**14 May 2019**

### Wayne’s world of difference in National Volunteer Week

A heart attack at 49 ultimately led Wayne Reid to a tree-change in Winchelsea, where he branched out into the community and became a valued volunteer.

Mr Reid has volunteered for the Winchelsea Delivered Meals program for several years.

“I was living in Melbourne and had a record shop in Northcote, and my wife had a naturopathic practice,” he said.

“I had a heart attack at 49 – it was pretty serious. It made me realise it was time for a change, so we closed our businesses and moved to Point Lonsdale where it wouldn’t be quite as stressful.”

The move to Winchelsea came about through a job opportunity as a coordinator at Adult Day Activity and Support Service (ADASS). It was this role that inspired him to become a volunteer.

“The ADASS program was for elderly people who lived independently in the community and came together for socialisation and activities,” he said. “I did that for a decade and got to know a lot of elderly people in Winchelsea.

“Some of the ADASS clients used to receive Meals on Wheels, and they talked to me about that service. After I finished up at this job, I was feeling a bit down and was looking for something to do in the way of contributing to the Winchelsea community. As I had always enjoyed working with the elderly I decided to give Delivered Meals volunteering a go.”

Mr Reid is one of six million Australians who will be celebrated in National Volunteer Week, held 20 to 26 May. His role sees him pick up meals from Hesse Rural Health and deliver them to community members once a month.

“A lot of these people live on their own and don’t have much social contact during the day, so I often have a chat with them. I’m a bit of a gas-bagger, and I think they enjoy that,” he laughed.

“But really, it is a two-way thing. For me, it gives me a sense of doing something worthwhile, it makes me feel good, and I enjoy their company. It’s very rewarding.”

With volunteering offering numerous benefits including learning new skills, improved wellbeing and social connections, Mr Reid encouraged people to consider lending a helping hand.

“Two words – do it,” he said. “If you’re thinking about volunteering, then try it and see if it’s for you. I’m sure you will find it rewarding and you’ll enjoy it.”

Surf Coast Shire Council has about 240 volunteers across Delivered Meals, Café Support, kindergartens, Visitor Information Centres, and Section 86, Positive Ageing and All Abilities committees. The volunteers will be celebrated with thank you events across the Surf Coast as part of National Volunteer Week. The 2019 theme is ‘Making a world of difference’.

Council this year introduced small grants to help community groups celebrate their volunteers during National Volunteer Week.

Eight community groups were successful in receiving a grant that will contribute to their events:

* Anglesea Community House – Morning Tea
* Deans Marsh Community Cottage – Morning Tea
* Jan Juc Surf Life Saving Club Inc – Presentation Dinner
* Lorne Community Hospital – Community Volunteers BBQ
* Modewarre Memorial Hall and Reserve Committee of Management – Recognition Dinner
* Torquay Community House – Morning Tea
* Torquay College – Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program Morning Tea
* Winchelsea Community House – Morning Tea

“Volunteers are a vital part of our community and it’s important that we take the time to acknowledge their generosity and passion,” Mayor Rose Hodge said.

“If you are a volunteer, thank you for all that you do. Your community spirit helps make the Surf Coast a great place to live.”

For more information on volunteering with Surf Coast Shire Council, visit [**www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/volunteer**](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/volunteer).

 **Not for publication:**

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