

January 2009

Community Skillsbank newsletter

Hello everyone

Welcome to the second edition of the Community Skillsbank newsletter. Our apologies for not producing the newsletter in December as originally planned. We took the opportunity to "re-set the clock" so that each quarterly newsletter will now appear in January, April, July and November. We've also examined the newsletter content based on your feedback to us. We believe that you will find this January 2009 edition full of news and information that will assist you with your volunteering requirements.

December 2008 saw some changes within the Community Skillsbank team. Anastasia Anagnostou who has been with CSB from early stages of the project, firstly as a volunteer and then lately as project Manager, has moved on and accepted a fulltime position working in administration in the health sector. We take this opportunity to sincerely thank Anastasia for the effort she contributed to the development of Community Skillsbank and we wish her every success in her new position.

The Community Skillsbank team will continue to meet your volunteering requirements through the skills and experience of Cherie Gottschling, Wendy Legg and our enhanced and constantly developing in-house volunteer team — Peter Thompson, Peter Lane, Marg Harvey, Jean Westwood, Heather Vallendar and Malalay Quraishi.

Community Skillsbank has also welcomed two new partners who will be using the CSB infrastructure in 2009 — Swan Hill Rural City Council and Hume City Council. We believe working together will further improve the operation of Community Skillsbank in 2009.

Thank you all for your support throughout 2008 . We look forward to finding suitable volunteers and volunteer opportunities for you in 2009.

The Community Skillsbank Team

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The Centre receives financial support from the Australian Government
Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

Meet the newest members of the Community Skillsbank team

Community Skillsbank recently welcomed three
new volunteers to our team.....



Name: Margaret Harvey
Family: Husband, 3 adult children and 6 grandchildren
Currently: Doing Certificate III in Active Volunteering
Enjoys: Cinema, fabulous food and wine, reading and cloth doll making

After retiring earlier this year, volunteering at Community Skillsbank is a way of re-entering the reality of the world which lurks outside my front door. However, I feel that volunteering is similar to being in the work force in that basically we're here to help each other. Volunteering is a different mind-set though, and is providing me with a certain amount of freedom to experience and take different paths in a work related atmosphere. When all parts of a job come together successfully there's a great sense of achievement. Community Skillsbank has been supportive and friendly and has been a great introduction to the world of volunteering. My time here has encouraged me to eventually seek other options to meet people's needs.



Name: Jean Westwood
Family: Husband Derek, 2 married sons and 4 wonderful grandchildren
Currently: Volunteering in CSB at The Centre in Benalla
Enjoys: Family, friends, walking, keeping fit, travelling, reading, photography and discovering new wineries

I live in England for 7 months of the year and Benalla for the other five. My husband and I have been doing this since he took early retirement and decided he would like to spend the English winter somewhere warm and where he could indulge his hobby of flying gliders. We chose Benalla because it had a very good gliding club and was a small town similar to the one we live in in England. I love my "two centre" life and have made lots of friends here but I do miss my grandchildren as they grow up and become really interesting little people, however, weekly telephone calls ensure we don't lose that special bond. Although I have a very full life I missed the volunteer work I did in England and now really enjoy working at The Centre one day a week. I feel I have a privileged life and passing on some of the skills I have is both rewarding and fun.



Name: Malalay Quraishi
Family: Husband and four children
Currently: Volunteering at Community Skillsbank, The Centre Greta Road
Enjoys: Reading and spending quality time with family

Hello, my name is Malalay. It has been two years that I have been living in Australia with my husband and my lovely children. I have studied Psychology in Malaysia. Currently I am doing volunteer work with Community Skillsbank. Through volunteering I have met really nice and friendly people whom I enjoy working with and find a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment by contributing to the community here in Wangaratta. I decided to volunteer to gain more experience in my chosen field in order to gain more employment opportunities.



Typo Bush Fair 23 to 25 October 2008



Evolve is a Victorian-based not-for-profit organisation which provides a supportive environment for disadvantaged young people to evolve into strong, caring and purposeful individuals. They achieve this through a number of programs throughout Victoria, which rely on community support and fundraising initiatives such as their annual Bush Fair at Typo Station situated at Cheshunt in the King Valley.

The Bush Fair allows Evolve to connect with the local community and communicate what they do at Typo Station, whilst raising money to support their signature Young Men's Program. Putting on such an event requires the help of many volunteers, in the lead up to the event, the actual running of the fair itself and through to the final pack down of the event.

Two weeks before the Bush Fair, Community Skillsbank was approached to help rally some much needed support. CSB used its unique matching process to check our current database and found suitable, enthusiastic volunteers to assist. Each of the volunteers who became involved with the bush fair had a fantastic time. Some even came back again to actually enjoy the fruits of their labour on the bush fair day.

Over the three days, volunteers assisted with the many aspects towards the preparation of the one-day event. They put up marquees, set up stalls, laid out parking areas, strung lights. There was a day of chopping and chatting in the kitchen at King Valley Cucina as volunteers put together food for everyone involved in the Fair.

Was it a success? Absolutely! Volunteers expounded at length about the beautiful setting of Typo Station nestled in the foothills of the Alpine National Park and of their involvement in assisting to help the well-being and development of the young people involved in the programs at Typo. There was also much talk about the fabulous roast meal spread served up to volunteers by the Typo staff. Many of the volunteers indicated that they would be ready again for the 2009 event.

Evolve at Typo said of the volunteers:

"On behalf of Evolve at Typo Station, thank you very much for coordinating such wonderful volunteers".....Sasha Molodtsov, Marketing & Development Manager, Evolve at Typo

"The Bush Fair on Saturday went really well. It was a great day, not too hot, no rain, heaps of fun and great conversations. The volunteers were fantastic in all their efforts. I really enjoy the energy of working with groups of volunteers, and the Skillsbank crew were great. Thanks again".....Suzanna Christison, Co-ordinator, Evolve at Typo

Photos and details of the Bush Fair Day can be found in the Bush Telegraph newsletter on Evolve at Typo Station's website: www.evolve.org.au. So to all involved with Typo Bush Fair a very big thank you for a job well done and for those who missed out on the opportunity — see you this year.

Villa Maria - Carers Week Colours of Caring Festival 22 October 2008



Villa Maria is a values-based organisation providing quality services and life enhancing opportunities for older people and people with a disability. Their vision is to create choices and build inclusive, sustainable and compassionate communities. To do this, Villa Maria has been creating an environment where its 950 staff and 300 volunteers not only feel engaged and supported, but feel closely aligned to the organisation's vision, mission and values.



The Community Skillsbank team decided to participate in the October 2008 Colours of Caring Festival to demonstrate and highlight the relevance and functionality of CSB's volunteer referral infrastructure to those members of the community seeking to volunteer with organisations such as Villa Maria. Anastasia Anagnostou and some of our Community Skillsbank in-house volunteers enjoyed meeting potential community volunteers in a relaxed setting. Brochures were distributed to interested people and the team felt they made a significant contribution to the day.

For more information about Villa Maria, visit their website www.villamaria.com.au

INVITATION TO VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS

As a Volunteer Coordinator you are invited to the next North East Volunteer Co-ordinator Network meeting.

The meeting is an opportunity for Volunteer Coordinators to network and exchange information and ideas with other volunteer involving organisations and community groups in our region. It is also an opportunity for Volunteer Coordinators to receive information and updates on volunteering and gain benefits of training, to be informed by relevant speakers and source information pertinent to our roles as coordinators of volunteers.

Date: Wednesday 18 February 2009

Time: 12:00 noon – 2:00pm

Location: The Centre
Conference Room 1
Greta Road (High School Campus)
Wangaratta

For further information or to tell us you would like to attend, please contact Cherie Gottschling on 5723 1376 or email cherie.gottschling@thecentre.vic.edu.au

An agenda and additional information is available on page 13 of this newsletter.

[Tip for engaging volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds - Volunteering Australia](#)

Offering staff and volunteers training may help them deal better with cultural differences among your volunteers.

This may include cross-cultural training to understand easy ways to communicate with volunteers from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds; disability awareness to help them interact with volunteers who have disabilities; Aboriginal cultural awareness training from a local Aboriginal organisation; or tips on how to interact with young people.

Staying fit and healthy in 2009

It's a new year and we've all made New Year resolutions. Statistics indicate that many of those resolutions involve getting fitter and healthier and/or losing weight. Statistics also indicate that many of those New Year resolutions will be short-lived.

Research suggests that having an active lifestyle is the key to good health and managing weight. It doesn't have to be expensive, intensive or involve complicated machinery. You can do lots of simple everyday things to help keep you fit.

Try:

- Walking, instead of driving, for short distances
- Parking further away from the shop door and walking that extra distance
- Ignoring lifts and/or elevators and walking up and down the stairs
- Stretching or taking a short walk when you've been sitting for a while
- If you are in the same location, walk around to see a person when you need to talk with them rather than using the phone or email
- Play with your kids or the dog
- Turn on your favourite music when doing housework and push the vacuum or broom around with enthusiasm
- Get into the garden — mow, rake leaves, plant something
- If you already go walking, make the occasional walk 10 minutes longer

All physical exercise — walking, swimming, dancing, playing golf — can help relieve muscle tension and relax your mind.

Allocating time to do the things you enjoy — exercising, meditating, reading, gardening, listening to music — will help with effective relaxation and leave you feeling that you have made a big difference to your health and well-being.

Healthy people make fantastic community volunteers!

These are some of the websites that may assist you in ways to keep those resolutions:

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

www.beyondblue.org.au

www.ifnotdieting.com

www.jeanhailes.org.au

What can volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds bring to our organisation?

How can we engage with diverse members of our community?

Many organisations say that they would like to involve volunteers from diverse cultures, but are unsure of how to engage effectively with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. However, many organisations do involve volunteers from CALD backgrounds successfully, and enjoy the benefits that this diversity brings to their volunteer program, their organisation and their client groups. These benefits include:

- a wider pool of volunteers
- new perspectives that volunteers from diverse backgrounds and experiences can offer
- increased awareness of different cultures, which helps break down negative stereotypes — a valuable end in itself
- expanded awareness and knowledge of global issues
- the creation of a multilingual organisation and enhanced communication with client groups from CALD backgrounds
- strengthened relationships with groups within your local community
- increased awareness of the way of life, beliefs and values of different cultures, leading to improvements in communication and program design, and more culturally sensitive service delivery
- the creation of an accessible and inclusive volunteer program that reflects the diversity of the community.

We have added tips from the Volunteering Australia's resources—Diversity & Volunteering Go Hand in Hand resource throughout this newsletter to help you with some ideas of how to engage with the CALD community in your area. For more information visit:

www.volunteeringaustralia.org

[Tip for engaging volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds - Volunteering Australia](#)

Find out who lives in your local area and build up your relationship with local community groups.

Go to your local council's website and your local Migrant Resource Centre to find out about the people who make up your community and what community groups operate in your area.

Volunteer Profile

Maxwell Kirkham

Name: Max Kirkham
Family: Three children and one grandchild
Age: 53 years



Currently volunteering with the Australian Red Cross Patient Transport Service

“The main reason I volunteer is to keep active and to fill my time doing worthwhile work in the community”

Why are you a volunteer?

I have worked for the railways for many years and have also had a long history of volunteering with my Lodge through which I have recently received international recognition for my 30 years association. I have also volunteered with the 'Active Roadshow Programme' through CARN in Wangaratta and have been with the Speedway in Wangaratta for nine years, where I helped with the catering.

The main reason is to keep active and fill my time doing worthwhile work in the community. I was very fortunate to come across Community Skillsbank, where I gained further opportunities to volunteer as I am always willing to help out where I can, and give of my best in any work situation. This has proved to be a very positive point in my life.

What do you gain out of volunteering?

I have gained a great measure of personal satisfaction working with the Red Cross team here in Wangaratta, and I am very happy in contributing to the needs of the patients which Red Cross are helping. I also enjoy the social interaction. I now have plenty of people to talk with and I have discovered that I can now get along with people in a very positive way. I have also enhanced my computer skills as a result of volunteering.

What do you think the organisation gains from your work?

Volunteering gives those who are genuine and wanting to help out in a meaningful way the opportunity to do so. I strongly urge other people to take up the opportunity to volunteer. The organisation benefits, the individual benefits and the community benefits.

[Tip for engaging volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds - Volunteering Australia](#)

Actively target a diverse range of volunteers in your recruitment strategy.

Advertise for young volunteers at local universities/TAFE. Put signs up at youth venues, advertise in youth newspapers. Remember your local ethnic radio stations and newspapers – especially the free newsletters distributed outside the local deli! Have a stall at a local festival, advertise in your nearest Centrelink office, put posters up in English language schools and temporary housing.

Volunteer opportunities

To check out the variety of local volunteer opportunities simply click [here](#) or log on to our Community Skillsbank website www.nevictoria.skillsbank.com.au and search the volunteer opportunity list online

- ◆ Volunteer required to assist the playgroup coordinator with the weekly running of the playgroup sessions. Develop a good rapport with parents and children to assist them to continue attending, and to help support them in stressful times. Engage parents in play based activities with their children, and assist with the development of friendships. Role will be required on Mondays 9.30am - 1.00pm.
- ◆ The 2009 Australian Women's Open will run from 12—15 February at the magnificent Metropolitan Golf Club. Volunteers currently being sought.
- ◆ Data entry support required for a variety of SES operational areas. Training provided once per month. Incidents will occur randomly. People with disabilities are encouraged to apply. Volunteers MUST be prepared to be available for immediate deployment in an emergency. Volunteers MUST be prepared to take direction and may be required for days at a time in an emergency situation. Volunteers will be offered the opportunity to participate in other SES activities eg. map and navigation, 4WD training, communications. Age requirement from 18 years.
- ◆ Conservation Volunteers Australia welcomes people with a love of the outdoors and interest in the environment to take part as a volunteer. In all areas of conservation, volunteers will be shown how to use all tools and equipment safely before they start a project, and there will always be a Conservation Volunteers Australia team leader with first aid training. Any essential safety equipment will be provided and you will be shown how to use it. Position available for immediate start.
- ◆ Assist at events in Wangaratta with answering questions from public/visitors about relevant event, set up and pack/clean up, registration / ticket sales at door or entry, supervising art exhibitions or installations. Position available for immediate start.
- ◆ Enthusiastic person required to assist in the coordination and management of equipment and property during training sessions and at weekend games based in Wangaratta. Position available for immediate start.
- ◆ Volunteers required to visit elderly clients in their own homes in the Euroa area and taking them out into the community such as shopping trips and other outings. Volunteers need to be able to communicate well, have an understanding of issues facing the elderly, and have a caring and compassionate nature with an interest in working with the elderly. Position available for immediate start.
- ◆ Hospital in Mansfield requires person with empathy and compassion to listen to patients and their families. Position available for immediate start.
- ◆ Energetic and enthusiastic person required to work with children in a garden and cooking environment in the King Valley region. Gardening and cooking skills would be an advantage. Position available for immediate start.

For information on any of these roles please contact the Community Skillsbank team

csb@thecentre.vic.edu.au

(03) 5723 1388



Corporate Volunteering

Lucky Howden Lock Supply Pty Ltd are one of the local small businesses who are very active in their support of the community, contributing to support a wide range of activities. Such activities include the adoption of the Victoria Police Blue Ribbon Foundation (North East Branch) cause for fundraising, supporting local hospitals, schools and community groups with donation support, committee representation and giving their time as volunteers to support local community events.

To date the NE Blue Ribbon Foundation has made sizeable monetary contributions to both the new Northeast Health Oncology Unit and Benalla Hospital A & E Centre.

“As local business people we like to make a positive contribution to the quality of life in our community,” said Bruce Johnstone owner/operator of Lucky Howden Lock Supply. *“We invest in our community and believe that it is important to support projects and activities that contribute to the well being of the community.”*

Local communities benefit enormously from the assistance of small business. Some of these contributions are nominal, such as supporting local sporting teams, providing food for community events, giving goods for raffles, donating equipment to non-profits, whilst others put forward staff to offer their expertise to community groups and not for profit organisations through representation on boards/committees, mentoring or lending a helping hand at community events.



Understandably, small business owners may be reluctant to embrace the release of staff into volunteer programs, as they are busy balancing costs with increasing their customer base and growing their business. Staff volunteering must not be viewed as simply a costly activity, but an opportunity to contribute to one's community while enhancing the overall performance of the organisation through improved staff morale and perceived value in their community.

Cost-related factors are the main deterrent to increasing hands on volunteerism in small businesses in our region. The allowance of staff to be released from their work duties to take part in voluntary activities create worker productivity loss, compensation from other staff, and require time and resources to organising the volunteer policies and effort.

Small businesses often are restrained for time to coordinate and control the volunteer program and effort.

A solution to this problem may be found in the community itself. Community Skillsbank have the resources to organise quality placement for your staff and to support your organisation and staff throughout the duration of your volunteer program.

If you would like to know more about Corporate Volunteering or share your business's volunteering experiences with others, please contact:

Cherie Gottschling

Volunteer Management Program Manager
on 5723 1376 or by email

cherie.gottschling@thecentre.vic.edu.au



Star Volunteer Awards



Based on feedback received, Community Skillsbank are discontinuing the use of the "Star" volunteer award. Volunteer recognition will be replaced by Volunteer Profiles, nominated by the community members, managers of volunteers and volunteers who wish to recognise the efforts of a peer. Community Skillsbank will happily profile the contribution of at least three volunteers in each quarterly newsletter.

We want to recognise the "Faces of Volunteer Service" in our community, by nominating the organisations, businesses, families, and individuals whose volunteer and community service efforts focus on building and strengthening the North East Region. Each nomination will showcase the organisations in which the nominee is engaged and will feature the activities available to new volunteers who wish to join those organisations and volunteer their time.

Please help us by letting us know about the volunteers who are making a difference in the lives of others. Your stories and photos will be featured in the quarterly Community Skillsbank newsletter and on our website www.nevictoria.skillsbank.com.au where they will provide recognition for our valuable volunteers and serve as an inspiration to the community.

Volunteer Profile nominations for the next newsletter will be received up to 31 March 2009. Selected volunteer profiles will be published in the April 2009 edition of the Community Skillsbank newsletter.

Managers of volunteers and organisations are encouraged to nominate their volunteers.

*'A **little** reward for making such a **BIG** contribution'*

Please send your nominations to:

csb@thecentre.vic.edu.au

Community Skillsbank — Website Information

Each newsletter, Community Skillsbank will provide easy directions for you to use the Community Skillsbank website. We encourage you to test these directions and give us your feedback. If you would like information about specific areas of the website, please let us know so we can feature your area of interest in the next newsletter.

Volunteer registration

1. Logon to the Community Skillsbank website www.nevictoria.skillsbank.com.au
2. In the centre panel, position the cursor over the area "sign me up [as a volunteer](#) "
3. Click on [as a volunteer](#)
4. Select [Apply](#)
5. In the appropriate boxes, key in your first name, your surname and your email address, then click on Register
6. The Volunteer Registration Details page will appear. This page records information for your volunteer profile with Community Skillsbank — address, phone number, experience, skills, interests etc. You do not need to fill in every box but the more information you provide, the better the volunteer opportunity will be matched for you. Your volunteer number is automatically recorded at the top left hand side of the page, your email address and password are automatically recorded under your name. You need to record this information for later access. Please note that you are not required to fill in all information in your first contact session. You can complete this later at your leisure
7. Remember to click the Update button **after** keying in your information and **before** logging out. If you do not click on Update, you will lose all the information you provided — this is not good for your peace of mind! There is an update button at the top and bottom of the page
8. When you have finished, go to the top of the left hand panel and click on Logout
9. **Congratulations — you are now registered with Community Skillsbank as a Volunteer**
10. If you have problems at any stage of your registration, call us on 5723 1388. We are here to help you

Organisation registration

1. Logon to the Community Skillsbank website www.nevictoria.skillsbank.com.au
2. In the centre panel, position the cursor over the area "sign me up [as an organisation seeking volunteers](#)"
3. Click on [as an organisation seeking volunteers](#)
4. Select [Apply](#)
5. In the appropriate boxes, key in your organisation title and your email address, then click on Register
6. The Organisation Registration Details page will appear. This page records information for your organisation profile with Community Skillsbank — address, phone number, insurance, accessibility etc. You do not need to fill in every box but the more information you provide, the better the volunteer skills matched to your opportunity will be for you. Your organisation number is automatically recorded at the top left hand side of the page, your email address and password are automatically recorded under your name. You need to record this information for later access. Please note that you are not required to fill in all information in your first contact session, however your insurance details are mandatory for the referral of volunteers to occur. Other details can be completed later at your leisure
7. Remember to click the Update button **after** keying in your information and **before** logging out. If you do not click on Update, you will lose all the information you provided — this is not good for your peace of mind! There is an update button at the top and bottom of the page
8. After completing the information fields for the Organisation, you can then register your Program(s) - see the bottom of the screen, and then the Role(s) associated with the Program(s). Information will be supplied as to how to do this in the next newsletter OR you can call us on 5723 1388 for telephone assistance
9. **Congratulations — you are now registered with Community Skillsbank as an Organisation seeking Volunteers**
10. If you have problems at any stage of your registration, call us on 5723 1388. We are here to help you

Feedback

You can send us feedback at any time from the website. Select the option at the bottom of the right hand panel on the website

[Tip for engaging volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds - Volunteering Australia](#)

Make your promotional materials relevant to volunteers from diverse backgrounds.

Use varied positive images of volunteers of different ages and backgrounds in your advertising. Look at recruiting a volunteer designer from within your target group to help you create a poster or leaflet relevant to that group. Use larger type sizes and plain language. Remember that the word *volunteering* may not be understood by all cultures – use phrases such as *learn more about* or *help your community*.

2 ways to apply for a Police Check ...

CrimCheck

In October, Community Skillsbank ran a training session on the electronic police check website CrimCheck. CrimCheck was developed to help organisations to complete Police Checks in a faster, easier manner than previously provided by the manual Police system.

CrimCheck is accredited by CrimTrac, an agency of the Federal Ministry of Justice and Customs.

CrimCheck features:

- Web-based system
- Pre-payments system
- Electronic documents available through website for easy access
- 'Best Practice' 100 point ID check
- Security for all potentially sensitive information.



The process:

- Organisations must register to submit Police Check Applications online, via the CrimCheck website www.crimcheck.org.au
- Applications are batched, encrypted and uploaded daily directly to the National Criminal History database in Canberra
- Police Check Applications are processed and the results transferred to the CrimCheck system
- For a "No Match", CrimCheck emails the organisation to advise them that the status of their police check has changed
- For "Confirmed Matches", the applicant is contacted directly by CrimCheck staff and advised of their options

Fees: \$12.50 for volunteer Police Checks, \$34.00 for paid employees

Timeline: If the application is in before 2pm on a business day, it will have a 12 hour turnaround (average) for no match, with a maximum 72 hours turnaround

For more details, go to the CrimCheck website or email info@crimcheck.org.au

Victorian Police National Police Check — process updated

As of Saturday 1 November 2008 new changes also applied to the Victoria Police National Police Record Check process available via www.police.vic.gov.au

The process:

- A downloadable online application form replaces the current form
- Applicants can download, complete and print the new online form
- A 100 point identification check to be introduced
- An authorised certifier is required to witness and certify identity documents and signature of applicant
- The certificate will only be issued to the applicant
- To increase protection of information released, the new certificate includes seven security features.

Fees: The application fee NFP is \$14. A valid Community Volunteer Fee (CVF) number must be provided by an organisation registered with Victoria Police to claim the reduced rate. The standard fee for a national name check is \$30.70

Timeline: A minimum of 10 working days for National Police Certificates to be processed.

Further information in relation to the above changes can be obtained by contacting the Public Enquiry Service at publicenquiryservice@police.vic.gov.au or calling 1300 881 596

[Tip for engaging volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds - Volunteering Australia](#)

Make it easy for volunteers to get involved – simplify the screening process.

Invite the applicant in so that you can meet them and tell them about the position. Interviews work better in person than over the phone. Arrange an interpreter if necessary. Email interviews allow people to use a dictionary, but don't forget to reply promptly. People can be put off by forms – you may want to fill out the form with them during the interview.

Volunteer Training

One of our highest priorities is to support volunteers, the managers of volunteers and organisations requiring volunteer assistance to build the capacity and skills of volunteering resources in our region.

You tell us your training requirements and we will work with you to produce the training.

We are currently investigating ways to increase participation in the above sessions. We intend to trial adjustments to delivery times to see if this better suits your needs in 2009. In 2008 the Pathways sessions were offered once a month on a Friday at 10am. We would like to trial running the course as required, with flexible times and days of delivery. After business hours sessions could be offered as an option for volunteers.

We need your feedback regarding these ideas. Please email us at csb@thecentre.vic.edu.au

Active Volunteering

Active Volunteering is a training course for persons wanting to up-skill their qualifications. Certificates I, II and III in Active Volunteering are nationally accredited courses designed especially for volunteers.

The course primarily is designed for volunteers who want to gain recognition and qualifications for themselves or for future workplace opportunities. They build competencies which are generic to all types of volunteer roles and are therefore relevant to volunteers working in any field. Areas covered in the courses include:

- what it means to be a volunteer
- volunteer orientation
- the unique context of volunteering and how this impacts on volunteer work practices
- how to work safely and effectively in environments particular to volunteers, including understanding how legislation affects volunteering
- how to communicate and work effectively with diverse groups of people while volunteering.

The course is flexibly delivered which means you undertake the training at work and at home, in your time with an assessor allocated to assist and support you.

If you enrol and are registered with Community Skillsbank, the normal course fee will be waived.

Community Skillsbank is a free service that matches volunteers with the most appropriate role for their skills and interest

Contact Cherie Gottschling
at The Centre on 03 5723 1376

Pathways to Volunteering

Pathways to Volunteering is an interactive induction session for volunteers and is at no charge for those registered with Community Skillsbank. The aim of this session is to support those entering volunteering and provides attendees with information on many topics which include:

- Rights and Responsibilities
- Benefits of Volunteering
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Insurance
- Police Checks
- Working with Children Checks
- Pathways to further education through training.

We have now incorporated some components of the Certificate III in Active Volunteering into our two hour session, so by completing the Pathways to Volunteering session, volunteers will be able to gain RPL for the first core unit "Being an Effective Volunteer" and will have a head start into their Certificate III in Active Volunteering.

We are interested in hearing your ideas regarding scheduling and structure for the Pathways to Volunteering session.

Please contact Cherie Gottschling
at The Centre on 03 5723 1376

North East Volunteer Coordinator Network Meeting

Volunteer Coordinators, you are invited to the next North East Volunteer Coordinator Network meeting.

The meeting is an opportunity for Volunteer Coordinators to network and exchange information and ideas with other volunteer involving organisations and community groups in our region. It is also an opportunity for Volunteer Coordinators to receive information and updates on volunteering and gain benefits of training, to be informed by relevant speakers and source information pertinent to our roles as coordinators of volunteers.

Date: Wednesday 18 February 2009

Time: 12:00 noon – 2:00pm

Location: The Centre
Conference Room 1
Greta Road
(High School Campus)
Wangaratta

Speakers: Gail Cumming
Program Manager
Volunteering Victoria

Trevor Barker
Rural Community Support Coordinator
Vic Relief Foodbank

RSVP: by Wednesday 21 January 2009 to
cherie.gottschling@thecentre.vic.edu.au

Community Skillsbank

For your consideration:

- Are you looking for an improved way to manage your volunteers and volunteering opportunities?
- Do you experience administration overload?
- Would you be interested in a centrally coordinated, logical matching process that links volunteer skills and experience to available volunteer positions?
- How about easy to access reports that indicate the activities and performance of your Volunteer Referral Centre?

Community Skillsbank can help you!

Contact Wendy Legg

on 5762 4311 or

wendy.legg@thecentre.vic.edu.au

[Tip for engaging volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds - Volunteering Australia](#)

Don't assume all culture are the same, especially concerning what's expected of men and women.

Remember that there may be different customs for women or men from other cultures. For example, in some cultures it may not be appropriate for a woman by herself to visit someone in their home, or perhaps to work alongside male volunteers. In some cultures, a woman might need the permission of her husband, father or son to do a particular task .

Feedback required please....

We would like to run a Network group for volunteers offering opportunities for training and access to speakers.

If you are volunteering and feel you would like to be given the opportunity to network and learn with other volunteers through a volunteer working group please contact

Cherie Gottschling on 03) 5723 1376.

GRANT INFORMATION

VIC Volunteer Small Support Grants

Provider — DCPD
(www.grants.dpcd.vic.gov.au) or call the Grants Information Line on 1300 366 356

Victorian Volunteer Small Support Grants of up to \$5000 are now available to not-for-profit organisations.

Purpose — The grants are aimed at organisations wanting to increase the diversity of their volunteers and/or involve or encourage new volunteers.

Preference will be given to organisations with relatively small operating budgets.

Applications can be submitted at any time throughout the year. Open on an ongoing basis

Emergency Volunteer Support Grants Program

Provider — DCPD
(www.grants.dpcd.vic.gov.au) or call the Grants Information Line on 1300 366 356

Purpose — The grants are aimed to provide practical help to the many Victorians and local community organisations providing voluntary emergency relief in communities who are suffering as a result of the drought.

Amount — up to \$20,000

Bendigo Bank Sponsorships

Provider — Bendigo Bank
(www.bendigobank.com.au)

Purpose — aims to spread sponsorship across a wide group of activities including schools, charities, sport and the arts. Please refer to each of the retail bank regions for more information

Amount — not stated

Caltex Community and Environment Sponsorship (closing date not stated)

Provider — Caltex (www.caltex.com.au)

Purpose — Caltex Australia Limited seeks to act as a good corporate citizen at all times and undertakes contributions and sponsorship programs as part of its partnership with the community

Amount — not stated

Other useful websites for grant information:

www.volunteeringaustralia.org

www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au

www.fahcsia.gov.au

www.regionalaustralia.gov.au

www.ourcommunity.com.au

www.aph.gov.au

More feedback required please!!

VOLUNTEERS WEEK — 11-17 May 2009

Volunteers how would you like to be recognised for your voluntary contribution during National Volunteers Week?

What is important to you in your volunteering?

Email us at csb@thecentre.vic.edu.au

[Tip for engaging volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds - Volunteering Australia](#)

Develop policies for your organisation that are inclusive of diversity.

Don't be exclusive – think of all groups in our society as potential volunteers, and don't leave anyone out. Develop policies that recognise and harness our community diversity. Perhaps recruit a volunteer from a relevant background to help you develop your policy. And establish advisory groups with representatives from different youth, disability and ethnic groups in your local area.

Community Skillsbank newsletter

Look out for our next edition
in April 2009

Contributions to the Community Skillsbank Newsletter
are welcomed.

We would also appreciate your feedback.

Relevant articles and photos can be forwarded to
the Community Skillsbank team at

csb@thecentre.vic.edu.au

We look forward to hearing from you.

For information about Community Skillsbank or to register,
visit our website at

www.nevictoria.skillsbank.com.au