

Mt Evelyn Street Party 2011

October saw everyone at Community Connections Wray Crescent join in the fun, yet again, of organising and being involved with the successful and much anticipated Mt Evelyn Street Party. Hosted by our local community, the street party is a great way for local traders, businesses and community groups to come together to promote themselves, fundraise and of course put on a fun, inclusive day out for everyone.

Not even the stormy, wet weather in the early part of the day could dampen the high spirits of all who had volunteered, and with an event filled with attractive, dynamic stalls and lots of people we couldn't help but have a great time!

The team from Wray Crescent put on the fairy floss again this year, which was the big winner of the day - thank goodness we had organised two machines this year as we were run off our

feet! We also ran a fabulous raffle, with Ron winning the hearts of many selling plenty of raffle tickets and pleasing our three winners.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the business who generously supported us by donating items and vouchers as part of our raffle.

They include: Dollar Curtains and Blinds Chirside Park, Target Chirside Park, Club Kilsyth, Chirside Park Country



Club,
Lilydale
Office Supplies and Jumping Jonquils.

Thank you also to Ron, Alistair, Cecelia, Michael Sellwood for all of your amazing work in the lead up to and on the day, and to Amanda and Malika from The Able Baking House for your support also.

To the families who assisted and donated items for our stalls, we thank you for your time and energy, and to all of the staff and their partners and children, you were amazing.

As someone was overheard saying on the day, 'Wow everyone really comes together', and we did - raising over \$2,500.

Final Link in David's Warburton Trail Trek

Blowing kisses and even the odd cheeky raspberry, David Leaver was over the moon when he was invited to officially open the Warburton Trail Bridge in Lilydale alongside the Shire of Yarra Ranges Mayor and MP, Christine Fyffe.

David, who had completed the 38km trek along the trail earlier this year was the first person to cross the bridge after the Mayor, and accompanied the Mayor and official

party on stage as they cut the ribbon.

Crossing the bridge was the final link in David's long journey and to be invited to be such a huge part of the official celebrations made the final link in the journey extra special.

A crowd of supporters including David's very proud mum and dad, family friends Norma, John and Bec and some of the staff at Melba were there to cheer David

along. The surprise of having David play such an important part of the activities was wonderful and David's mum and dad, Anne-Marie and Graham were extremely proud. Congratulations David on your terrific achievement - and well done to Steve who enjoyed the journey with David.





CEO's Report

You never can anticipate what the year ahead will look like. You may have a strategic plan, a work plan, a management plan, a personal plan or an organisational plan, but none of them will be useful if you are not prepared to modify them when the opportunity presents. For all of us, planning assists us to organise our day to day events and to give us a road map to help us to get to where we want to be. However, although planning is important, sometimes we need the freedom to "take it as it comes", because that will often lead us into a direction or path that we had never thought of or dreamed about. Successful planning is all about being flexible and allowing people the opportunity to explore variations to the theme - to encourage and promote the difference - which may lead us into new territory. I have been involved in several forums and conferences in the last few months and am continuously amazed that some in the sector see Individualised Arrangements for supporting people as something implausible or even improbable. Some even argue that you can only

really achieve individuality on paper or as a profit and loss statement. I can assure you this is not true. Every day I see people getting lives that look a whole lot better because of an Individualised Arrangement. For some people it may involve only a few hours per week, but the changes that can occur are truly astounding. People's lives can be, and are being, transformed to look like something you and I might see as ordinary. Individualised Arrangements are not about what people's lives look like on paper but what they really are; the day to day, the ordinary and perhaps even the mundane, but it is theirs and they own it. Maybe what I see is an illusion. Perhaps I am looking through rose coloured glasses? I don't think so but I am happy to be challenged on this and enter the debate, and I am even happier to have my observations confirmed. Enclosed, you will find a Feedback Form 'Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions'. I urge you to complete this form and return it in the envelope provided so that we can continue to provide responsive, high quality and meaningful services. The Board of Management and everyone at Melba Support Services would like to wish you and your family a wonderful Christmas and a peaceful New Year. We look forward to working together in 2012.

Penny Kendall
Acting CEO

Flower Power in Yarra Junction

My business, Lisa's Blooms, has been running for a couple of years now, selling wholesale flowers within the local community.

At my last planning meeting I decided that I would like to help out within the community, and we thought what better way than to combine my business and love of flowers with the Cancer Council's Daffodil Day.

As a registered volunteer, I worked alongside Sandra and Geoff Coulson at the Yarra Junction Shopping Centre, wearing my official name badge and greeting potential customers for our Daffodil Day stand. It was terrific to chat with the steady stream of people who approached us, and I settled into the rhythm of the day very quickly. Many people greeted me using my name, which I

loved, and some told me their experiences and stories of people they knew who had been touched by cancer, which was very sad, but an honour to be a part of.

There were many children playing around the table across the couple of hours I was there, which was lovely to see, and the generosity of those who purchased the merchandise was at its highest. We even broke the record for raising the most amount of money in that area, raising \$1,583.

I was extremely proud to be a part of the day and a part of the 25th Anniversary of Daffodil Day, helping to raise money for the Cancer Council's great work. I will certainly look to be involved again next year.

Lisa Sulfaro

Melba Turns 40!



2012 will be an exciting year for Melba, as we will not only continue to provide quality, individualised support to the people who use our services, we will also be launching some great initiatives to help celebrate the 40 years of Melba. If you have are interested in finding out more, or getting involved with these celebrations, contact Lisa Stapels at lisa@hatrickcommunications.com.au, or stay tuned in to this space in our next edition for more information!



Vale

VALE to Darren Johnson's mother who passed away suddenly in her home on Friday 28th November 2011. Melba Support Services extends their condolences to Darren and his family at this sad time.

Business Booster Breakfast

2011 Australian of the Year, Simon McKeon officially launched Maroondah Council's 'Community Business Partnerships' website at a business breakfast in Ringwood in November.

Simon, who has a strong belief in the benefits of business and community partnering together to achieve a win-win situation for all, addressed the 136 guests from across local community and business sectors, sharing inspiring, evidence based examples of where these types of partnerships have had significant positive impacts on the lives of many.

"It is extremely important for the corporate world to invest in their local community in a meaningful and engaging manner, with consequences which provide positive outcomes for the community and the business alike", he said.

The Community Business Partnership (CBP) website was developed by a steering committee consisting of representatives from Melba, Monkami, Irabina, Maroondah Council and Eastern Volunteers and was designed to facilitate the matching up and supplying of, resources for community and local businesses to form mutually beneficial partnerships.

It is now widely recognized that the well-being of a community is closely linked to the sense of belonging by everyone within that community. Therefore, Melba will continue to encourage and support business partnerships and raise awareness of the mutual benefits of working together. For more information, please visit the website at www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/CBP



Tony's Gardening Business Gets a Boost

With many thanks to Hunter and McPherson Lilydale, and store owner, Gary Steel, my business 'Tony's Gardening Service' is now well equipped to continue to deliver high quality gardening services, after their very generous donation of a petrol powered Leaf Blower.

I established my own gardening business this year, after getting involved with a men's Gardening group at Belgrave South Community House. After realising just how much I love and have a knack for gardening (my thumbs are turning green!), I began working for a number of clients and saved up to buy some basic tools for my business. My goal was to save for and purchase my very own leaf blower, but thanks to the generosity of Gary Steel and the team at Hunter and McPherson in Lilydale, I can now put that money towards other things as they provided me with 'my new favourite business tool'!

I have always been one of those Tony

people that would rather be outside working on something productive and I really enjoy the reaction and kind words of gratitude I receive from my clients about the quality of my work and effort I put in after I finish their jobs; I often even find myself going overtime on jobs because I simply get caught up in the work.

Currently I am working for 4 different properties on a fortnightly rotation and am still working out times with others to fit more in!

To have my own business gives me great joy, knowing that I am contributing to my community. I get a real sense of achievement and pride in myself. The fact that I gave an idea I had the time and effort to pursue has taken me in a direction that I am very excited about. With my new favourite business tool in hand, a full tank of petrol and a permanent grin on my face, I look forward to the future.

The Great Chase

The Greyhound Racing Victoria's 'Great Chase' was run at Healesville Greyhound Track on Sunday 6 November, and Melba was fortunate to be a part of the day with 7 dogs representing Melba's CLSS houses and Individual Support Arrangements.

Enjoying the beautiful weather and great BBQ, were over 40 of Melba's staff, families, friends and service users, all there to watch two of Melba's allocated greyhounds win their races. A great day out was had by all.

With the two winners then competing in the semi finals in Warragul, Guy, Paul, Andrew, Margaret and Judy enjoyed yet another gorgeous day at the Greyhound Races, with more delicious food –but unfortunately this time, no winners.

The goal for next year – a run in the finals to win first prize of \$5,000!





Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Who's Who at Melba

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Melba Memorable Moments & Milestones

A huge congratulations to the following staff on celebrating these employment milestones: 35 Years of Service: **Kay Barnett & Sandra Rose**, 25 Years: **Pam Childs**, 15 Years: **Pam Heal**

Adrian was the recipient of a Random act of kindness recently, whilst shopping at Croydon Market Place. "In line to purchase some groceries, including Tea, Adrian was his usual happy and noisy self, asking for a cup of tea". A young mum and her two lovely girls were in front of us, and I told him as soon as we paid for the tea and got home, I'd make him a cuppa. When it was our turn at the register, we put our items through and then was told that the lady had left some money to pay for our things. We were very surprised and caught up with the mum and her children to thank them for their unnecessary but kind gesture and the lady said that she was more than happy to give the money, and to think of it as a random act of kindness. We thanked her, said goodbye to her girls and Adrian let out an 'OooRoo' as we headed home for a cup of tea. What lovely people we have in the community!

Thank You

An enormous thank you to the **Bendigo Bank, Mt Evelyn** for their continued support of our newsletter. Your quarterly donation helps to ensure that all other support we receive goes directly to improving and building upon the services we provide.

Melba would like to extend their sincere thanks to the **Eastwood Ladies Golf Club**, for their continued support. This long running partnership has been extremely beneficial to everyone using Melba's services, with donations over the years totalling thousands. Read all about this relationship in the next edition of Melba's Newsletter.

Many thanks to **Trish, Frank and all of the staff at the YMCA** for their hospitality in both March and December this year. We look forward to continuing to work together in the future.



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