



WOOLLAHRA VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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Two heads much better than one

Welcome to the first edition of the *Woollahra Volunteer Coordinators Network Newsletter*, an initiative of participants of the Volunteer Forum. The Volunteer Forum provides support to volunteer organisations in the Eastern Suburbs.

This newsletter aims to support volunteer coordinator's to achieve 'best practice' in their management of volunteers. It is a supplement to the Forum, which is held quarterly at Woollahra Council.

At the first Volunteer Forum for 2008 David Brettell, (Chief Executive of the Australian Cancer Research Foundation) related his experience of structuring the volunteer team that delivered the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

In his presentation David encouraged organisations working with volunteers to build partnerships that will assist them to build the organisation's profile and enhance their resources. Partnerships assisted the Sydney Olympic Games Committee to provide volunteers with uniforms & training.

In terms of best practice a partnership should be based on mutual respect and cooperation, to achieve specified goals. Creating a Memorandum of Understanding can be a constructive premise for any partnership. The Memorandum should be created in the early phase of the relationship and should articulate the goals and intended outcomes of the partnership, and the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved.

In 2006 participants of the Volunteer Forum suggested that this network be used to work on projects that would help address shared volunteer issues. Subcommittees and partnerships can be formed for the duration of a project, consisting of volunteer coordinators looking to strive forward and strengthen the volunteer sector.



David Brettell at the Volunteer Forum, February 2008

Networking Breakfast

Enjoy breakfast with volunteer coordinators from diverse organisations across Sydney at The Centre for Volunteering's Networking Breakfast (Level 2, 228 Pitt Street).

The networking breakfast, held monthly between 8.30am and 10.30am, is an opportunity to strengthen interagency support. Topics—often suggested by participants from previous breakfasts—are discussed, with input from invited guests.

At the next Networking Breakfast, planned for 18 March 2008, Kristin Romanis (Communications Manager, Centre for Volunteering) will provide a review of the 2007 IAVE Asia Pacific Volunteer Conference, at which she presented the Country Report for Australia. This report detailed current volunteering activity, trends and issues in Australia

Kristin's presentation will cover Emergency Volunteering, Senior Citizens Volunteering: Baby Boomer Generation, Youth Volunteering amongst others. Booking essential, call 02 9261 3600.



An initiative of the Woollahra Volunteer Forum, supported by Woollahra Council & Holdsworth Community Centre & Services



Volunteer of the Year Awards

Congratulations Loys Thompson AM, of Rose Bay, who was named as the Sydney East Regional 2007 winner of the Volunteer of the Year Award.

Loys was recognised for the innovative and insightful contribution she has made over forty years to the Cancer Patients Assistance Society (Can Assist). Coming from a background in nursing & social work Loys was touched by the sad faces of rural patients visiting Sydney for intense cancer treatment.

Loys successfully extended Can Assist's presence in rural centres, helping to decrease the pressure on families without the luxury of nearby specialist treatment. Loys joined the Board of Can Assist in 1978, and was the President between 1990 & 2008.

Loys continues to demonstrate an outstanding contribution to her community and provided an inspiring speech at International Women's Day Celebrations held at Woollahra Council on 6 March 2008. Thank you and congratulations Loys! To learn more about Can Assist visit: <http://www.cancerpatients.com.au>



Loys Thompson
AM

Research

Volunteer Coordinators have free access to a new *Practical Guide to Involving Volunteers from Diverse Cultural and Language (CALD) Backgrounds in Your Organisation*.

Volunteer based organisations are becoming aware of inclusive & proactive recruitment practices.

The Practical Guide has been developed by the Australian Multicultural Foundation & Volunteering Australia (2007), & can be downloaded from the following website: <http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/files>

Also recommended is *The National Survey of Australian Volunteers from Diverse Cultural Backgrounds* (Australian Multicultural Foundation and Volunteering Australia 2007), which refutes the myth that people of CALD backgrounds only volunteer within their own cultural community.

The 'Practical Guide' provides a foundation for organisations to consider volunteering traditions & motivational trends in order to develop appropriate strategies to attract & support volunteers from CALD backgrounds.

Dates for your diary

National Volunteer Week between 12–18 May 2008

Volunteers change our world. For ideas on how to acknowledge volunteers for their contribution check out Volunteering Australia's website: <http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org>

Woollahra Volunteer Coordinator's Forum, held at Woollahra Council, will take place on the following dates: 7 May 2008, 6 August 2008 & 5 November 2008.

Networking Breakfasts held at The Centre for Volunteering (Level 2 – 228 Pitt Street) will take place between 8.30am and 10.30am, on the following dates in early 2008: 18 March, 15 April, 20 May, 17 June.



Q & A

Meet Sonia Gidley King, Founder of Wrap with Love Inc.

How it started... with an inspiration to stop hypothermia.

The greatest challenge... is programming to meet the requests of aid agencies to accommodate the urgent needs of cold & traumatised humanity with shipping schedules.

Strategies used to attract volunteers? Word of mouth & the 'ABC 702 annual knit-in'.

The greatest volunteer effort ever was... undertaken after the Kosovo Disaster in 1996.

One new thing I learnt recently... not to count the years. Instead—make the years count!

The Woollahra Volunteer Forum... keeps us in touch with issues faced by other volunteer based organizations.

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This newsletter is prepared by participants of The Volunteer Forum, supported by Woollahra Council & Holdsworth Community Centre & Services.

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