migrants in Australia.

Volunteer tutors make a huge difference in the everyday lives of their students. After their initial training, tutors provide outreach service by visiting students who are often isolated at home; mothers with young children or elderly people suffering from health and transport problems. The tutors become

supportive contacts, providing warmth and friendship as well as language tuition.

Tutors also help students gain the confidence and skill to communicate with neighbours, apply for a driver's licence, join playgroups, enroll in academic courses, and speak on the telephone. One student was able to ring for an ambulance after her husband had a stroke because her tutor taught her how to make an emergency call the week before.

For more information about the Home Tutor Scheme or volunteer work in the classroom with English as a Second Language students, contact the Adult Migrant Education Service on (08) 229 3630.



Ministry for Planning

Whiteman Park says Thank you to Volunteers



February 14 was a black day for Whiteman Park with fire burning 1,000 hectares of bushland. Park Manager, Nigel McCombe, said the biggest fire at the Park in over 20 years burnt on a front two kilometres wide. "The DOLA satellite image shows the smoke plume on Wednesday afternoon extending over 250 kilometres out to sea and over 80km wide," Nigel said.

"Over 140 personnel attended the fire. Units attended from as far away as Bunbury, Serpentine, South

Cardiff (near Collie), Mandogalup, Cardup, Gidgegannup, Bullsbrook and Swan. Also in attendance were Fire and Rescue, City of Swan, Salvation Army, St John Ambulance, Police, Western Power and three water bombers from Perth Airport. Over 220 meals were served by the State Emergency Service."

Forty-eight hours after the fire started, the final patrol was left to Whiteman Park with the mop-up

taking place on Sunday the 18th. Nigel said the massive effort was a credit to all those involved, and, in an appropriate gesture for 2001, the International Year of Volunteers, it was marked by a thank-you function and celebration on April 28 at Mussel Pool.

This event was a joint initiative of Whiteman Park, the City of Swan and the West Swan Volunteer Fire Brigade to thank the volunteer firefighters who attend fires at the park.

"The idea arose out of the February fire," Nigel said. "Over 400 volunteers and their families attended. We provided them with free entry to the Park, free entertainment and concert activities. The City of Swan agreed to fund light refreshments and a meal for the volunteers."

As part of the thank-you, Emergency Services Minister Michelle Roberts, City of Swan Mayor Charlie Gregorini and volunteer John Shaw spoke to the crowd.

Nigel said the volunteers deserved all the praise they received. "Through this event, we acknowledged the work of the firefighters who have attended up to 15 fires at the Park this year. We have seen nearly 1,300 of our 3,600 hectares burnt," he said. "The celebration at Mussel Pool was a special thank-you to some of the unsung heroes of the community who come here and place themselves in danger and whose families are affected by their volunteer work."

Ministry of Justice

Volunteers Helping Victims of Crime

The Ministry of Justice's Victim Support Service has become a respected resource in the court system. The service's carefully trained, dedicated volunteers are friends to victims of crime as they undergo the stress and anxiety of appearing in court.

Daphne Farcich has heard her fair share of horror stories and details of crimes. She has been a shoulder to cry on for hundreds of victims. Daphne is not a criminal lawyer or detective, but one of about 50 volunteers around the State who are providing a much-needed service to victims of crime.

The volunteers with the Victim Support Service assist victims of crime through their ordeals—from the aftermath of crimes, through to court cases, and sometimes afterwards. The volunteers often attend court with victims where they provide support such as explaining the layout of the court, giving information, or providing refreshments.

Daphne has been with the service for more than six years and feels fortunate to have been able to support people in their time of need. "It is so rewarding and I learn so much about others and myself," Daphne said. "If I can do something for

these people who are going through a terrible ordeal, then I am lucky."

According to the Victim Support Service's Anthea Chambers, the volunteers who give their time are certainly making the world a better place. "Victims of crime go through an incredible amount of strain, and often the court proceedings can be terribly daunting. The volunteers make this time a little less difficult."

Because they deal with such sensitive issues, volunteers undergo a rigorous selection process. "The volunteers come from all walks of life, but all have the personal and life skills necessary for such a sensitive and important role. They are good listeners - understanding, patient, and tolerant."

Anne Murray is another volunteer who enjoys making a difference for victims of crime. Like Daphne, Anne is not new to volunteering her time, and has spent nine years with the Victim Support Service. "The best thing about the work is the gratitude of people you help," said Anne.

"Sometimes you feel as though you haven't done a great deal, but just being there means so much to the victims when they are going through such a

stressful time. It means a lot to them to have the moral support of a caring and sympathetic person in the court."

The volunteers generally sit in the public gallery during trials, but in special cases, they will be permitted to sit next to the victim.

Asked if there was a "down side" to being a victim-support volunteer, Anne said that it was sometimes overwhelming to hear first-hand accounts of the types of crimes perpetrated on others. "It's awful to be reminded of how cruel people can be to one another, but it's also very rewarding to be of some help to these unfortunate victims."

The Victim Support Service

The Victim Support Service (VSS) offers a confidential service for victims of crime, and provides flexible services with professional counsellors, trained volunteers, and a network of information and service providers.

The VSS is committed to promoting the rights and addressing the needs of anyone who has suffered harm from crime. There are 14 offices throughout the State.

Western Australian Museum

Museum Volunteers Work with a Passion

Volunteers at the WA Museum are clambering in and out of submarines, indexing references in the Museum Library, and taking school children to speak to Holocaust survivors after they've toured the Anne Frank exhibition. Other volunteers work in the Natural Science areas and assist education staff. Still others assist staff at the Maritime Museum. Diversity is the key to volunteer work at the WA Museum sites.

Museum volunteers are recruited to participate in areas in which they are personally interested. Coordinator of the Anne Frank Exhibition, Heather Robinson, believes this is the key to keeping volunteers.

"Volunteers for the Anne Frank exhibition were specifically recruited for a three-month period, and it's very clear to them what type of duties they are expected to do, but they also have a strong personal interest in what they're doing."

The commentary of trained volunteer guides is critical in relating Anne Frank's message to

contemporary times, revealing how differences in society can lead to persecution, and how individuals can act to preserve freedom.

One of the volunteers who has been interpreting the exhibit for school groups has been greatly moved by the comments from both the school children and the general public. Mrs Louise Schneider says, "In Australia, we need to be very aware of the development of racism. What strikes me the most is the way Anne Frank's message is still relevant today. Even very young school kids can pick up on that. For instance, one student said, 'I am only 11. Although I did not understand everything about the exhibit, I feel now I will speak up for what is right.'"

At the other end of the spectrum are the 52 volunteers who are committed to the ongoing exhibition of the HMAS Ovens submarine at the WA Maritime Museum. David Pike, Manager of the Submarine Project, says, "Our volunteers just

love what they're doing. As many of them are ex-submariners, they tend to focus on the sort of work they did in the past. Some of these men have even convinced their wives to become volunteer tour guides as well."

Every 15 minutes, a submarine volunteer guide picks up a maximum group of 10 people and takes them through the HMAS Ovens for about one hour. Guides are rostered to work every second weekend, but that's no hardship for people who love all things nautical. For instance, submarine volunteer guide Gordon Samuel has been involved with both the Dufyken and the Endeavour. "It's hard to put into words - but when the HMAS Ovens became available, I virtually just had to get into it - an opportunity just not to be missed to be involved with the submarine."

The scope of diverse activities at the WA Museum sites means volunteers are recruited to areas that they love - the best way to keep volunteers happy!

Specialist Drug & Alcohol Services

Parent Drug Information Service

Parents worried about their children's drug use can seek immediate support and counselling through the Parent Drug Information Service. Professional counsellors are available 24 hours per day to listen to concerns, provide support, and help parents plan the best course of action. Trained parent volunteers who have lived the experience of a child taking drugs are also available to provide parents with personal support and strategies.

Offered by Next Step Specialist Drug and Alcohol Services, the Parent Drug Information Service is funded through the proceeds of drug crime as part of the WA Strategy Against Drug Abuse. Launched in May 2000, the Information Service has 31 parent volunteers answering approximately 400 calls per month.

These special volunteers offer enormous value to the Service and to callers. Having personally experienced a child using drugs, the parent volunteers provide experience, wisdom and practical strategies to assist callers in coping with the issues associated with family drug use.

All volunteers have been specifically selected for their openness and ability to reframe their

relationships with their children, families, and communities. Their motivation for wanting to help other parents in similar circumstances is directly linked to their desire to let parents know that drug use is not always a result of parental failure and that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Working from their own homes, parent volunteers share a roster between 8am and 10pm. Parents calling the Service speak to a professional counsellor first, and are then offered the opportunity to speak to another parent. The professional staff can immediately transfer the call through. Thus, parents and families have access to both professional and peer support in one telephone service.

The Parent volunteers also offer a support

group each Wednesday evening in Subiaco. The sessions are informal and confidential. Parents can attend as many times as they wish. The Service hopes to spread the word about the support group so parents needing it will find it.

The Parent Drug Information Service is available on (08) 9442 5050. Country callers can ring toll free on 1 800 653 203.



Perth Zoo

Volunteering on the Wild Side



The Docent Association, comprising more than 300 members, is Perth Zoo's very special and dedicated volunteer organisation. As the name indicates (from the Latin *docere*, "to

teach"), these volunteers play a pivotal role in helping the Zoo with one of its key roles - education. Since its formal beginnings in 1982, the Association has established itself as an integral part of the Zoo, contributing to customer service, fundraising and animal enrichment.

Ranging in age from 18 to 80 years, the volunteers play a significant role in the Zoo's education and conservation work to help save some of the world's most endangered animals. "The Docents help us advance the conservation of wildlife and to change community attitudes towards the preservation of

life on earth," Perth Zoo's Chief Executive Brian Easton explained.

"There is an extraordinary depth of knowledge amongst the Docents about the animals, the gardens, and the Zoo's history.

"The Docents staff our visitors' information centre, conduct walking and zebra-car tours, and interact with visitors providing interesting facts and wonderful behind-the-scenes insights into the animals, and plants on display at Perth Zoo.

"Some of the Docents work very closely with our world-famous breeding colony of Sumatran Orang-utans and are actively involved in the behavioural programs to enrich the lives of these highly intelligent apes. As a result of this close involvement, the Docents have formed special bonds with these much-loved orang-utans."

The Docents can and do play a very hands-on role like stripping the leaves off browse branches for the Zoo's much-loved elephant, Tricia, whose digestive system is not what it used to be. They make puzzle boxes for animals and prepare special scent treats,

ropes and other items for inside the enclosures, and are involved in the landscaping of enclosures.

Perth Zoo's Docents also conduct "animal watches," helping to monitor animals that are unwell or vulnerable amongst their social group due to an illness, and recording the behaviour of specific animals over a period of time.

A small group of Docents has been conducting a watch over Perth Zoo's three Southern White Rhinoceroses, tracking the two females' oestrus cycles and recording any mating activity with the male, Memphis. Perth Zoo is part of an Australasian breeding program for the threatened Southern White Rhinoceros and is hopeful of future breeding success with its three-member herd.

Whether it's growing herbs for the Cheetah's enclosure or acting as snake handlers, the volunteers enthusiastically provide their time and labour to Perth's internationally renowned zoo, imparting their knowledge and passion for animals to the wider community.

Eastern Pilbara College of TAFE

SES Volunteers in the Pilbara

Seven staff members from the Eastern Pilbara College of TAFE are members of the local SES in Port Hedland. They give up one night each week and up to five weekends a year to train for any emergency situation which could be thrown at them. Then, of course, there are all the hours they put their training into practice when an emergency strikes.

Training is on-going and SES volunteers acquire a great range of skills—conducting aerial searches, sea rescues, abseiling for cliff rescues, securing roofs, 4Xwheel driving, foot searching, map reading, and helicopter rescues. According to Peter Ryan, Program Manager at Eastern Pilbara TAFE and a long-term volunteer in the SES, the 'foot soldiers' do everything!

Peter says, "Volunteering is rewarding and the experiences gained immeasurable. But because of the enormous amount of personal involvement and the tragedies people face, working with the SES can be very taxing emotionally. Until it happens, you just never know what you're going to be involved in and some of the things are pretty

horrific. You can't show any emotion. You just get on and do what has to be done."

Perhaps one the most visible times for the SES in the Pilbara is in the aftermath of a cyclone. While volunteers will be operating outside to make areas safe, others will be staffing the office and coordinating communications with other agencies under the direction of the full-time manager. Organising 3 Hercules aircraft loaded with fresh water could be just one of hundreds of tasks volunteer SES workers could be asked to do.

Pilbara volunteers must be ready to go anywhere to the site of an emergency from Onslow in the South to the Kimberley in the North within a couple of hours. From that point on, until the end of their involvement, there's little time for rest.

According to Marion Angel, Purchasing Officer at Eastern Pilbara TAFE, it's a case of "catch a couple of hours exhausted nap when you can." Marion finds working with the SES very fulfilling and a great way of learning life-skills. Working at Anna

Plains Station after Cyclone Sam last November, for example, Marion organised the catering, coordinated communications, then found herself assisting with sealing windows, securing roofs, and removing trees. And it's all in the day's work!

Cyclones, though, are usually only summer month occupations. Foot searching, for example, is a year-round event and SES volunteers often support the police by searching for objects - perhaps related to crime - or for people. Searches occur in all kinds of weather and often in inhospitable terrain such as sand dunes and crocodile-infested mangrove swamps. Marion says, "It can be exhausting walking for hours in line formation, searching the ground in front and side-to-side. We search for six to seven hours a day with short breaks every two hours or so."

Eastern Pilbara TAFE thanks volunteers everywhere, especially its own dedicated people who give so much to their community working in both the SES and the Fire Service.

Department of Training and Employment

Twenty Five Years of Literacy Help

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the volunteer adult literacy program, Read Write Now! that has helped thousands of Western Australians gain self-respect and greater confidence through improved literacy skills.

And, according to Ian Hill, Chief Executive of The Department of Training and Employment, the organisation continues to draw successfully on the goodwill of tutors aged anywhere from 18 to 85 who are prepared to devote their time and efforts to improving the lives of others who've slipped through the education net.

Robyn Knight, Programs Acting Manager, said there were about 1000 volunteers all around the State working with 1200 or so students. In most cases, students enjoyed one-on-one tuition, which has always been one of the organisation's greatest strengths.

The program was established in 1977 as the Volunteer Tutor Scheme to assist adults struggling with literacy problems. Departmental staff member, Kath Napier, pictured above with Managing Director of Midland TAFE, Royce Standish, saw the value of a similar scheme operating in the United Kingdom and decided to explore its potential in Western Australia. Twenty-five years later, Kath is still an active volunteer tutor in the Swan region.

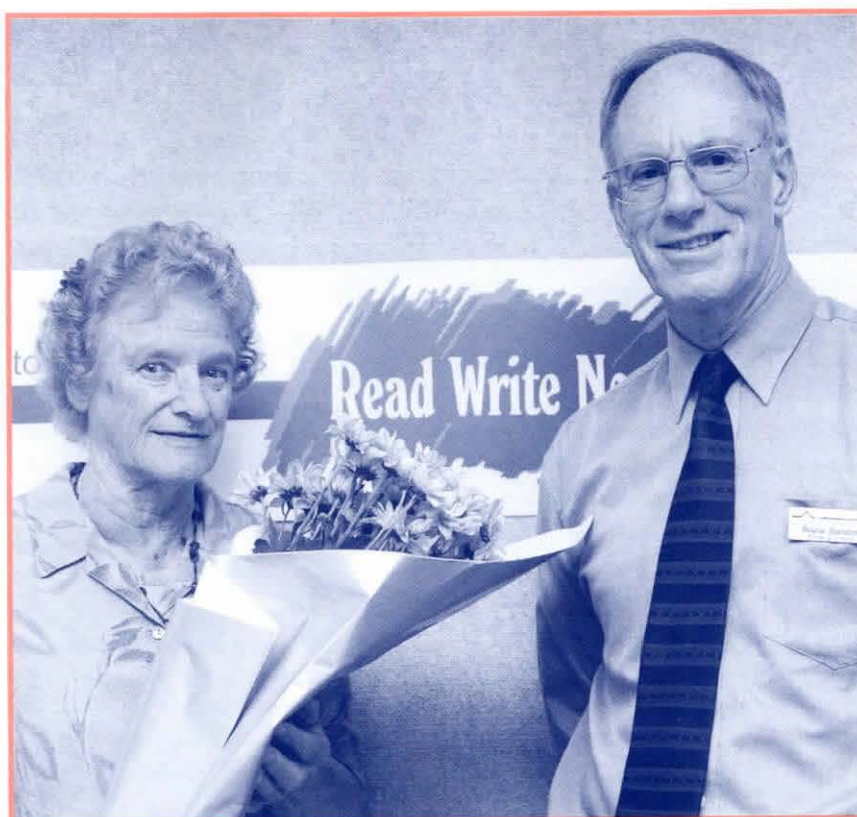
Read Write Now! receives funding from the Department of Training and Employment for two full-time and two part-time employees, mainly in administrative, training and volunteer support functions. In addition, Midland College of TAFE provides "in kind" support in the form of office space and administrative services.

"Other than that, volunteers are our backbone and everyone does a bit of everything," Robyn explained. She is a case in point: a former events' manager who decided to put her coordinating and management experience to another use.

"People seek us out for a wide range of reasons—for assistance with a TAFE course, to learning how to fill in forms, or to pass a driver's licence exam.

"We don't follow a set curriculum. Instead, students come to us with their own goals and we help them achieve them. Often, that sets them on the path to lifelong learning."

Older people forced to leave school when they were 13 or 14 to help support family is a common thread joining many of Read Write Now's!



students. Others have somehow missed out on schooling through illness or constant moves throughout their childhoods.

"The incentive can be as simple as wanting to read a story to a grandchild. You'd be surprised how many times we've heard that repeated," said Robyn.

Sometimes the decision to finally seek help in reading and writing unmasks a lifetime of shame and embarrassment. Robyn relates one example of a client in his sixties who rose to become a foreman in his workplace and played on his seniority to avoid answering the telephone.

"He'd always complain that someone more junior should answer the call and it was just to avoid having to write down a message. For other people, it can be 'I've left my glasses at home' or 'I've sprained my wrist', but the shame behind it is still the same."

She estimates about 40 percent of Read Write Now's! students need help in learning English as a second language, ranging from well-qualified professionals to others with only basic skills in their own languages.

Volunteer tutors are an equally mixed bag, ranging from " students in their twenties who

have the time and commitment to help other people to an 85- year-old former dancer in Albany who uses the Internet and has an interest in everything," said Robyn.

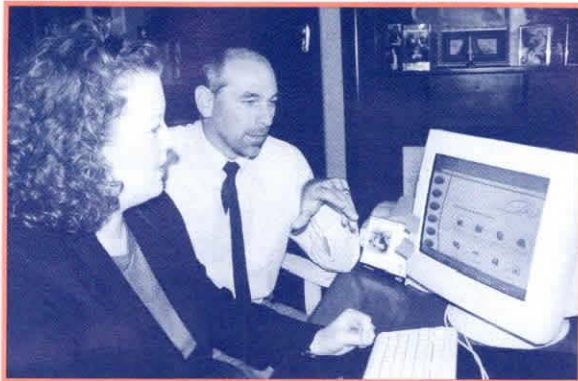
All are prepared to undergo a nationally accredited training course over several weeks and commit to a minimum 12 weeks of tuition normally amounting to two to three hours a week in order to achieve their qualifications. Another 30 voluntary coordinators administer the program in Perth and country regions from Broome to Esperance. In their case, the commitment is normally 20 to 25 hours a week.

Robyn believes many tutors provide much more than just literacy skills to their students. "It can be guidance, warmth or stability that all lead to rebuilding self-esteem."

Wherever possible, coordinators try to match tutors and students who have an interest or experience in common as a starting point for effective communication. Teaching experience is not a requirement for tutors. What's needed instead, is patience, humor and most of all, an interest in helping other people.

Small Business Development Corp

Mentors: a Great Boost for Business



Steve Griffiths is a volunteer whose guidance adds value to other people's businesses. He is a volunteer for the Small Business Development Corporation's (SBDC) Business Mentor program. A business mentor provides voluntary, practical, one-on-one guidance and information on key aspects of an individual's business activities.

Mentors also offer encouragement and support in the general management of business and encourage small business clients to access private and public sector enterprise-development services, programs and specialist networks.

There are currently 147 volunteer mentors participating in the program. Supported by Perth

Rotary Club and the Office of Seniors Interests, the program is designed to offer support and guidance to small business operators who are starting or expanding their businesses.

SBDC Managing Director, George Etrelezis, said a good mentor combined caring with a willingness to share information. "Starting a small business can be a lonely - and sometimes frightening - endeavour.

"Some of our small business clients don't have family members or friends in business they can turn to for guidance. Matching clients is like - preparing for a marriage: it is important that the parties get along with each other."

Steve Griffiths of Steve Griffiths Management Services in Kingsley has been in business for more than 20 years. He has been a business mentor for 12 months and mentors clients in Paraburdoo and Geraldton.

Steve was motivated to become a mentor from the sense of satisfaction he receives by offering solutions to problems.

"When I was starting off in business, there was no one to ask for guidance and - besides - I was probably too proud to ask," Steve said.

The kinds of questions he has been asked include everything from business planning to contract management and marketing.

"Initial contact is usually frequent as clients overcome the pain barrier in their business," Steve said.

He said it was equally important, as a business mentor, not to disempower clients. The decision-making must ultimately rest with the client.

One of the business people mentored by Mr Griffiths is Kate Gorce-Macham of Bassendean.

Ms Gorce-Macham is Managing Director of Virtual Assistant Group, an umbrella organisation for small office/home office people who use technology to deliver their services.

"Accessing a mentor was an extremely valuable experience for me," Ms Gorce-Macham said. "Because Steve has no vested interest in my business, I can trust him completely."

To find out more about becoming a business mentor or accessing a mentor, contact the SBDC on 9220-0222.

Department of Transport

Volunteers Improve Marine Safety

Go fishing or boating from a major tourist launching ramp, and you're likely to be offered helpful local information and tips from a smiling volunteer wearing Transport's blue tee-shirt and cap. These volunteers play an important role in education and marine safety as Volunteer Marine Safety Liaison Officers.

A trial of the volunteer scheme was held last summer in Geographe Bay between Busselton and Dunsborough - chosen because it is one of the State's busiest summer recreation areas for boating and jet ski activity.

Three volunteers individually worked four hours each month, speaking to more than 600 people over the course of the summer. During the trial, the number of boating-related incidents in the area declined.

The trial was so successful that the scheme has been expanded to other regions and to the metropolitan area. By the end of the 2001/2002 summer season, it

is expected that 30 volunteers will be contributing to boating safety throughout the State.

Volunteer Marine Safety Liaison Officers donate their time, boating expertise and local knowledge mainly on weekends and public holidays. Their role is strictly educational. With no authority for enforcement, just wide, friendly smiles and helpful advice, they

- distribute boating safety pamphlets and general boating safety information at boat ramps and to vessels anchored along the beaches;
- advise boat owners of gazetted waters;
- conduct complimentary safety gear checks and provide advice in relation to safety gear, storage, accessibility and condition, etc;
- advise on local knowledge of weather/wind shifts and where to get the latest weather information;
- provide hints on the use of marine radios and

the value of communicating with local sea rescue groups;

- attend special events/boat shows.
- The volunteers are handpicked by Regional Transport Officers on the advice of local boating groups. Candidates possess local knowledge and an interest in boating safety. They do one day's in-house training, followed by an on-the-job session and monitoring by regional staff.
- Transport's Regional Liaison Officer, Nick Grundy, said the volunteers were providing an excellent community service. "Education in marine safety is essential if we want to avoid boating tragedies. These volunteers are helping us to help the community so that all can have a safe, happy summer on the water. We are very grateful to community-spirited people who are willing to provide this service for us."

Sport and Recreation WA

Volunteers Make Sport Happen

To some of the thousands of people who enjoy taking part in sport and recreational activities throughout Western Australia each week, the word "volunteer" is just that - another word.

In the excitement of competition, many don't stop to think about how the funds were raised to pay for the uniforms, sports equipment or facilities - or who has done the behind-the-scenes work that allows their sporting club to exist. Coaches and umpires? They just turn up on training nights and match days as a matter of course.

The truth is - more than 80 per cent of those involved with organising sport in Western Australia are volunteers - people who, for the sheer love of sport and for the joy of providing other people with an opportunity to participate, contribute countless hours of their time each year totally free of charge.

Volunteers are the unsung heroes who make it all happen. Without them, sport in its current affordable form in Western Australia would not exist.

Community sport and recreation in Australia relies on about 820,000 volunteers who contribute in excess of 105 million hours per year for running sport and recreation clubs and organizations. In fact, volunteers are also responsible for 80 per cent of administration in Australian sport and recreation.

Voluntary work is an enormous source of social capital and contributes directly to the growth and

development of social networks and social cohesion within our communities. Sport and recreation volunteers also have a vital role to play in providing opportunities for Western Australians to lead physically active lifestyles.

Sport and Recreation WA recognizes the importance of volunteers to the sport and recreation industry and has in place programs that assist in the promotion, training, resources and recognition of volunteers.

Sport and Recreation WA's Chief Executive Officer Ron Alexander says that recognition of work done is crucial to the on-going success of the volunteer structure in sport and recreation.

"Whilst the vast majority of volunteers do not consciously seek recognition or reward, our volunteers deserve to be acknowledged. They should not be taken for granted because without them, there would be no viable sporting structure," he said.

"The International Year of Volunteers provides an excellent opportunity to focus on these areas. Even though there are many people volunteering, we still need more. Volunteers are becoming more difficult to recruit and retain, especially with so many demands on our time these days.

"Sport and Recreation WA is working hard to assist organizations to develop and implement effective volunteer and club management practices which will

ultimately improve the industry as a whole, from grassroots participation to elite performance.

"It's timely to recognize volunteers in sport and recreation this year, given the critical role they played in the outstanding success of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. However, the International Year of Volunteers is not just about recognizing the efforts of those who help out with major events. We must not lose sight of the fact that week in, week out, thousands of volunteers at community level give freely of their time and expertise. Whether it's through officiating, coaching or working at the canteen, every volunteer plays an important role."

Delivery of a series of special volunteer management and training seminars is a focus of Sport and Recreation WA during International Year of Volunteers. Through its 10 regional offices and in partnership with regional shires and other state government agencies, Sport and Recreation WA aims to provide face-to-face training options as well as on-line access to resources, information and training.

For further information on Sport and Recreation WA's volunteer programs and special training seminars, contact Jo Davies on 9387 9728 or email jo.davies@srwa.wa.gov.au

WA Police Service

Police Praise for Tireless Volunteers

First Class Constable Kaylene Webber cannot praise highly enough the work of volunteers. For her, the equation is simple - without volunteers her doors would be closed.

Kaylene is the Community Policing/Crime Prevention Officer for Victoria Park and the surrounding suburbs. Working out of a modest office on Albany Highway, her role sees her continually out and about, giving talks to local residents on safety and security issues, and talking to local businesses about their crime concerns.

Kaylene relies on the seven volunteers who act as the backbone of her Community Policing Resource Centre. The Centre provides an outlet for members of the public to get information on security products, receive advice on personal safety, and to discuss community-policing initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch. The volunteers work a few days each and are on

hand from 8am until 4pm, five days a week.

"Without volunteers, we would have to close the doors. It is that simple. They make a fantastic contribution to the community through their tireless efforts. They are all busy people who still make the time to give something back to the local community. They really do keep this place running when I am not here," Kaylene said.

For Lyn Phillis, being a volunteer is second nature. Not content with her 10-year stint as the Neighbourhood Watch Suburb Manager for St James, Lyn also works two days a week as a volunteer helping Kaylene at the Resource Centre.

"As a volunteer, I am always trying to raise the awareness of Neighbourhood Watch and recruit new members. Unfortunately, many people aren't interested until they have been broken into, or

become a victim of crime, and it is only then that they realise the importance of programmes such as Neighbourhood Watch. If we can get these people involved before they become victims, then we are halfway there to winning the war on crime," Lyn said.

Lyn is just one of the hundreds of volunteers involved in the Neighbourhood Watch program in suburbs throughout Western Australia. Although their tireless efforts go unpaid, they have the heartfelt thanks of a very grateful Police Service.



Contributors

Art Gallery of WA
Department of Conservation and Land Management
Challenger TAFE
Eastern Pilbara College of TAFE
Family and Children's Services
Disability Services Commission
Fire and Emergency Services Authority
Fisheries WA
Goldfields Development Commission
Graffiti Program
Ministry of Housing
Ministry of Justice
Botanic Parks and Garden Authority
Western Australian Museum
Next Step Specialist Drug and Alcohol Services
Office of Seniors' Interests
Perth Zoo
Ministry for Planning
WA Police Service
Small Business Development Corporation
Sport and Recreation WA
Department of Training and Employment
Department of Transport
West Coast College of TAFE

Further Information

International Year of Volunteers Website:

<http://www.iyv2001.org>

Volunteering WA

Phone: (08) 9420 7288

Email: community@volunteer.org.au

Website: <http://www.volunteer.org.au>

Online WA Website:

<http://onlinewa.com.au/community>

Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet:

Phone: (08) 9222 9847



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF VOLUNTEERS, 2001

DECEMBER 2000

Welcome

Welcome to the first in a series of Fact Sheets on the International Year of Volunteers (IYV). These sheets will be printed at regular intervals throughout 2001.

The purpose of these Fact Sheets is to keep the community informed on IYV events and activities taking place across Western Australia in 2001.

Background

The Global Perspective

The General Assembly of the United Nations has declared 2001 to be the International Year of Volunteers.

This declaration has resulted in over one hundred countries agreeing to acknowledge the critical role played by volunteers by staging celebratory public launches for the International Year of Volunteers. These launches are happening in countries as diverse as Bangladesh and the United States, Senegal and Singapore.

The Western Australian Perspective

Western Australia has been enthusiastic in embracing the concept of IYV. The Governor and his wife have agreed to be joint patrons and the Premier is the responsible Minister for the Year.

A Secretariat has been established at Volunteering WA, and the Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet is the lead agency for State Government.

This year is an opportunity to highlight the critical role volunteers play in our community. It also provides a chance to thank all the volunteers across the length and breadth of the State for the invaluable work that has been done by people giving freely of their time and expertise.

In 1995, following the ABS National Voluntary Work Survey, Family and Children's Services commissioned a project to analyse the data in relation Western Australia. A similar project will be undertaken by the State Government when the data becomes available from the 2000 survey.

Refer to Fact Sheet 3 for updated statistical information

Useful Facts and Figures

In Western Australia it is estimated that:

- One person in every five aged fifteen years and over is involved in providing voluntary work through an organisation or group each year (262,000 people)
- This contribution equates to 46 million hours of unpaid work with each volunteer averaging 3.2 hours per week
- The value of this contribution equates to \$460 million
- The four most popular areas of voluntary work are:
 - Sport and recreation,
 - Education/training, youth development
 - Welfare/community
 - Religious
- 36% of volunteers do voluntary work for more than one organisation
- Almost two thirds (62%) of volunteers stated personal satisfaction as the key motivator for volunteering
- One third of volunteers become involved in volunteer activity because they are asked directly by a friend or colleague.

(Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1995 National Voluntary Work Survey)

Further Information

International Year of Volunteers Website:
<http://www.iyv2001.org>

Volunteering WA
Phone: (08) 9420 7288
Email: community@volunteer.org.au
Website: <http://www.volunteer.org.au>

OnlineWA Website:
<http://onlinewa.com.au/community>

Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet:
Contact Anne Simpson
Phone: (08) 9222 9847

Key Dates

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 5 December 2000 | Official Launch of IYV |
| 14 - 20 May 2001 | National Volunteer Week |
| 8 - 10 August 2001 | Vision Conference,
Developing a Vision for
Volunteering in WA |

FACT SHEET NO 1
Volunteers ~ The Spirit of Community


Volunteering WA



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF VOLUNTEERS, 2001

JUNE 2001

Introduction

Welcome to the second in this series of Fact Sheets on the International Year of Volunteers which will inform you of interesting findings on volunteering and volunteers. They will also provide you with information on events and activities taking place in Western Australia during 2001.

Welcome to the new Minister with Responsibility for Volunteer Services

For the first time in the history of Western Australia, we now have a Minister with responsibility for Volunteer Services, the Hon Sheila McHale MLA. The Premier, the Hon Geoff Gallop MLA has reinforced the Government's commitment to recognising the wonderful work of volunteers across the State by taking special responsibility for the International Year of Volunteers.

This high level of support demonstrates the Government's commitment to fostering the growth of community across WA.

Definition of a Volunteer

There has been much recent discussion on just what a volunteer is. Are you a volunteer if you:

- act as secretary for a sporting organisation
- give blood
- work in a school canteen
- help a neighbour
- send a cheque to a charity
- undertake community service work?

The answer is that it depends on which country you come from. It's extremely difficult to give a single definition of volunteering because it means different things to different people and is influenced by history, culture, politics and religion.

However, at a United Nations funded expert working group meeting on Volunteering and Social Development, in 2000, five core characteristics of volunteering emerged. They are:

The notion of Reward

Volunteers do not undertake any activity primarily for financial gain.

The notion of Free Will

The activity is undertaken voluntarily according to the person's free will.

The notion of Benefit

The activity will directly benefit someone (other than the volunteer) or society at large. Nonetheless, it's clearly acknowledged that volunteering brings significant benefit to volunteers as well.

Organisation Setting

There is increasing recognition of the importance of recognising 'informal' volunteering like one-to-one caring as well as 'formal' volunteering such as that carried out by an organisation.

Level of Commitment

The level can range from high commitment to sporadic involvement although in the past, volunteering has usually carried some degree of sustained commitment.

FACT SHEET NO 2
Volunteers ~ the spirit of community



Refer to Fact Sheet 3 for updated statistical information

Useful Facts and Figures

- Analysis of data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1970 – 1997) to measure volunteering in economic terms shows that Australian adults spent an estimated 2,200 million hours per year in volunteering which is worth an estimated \$42 billion a year or roughly 7-8% of GDP. (*Ironmonger D., 2000 Volunteers and Volunteering, The Federation Press*)
- It is estimated that each family in Australia relies on the work of more than twenty volunteers each week. (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1995 National Voluntary Work Survey*)
- In 1995, the profile of the person with the highest participation rate of volunteerism in WA was a married 35-44 year old Australian born woman in paid employment with post school qualifications. (*ABS 1995 National Voluntary Work Survey*)
- More recent research suggests there is no significant relationship to the level of volunteering and gender, income, age, self nominated social class or labour market status. The partial exception is that people who have worked for pay seem to be three times more likely to say they do voluntary work than those who have never worked for pay. (*Pusey, M., 2000 Volunteers and Volunteering, Vintage Press*)
- People living in rural areas are almost twice as likely to be involved in volunteering activities than those living in Perth. (*ABS 1995 National Voluntary Work Survey*)

News Update

- A new book on volunteering sponsored with funding and promotional support by the Fire and Emergency Service Authority is now available. The book, 'Volunteering, Count Me In! – 500 Ideas on Recruiting Volunteers' by Judy Esmond is available through Newseason Publications ph: (08) 9361 9339. The cost is \$26.00 incl GST + \$4.00 postage and handling.
- The Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet has commissioned the design of a special flag for WA to celebrate the IYV. It is available for \$97.50 from Volunteering WA Ph: 9420 7288.
- Whiteman Park (Ministry for Planning) has agreed to provide facilities for a venue for volunteers' events and celebrations, subject to availability. For more information, contact Ross Parker phone (08) 9249 2446.
- The Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet has two International Year of Volunteers flags and a variety of banners for short term loan to organisations who are celebrating the International Year. Phone 9222 9847 for details
- The Ministry has also developed a policy to promote, sustain and grow volunteerism among its staff. For more information, contact Anne Simpson on 9222 9847.
- Family and Children's Services is currently developing a Policy and Procedures Manual for volunteers in its Parentlink program. For more information, contact Roberta Shaw on (08) 9386 9262.

Don't Forget

- **The Vision Conference on Volunteering**
8 – 10 August 2001
- For information on government organisations working with volunteers:
www.onlinewa.com.au/community
- For the latest information on activities during the International Year, contact Volunteering WA on (08) 9420 7288 or access their website:
www.volunteer.org.au/news



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF VOLUNTEERS, 2001

AUGUST 2001

Introduction

In June 2001, the Australian Bureau of Statistics released a report entitled 'Voluntary Work, Australia 2000'. This report contains results from the second national survey of voluntary work conducted throughout Australia over 2000. The first survey was conducted in June 1995. The following information is from the latest report.

It should be noted that as a consequence of the 2000 survey, the ABS has reviewed the methodology of the 1995 survey, and revised 1995 statistics will be available shortly.

USEFUL STATISTICS

(source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000 National Survey of Voluntary Work)

General Information

- Nearly one third of Australians or 4.4 million people aged 18 years and over took part in voluntary work with an organisation or group in 2000.
- This amounted to 704.1 million hours of unpaid work.

Western Australian Information

- 32.2% or one in three Western Australians, aged eighteen years and over, took part in volunteering activities which is above the national rate of 31.8%.
- In 2000, 428 600 Western Australians contributed 70.8 million hours of unpaid work for the benefit of the community. At \$12.00 per hour this equates to almost \$850 million.
- In the Metropolitan area, the volunteering rate is 28.2% and rural Western Australia has the highest volunteer rate in Australia with 45% of the population involved in volunteering.

The following information was taken from a review of referrals by Volunteering WA over a 10 year period from 1989 - 1999/2000.

Referrals and Age of Volunteers

- The greatest increase in referrals was in the 18-24 age group which increased from 16.4% of all referrals in 1989 to 26% of all referrals in 1999/2000.
- The largest group interested in volunteering is the under 44 years which makes up 68% of all current referrals.
- Those aged 55-64 make up 11% of current referrals.
- The smallest group is the over 65's which make up 4% of current referrals.

Gender

The balance between female and male volunteers using the referral service has become more even with the number of females decreasing from 70 - 60 % and male volunteers increasing from 30% - 40%.

For more information on these figures from Volunteering WA, contact Ivan Lundberg 9420 7250.

FACT SHEET NO 3
Volunteers - The Spirit of Community



Information from around the World

Many countries have taken the opportunity to recognise and celebrate their volunteers during the International Year of Volunteers (IYV). Around the world, there are 120 IYV National Committees, 75 State Committees and 6 city IYV Committees.

A large number of volunteer activities and events are occurring ranging from the development of IYV songs, to IYV stamps to four landmark UN resolutions. More information can be obtained on the IYV website: www.iyv2001.org

The International Year and Volunteering WA

In Western Australia, the Government has worked closely with Volunteering WA to recognise our volunteers and to celebrate and promote volunteering.

Highlights for the Year include the launch of a Mobile Volunteer Referral Unit in Mundaring and six exciting research projects tackling topics as diverse as measuring volunteer contribution in our community and drafting guidelines for the establishment of Volunteer Centres in regional areas. A photographic collection with the theme of Volunteering and a History Book of Volunteering in Western Australia will provide future generations of volunteers with an understanding of the volunteer sector in the years to come.

A key event for the Year is the Vision Conference, the outcomes of which will help set the direction for volunteering in our State for the next 5 - 10 years. A future Fact Sheet will discuss the outcomes of the Conference.

The International Year and the Public Sector

Public sector departments have provided substantial resources to acknowledge the magnificent contribution their volunteer partners make to the community.

Over seventy public sector departments and organisations work with volunteers in areas such as sport, justice, community services, health, education, emergency services, the environment, tourism and fisheries.

Over 70 000 volunteers work directly with agencies. Many more work with community based organisations which receive Government funding.

Through a committee of Chief Executive Officers, a business plan was developed for the Year.

A number of exciting initiatives have occurred during 2001 which will leave valuable legacies from the Year. These include:

- the establishment of the WA Centre for Leadership and Community Development at Challenger TAFE, the first of its kind in Australia.
- The development of a policy, 'Time for Volunteers' by the Department of Premier and Cabinet to encourage volunteerism in the Department.
- The Government is also partnering with the Streets Alive program, a Statewide initiative to promote informal volunteering in the community by establishing social connections among neighbours. Further details can be accessed on www.streetsalive.8m.com

For more information on any of these initiatives, contact Anne Simpson on (08) 9222 9847.