



FROM THE COAST

National Volunteer Week

In the past week we have been recognising volunteers across the nation for National Volunteer Week. In the local area of Esperance, volunteers are everywhere. They are all kinds of people, doing all kinds of work, and making a significant difference in our everyday lives, whether you know it or not. You will find volunteers in health, education, environment and conservation, recreation, service, sport and work with people and agencies providing assistance to children, youth, seniors and people with special needs. The willingness of our community to put their hand up and provide unpaid help was never more obvious or touching than during the now notorious November bushfires.

The Esperance Volunteer Resource Centre provides information and support to volunteers and agencies working with volunteers, including the updating of a comprehensive register of volunteer positions in the local area. They carefully match volunteers evaluating their skills, interests and aspirations with appropriate positions, and offer training and education to enhance those skills and offer work opportunities that may otherwise be unavailable.

The Esperance Volunteer Resource Centre held a Sundowner at the Civic Centre on Thursday to thank our local volunteers for the national week of recognition, and have arranged some exceptional and highly sought after volunteer training by one of the world's leading authorities on volunteering, Rob Jackson, who is visiting us on May 18th. Andy Fryer, former president of Volunteering Australia, will also be here in July, to deliver valuable volunteering related training.

As a community we rely on volunteers for many things, so it is important we thank them in any way we can. Keep an eye out for opportunities to reward or thank volunteers for the great work they do in our community, such as nominations for awards and other types of official recognition. The WA Regional Achievement & Community Awards are currently calling for nominations for people and groups whose passion and commitment to making their community better, really stand out. To find out how to submit a nomination for these awards go to www.awardsaustralia.com.

People volunteer with the main aim of helping the community and to do something worthwhile, but it can provide so much more. Volunteering can help build self-confidence and satisfaction, social contact, the ability to use skills or develop new ones and a possible start to paid employment. If you'd like to find out more about volunteering opportunities in Esperance, contact the Esperance Volunteer Resource Centre on 9072 0346. To all the volunteers in our community, a sincere thank you for everything you do.