

BVRC NEWS

Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre Newsletter



AUGUST 2011 #44

BVRC UPDATE



As Melbourne battled through what seemed like the coldest winter in decades, the team at the BVRC stayed warm by keeping busy!

There continues to be a strong demand for volunteers from not-for-profit organisations, as well as volunteers seeking interesting volunteer positions. With the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Volunteer more than halfway over, we continue to work to facilitate and promote volunteering within Boroondara, as well as volunteering on a broader scale.

We are happy to welcome a new team member, Catherine, who has replaced Menik while she is on maternity leave. Catherine comes to us after previously working at Boroondara Library Service on a casual basis for several years.

6TH ANNUAL BVRC VOLUNTEER EXPO - 9 MARCH 2011

For those who couldn't attend, we thought you might like to know that we held another most successful BVRC Volunteer Expo on Wednesday 9 March, 2011, from 2pm-7pm, at the Hawthorn Town Hall.

This year, 627 people wandered through the Expo and chatted with representatives from the 51 member agencies present, and judging by the atmosphere a good time was had by all.

We've already booked the date for next year's Expo, so block out Wednesday 14 March 2012 any time between 2-7pm at the Hawthorn Town Hall, and we'll give you more information closer to the date. And best of all, it's free to attend.



2011 - INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE VOLUNTEER +10 (IYV+10)

Inspiring the volunteer in you is the theme for 2011, which marks the tenth anniversary of International Year of Volunteers (IYV+10). Ten years seem to have flown by and much has changed within the volunteer sector, with greater checks and balances in place to protect volunteers, including working with children checks, police checks and insurance coverage for volunteers within not-for-profit organisations.

So for the remainder of this year, why not take the opportunity to further promote IYV+10 in order to maintain the momentum started ten years ago and continue to improve the situation for volunteers and organisations that use them.

More information about IYV+10 is available at www.iyvplus10.com.au, as well as ways to continue to celebrate volunteering. We hope, this year, that you've inspired the volunteer in you!



2011 INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY BARBECUE

International Volunteer Day is an annual event which takes place on 5 December.

International Volunteer Day (IVD) was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1985, and is now celebrated throughout communities worldwide.

This year the BVRC will again celebrate International Volunteer Day with a barbecue on Wednesday 7 December, starting at 4.30pm and finishing at 7pm. The barbecue will be held at the BVRC, 'Chambly', 405 Camberwell Road, Camberwell.

We'll be sending out invitations closer to the date, but please mark this date in your diary as we'd like to see as many of you there as possible. RSVPs are essential so if you'd like to attend, please let us know by Friday 25 November.

CHANGES TO THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010

From 1 August 2011 new Victorian law about sexual harassment will extend to include volunteers. Organisations will now have a new responsibility under this law to make it clear to their volunteers that sexual harassment is not acceptable in any form. This means that volunteers are protected from harassment, but also

that volunteers must abide by the law and not sexually harass others.

You can find out more about the changes to the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 on the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission website:

[www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.a](http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au)

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or telephone 1300 292 153,
or email enquiries@veohrc.vic.gov.au

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

The Working With Children Check (WWCC) was first initiated in 2006 and has continued to be progressively rolled out since that date. The WWCC card is valid for five years, which means that anyone whose card was issued in 2006 will need to renew their WWCC if they intend to continue doing 'child-related work'.

WWCCs are free for volunteers, so if you need to renew now's the time to do so.

You can find further information on the Department of Justice website:

www.justice.vic.gov.au

Don't forget that you must also advise the Department of Justice if any of your personal details change during the card's validity period. You can update your personal information online.

AGENCY PROFILE VERY SPECIAL KIDS

In this edition we're profiling Very Special Kids, an organisation that was founded in 1984 by two families who were experiencing the trauma of their children dying, and who came together to support each other. At that time, there was little in the way of community support services available for families who had children with life-threatening illnesses. Very Special Kids was established in 1985 and here are some facts about the organisation:



- ❖ Very Special Kids provides support to families throughout their experience of caring for children with life-threatening illnesses, from diagnosis through to recovery or bereavement.
- ❖ Services are offered free-of-charge by a team of professional Family Support Workers (including social workers, psychologists, family therapists and counsellors) and hospice staff, who are also supported by trained Family Support volunteers.
- ❖ Family Support Volunteers work closely with families, mainly in their homes, but also in hospitals

and at Very Special Kids House. All volunteers who work directly with families are supervised and must complete Very Special Kids' nine-week Family Support Volunteer Training Program. In addition to supervision, a professional development program also provides trained volunteers with opportunities to further their knowledge.

- ❖ Very Special Kids currently supports more than 800 families across Victoria, and this number has been increasing each year. Very Special Kids support services include respite and end-of-life care at Very Special Kids House.
- ❖ Some children are at a critical stage of their illness, but others have been part of Very Special Kids for years following diagnosis, with many families supporting a child whose condition will gradually deteriorate over a long period of time, and who requires a high level of ongoing care for many years, which places increasing strain on families.
- ❖ The major annual fundraiser for Very Special Kids is The Piggy Bank Appeal. The Appeal runs throughout September with businesses, community groups and whole towns getting together to organise activities with the aim of raising over \$1 million.

So, as you can tell, volunteers are an integral part of the support services provided by Very Special Kids. At the moment there are a number of volunteer roles listed with Very Special Kids, including Friends of Very Special Kids (assist with fundraising and

administration) and volunteers who work directly with families either as Home Volunteers, Hospital Volunteers or Very Special Kids House Volunteers.

If you think you'd like to make a difference in this area and would like to find out more about volunteer opportunities with Very Special Kids, contact us on 9278 4550.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

ALEX BELCHER

For our volunteer profile in this newsletter, we have chosen to interview one of our own dedicated volunteers, Alex Belcher.

Alex came into the BVRC looking for general volunteer work, and as she wasn't quite sure what kind of volunteer work she was interested in, decided that volunteering at the BVRC might give her a good overview of the volunteering roles out there.

Alex has been volunteering for over a year as an Interview Officer at the BVRC once a week. Alex's main tasks as a volunteer include interviewing prospective volunteers and trying to guide them into roles that might be of interest, as well as following up later to see how volunteering roles have worked out.

She is also involved in fundraising for Bethlehem Community, a service that works to provide accommodation and support to homeless women within Melbourne, as well as school-related volunteering.



Alex says that she enjoys volunteering at the BVRC as it allows her to meet a broad range of people, as well as allowing her to contribute positively to the wider community as a whole.

In her (limited) spare time, Alex attempts to maintain a semblance of control on the domestic front, especially with a new puppy in the house, and is also currently training to run the City-to-Surf.

When asked what advice she would give to others who are considering volunteering for the first time, Alex says "Just jump in! Be flexible about what volunteering roles you are looking for, and remember, no one ever regrets volunteering."

UPCOMING TRAINING AND INFORMATION SESSIONS

Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre

We have one more training workshop this year, as listed below. This session is **free of charge**, and is open to everyone to attend. Bookings are essential as places are limited, so give us a call if you'd like to secure a place.

Estate Planning

Date: Thursday 13 October
Time: 10am-12noon
Facilitator: Jennifer Maher,
Maddocks
Venue: Boroondara Room,
8 Inglesby Road,
Camberwell

DAYS, WEEKS AND MONTHS OF INTEREST

Listed below are some forthcoming days, weeks and months that may be of interest to you. Read on for an interesting selection of upcoming and significant days, weeks and months:

SEPTEMBER 2011

- 8 International Literacy Day
- 10 World Suicide Prevention Day
- 21 World Alzheimer's Day

OCTOBER 2011

- 1 International Day for Older Persons
- 5 World Teacher's Day
- 10 World Mental Health Day
- 17 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you have some spare time or do you know someone else who has? These are just some of our member organisations looking for volunteers to be involved in a variety of jobs: For further information on

any of these opportunities please contact the BVRC on 9278 4550.

Camcare - Opportunity for students or recent graduates - would you like to work in a retail shop & learn about how the business works, and to be part of Mentoring Position Program? Come & join us until March 2012. There are 1 or 2 shifts only per wk and we have a fun working environment.

Foodbank Victoria - Food Rescue Warehouse Volunteers are needed to pack food items into hampers and quality control.

Volunteer Alliance - Volunteers with a professional background needed as committee members. Responsibilities include setting & monitoring strategic direction, establishing & monitoring policies, overseeing compliance with legislation & agreements, monitoring management & financial performance.

Multicultural Hub - The Volunteer Work Experience Project is an intensive volunteer project designed to provide Australian work experience over short period of time to newly arrived migrants & refugees. The project will provide experience in customer service, office admin, hospitality & events support.



Well, that's it for this edition. We welcome your feedback and look forward to updating you with further information in the future. In the meantime please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends and relatives who may also share an interest in volunteering - don't keep it a secret!

If you would like more information about any of the topics discussed, please contact the staff at the BVRC on 9278 4550. Please also let us know if you no longer wish to receive newsletters from us, but we'll be sorry to see you go.

You can also contact the BVRC by e-mail at bvrc@boroondara.vic.gov.au or via fax on 9835 7896. You're always welcome to visit us again to check the latest volunteer roles listed on our database but call us first to book in an appointment and avoid disappointment.

Our website is located at www.bvrc.org.au and you are able to view an abridged version of our database on www.govolunteer.com.au or at www.volunteer.vic.gov.au. We're also on **Facebook** so see you on the net!

Volunteer!

What better way to spend the day?

