



## FROM THE COAST

### Community Heroes

Nominations for the Australia Day WA Citizen of the Year Awards 2017 are closing soon and I hope to see many nominations made to recognise the individuals and groups that make a difference in Esperance and the Goldfields. These awards are a wonderful opportunity to recognise and celebrate members of our local community who have invested their time and effort to ensure that we continue to enjoy a quality of life envied around the world.

We are so fortunate in Esperance to have such a large number of volunteers helping our community in many different ways. Many of them are quiet achievers unlikely to “toot their own horn” and who have dedicated hours, years and even decades of their time to making our community a better place.

The 2016 Citizenship of the Year Awards saw the local emergency services in particular honoured and thanked for their efforts dealing with the catastrophic November 2015 bushfires and their aftermath, which affected so many of us. There were many deserving winners and nominees which included community groups involved with the Esperance bushfires, Saving Animals From Euthanasia (SAFE) Esperance, Bay of Isles Community Outreach (BOICO) and a number of outstanding community minded individuals. It was certainly a time when our volunteers were at the forefront of our minds as they helped our community to move into recovery which may have contributed to the large number of nominations received.

It is important to remember these outstanding groups and individuals don't just work hard during times of crisis or when publicly scrutinised. They soldier on selflessly all through the year making a positive difference in our daily lives. It's very easy to let opportunities to thank them slip by, thinking someone else will do it. However, it is up to each of us to pay attention to the things these individuals and groups do for our community and put in a nomination for the annual WA Citizen of the Year Awards to acknowledge their passion and dedication. It is also important to note that just because a group or individual may have been recognised previously, does not exclude them from being nominated again.

The nominations for 2017 close on the 31 October so now is the time to let us know of any outstanding individuals or groups who have significantly contributed to our community. Categories include Citizen of the Year, Youth Citizen of the Year (under 25), Senior Citizen of the Year and Active Citizenship (group or event). Nominations can be made at the Awards website [www.citizenshipawards.com.au](http://www.citizenshipawards.com.au). Recognising and celebrating our community heroes on Australia Day fosters both national pride and community spirit. What better way to celebrate Australia Day?