

# Our Community **MATTERS**

Your community knowledge bank helping groups survive, improve, grow and innovate



## Resources, News, Innovations and Tips on:

- ✓ Funding, Finance & Membership Management
- ✓ Leadership & Advocacy
- ✓ Management & Training
- ✓ Marketing & Media
- ✓ Boards, Committees & Governance
- ✓ Community & Business Partnerships
- ✓ Insurance & Risk Management

[www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

June edition 2004

Welcome to the latest edition of *Our Community Matters*, our regular free community update. It is yet another benefit of membership of [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) - the premier destination for Australia's 700,000 community, education and non-profit groups. Ourcommunity.com.au provides community groups with the latest funding and fundraising news as well as practical management and board and committee advice and the opportunity to list for free online donations through the [Australian Giving Centre](#).

A summary of our services is listed at the end of this newsletter. If you have trouble reading this newsletter or have any comments please let us know at [brianw@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:brianw@ourcommunity.com.au).

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## 1. Welcome by Rhonda Galbally AO, CEO of [ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

Welcome to the latest edition of Our Community Matters and especially welcome to all of the 1500 groups who travelled from far and wide to participate in the Communities in Control 2004 conference – I hope you have recovered after a full on two days.

And commiseration to the 600 groups who missed out – we will advertise the next conference in a couple of months so that you can get in early for 2005. We agonised again about changing venues to enable a larger number to attend, but decided to cap it – there is something magic about the atmosphere and configuration of the space at Moonee Valley Racing Club that enables a large group to be intimately engaged.

Meanwhile all the papers are now available on the Communities in Control page on [http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/control/control\\_main.jsp](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/control/control_main.jsp) (see next item for more details).

The feedback has been overwhelming – a dynamic response seems to have been ignited and local government and community groups all over Australia are now planning to hold communities in control gatherings to mobilise support for the value of community groups - the stars of communities. Part of what is being explored is also a significant reform agenda.

It is only when communities are in control that anything is achieved to improve the situation of community citizens – including their health and well-being. Numbers of papers showed that individualistic and top down solutions do not work and most especially that they are a waste of time, energy and resources to impose approaches on community groups.

Communities in control is recognising that people have first hand experience and knowledge of a condition or situation are in the best position to design and develop programs that will work. This is now well established - whether it is about disability, parenthood, indigenous issues, immigration, rural living, small towns, regional or urban communities.

The next conference will extend this theme further, build on the Community Manifesto further (see the Manifesto at [http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/files/community\\_manifesto.pdf](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/files/community_manifesto.pdf)) and draw on all of the work communities of all kinds are undertaking across the nation.

The enthusiasm, the passion and the energy on display has demonstrated strongly that Communities in Control is not just a two day a year wonder but a movement that is gathering force.

**RHONDA GALBALLY AO**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

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## 2. Communities in Control conference entrenches belief that local communities hold key.

What a wonderful success the Communities in Control conference was!

While the numbers were huge with a capacity crowd of 1500 people attending the Communities in Control conference (and a further 600 unfortunately turned away), it was the feedback that showed the real success of the event – Australia's biggest community gathering of its kind.

As co-convenors, Rhonda Galbally and Fr Joe Caddy, from Catholic Social Services pointed out, Communities in Control is no longer a conference - It is a movement that has brought together an incredibly diverse group of community activists from all points of Australia around the common theme based on the importance of local empowered communities.

One of the main features of the conference was the preparedness to listen to a diversity of views – and we certainly saw that over the two days. While not everyone agreed with all the views on offer (and with representatives from all sides of politics that was always going to happen), the overriding feeling was that the quality of the speakers and the variety of the views they presented both encouraged, challenged and provoked people. As the Pratt Foundation's Sam Lipski would say there were more "cold showers" than "warm baths" at this year's conference.

We also had a terrific response to the two Pratt Fellows for 2004, David Henshaw, the CEO of the City of Liverpool in the UK and Shelley Martin, executive director of the Centre for Community Wellness at the University of Berkeley, California.

David Henshaw's presentation on how local government needs to work - or as he put it "dance" - with its local community and community organisations was a highlight. He is one of the most innovative local government CEOs in the world and talked frankly about how he took the City of Liverpool from the bottom of England's council tables to near the top. Several days after speaking at the conference, David Henshaw's efforts in Liverpool were recognised when he was knighted for his contribution to local government in Britain.

For many people, the conference came together during Shelley Martin's presentation as she used examples of successful "communities in control" to demonstrate the power of local communities when they are empowered and engaged. It was a powerful and very moving presentation.

The one thing that all speakers agreed with was the importance of community organisations and the need to actively listen and involve community groups and empower them – even when communities didn't agree with the prevailing view. The other key message was that nothing could be achieved in isolation. It is a true partnership of all levels of Government, business and community where the most can be achieved.

Also at the conference the Acting Premier and Minister for Victorian Communities, the Hon. John Thwaites, announced \$20m of new funding to support volunteers through extra resources and a small grants program. We also had two Community Leadership awards which were awarded to Heloise Waislitz, for her inspirational leadership as chair of the Pratt Foundation, and also to ABC Radio Victoria for their continuing push to building community through programming initiatives such as their "Get involved" series. The award was made to Ian Mannix, Manager, Local Radio Victoria.

We had an extraordinarily high number of requests for individual speeches and presentations and we have now finished transcribing the speeches as well as creating short summaries for those who do not want to wade through all the speeches. Rather than try and summarise each of the speakers here you can access the speeches below or by visiting [www.ourcommunity.com.au/conference](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/conference).

<b>The Keynote speakers at the 2004 Communities in Control Conference</b>			
<b>SPEAKER</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>SPEECH</b>	<b>POWERPOINT</b>
<b>The Hon. John Thwaites,</b> Deputy Premier of Victoria and Minister for Victorian Communities	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	
<b>Dr Clive Hamilton,</b> Executive Director of the Australia Institute, Australian National University	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Sir David Henshaw,</b> CEO, City of Liverpool, United Kingdom <b>2004 Pratt Community Fellow</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Pauline Peel,</b> Divisional Manager, Community & Economic Development Brisbane City Council	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Hugh Mackay,</b> Australia's foremost Social Research commentator and author	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	
<b>The Hon. Peter Costello MP</b> Treasurer, Commonwealth of Australia	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	
<b>Mike Pratt,</b> Group Executive, Business and Consumer Banking, Westpac Bank	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	
<b>The Hon Larry Anthony MP,</b> Federal Minister for Children and Youth Affairs.	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	
<b>Shelley Martin,</b> Executive Director, Centre for Community Wellness, University of California Berkeley. <b>2004 Pratt Community Fellow</b>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	
<b>Richard Eckersley,</b> Fellow, National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>
<b>Phillip Adams AO</b> Broadcaster, columnist and social commentator	<a href="#">Click here</a>	<a href="#">Click here</a>	

The video of the conference can be ordered at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/files/cic\\_video\\_order2004.pdf](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/files/cic_video_order2004.pdf)

We now also have the photos from the conference and will be adding a link to the photos over the next week or so. Anyone wanting photos of the speakers for their own publications can contact Brian Walsh at [brianw@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:brianw@ourcommunity.com.au).

We again thank the conference sponsors and supporters including the Pratt Foundation, the Department of Victorian Communities, the Federal Government through the Department of Family and Community Services, Westpac, Catholic Social Services and the Municipal Association of Victoria.

And also a special thank you to ABC Radio 774 Melbourne and Lynne Haultain's afternoon program that broadcast from the Communities in Control conference and interviewed many of the major presenters during the three hour live broadcast. It was a great afternoon for community!

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### 3. New Guide for Community Treasurers – help your group balance the books.

Have you taken on the role of Treasurer of your Community organisation? Or are you a committee or Board member and want to be across some of the issues that you should be keeping your eye on when it comes to the group's finances?

For many people it's a question of where do we start?

Well we now have the answer with a new free resource designed specifically to assist Community Group Treasurers in helping them to better balance the books.

Westpac Bank, with the assistance of Our Community, has produced an excellent production, the 48-page **Guide for Community Treasurers**, which is a highly practical, easy-to-follow guide covering all the basics of being a community treasurer.

The **Guide for Community Treasurers** was launched at the Communities in Control conference by Mike Pratt, Group Executive, Business and Consumer Banking, Westpac Bank.

"Combining our financial expertise with Our Community's knowledge, we've developed a unique financial literacy tool. It's an essential guide for community treasurers that includes advice on keeping the books, asset registers, cash flow, tax, and so on - all of which are essential to running a successful community organisation," Mr Pratt said.

"I encourage all community groups and their treasurers to make use of this exciting learning tool that breaks down complex financial concepts while providing practical examples."

All 1500 conference attendees were given a copy. Free copies of the guide can be downloaded from the Financial Centre at Our Community at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/finance](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/finance) or hard copies can be obtained from any branch of the Westpac Bank.

Our Community CEO Rhonda Galbally said the Guide was the most up-to-date free resource for those in charge of a community group's finances. "No community Treasurer should be without it," she said.

The new Guide covers topics such as:

- You've been elected Treasurer – Now what?
- What's involved in being a Treasurer
- Keeping the books
- Tracking the cash
- Where the Money comes from, where it goes
- Eight simple steps to a Budget
- Auditors and assets
- Reporting to the Board
- Tax Facts and legal structures
- Write it up – it's a manual process
- Tips on saving time and money.

Mr Pratt also outlined Community Solutions, an innovative package of banking solutions for the benefit of not-for-profit community. He said Community Solutions greatly increased the bank's scope to create positive

impacts for each and every one of the 700,000 community groups in Australia through banking products better suited to their needs.

Free copies of the *Guide for Community Treasurers* can be downloaded from the Financial Centre at Our Community at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/finance](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/finance) or hard copies can be obtained from any branch of the Westpac Bank.

Information on Community Solutions and tips on minimising bank fees for community groups is also available at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/finance](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/finance) or at any Westpac Bank.

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#### 4. Promoting giving in the last week of the financial year.

Have you made an end-of financial year donation to your favourite community group? Or is your favourite group listed on [www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations) to receive funds online?

For those groups that do have an online donations facility it is never too late to get an email out to members, supporters and people on your approved mail lists to let them know you need support. There are many groups out there requesting support so your group should be promoting your own cause.

While financial support is needed all year around and the vast majority of groups don't have Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, the month of June is by far the biggest month in terms of donations to the Australian Giving Centre at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations).

We will continue to promote the Australian Giving Centre – which is supported by Westpac Bank – through some of the major celebrations through the year and also have a number of new initiatives to direct traffic in there on a regular basis.

With over 350 separate community group appeals and more coming on each month, it is developing an amazing following among donors who are searching for different groups to support.

Here is the release that was put out:

#### IMPORTANT SEVEN DAYS FOR MANY COMMUNITY GROUPS

PERSONAL life experience, reading or hearing about the work of a community group and being asked by a friend to support a group are some of the major factors prompting people to donate to non-profit organisations, according to donors visiting [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au).

Visitors to the Australian Giving Centre at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/donations) are nominating life experience such as the death of a loved one, illness or personal experience as the most influential factor in prompting donations.

Other major factors which they say are influential in prompting people to donate were reading or hearing a news story and being asked to give by a friend or colleague. The least influential factor in prompting people to donate was receiving a phone call asking for donations.

Donors also indicated they were most prepared to support groups they believed were the most effective in their work and also efficient in their fundraising.

When asked what influenced their giving, the most popular responses nominated were:

- the amount of donation which actually reached the group
- donor awareness of the results and impact of the group
- the public profile and reputation of the group.

Dr Rhonda Galbally, CEO of [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au), which operates the Australian Giving Centre – the free online donations service supported by Westpac Bank, said the survey of donor attitudes was continuing throughout 2004. Some emerging trends had been released to coincide with the last week of June - the most concentrated seven days for donations for many groups.

"The days leading up to the end of June are vital for many groups. There is no doubt that this month is easily the biggest period for giving," Dr Galbally said.

“Community groups need ongoing support. I think what the initial responses are showing is that they need to communicate to supporters both their need for assistance and their achievements and results,” Dr Galbally said.

“In the past non-profit groups thought it was enough to let their good work do the talking. That’s no longer the case. Donors are more discerning and as the number of groups seeking support increases, they want to be sure their dollars are making a difference and achieving results.

“That does put increasing pressure on local groups, particularly on those groups that do a wonderful job but lack the marketing expertise to sing it from the rooftop.”

Since the Australian Giving Centre at [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) opened as Australia’s first free online donation service in 2001, more than \$450,000 had been donated online to community appeals at an average per donation of \$120.

Presently more than 350 community appeals are listed on the site for donations.

“What I would say is don’t be a one-off donor. Instead become a lifelong friend to your favourite community organisation.”

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## 5. National Community Business Partnerships Week.

COMMUNITY groups and businesses are being encouraged to register for a series of Community Business Partnership Days, which are being held as part of Partnerships Week being held from 19-23 July.

Partnerships Week, an initiative of The Prime Minister’s Community Business Partnership, will be made up of a series of eight Community Business Days, one in each capital city. Each Community Business Day will provide practical hands-on information about the benefits of community business partnerships to Businesses and Community organisations.

All activities are free! The presentation of the State and Territory Awards winners of the Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships will form part of the day’s activities.

Places are limited for the days so those interested are encouraged to register now. You can do that by visiting the Partnerships website at [http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd\\_registration.html](http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_registration.html).

Partnerships Week is designed to:

- explain community business partnerships
- explain the benefits of community business partnerships to both the businesses and the community organisations
- provide practical advice about starting a partnership or strengthening an existing partnership

Each individual Community Business Day will include public forums, displays, seminars and professional development activities. Each day’s activities are free and you are welcome to attend all the activities in your state or territory, or just the sessions you choose.

Dates and Locations for Community Business Days

DATE	CITY	WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS
Monday 19 July	CANBERRA	<a href="http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_canberra.html"><u>http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_canberra.html</u></a>
Tuesday 20 July	DARWIN	<a href="http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_darwin.html"><u>http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_darwin.html</u></a>
	HOBART	<a href="http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_hobart.html"><u>http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_hobart.html</u></a>
Wednesday 21 July	BRISBANE	<a href="http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_brisbane.html"><u>http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_brisbane.html</u></a>
	MELBOURNE	<a href="http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_melbourne.html"><u>http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_melbourne.html</u></a>
Thursday 22 July	ADELAIDE	<a href="http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_adelaide.html"><u>http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_adelaide.html</u></a>
	SYDNEY	<a href="http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_sydney.html"><u>http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_sydney.html</u></a>

As each Community Business Day is designed to provide practical advice about the operation of community business partnerships presenters will include members of business and community organisations who are already operating successful community business partnerships. Other presenters will come from universities, local, federal and state governments and professional organisations and industry groups.

Representatives of Our Community, which facilitates the Brokerage Service, another initiative of The Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership, administered through the Australian Government's Department of Family and Community Services, will also take a key role in each program.

### Who should attend?

Representatives of Business, Community organisations, Industry bodies, Research groups, Facilitation agencies, Local, State, Commonwealth government departments and agencies, HR and public / corporate relations staff, Peak bodies for community or business organisations.

### Why should I get involved?

This may be an opportunity to find out how you can improve the profile of your business in your community or further develop the skills of your staff. If you are part of a community organisation you can get information about how to maximise your outcomes and achieve your aims. If you are trying to solve local community problems you can get ideas for a broader range of solutions.

### How much does it cost?

Partnerships Week is a free series of activities hosted by the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership. To register, download the registration form at [http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd\\_registration.html](http://www.partnerships.gov.au/cbd_registration.html) and either fax or email it back to (02) 6212 9298 or [cbp.inbox@facs.gov.au](mailto:cbp.inbox@facs.gov.au).

For more inquiries call 1800 102 014.

### And don't forget.....(1)

The series of regional seminars on community and business partnerships which target businesses and community groups wanting to work together, make a difference and find out more about forming a partnership - all with the aim to create and inspire more community business partnerships," she said.

Registrations are open for the remaining 11 Regional Seminars:

- **13 July:** Morwell - Latrobe City Council
- **27 July:** Geelong - City of Greater Geelong
- **4 August:** Dubbo - Dubbo City Council
- **17 August:** Wollongong - Wollongong City Council
- **19 August:** Newcastle - Newcastle City Council
- **25 August:** Gold Coast - Gold Coast City Council
- **26 August:** Shepparton - City of Greater Shepparton
- **1 September:** Mount Gambier - The City Of Mount Gambier
- **9 September:** Merredin - Wheatbelt ACC
- **14 September:** Cairns - Cairns City Council
- **15 September:** Rockhampton - Rockhampton City Council

For further information or to register for a seminar, contact Lidia Milevski on (03) 9320 6807.

### And don't forget...(2).

Remember to register your community group through the Community Business Partnership Brokerage Service the best place to find a partner for your community partnership.

To register your group – or business – visit the Brokerage Service at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/partnerships](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/partnerships).

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## 6. Time for a mid-year review for your organisation.

In this newsletter as well as the news and views we also try and supply resources to make running a community organisation a little easier.

Here is a recent column that went out to regional newspapers suggesting some ideas on conducting a mid-year review of a community group. It's a good opportunity to ensure that your group remains focused on its priorities.

### Time for a mid-year review.

When people are leading a community organisation and running at full pace, it can be incredibly difficult to actually slow down long enough to review what you have been doing and what you have achieved.

But as difficult as it can be, it's vitally important to stop, take a deep breath and review your organisation's performance over the first six months of the year. It's like regularly servicing your car. The car might appear to be running well but there is always something that can be tweaked or realigned to improve performance.

And performance is the reason for any review. You want to make sure your group is achieving its goals. A mid-year review allows you to re-focus and ensure you are on track before the year literally disappears on you. A review also needs to look at finances and fundraising – again so that if revenues are below expectation, there is still time to remedy the situation (groups putting together 2004/05 financial year budgets will have already gone through this exercise).

Reviews don't need to be restricted to mid-year but now is as good a time as any to put your group on the blocks and check its performance. Here are some tips to help with the process.

- Review your organisational mission and goals. We say this constantly but sometimes it is a great place to start because it reminds everyone why your organisation exists.
- Review your annual plan and look at the goals you set and whether you have achieved them or – if not – whether you are still on track to achieve them.
- Review whether your goals have changed. Is there a valid reason for abandoning some of the goals you set or do you need to re-focus attention on the main game.
- Try rating your own performance and the performance of your group in achieving the group's 2004 goals.
- Review all the achievements you have notched up that weren't in your plan or list of goals for 2004. It's important to review the unexpected challenges that emerged and your flexibility in being able to react and meet them.
- Review where most of your time and energy went in the first six months. Have you been side-tracked by an issue? If so is there anything you can do to stop it happening again?
- Now re-rate your performance based on success in achieving planned goals and also those unexpected successes achieved over the past six months.
- Analyse the areas where you need to re-focus attention, change direction or totally re-write your goals for the rest of the year.
- Now take that information and feed it back into your processes so you can concentrate on achieving the most important goals during the remaining six months of the year.
- Tell everyone what you have done. It's a good opportunity to remind all your stakeholders what you have achieved.

For more information on managing a community group visit [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au), email [questions@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:questions@ourcommunity.com.au) or call (03) 9320 6800.

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## 7. More groups get deductibility but Government holds off extending charity definition.

After raising the hopes of the community sector that we might at last see a definition of "charity" that better reflected the modern situation than the 400-year-old version we have, the Federal Government has dropped moves at this stage to legislate an improved definition.

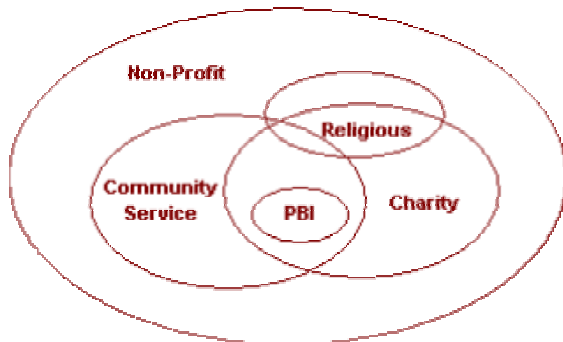
Instead the Federal Government announced last month that the common law meaning of charity will continue to apply and that they would not be proceeding with the draft Charities Bill.

The only good news on that front is that legislation will extend the definition of charity to include groups providing non-profit child care available to the public, self-help groups with open and non-discriminatory membership, and closed or contemplative religious orders that offer prayerful intervention to the public.



The Government said it had taken advice from the Board of Taxation that the draft legislation which was looked at by the *Inquiry into Definition of Charities and Related Organisations* did not achieve the level of clarity and certainty that was intended to be brought to the charitable sector.

This area is fiercely complex. We have to remind you at the start that, as we pointed out in August, the government was proposing to change "the definition of only one of the terms used in this area, and not the most important." Tax legislation involves not only the term 'charity' but also the terms 'community service organisation', 'religious institution', and 'public benevolent institution' (PBI). Each of these terms covers a different area, although some of these areas overlap.



(Source; ATO)

Each of these entities attracts different kinds of tax concessions, and access to tax deductibility of donations (DGR) status depends on being a PBI, not a charity. What being a charity gives you is income tax exemption (which is also worth having, of course) and some minor GST and fringe benefit concessions.

The government is now going to legislate to allow charitable status to self-help groups, contemplative religious orders, and not-for-profit child care centres, which is great for a number of groups who will benefit. But the other benefits of the proposed changes – the creation of a heading of 'social and community welfare' that included the old topics of 'relief of poverty', 'unemployment', 'disaster relief', 'aged persons', and 'indigenous persons' but also added some things such as the 'promotion of social cohesion', that would have taken a lot of argument to get through under the old rules – aren't going to happen at this stage.

The Government has also announced that it will delay the introduction of changes requiring charities to be endorsed in order to access relevant tax concessions.

### Fundraising dinners

From 1 July 2004, groups with DGR status will receive a further bonus because donors will be able to receive a **tax deduction** when they buy one of your fundraisers - for example, a ticket to one of your charity fundraising dinners.

Someone who pays \$1000 to attend a dinner for a group with deductible gift registration, the market value of which is \$100, may be entitled to a \$900 tax deduction (cost minus value).

The deduction will apply to cash donations above \$250 where the value of the benefit received (the meal, for example) is no more than 10 per cent of the total donation or \$100, whichever is less.

So if you're planning a dinner, be sure to mention the deduction (and if you're not planning a dinner, why not?) and print the value of the meal on the ticket so that the participants have an indication for their tax returns.

For more information click on

<http://www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit/content.asp?doc=/content/45757.htm&pc=001/004/020/004&mnu=4855&mf p=001/004&st=&cy=1>

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## 8. Several States announce volunteer initiatives

### Volunteering Initiative 1

The South Australian Government and the 29 volunteer organisations who are members of the State's Volunteer Ministerial Advisory Group (VMAG) have signed off on a 50 per cent participation rate target for volunteering within the state in its latest report on the progress of the Advancing the Community Together (ACT) partnership between the Government and the SA community sector.

The Government is also developing a campaign, currently in production, to promote volunteering and the benefits it brings to people's lives.

The Parliamentary secretary to the Premier and Chair of VMAG, Ms Jennifer Rankine, said the partnership had brought volunteer organisations in the state together to provide major benefits by identifying the way groups and Government could work closer together and improve the way volunteering is viewed.

She said volunteering was about being involved in your local community and not a "charity model". She said many people in the community didn't view their important work as volunteering. They were just getting involved.

"I think our nation was founded on the concept of volunteering. People just saw their neighbours needed a hand and gave it and that's really the basis of volunteering. To some degree we have formalised it and put labels on it but sometimes it's a disincentive," Ms Rankine said.

Ms Rankine said there was a strong sense of the importance of inclusion and that many volunteer organisations – particularly indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse groups were missing out because they system didn't recognise that they might volunteer differently. "Even the term volunteer is an Anglo term. We give it a structure that many communities don't recognise. They don't see what they do as volunteering.

"We often don't see what we do as volunteering. It's not a charity model. It's about getting involved in your community."

Ms Rankine said the interesting thing about the ACT partnership was that the volunteer organisations saw the process as more important than the outcomes. They were able to learn from each other and also from the start put aside their own organisations and looked at what was best for the community as a whole.

Key achievements over the past nine months include:

- Research report into the wider economic value of social capital and volunteering.
- Gawler Volunter Charter being develop to create a local partnership agreemtn with local volunteers and the council which will be a blueprint for other councils
- Developing approaches to help the volunteer sector involve more young people
- Insurance information paper produced to better inform volunteer organizations
- Review of grant applications and processes
- Rural workshops held on how to access grants and write applications
- Updated media and sponsorship guides for community groups
- Consultation undertaken to identify ways to improve communication between community groups and the State Government.
- Investigation underway into the Association Incorporations Act and how it can better protect volunteer committee members.

Ms Rankine said the implementation of the ACT partnership had followed more than 12 months of consultation.

## **Volunteering Initiative 2**

In Victoria the Minister for Victorian Communities, John Thwaites, during his speech to the Communities in Control conference, announced \$20 million in funding over three years to support volunteering in Victoria.

Mr Thwaites said the funding package would support and extend the work done by volunteers and community groups. he said the Government would work in partnership with local government and existing volunteer organisations to ensure there are volunteer resource centres across the State. Mr Thwaites said funding would be made available through the package to support the existing network of volunteer centres and develop new ones to link volunteers to charities, community groups and other volunteering organisations.

He said the Government would back their work by investing \$9 million in building up the networks of resources and support that volunteers and organisations need and that a key part of the plan was to reach out to sections of the community who in the past may not have been connected to volunteering organisations.

"Recent research shows that in communities where social cohesion is high – where there are high levels of community participation and volunteering – there are better social outcomes. These include students staying longer at school, lower rates of imprisonment, lower unemployment, better health outcomes and less child abuse.

Mr Thwaites also announced an extra \$1 million to provide small grants to community groups with practical ideas that support local communities. A further \$10 million will go towards developing the work of Victorian volunteers and community groups which Mr Thwaites said was about encouraging new ideas about what community groups can achieve.

Other initiatives to be funded through the package include:

- Training in management skills for community groups;

- The creation of a peak body for volunteering in Victoria;
- Developing new ways of linking community groups to potential volunteers.

### Volunteering Initiative 3

Queensland marked National Volunteering Week by having its Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors, Warren Pitt, launch a guide aimed at boosting participation in volunteering.

"Get involved in volunteering: a practical guide to volunteering" provides a range of useful information, examples and contacts for people interested in volunteering in their local community.

It is a free publication and available by calling 1800 102 225 or visiting [www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au](http://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au).

"Volunteering touches every part of our society, through sport, environment, seniors, youth, the arts and responding to emergencies," Mr. Pitt said. "Queenslanders are committed volunteers, with more than 30% of our adult population formally involved in volunteer work. You cannot put a price on the contribution of volunteers' time and effort. This selfless generosity helps bind us closer together as a community."

Last year the Queensland Government launched a policy on volunteering called Engaging Queensland, and this is now being implemented across all government agencies.

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## 9. Our Community Leaders – Great Australian Leaders in Focus.

Stephanie Alexander has been a leader in the Australian food industry for decades. A restaurateur and author of cooking books, Stephanie has been instrumental in the development of an Australian food movement and the many festivals and special events it has spawned across Australia. Stephanie has also been a teacher for generations of chefs and also children through a gardening and cooking program she initiated at an inner-Melbourne school.

**Stephanie Alexander** is the subject of this month's *Great Australian Leaders in Focus* segment, a series which features the thoughts of some of Australia's best-known community leaders.

Already we have featured renowned singer, activist and the former President of the Australian Conservation Foundation, **Peter Garrett**, the tireless former Australian of the Year, **Sir Gustav Nossal**, former World Cup-winning Wallaby captain **John Eales**, the 2003 Australian of the Year, **Professor Fiona Stanley**, Clean Up Australia founder, **Ian Kiernan** and one of the country's best known jurists, **the Honourable Justice Michael Kirby** and **Molly Harriss Olson** is Director of the Australian-based international policy firm, [Eco Futures](#)

All those interviews can now be read on the [Leadership Centre](#) at [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au). Also on the Leadership Centre, which is a joint initiative with the Department of Family and Community Services, is a series of free [Help Sheets](#) and Australia's [largest free database of leadership courses](#) and opportunities.

**We started by asking her who she considered to be her three great leaders. And why?**

**Stephanie Alexander**

- Nelson Mandela - courage, principled, ability to inspire others
- Gough Whitlam - offered a vision that changed society; willingness to hand out resources and see what grew from the initiatives; articulate
- Noel Pearson - has intellect; empathy, ability to influence change of direction for one of our most shameful problems, the situation of Aboriginal Australians

**What are the three attributes you would consider to be essential to a leader? And why?**

**Stephanie Alexander**

- Ability to articulate a vision that inspires hope
- Clear principles that many can relate to
- Wisdom, ability to engage in debate with opponents without recourse to violence or abuse

**Our Community: What are the three greatest barriers to new leaders emerging in Australia?**

**Stephanie Alexander**

- Education does not encourage radical thinking
- Inequalities in education system

- Political apathy perhaps due to average high standard of living
- Political party system that plays politics rather than debates change

**Our Community: What advice would you give to a potential leader to taken them to the next stage?**

**Stephanie Alexander:** Tricky one. Think. Develop a thick skin.

**Our Community: Nature/nurture - are leaders born or bred?**

**Stephanie Alexander:** Who knows, probably bred from circumstance.

**Our Community: What do you consider to be the top leadership issues facing the nation?**

**Stephanie Alexander:**

- Social justice
- Republic
- Aboriginal Rights & Welfare
- Refugees

**Our Community: What insights have you gained personally on your leadership journey?**

**Stephanie Alexander:**

- It's lonely at the top
- Huge satisfaction in influencing others
- Big issues in life can take a long time to resolve

**Our Community: Who have been your own leadership mentors and how did they assist in developing your own leadership style?**

**Stephanie Alexander:**

- Mostly writers about food ie. Elizabeth David, Richard Olney, Alice Waters, Claudia Roden.
- My mother, who gave me a love of food and understanding of the place of good food in a full life.
- A few friends in the hospitality industry - Damien Pignolet, Maggie Beer, Janni Kyritsis - who gave practical assistance to problems and an ear to listen

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## **10. Latest ABS research provides valuable insights for community groups.**

One of the things that groups have found most valuable in this newsletter is the availability of statistics or reports that they can use both in preparing grant or funding applications and also in compiling overviews or long-term strategies.

It is important to know what information is out there and can be easily accessed by groups seeking more than anecdotal information.

Recently we listed the Australian Bureau of Statistics National Regional Profile which can be accessed at <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/c311215.nsf/20564c23f3183fdaca25672100813ef1/4baa3ed3b7045763ca2568f0001329fa!OpenDocument>.

These figures provide a breakdown of stats in each Local Government area.

Today we have included the release of **Australian Social Trends 2004** from the Australian Bureau of Statistics which details the evolution of Australian lifestyles over the decades – and provides some useful information for community organisations.

### **.. Australia's children**

The effect of the 1950s baby boom on births and fertility was barely discernible in 2002, due to four decades of declining fertility. There has been no discernible peak in births of grandchildren to baby boomers, unlike the distinct peak which occurred in 1971 with births of children to baby boomers.

In 2002, the total fertility rate for Australia (1.75) was around half of what it was at the height of the post-war baby boom, and under one in five (18%) of all births were to women aged 35 years or over.

Close to half of women with children under five are now in the labour force, and in 2002, 45% of children aged under five years spent some time in formal child care - including long day care, family day care, occasional care or preschool.

In 2001, over 350,000 families with children aged under 15 years had no employed parent living with them. Almost two-thirds of these families were one-parent families.

### **... Australia's youth**

Over the 1980s and most of the 1990s, Year 7/8 to Year 12 apparent school retention rates increased, as did participation in non-school education, mostly at university or TAFE. At the same time, there have been changes in the working arrangements of young people.

The proportion of employed young people (15-24 years) working part-time has more than doubled over the twenty years to 2003 (from 18% to 47%). Of part-time workers aged 15-19 years, 79% were studying full-time. Over half (55%) of part-time workers aged 20-24 years were studying full-time.

About one in five (21%) people aged 25-29 years held a higher education qualification in 2001. This contributed to the substantial increase over the last thirty years in the proportion of Australians with a higher education qualification (16% of 20-64 year olds in 2001, up from 3% in 1971).

In 2002, almost four out of five HECS-liable university students in Australia deferred their payment. The remainder paid up-front, receiving a discount.

The proportion of young people who stated that they were concerned about environmental problems declined over the 1990s. In 2001, after retirement-aged people, 18-24 year olds were the age group least likely to state that they have such concerns.

### **... families and older Australians**

In 2003, about one-third of the labour force was aged 45-64 years; up from one-quarter twenty years earlier. This reflected the ageing of the population, as well as the increased proportion of women in the labour force, many of whom work part-time.

In addition to the support provided by family members they live with, four out of five people (80%) with disabilities, in 2002, nominated family members living elsewhere as a source of support in time of crisis.

Coinciding with the trend for greater home-based care, the number of people employed in non-residential care services (e.g. emergency housekeeping) increased by about 18,000 to 80,600 over the five years to 2001. This industry also relied on a large number of volunteers - 211,700 in June 2000.

Around three-quarters (74%) of adults aged 18 years and over reported an affiliation with a religion in 2001, following a fairly steady decline over the previous three decades. In 2002, almost one-quarter (23%) reported participating in church or religious activities over a three month period.

By 2051, Australia's population is projected to reach 26 million, assuming medium level fertility and migration. People aged 65 years and over are projected to make up more than one-quarter of the population (27%) in 2051, compared with 13% in 2002.

### **... our homes and where we live**

Contrary to stereotypes of city people retiring to the coast, almost four out of five new residents of fast growing coastal areas were aged under 50 years, and two-thirds had moved from country areas or large population centres rather than from capital cities.

The overall rate of home ownership in Australia has been steady since the 1960s, with about 70% of occupied private dwellings being owned outright or being purchased. However, the age profile of home owners and purchasers has shifted over the last twenty years, with a decline in home ownership among younger adults. Seven in ten Australian households reported they owned or were purchasing their home out of Australia's 7.5 million households in 2002. Of all households, 16% had less than \$100,000 equity in their home, and at the other end of the range, 10% had \$400,000 or more equity in their home.

There were an estimated 99,900 homeless people on census night 2001. Over 2002-03, about 97,600 people were assisted by the refuges, shelters and other agencies in the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.

More analysis is available from [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au). Links to each state are also available at these links:

- [New South Wales Snapshot](#)
- [Victorian Snapshot](#)
- [Queensland Snapshot](#)
- [South Australian Snapshot](#)
- [Western Australian Snapshot](#)
- [Tasmanian Snapshot](#)
- [Northern Territory Snapshot](#)
- [Australian capital Territory Snapshot](#)

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## 11. Community Briefs

### Are you looking for new volunteers – well new volunteers are looking for you!

If you're looking for someone to help write media releases, organise a special event, develop a newsletter, conduct research or help with book-keeping or filing then you should visit [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au).

GoVolunteer, Volunteering Australia's award-winning volunteer-matching website, has thousands of young volunteers keen to help their community and at the same time gain some experience to add to their CVs.

Research recently undertaken by [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au), showed that 50% of potential volunteers which equates to over 17,500 people each month) visit GoVolunteer keen to volunteer in these types of roles.

With less than 800 positions (out of a total of over 7,500) meeting these criteria, Volunteering Australia is calling out to organisations to involve young people by advertising their office positions on [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au).

"Surely every not-for-profit organisation would be able to think of an office project that volunteers could help them with," said Rosie Brown, Business Development Manager for GoVolunteer.

The research also shows that 66% of potential volunteers are interested in volunteering to gain work experience.

"It's a win-win situation. Volunteers can perform vital projects for community groups whilst gaining that ever-valuable 'experience' that so many future employers are looking for," said Ms Brown.

Other types of volunteer positions in high demand on GoVolunteer include working with kids/youth, mentoring, working with animals and IT/library services.

[www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au) provides FREE advertising for not-for-profit organisations looking for volunteer support. "GoVolunteer is great at attracting new, young people to organisations. 80% of the potential volunteers that search on GoVolunteer are not currently volunteering and 74% of them under 34 years of age" said Ms Brown.

As 71% of potential volunteers looking at GoVolunteer are either working or studying, flexible projects in terms of time commitment (including out-of-office hours projects), specific shorter-term projects and virtual volunteering opportunities (those using the Internet to volunteer) are particularly of interest.

For more information visit [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au).

### Congratulations to all the local heroes!

It was great to see so many local community heroes that were recognised in the list of Queen's Birthday Honours this month.

In recent years we have encouraged community organisations to nominate their own local identities and the people who have really made a difference at a local level and it was great to see so many of our local quiet achievers recognised for their work.

For those who haven't caught up on the recent Honours – and most local media organisations have highlighted the achievements – you can access the full lists at [http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/honours\\_list.html](http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/honours_list.html).

Don't stop there. Now that we are seeing more of our local champions recognised, the opportunity is there to see the next group receive some kudos for their contribution to their communities.

Visit [http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/about/how\\_to\\_nominate.html](http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/about/how_to_nominate.html) and nominate someone you think deserves to be honoured.

### **Latest ABS stats on living alone.**

As we have said previously we will continue to bring you reports and statistics as they become available. Not only are these of interest to groups working in that particular area but also may be of relevance to those organizations trying to recruit members, donors or volunteers.

The number of Australians living alone is projected to reach between 2.8 million and 3.7 million people by 2026, says the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This is compared to 1.8 million Australians living alone in 2001.

These projections are based on three alternative sets of assumptions about changes in people's future living arrangements and equate to between one in seven and one in nine Australians living alone, up from one in eleven in 2001. Around one-quarter to one-third of all people living alone in 2026 (between 844,000 and 962,000 people) are projected to be older Australians (aged 75 years and over). Three-quarters of these older Australians are expected to be women.

The increase in the number of people living alone is related to the ageing of the population, increases in divorce and separation, and the delaying of marriage.

Couple families without children are projected to increase the most rapidly of all types of families over the next 25 years, to between 2.9 and 3.3 million in 2026 (or between 41% and 49% of all families). In 2001, there were 1.9 million couple families without children (36% of all families). Couple families without children may overtake the number of couple families with children, in either 2010 or 2011.

The growth in the number of couple families without children is primarily related to the ageing of the population, with baby boomers becoming 'empty nesters', and to a smaller extent to declining fertility among younger couples and delayed family formation.

Children of all ages living in two-parent families are projected to fall to between 4.4 and 4.9 million in 2026 (from 5 million in 2001). This fall is associated with declining fertility and delayed childbirth, and with the increasing tendency for children to live in one-parent families as a result of family break-up. The number of children living with one parent is projected to increase to between 1.4 and 2.1 million in 2026 (up from 1.3 million children in 2001).

More details are available in [Household and Family Projections, Australia, 2001 to 2006](http://www.abs.gov.au/3236.0) (www.abs.gov.au). 3236.0).

### **Don't forget the \$10 Gift Vouchers**

One more reminder for new members about the \$10 gift voucher offer for our range of books.

These publications are designed to provide practical, accessible, easy-to-follow advice to assist in many areas of managing a community organisation, such as improving the role of the Board, finding funding and operating ethically. The new titles include:

- **Finding the Simple Secrets of Successful Community Groups** – over 400 tips on running a more effective community group and school.
- **Transforming Community Committees and Boards** – From hell to heaven.
- **Surviving and Thriving as a Safe, Effective Board Member** – The essential facts you need to know before, during and after joining a community Board.
- **How to Slash your Insurance Claims** – The essential steps to identifying and managing risk.
- **Finding the Best People** – The essential steps to recruiting a great Chief Executive / Coordinator for your community group.
- **Ethical Solutions** – Essential guide to implementing an ethics program in your community group.
- **The Fifty Best Grants** – Winning more money for your community group and school (separate versions for each state/territory).
- **The Fifty Best Scholarships and Awards** - Targeting your personal and workplace training and development opportunities.

To find out more about the books you can click on [www.ourcommunity.com.au/newbooks](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/newbooks) or you can order by clicking on the \$10 gift voucher at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/giftvoucher](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/giftvoucher).

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## 12. Fast Forward

If you found this newsletter helpful, please feel free to send it onto your friends and fellow community groups in your area. We would also like your input into this newsletter.

If you have any thoughts or any issues you would like addressed we would appreciate hearing from you. You can send your comments to [brianw@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:brianw@ourcommunity.com.au) or call (03) 9320 6813.

We now have button logos for those groups who want to set up links to [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) from their own websites. You can find them in the media centre. Just visit [http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/article/view\\_image\\_list.do](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/article/view_image_list.do) and right click your mouse on the image you want and then click on SAVE to your own computer. If you have any problems just contact [brianw@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:brianw@ourcommunity.com.au) or call (03) 9320 6813.

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