

Our Community **MATTERS**

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



Resources, News, Innovations and Tips on:

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- ✓ Leadership & Advocacy
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www.ourcommunity.com.au

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Welcome to the latest edition of *Our Community Matters*, your regular free community sector update. It is yet another benefit of membership of www.ourcommunity.com.au – the premier destination for Australia's 700,000 community, education and non-profit groups. Our Community provides community groups with the latest funding and fundraising news as well as practical management, board, marketing and community business partnership information. Our Community also operates the [Australian Giving Centre](#), the free online donations service that has so far raised almost \$5 million for Australian community appeals. 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 by emailing kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au

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1. Our View ... By Rhonda Galbally AO, CEO of www.ourcommunity.com.au

In a controversial [new report](#) on the charity and not-for-profit sector, *BRW* has called for radical reforms, including mergers of not-for-profit organisations to eliminate what is perceived as wasteful duplication.

In this article, Our Community CEO RHONDA GALBALLY warns against the muddying of the line between charities and participative community organisations, and the dire consequences that would result if the calls for amalgamation are applied to the latter – groups such as community houses, arts, recreation and sports groups, which not only give us something to do and somewhere to belong, but are crucial to good health and wellbeing.

* * *

As with everything in life, when you feel particularly passionate about something there is usually a personal association. For me my passion for participation in community groups started from a very young age. As a child with a disability from a troubled family – someone who was, to a degree, at risk – for me participation in community was my saviour.

As a child I was a member of the Brownies, the drama club, the debating team, the Victorian Ladies Yacht Club; as a young mother, my local playgroup, disability rights group and women's group. My membership of all of these groups over the years pulled me back from the brink of all manner of risk behaviour underlined by despair at being an outsider – a reject. My participation in community groups gave me confidence. It allowed me to feel like one of the group – accepted, part of things. My participation enabled me to establish some capacity for leadership.

So it was not greatly surprising when I learned 40 years later about the groundbreaking research of Professors Len Syme, Lisa Berkman, Michael Marmot and Meredith Minkler – all International Pratt Fellows for Melbourne's **Communities in Control conference**, which each year brings together 1500 community sector workers, volunteers and supporters. Their research shows that my experience was not isolated; that participation in community groups is great for everyone – improving health and wellbeing more than any other action people can take. That sense of hope, belonging and control you can derive from being a member of a well-run group does in fact reduce stroke, heart disease, depression, child abuse, school truancy. Participation in community is prevention.

The community groups that provide the opportunity for participation are not charities. To me, charity means that someone (and as a child, that "someone" was me and my family) has to receive it. Charity rarely provides an equal relationship for the recipient; it is rarely a participative experience. It occurs when someone has the expertise, the knowledge, the money, the key to what you need – not you. And you usually receive it in isolation – as an individual, not along with others as a group where you share experiences, wisdom and your own brand of knowledge.

Certainly there are critical times when people with specific needs need help – and receiving that help in the most effective, least patronising, most empowering way should be a top priority for every service delivery organisation. But according to a growing body of research, participation in community – being able to join up as a shoulder to shoulder member – is **prevention** and the groups that provide it should be valued, supported, and encouraged to reach out more.

The recent call in *BRW* to rationalise the numbers of groups and to get them to amalgamate might be good for charities, but it is disaster for prevention if it also by default comes to apply to community groups. We need more not fewer participative community groups. Every parent who has lost a child needs a Compassionate Friends self-help group to join. Every person with a disability and their parents should have a group to join for support and to advocate for their rights. Every neighbourhood needs a community house. Every person from a different ethnic background should have a group to join to celebrate and preserve their cultural life. Every community member needs local sports, recreation and arts groups such as choirs and community theatre groups to join.

The trouble is though that, as you would expect, the most disadvantaged areas have fewer and more fragile community groups. So while we know that joining up is good for your health and your spirit, disadvantage is yet again a barrier.

I strongly believe that the current cry for amalgamations of community organisations should be clearly targeted solely on charities – there is a strong case that disadvantaged individuals should be able to receive services locally and conveniently and not have to run around to find housing, financial support, emergency relief, alcohol counselling and advice – the consumers should be able to get the combination of what they need for their

convenience, in the one location. Community owned and managed services are more likely to best meet the needs of community people. This is because when services are provided at the community level, the people who have first-hand experience of the need will be more likely to have a hand in design and delivery, rather than a one size fits all program design coming from on high.

Whatever the outcome for charities, strong, functional community groups that exist for people to join and participate in should flower like a thousand blooms, and they should be resourced to bloom most particularly in disadvantaged areas and for disadvantaged groups – run by and for communities.

An edited version of this article will appear in the Letters section of an upcoming edition of *BRW*. What's your view? Tell us what you think by emailing us at kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au.

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2. The Power of Leadership highlighted at fourth Communities in Control conference

Community leadership – in the face of opposition, prevailing wisdom or just against the odds – was in the spotlight at the fourth annual Communities in Control Conference, staged at Moonee Valley Racecourse last month.

More than a dozen inspirational speakers from the worlds of academia, community, business, government and sport spoke around the main topic of the conference – Challenging the Power of One.

Professor **Amanda Sinclair** from the Melbourne Business School, University of Melbourne, quickly grabbed the attention of the 1500 delegates attending the conference with an impromptu yoga session before challenging myths about leadership.

“I want to argue that leadership needs to be liberated from itself, and in particular from a received wisdom, which is I believe increasingly narrow, corporate-inspired and individualistic in its focus,” she said.

“It needs to be liberated from these rather banal and massaged manufactured notions of leadership that we've come to have inflicted on us.”

Ms Sinclair said leadership should free people, not constrain them.

“The purpose of leadership should be about liberation. It should be about freedom. And yet, very very often, in my observation, in my experience, leadership does the reverse.”

The first of two Pratt Fellows – internationally-acclaimed author and storyteller **Bryce Courtenay** – delivered a memorable speech recalling his childhood growing up as a small boy with an English name in an area of South Africa where his peers were bigger, spoke Afrikaans and had a deep-seated hatred of the English.

Drawing on illustrations from his life, Mr Courtenay called on delegates to dream, to not give up and to believe in their own power to inspire others and achieve their own dreams.

The conference also welcomed a second Pratt Fellow – Professor **Meredith Minkler** from the School of Public Health, University of California Berkeley.

Prof. Minkler said health and social problems in many communities were too complex for “outside-expert” driven research to find solutions for – with more and more communities realising that they themselves were in the best position to find the problems, and then address them at a local level.

Prof. Minkler showed delegates some of the work done at a local level in communities in Richmond, California, and in the troubled San Francisco suburb of Tenderloin.

In the latter example, some of Prof. Minkler's students initiated change after becoming concerned about the high rates of social isolation and physical and mental health problems among low income elderly people in Tenderloin hotels.

Through the Tenderloin Senior Organising Project, dramatic improvements were made in local safety (a 26% drop in crime in 18 months), nutrition, transport and health.

In addition, the changes made to individuals' lives were heartening – “Such stories too are part of the data we need to collect and share, for they show, in most human and personal terms, the value of our community groups and partnerships,” Prof. Minkler said.

Among the other conference highlights were:

- An entertaining and informative lively discussion from noted futurists **Phil Ruthven** and **Barry Jones** which looked at social and political trends and leadership in Australian society.
- An illuminating presentation from Victorian Deputy Premier and Minister for Communities **John Thwaites**, who discussed the community leadership provided through the State Government's A Fairer Victoria program.
- A thought-provoking and lively "Great Debate", examining the notion that *Neighbourhoods are Dead and the Individual Now Reigns Supreme*. Moderated by the ever-popular **Joan Kirner**, the debate featured Lumbu Community Foundation CEO **Jacqui Katona** and Associate Professor **Christopher Newell** arguing in favour of the topic, with Bank of I.D.E.A.S. founder **Peter Kenyon** and **Hutch Hussein** from the Northern Migrant Resource Centre on the other side of the fence.

Another highlight was the second annual Westpac Australian Community Idol competition, hosted by the ever-popular Mayor of Hootville Communications, Brett de Hoedt.

The competition involved this year's finalists – the **Wunan Foundation**, the **Sanctuary Refugee Foundation** and **WayOut Rural Youth & Sexual Diversity Project** – "pitching" themselves to conference delegates before the audience voted on a winner.

The eventual winner of this year's Community Idol – the Wunan Foundation – was announced by legendary AFL player and coach **Kevin Sheedy**.

Mr Sheedy also provided an entertaining final presentation at the conference, drawing on his experiences in his 40 years in football to convey his views on breaking new ground in the search for success.

His recent success coaching the Australian side to win over Ireland in last year's International Rules series showed the importance of challenging the status quo.

"We kept picking the all-Australian team that were good at playing Australian football. But we were actually playing the Irish at Irish football. That's how dumb the Australians were," he said.

"So we actually changed the rules of selection. We actually decided not to pick the best players that play AFL. We won by the greatest ever margin in the history of 40 years ... We changed the rules and won.

"This is what leadership is. You've got to be challenging. Don't walk away from the white line when it's there, and make sure you have a very good powerful base for your debate because you've done the homework."

To make sure the wisdom of the Communities in Control conference – Australia's biggest and most important community sector gathering – is spread as far and wide as possible, we have posted a range of resources on the Our Community website:

- To access speeches and PowerPoint presentations from the 2006 conference visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic2006
- To order conference DVDs, visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/cicdvd or contact Alan Matic on (03) 9320 6800 or by email at alanm@ourcommunity.com.au
- To read more about the Westpac Australian Community Idol competition visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/idol
- To read about past Communities in Control conferences, access previous years' keynote speeches and presentations, and download the Communities in Control manifesto, visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/cic
- To order Prof. Meredith Minkler's books – 'Community-Based Participatory Research for Health' (2002) and 'Community Organising and Community Building for Health' (1997) – click [this link](#) or visit www.amazon.com and type "Meredith Minkler" in the Search field at the top of the page.



The Westpac Australian Community Idol finalists

Finding the money

This year's pre-conference Special Day focused on helping community organisations learn how to generate money.

Delegates at the Special Day heard a diverse mix of practical presentations, workshops and interactive discussions featuring a number of fundraising and not-for-profit experts. Highlights included:

- an inspiring and challenging presentation from founder and CEO of the Bank of I.D.E.A.S., **Peter Kenyon**, on how communities can go from rags to riches;
- a lively panel discussion on *Baby Boomers and Money* featuring ABC Radio station manager **Ian Mannix**, Gandel Charitable Trust executive director **Laurence Joseph** and Royal Women's Hospital Foundation executive director **Wendy Brooks**;
- an interactive session on *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Fundraising But Were Too Scared to Ask* chaired by Mayor of Hootville Communications **Brett de Hoedt** and featuring Membership Growth's **Kevin Cahalane**, Our Community director of training **Patrick Moriarty** and arts and festivals "guru" **Maggie Maguire**; and
- Workshops on building membership and regular donations, developing community and business partnerships, writing winning grant applications, marketing and fundraising, and running successful special events – featuring Patrick Moriarty, Kevin Cahalane and Maggie Maguire, as well as **Anne-Marie Phippard** (Netball Victoria), **Andrew Urquhart** (Walwa Bush Hospital), **Denis Tracey** (Asia-Pacific Centre for Philanthropy & Social Investment), **Karen Martin** (Macedon Ranges Shire Council), **Kara Wise** and **Chantelle Davies** (Australia Post), **Rick Henke** (Karoonda Football Club), and **Jenny Ellis** (Uniting Church).

All the wit and wisdom of the day, as well as links to speeches and PowerPoint presentations, will be included in the next edition of Our Community's [Raising Funds](#) newsletter, a complimentary copy of which will be emailed to all Sunday delegates.

For more information on *Raising Funds*, go to <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/raisingfunds>.

We couldn't do it without ...

Our Community wishes to thank all of our sponsors and supporters – the Pratt Foundation, Westpac, Australia Post, Alcoa, Leader Community Newspapers, the Department for Victorian Communities, the Department for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, and Moonee Valley Racing Club – for helping to make this year's conference another resounding success.

Thanks also to our partner in staging Communities in Control, Fr Joe Caddy and his team at Centacare Catholic Family Services.

A special thanks too to all of the incredible presenters, who helped to create such a memorable, inspiring and challenging three days.

And thanks most of all to the delegates, who came from all sectors and from all corners of the country to meet, mingle, learn, teach and seize the opportunity to lift their gaze from the daily grind and take another step down the road forward for community.

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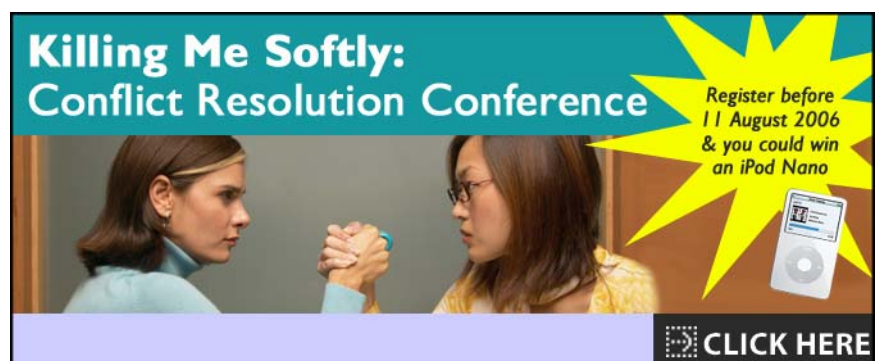
3. Killing Me Softly: Resolving conflict in your community organisation

In our travels around Australia, we hear a lot of great stories about community groups functioning well and making an incredible contribution to their communities.

On the flip side, another thing we commonly hear about is the grief, misery and destructiveness caused by conflict.

Sadly, conflict seems to be a common issue in community life – but it doesn't have to be this way.

To help community organisations to prevent, negotiate and resolve



conflict, Our Community has introduced a new event to our training calendar – a conflict resolution conference designed specifically for community organisations.

[**Killing Me Softly: The Conflict Resolution Conference**](#) will be held at Moonee Valley Racing Club in Melbourne from 9.30am to 4.15pm on Friday, September 8.

The conference will cater for small groups and large, board and committee members, community group employees and volunteers, local government staff and councillors – and anyone who is interested in avoiding the turmoil and disruption created by conflict.

Keynote speakers will include:

- **Prof. Eleanor Wertheim**
Professor (Personal Chair) at La Trobe University, in the school of Psychological Science
Prof. Wertheim coordinates the Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology and teaches Negotiation Skills in the Faculty of Law of Management, as part of the Conflict Resolution postgraduate programs. She is the author of two books on resolving conflict including 'Skills for Resolving Conflict: Creating Effective Solutions Through Co-operative Problem Solving';
- **Pat Marshall**
Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, The University of Melbourne, Mediator in private practice, and Accredited Mediator with the Department of Justice, Victoria
Pat is an educator, mediator and director of her own educational consultancy and mediation and facilitation service. She is particularly interested in workplace conflict and in the structural conditions that may produce or exacerbate interpersonal conflict. She is completing her PhD on the stressors facing mediators and how they cope.
- **Jonathan Schauder**
Senior Consultant, CMA
As a senior consultant with CMA, registered psychologist and mediator with the Industrial Relations Registry, Jonathan Schauder is an acknowledged expert in negotiation, dispute resolution, relationships, interpersonal skills and organisational process design.

Other speakers include:

- **Ian Beith:** Committee member and Sponsorship Coordinator, Upper Murray Community Radio Inc.
- **Alexandra de Blas:** Communications Strategist, Bush Heritage Fund
- **Susie Burke:** Psychologists for Peace
- **Tim Connellan:** Mediator, Founder, Pacific Mediation Dispute Resolution Business and Victorian President, LEADR (Association of Dispute Resolvers)
- **Rosemary Crossley:** Director, DEAL Communication Centre Victoria; Board Member, Dignity Education and Learning
- **Ellis Ebell:** Committee Member, Williamstown Little Theatre
- **Brigid Nossal:** Principal Consultant, Nossal Consulting (Organisational and Leadership Development)

The conference will cover a range of topics, including:

- What To Do When There Is A Conflict that Needs to be Resolved
- Carving up the Budget by the Board
- Resolving Team and Staff Conflict
- Resolving Board and Committee Conflict
- Resolving External Community Conflict
- Resolving the Problem of the Serial Pest
- Negotiating with the Devil: Collaborative Problem Solving Approach to Conflict
- Please Stop Yelling At Me: Managing Conflicts, Complaints and Relationships

To find out more or register, go to www.ourcommunity.com.au/kms.

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4. Great Australian Leaders in Focus: Jacqui Katona



This month's Great Australian Leader in Focus is **Jacqui Katona**, who is the CEO of the Lumbu Indigenous Community Foundation, and a noted community campaigner.

A member of the Djok clan, located within Kakadu National Park, Jacqui was at the forefront of the highly celebrated campaign against the Jabiluka uranium mine.

She is the recipient of the Australian Conservation Foundation's 1997 Peter Rawlinson Environmental Award and the 1999 Goldman Environmental Prize.

Our Community: Who do you consider to be the three great leaders of our time?

Jacqui Katona

1. Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Cath Walker) – prominent Aboriginal author and activist – for her sharp, forthright and relentless advocacy for the recognition of citizenship and land rights of Aboriginal people in Australia.
2. Aung San Suu Kyi – non-violent resistance to repressive militarist regimes – for her powerful courage to stand up for the freedom of the Burmese people.
3. Nelson Mandela – anti-apartheid campaigner - for his endurance to keep the hope of his people alive and strength to overcome repression and create a new future for his country.

Our Community: What are the three attributes you would consider to be essential to a leader?

Jacqui Katona:

1. Discipline and commitment: because you must pay attention to deadlines and know your stuff!
2. Giving others the inspiration to empower themselves as active participants: because we can all make a valuable contribution.
3. Celebrating our achievements as they happen: because we need to value the hard work which brings about positive action.

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

Jacqui Katona:

1. Lack of access to education – lack of exposure to different ideas and cultural backgrounds; increased competition for learning resources; lack of flexibility in learning modes; discouragement from exploring boundaries of issues and new ideas; and commercial imperatives overriding debate.
2. Media control – political imperatives overriding debate; and poor examples of leadership promoted by media.

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

Jacqui Katona: Be sure of yourself and remember that you have lots to learn and lots to offer.

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

Jacqui Katona: Leaders are created through their experience. While some people may demonstrate leadership qualities, to have the courage to lead, you have to have the courage to admit that you still have to learn. Leaders are communicators and have to hone their skills over time. Leaders have to pass the baton and create opportunities for others to lead also.

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

Jacqui Katona:

1. Health and education – Lack of planning and provision of resources by governments
2. Settlement of Australia – Lack of recognition that Aboriginal people are prevented from enjoying the rights and benefits of land which is our heritage
3. Resource management – there has been little investment in sustainable strategies for future generations

Our Community: What insights have you gained personally on your leadership journey and how have they impacted on your style of leadership?

Jacqui Katona:

- You have to be prepared to take a stand even though it may be unpopular: This impacted on me by making me think carefully about the stand I'm taking, why and how I can be effective. Integrity is an important quality of leadership which others take as an example.
- Collaboration is important: It is important to seek the views of others but true collaboration doesn't happen overnight – only through hard work. Commitment comes through ownership of the process which requires give and take.
- Listening, reflection and evaluation: Creating time to evaluate allows input from others about objectives achieved. Valuing of achievements must include recognition of commitment and effort.

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

Jacqui Katona: My mother, who taught me perseverance, and that finding the solutions within, not waiting for someone else to do it for you, was worthwhile.

For more community leadership wisdom, visit the Australian Community Leadership Centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au/leadership.

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5. Queensland Government removes red tape for community organisations

The Queensland Government is making changes in its laws with the purpose, it says, of relieving thousands of small community organisations across Queensland from their present burden of red tape.

Once the changes are enacted – probably by the end of the year – small community organisations across Queensland will no longer need to submit audited annual financial reports, nor obtain mandatory public liability insurance.

The Government believes up to 15,000 organisations could benefit from the changes.

Fair Trading Minister Margaret Keech said the move would allow organisations with both gross income and current assets of \$20,000 or less to replace their annual audit with other less expensive options.

"Associations with income or assets between \$20,001 and \$100,000 will have to lodge accounts kept according to good accounting practice and have their accounts certified by a registered accountant," she said.

"By reducing the financial burden of an annual audit, smaller associations that have previously struggled to meet the requirements can now focus more on the association's core objectives."

In a separate move, the Queensland Government has also introduced a \$369,630 funding program to allow 666 organisations to adopt a new bookkeeping system as part of the Strengthening Non-Government Organisations (SNGO) strategy.

The Community Bookkeeper initiative will support community organisations to introduce the Standard Chart of Accounts (SCOA) which was developed by Queensland University of Technology's Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies and Queensland Treasury, and includes:

- Standard financial headings;
- Financial terminology to assist accounting staff and bookkeepers;
- Dictionary of Terms to help understanding and use;
- Links to the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) Standards; and
- The accounts that are most likely to be used and required by NGOs.

The funding program aims to support organisations to introduce the SCOA by providing online resources and information manuals, training for community organisations and departmental staff, and small subsidies to help with the administrative costs of implementation.

"This system aims to streamline accounting processes and reduce time-consuming duplication," said Communities Minister Warren Pitt.

"The funding will assist community organisations to increase their accounting efficiency, while removing some of the administrative burden."

The Queensland Government also plans to remove the requirement on low-risk associations to insure against public liability claims – a move that brings Queensland into line with most other Australian states.

"Instead, as a safeguard, associations will be required to make a formal decision as to their insurance needs, and to report that decision to all members as well as to other parties that might be affected," Ms Keech said.

"Certain smaller organisations with a very low risk of causing public injury, such as a bridge club or residents' association with no property or assets, may decide that public liability insurance is unnecessary.

"These changes will make life a lot easier for community groups. Higher risk organisations, obviously, will still require public liability insurance."

The changes to auditing and public liability insurance requirements are part of an ongoing review of Queensland's Associations Incorporation Act, which covers more than 20,000 non-profit organisations.

The reforms may indeed lessen the formalities demanded of community groups, but it must be remembered that they are also accompanied by their own risks.

Any organisation with any size budget could be seen to be at risk of loss or fraud, and no organisation is entirely free of public liability risk – if someone trips on the rug, or if a group's sausage sizzle is followed by hospital admissions, or a flyer carrying their logo makes a defamatory attack, then the lawyers are going to come calling, and if it seems that the board has neglected its responsibility to protect or insure appropriately, the courts may not be sympathetic.

Organisations affected by the changes (in fact, all organisations) should ensure they have in place sound financial and risk management practices.

Visit Our Community's Financial Centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au/finance and the Insurance and Risk Management centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au/insurance for some help sheets that will help you get started.

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6. Awards programs provide opportunity to recognise community contributions

We're always urging community organisations and community leaders to seek recognition for their efforts. There are several opportunities around at the moment that will allow you to do just that.

Who will be the 2007 Australian of the Year?

Nominations for the Australian of the Year Awards 2007 have opened – and Prime Minister John Howard is calling on all Australians to nominate someone for the awards.

Awards are available in the categories of Australian of the Year, Senior Australian of the Year, Young Australian of the Year and Australia's Local Hero.

"A great way to thank those great Australians whom we admire and who inspire us with their achievements and contributions to our society is to nominate them for an Australian of the year Award," Mr Howard said.

Nominations close on Friday, August 28. For more information and nomination forms go to www.australianoftheyear.gov.au.

Human Rights Medal and Awards

This year's Human Rights Medal and Human Rights Awards are also open for nominations.

The awards aim to recognise those who have made "an outstanding contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights in Australia". This might have been within their own communities, or through work in the areas of law, the media or writing.

Official entry forms and more information are available at the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission website: www.humanrights.gov.au/hr_awards. Entries close on September 29.

Australian Safer Communities Awards

Emergency Management Australia is accepting nominations for this year's Australian Safer Communities Awards, which aim to recognise "best practice and innovation by organisations and individuals that help build safer communities across Australia".

A number of areas are covered by the awards, including risk assessment, research, education and training, information and knowledge management, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Entries close on August 4 and more information is available at www.ema.gov.au.

Diversity@work Awards

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the Diversity@work Awards are also open for nominations.

These national awards aim to highlight individuals, teams and organisations which encourage and welcome the participation of people from many different backgrounds.

Nominations close on August 11. For more information, visit www.diversityatwork.com.au.

And while we're on the topic of awards ...

One of the three finalists in the 2006 Westpac Australian Community Idol competition, rural youth and sexual diversity organisation WayOut, write in their most recent newsletter about the benefits the competition has generated for the group.

"This in turn led to lots of unsolicited emails from people in Victoria and other states sharing personal stories, asking if there were WayOut projects in their area and saying what a difference such initiatives make," the newsletter says.

"The whole experience has given all involved with the project a renewed sense of hope and energy."

Community Idol will run again in 2007 – it's never too early to start preparing your entry!

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7. Business magazine pushes for urgent not-for-profit sector reform

As discussed in **Part 1** of this newsletter, Australian business magazine *BRW* has called for urgent reforms to the not-for-profit sector – including better regulation of charities and not-for-profits, less duplication of services and improved efficiency, disclosure and oversight.

As part of an investigation of the sector late last month, *BRW* urged organisations to reform and improve what they do – or risk going out of existence.

Areas of concern highlighted in the feature were:

- **Duplication of services** – the magazine in particular highlighted the 20 or more children's charities which aim to look after 600 youngsters diagnosed with cancer each year – and who compete with each other for public, government and philanthropic funding. *BRW* says that because there are no laws or regulations that encourage rationalisation of these "duplicate groups", their proliferation is encouraged. The magazine suggests that the Federal Government provide incentives for organisations to merge.
- **Inefficiency** – *BRW* highlights the common duplication of services and inefficiency that leads to extra or duplicated administrative costs, or to using money and donations that could go towards good works on extra staff or marketing in order to compete in the area. It says recent Australian studies have found groups in the sector are often over-charged on various commodities they use – including telecommunications, utilities, marketing and technology.
- **Short-sightedness in planning and strategy** – which *BRW* says leads to an inability to map out a long-term strategy, and to a shortage of skills due to inadequate investment in long-term planning and training.

- **Inconsistency in (or lack of) regulation and transparency** – The *BRW* report says the Australian Taxation Office currently has little idea of the number, worth or operations of organisation in the charity sector. In addition, there is an absence of accountability and reporting standards to bind groups in the sector. This can cause donors to be unsure where their money is going. The magazine again called on the Federal Government to take action, urging it to put in place more rigid guidelines to improve charity regulation and transparency.

Sector representatives told *BRW* said that the effects of these problems were already starting to be felt: “We are already seeing cracks,” said the chair of the Non-Profit Roundtable Advisory Council Elizabeth Cham.

“As the demands of the sector get greater and greater, governments expect more with less. We can do that for five years, but five years is up and now these organisations are cannibalising themselves.”

The *BRW* investigation also took a swipe at religious organisations, saying they had taken advantage of “lax” taxation regulations and exemptions.

Returning to the overall charity sector, Nonprofit Australia chief executive Jane Schwager, and her Philanthropy Australia counterpart Gina Anderson, said reforms needed to occur – and occur quickly.

Ms Anderson said the sector had a chance to put in place reforms, or run the risk of having them imposed on them by someone else.

“Part of the push for reform will come from philanthropists who want more transparent information before they give out money,” she said.

“I think the sector has time to reform itself, but come the next election, if things aren’t sorting themselves out, there will be increased scrutiny.

“Globally there is increased scrutiny of the sector by media and government ... (It) would be foolish to think that this is not going to happen in Australia.”

Poche tops Australian giving list

A donation in excess of \$30 million has seen freight magnate Greg Poche top a list of Australia’s “most generous donors” published in the same edition of *BRW* magazine.

While Mr Poche’s donation of \$32.5 million towards the building of a melanoma unit at Sydney’s Mater Hospital was not the biggest sum given by an individual to charity during the previous 12 months, it took him to the top of the list because it represented the largest percentage of net wealth given by an individual through a donation – 4.3%.

Mr Poche sold his freight operation in 2003 for \$750 million. His donation to Mater Hospital is believed to be the largest ever made to a single cause in Australian history.

Among the other top donors contained in the list was the late Marjory Edwards, a former Adelaide pastoralist, who gave away \$A37 million in her will to a dozen charities (a larger amount than Mr Poche’s gift but a slightly smaller percentage of her net wealth).

According to *BRW*, the biggest regular donor to charity was shopping centre tycoon and Football Federation Australia chairman Frank Lowy, who reportedly gives away \$15 million – or 0.3% of his net worth – each year.

The report noted that Australia still lagged far behind other nations when it came to generosity. The total amount of money Australians donated to charities in 2005 was 0.68% of GDP. In comparison, the US donated 1.6% of GDP last year.

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8. New ABS report ties together social capital indicators

A new Australian Bureau of Statistics publication has drawn together previously published data on social capital.

The report – *Aspects of Social Capital* – compiles statistics from previous ABS reports dating back over the past decade to provide a snapshot of social capital indicators grouped under more than a dozen related topics.

These topics range from living arrangements, cultural diversity and residential mobility to indicators looking at trust, access and provision of support, giving, conservation practices, social participation, voluntary work and caring.

The report contains no new data but provides a handy insight into where Australia is at in many areas related to social capital (although it only provides “the range of relevant indicators” on the subject available from the ABS).

As ABS statistician Denis Trewin explains in the report’s preface, the “relatively recent emergence of social capital as a field of interest in its own right” means that the data drawn on for this report comes from a relatively small pool.

However, Mr Trewin adds that the ABS’ General Social Survey being conducted this year will contain a “significant number of social capital related items not previously collected by the ABS”.

Publication of survey results, expected early next year, should expand on the data available and give some real indicators – both up-to-date and over time – on social capital topics.

More information on the *Aspects of Social Capital* report, including a link to download the document free of charge - is available from the ABS site: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4911.0?OpenDocument>.

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9. Reader Feedback – extending DGR

We love to hear your views on community sector issues and on the articles we run in ‘Our Community Matters’.

Following last month’s article on the extension of DGR eligibility, Dr Graeme Smith, Managing Director of the Lost Dog’s Home in Melbourne, writes that even with the extension in DGR eligibility to include “animal welfare”, not all groups that work with animals will qualify:

“I enjoyed reading your latest newsletter. In relation to tax and DGR status I think you put the Federal Government’s position re charitable activities and advocacy quite well.

“The links below take you to the new legislation and the explanatory memorandum.

“In our area (animal welfare) DGR status will go to the animal welfare charities that are looking after and collecting unowned or unwanted animals in the short term. It will not go to organisations that are simply advocating changes to laws or whose primary function is looking after owned animals.

“Shelters that deal in wildlife only apply under a different section.

“If you click on the links below they will take you to the relevant information.

“I found the examples in the explanatory memorandum to be very helpful.

- Legislation: <http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au/piweb/Repository/Legis/Bills/Linked/25050607.pdf>
- Explanatory memorandum: <http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au/piweb/Repository/Legis/ems/Linked/25050607.pdf>

“It may also be useful to publish the ATO’s Non Profit Info line – Ph 1 300 130 248. This is the number to call if you wish to have an application form for DGR sent out.”

Please send your comments on this issue or any others affecting the community sector to kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au.

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[FLASHBACK] Extending DGR

The Budget didn’t touch one of the most important aspects of what’s amiss with our present system – the narrow and many would say outmoded definition of a ‘charity’ and the exclusive and highly inconsistent way DGRs are defined and designated.

The government has, however, finally moved to implement its promise to extend the categories of DGR to cover war memorials, disaster relief, animal welfare, charitable services and educational scholarships.

Any group with any of these objectives that has not yet gained DGR status should send in another application immediately.

(Our Community Matters, June 2006)

UPDATE:

The new DGR legislation referred to above received Royal Assent on June 30, 2006. The new categories took effect on July 1. For more information go to <http://ato.gov.au/nonprofit/content.asp?doc=/content/76199.htm>.

10. Community Briefs

Anaphylaxis policy now online

We are continuing to add new policies to our Policy Bank at www.ourcommunity.com.au/policybank.

The latest addition is an [Anaphylaxis Policy](#), which has been kindly contributed to the Policy Bank by Kindergarten Parents Victoria (KPV).

KPV developed the policy with the support of Anaphylaxis Australia Inc., the Royal Children's Hospital, Department of Allergy and the Department of Human Services.

The resulting document is a useful reference tool for any organisation considering their response to anaphylaxis – a life-threatening allergic reaction that affects up to 2% of the general population and up to 5% of children.

Other template documents available for download from the Policy Bank include a range of Human Resources Policies (Diversity Policies, Volunteer Policies, etc.), Values Policies (Code of Ethics), Board Operational Policies (Conflict of Interest, Board Attendance, etc.), Financial Management Policies (Budget Planning, Investment Planning, etc.), and many others.

In total, there are now around 50 policies you can download and use to help shape your organisation's own policies and procedures.

What's on your community-business partnership wish list?

In every edition of the Our Community-published corporate social responsibility newsletter, *Business Community Intelligence* (BCI), we highlight some community organisations seeking business support.

This section is designed to encourage businesses to think beyond 'the usual suspects' when formulating their CSR or partnerships programs. We also want to show businesses that community organisations do not just want their money – that there are all sorts of partnership activities a business and community group can undertake together.

If you would like your group to be featured in the newsletter email us and tell us in 200 words or less:

- The name of your group
- What your group does
- What you would like to get out of a partnership with a business
- What you can offer a business in return
- Contact details (for publication)

If you need some tips on how to frame your response, refer to the free help sheets at www.ourcommunity.com.au/partnerships.

We can't guarantee you a spot in the newsletter and even if you do make it in, we can't guarantee you a partnership – but you'll never know if you don't have a go.

Send your responses via email to kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au by the close of business on July 25.

State of the Community

A reminder that the State of the Community survey is still open – but it will be closing soon.

If you would like to have your say on how your organisation is travelling, as well as issues relating to the community sector in general, you can take part in the survey at www.ourcommunity.com.au/communitysurvey2006.

Results will be revealed in the next edition of the newsletter.

Getting on top of grants

All subscribers to this newsletter should have received our Special Bulletin on the Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs' [Volunteer Small Equipment Grants](#) - without a doubt one of the best community grants programs in Australia.

If you missed the bulletin and would like to apply, you only have a few days left – the program closes this Friday, July 21.

All EasyGrants subscribers received the Special Bulletin on the day of the program's release and have since also received another bulletin on the Telstra Assistance Fund – another great program we didn't want you to miss.

These special bulletins, in addition to the regular EasyGrants newsletter, are a result of our commitment to providing the best grants resource in the country.

You can find out more about EasyGrants at www.ourcommunity.com.au/easygrants

Social return workshops

A two-day workshop to help community sector organisations create social impacts will be held along the east coast later in the year.

The Social Ventures Australia (SVA) Social Return Workshops are designed to provide tools to enable the identification and articulation of an organisation's purpose, indicate its capacity relative to its peers, assist in building a performance culture, and clearly and comprehensively articulate an organisation's results to any stakeholder in any context.

The workshops will be held from 9am to 4.30pm in Brisbane on August 28-29, in Sydney on September 28-29, and in Melbourne on November 20-21. They cost \$400 for people from not-for-profit organisations.

For more information visit www.socialventures.com.au

Partnerships Week starts soon

State and territory winners of the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships will be showcased at events taking place around Australia later this month.

Organised as part of National Community Business Partnerships Week from August 21 to 25, the events will also include keynote addresses, workshops case studies and partnerships expos.

Events will be occurring in Brisbane on Monday, August 21; in Darwin and Sydney on Tuesday, August 22; in Canberra and Adelaide on Wednesday, August 23; in Melbourne and Perth on Thursday, August 24; and in Hobart on Friday, August 25. To register, go to www.partnerships.gov.au.

Calling on small towns to help the "grey nomads"

A new Sydney-based research project hopes to find better ways for rural towns to involve "grey nomads" – described as people aged over 50 who travel around the country for long periods in a caravan, campervan or motor-home – as volunteers.

Volunteering on the Move: Enhancing the Grey Nomad Experience and Increasing Volunteering in Outback Towns is being co-ordinated by Volunteering Australia, with help from University Technology Sydney and the University of Western Sydney.

The study will look at towns and groups that already involve these volunteers and speak with the "nomads" themselves about their volunteering experiences. It will also work with new projects specifically designed to involve "grey nomads" and then revisit the projects to assess their benefits and successes.

Researchers are looking for rural towns with a population of less than 3000 people that want to take part in the research project, as well as existing programs that use "grey nomads". If you wish to help, contact Annette Maher at Annette@volunteeringaustralia.org or Jenny Onyx at jenny.onyx@uts.edu.au

Grey nomads can also take part by completing an online survey at the Volunteering Australia website - www.volunteeringaustralia.org.

11. Community Jobs

A selection of community jobs from Our Community's latest *Good Moves* newsletter – listing Australia-wide community sector vacancies:



Good Moves :: Jobs Bulletin

www.ourcommunity.com.au

ACT

Job Title	Organisation	
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	GROW	Details

VIC

Job Title	Organisation	
Web & Design Officer	Melbourne Citymission	Details
Major Donor & Bequests Officer	Melbourne Citymission	Details
Donor Database Officer	Melbourne Citymission	Details
Business and Development Director	Victorian Council of Social Service	Details
Assistant Manager	SPAN Community House	Details
Administration Officer and PA	Children First Foundation	Details
Fundraiser/Stakeholder Relations Manager	Jesuit Social Services	Details
Operations Manager	Port Phillip Housing Association Limited	Details
Finance, Corporate Services Manager	Port Phillip Housing Association Limited	Details
General Manager	Involvement Volunteers Association Inc.	Details
Chief Executive Officer	Unable to disclose	Details
Kinship Family Support	The Mirabel Foundation	Details
Volunteer Co-ordinator	Victorian AIDS Council	Details
Office Manager	Reichstein Foundation	Details
SPAN Volunteer Tutor Program (SVTP)	SPAN Community House	Details
Sexual & Reproductive Health Co-ordinator	Women's Health West	Details

www.ourcommunity.com.au/jobs

www.ourcommunity.com.au - Good Moves Newsletter - Your best choice to find and advertise a job



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. People can sign up to receive their own copy at www.ourcommunity.com.au/signup.

If you would like to reproduce anything in this newsletter in your own newsletters or websites, you are free to do so. Please just add a small credit line, "courtesy of www.ourcommunity.com.au" and a direct link to the www.ourcommunity.com.au site if on a web page.

13. About Our Community

Our Community is a world-leading social enterprise providing:

1. www.ourcommunity.com.au - Australia's most useful website and publishing house, encompassing the nation's largest and most diverse membership base and 15 knowledge and service hubs - accelerating the impact of Australia's 700,000 community organisations
2. [Australian Institute for Community Practice and Governance](#) - practical and accessible certificated training delivered locally through our training Institute
3. [Centre for Best Practice in Grantmaking](#) - the unique suite of grantmaking services for government
4. [Centre for Community-Business Partnerships](#) - cutting edge Corporate Social Responsibility resources for large, medium and small business and community organisations

Our Community's website currently consists of 15 major Centres of Excellence.

Make a Difference

- [Australian Giving Centre](#): Helping Individuals and Workplaces Give in Every Way
- [Centre for Community-Business Partnerships](#): Connect, Make a Difference and Form a Partnership
- [Boards, Committees & Governance Centre](#): Build a Better Board; Be a Better Board Member; and Find a Board Position

Find & Manage Money

- [Community Funding Centre](#): Helping all Community Groups and Schools Find Money
- [Community Financial Centre](#): Banking Solutions and Services
- [Centre for Best Practice in Grantmaking](#): Achieving Best Practice with Grants, Awards and Scholarship Programs

Build Capacity

- [Marketing, Media & Post Centre](#): Delivering Better Results for Community Groups
- [Australian Institute of Community Practice & Governance \(AICPG\)](#): The A-Z of Training & Resources for Managing Community Groups
- [Leadership Centre](#): Community Groups Can Do: Leadership
- [Communities in Control](#): Giving Voice – and Support – to Grassroots Community Groups
- [Jobs / Recruitment](#): The First Place for Good Moves in the Community Sector
- [Centre for What Works](#): The First and Best Place for Community

Buy Supplies & Be Informed

- [Community Marketplace](#): Providing all Community Groups with Excellent Value Products and Services
- [Insurance & Risk Management Centre](#): Helping Community Groups Manage Risk & Get Insurance
- [TechCommunity Centre](#): Technology Resources and Services for Community Groups
- [Calendar of Key Events](#): Listing of nationally significant events

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please email service@ourcommunity.com.au and put "Unsubscribe-OCM" in the subject line.

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Insurance Peace of Mind

Australia's oldest insurer – GIO – offers community groups peace of mind with competitive insurance products.

Why Choose GIO?

- GIO has a Public and Products Liability Insurance Policy which has been specifically tailored for small community organisations.
- An optional pay by the month facility - allows you to smooth out your cash flow.
- We have a dedicated NFPO team that understands your organisation – someone actually speaks to you.
- A national 1300 Hotline – you only pay the cost of a local call.
- A prompt quotation turnaround – we aim to respond to your request within 2 working days of receiving it.
- GIO rewards risk management. If you don't currently have a risk management program we will supply you with a risk management tool which, once completed, will entitle you to a 10% premium discount on your next renewal.

What does GIO's NFPO Public & Products Liability Insurance Policy Cover?

- Cover up to \$20,000,000 is available
- Cover is automatically provided for small fund raising events (<100 attendees). Extra premium may be payable for larger fund raising events such as, live drama, dance and music performances, entertainment, functions, parades and festivals.
- Voluntary workers are covered for claims made against them as a result of the performance of volunteer work for the NFPO.
- Cover for claims against members for personal injury caused by the member whilst engaged as a member in activities organised by the organisation.
- Additional cover (up to \$2,000,000) can be requested for claims for personal injury to members participating in certain low risk sport and recreational activities. An additional premium will be payable for this cover.

For more information or a quotation

Please contact GIO:

Phone: 1300 763 117 (quote reference 2134)

Fax: 1300 799 786

Email: nfpo@suncorp.com.au.

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