



Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited

Newsletter

April 2009

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Fuel for the spirit ...

Upper Yarra Community House has successfully applied for a \$9286 Community Grant from UYCEL to fund a pilot community restaurant in Yarra Junction.

The project is named 'Koha Community Café'.

Koha is a Maori term which exemplifies the strong sense of 'reciprocity' – mutual generosity and honour – between visitors and hosts embedded in Maori culture: the host of an event gives freely and the beneficiary usually returns the favour by offering a small gift.

'Koha will be modelled on the very successful 'Lentil As Anything' restaurants located in the city,' said project facilitator, Suyin Chan. 'The key principles of the restaurant will be generosity and trust within the community. When we give freely, most reciprocate.'

'Anyone will be welcome to enjoy nutritious, vegetarian meals and pay what they feel the meal is worth – or simply what they can afford.'

'Our research over the past 12 months demonstrates a significant rise in food insecurity in our region – not only for those on government benefits but also those who are working for low incomes,' said Suyin.

As the project develops it will offer much more than food! According to Suyin, the team are developing a range of initiatives to value-add Koha in the Upper Yarra community.

Medium-term, the aim is to run the restaurant as a self sustaining project – based primarily on the talent and generosity of volunteers and the use of local produce – demonstrating our community is a strong, self-reliant and inclusive one where individuals value, engage and support each other.

Future plans include a series of targeted strategies offering training, education, and employment with a focus on skills, confidence and networking.

'We hope to foster other services and projects as well; for example, legal aid

visits once a week, health advice talks, classes on how to prepare good vegetarian meals, preserving food or making jams ... we are always open to suggestions – particularly from those who are willing to participate,' Ms Chan said.

'I am both delighted and proud that our Community Banks share our vision and optimism. With negotiations over a premises in their final stages, we hope to hit the ground running within a few months.'

UYCEL Executive Officer, Geoff Vickers, praised Suyin's project.

'One of our core roles is to support community strengthening – and Koha can deliver this on several levels,' Geoff said.

Anyone interested in volunteering their time or skills – or both! – to Koha Community Café is welcome to call Suyin on 0403 185 580 or email her at suyinchan@uych.org.au

Above: Koha Community Café supporters with project facilitator, Suyin Chan, and UYCEL Executive Officer, Geoff Vickers, celebrate the successful grant.

New Community Grants

Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited has approved a total of \$39,176 in funding from its latest round of Community Grants.

As always, our shareholders deserve most of the credit for these partnerships with a diverse range of worthwhile initiatives in the Upper Yarra.

Thanks to your support and advocacy over the years our Branches continue to generate significant profits which are regularly reinvested in our community.

Upper Yarra Valley Historical Society – \$4990 to repaint front exterior of the Upper Yarra Museum



A much-loved local icon housed in the former Yarra Junction Railway Station, the 'Museum', established in 1972, is an important repository of local history.

Largely unfunded and run by volunteers, every Sunday it offers visitors a glimpse of times past, while – during autumn every year – its famous 'Vintage Engine Crank-Up' brings enthusiasts from far and wide to celebrate the heritage of stationery engines.

In recent years the Museum has been increasing its inventory of stock and taking on new restoration projects, such as two huts used as accommodation during construction of the Upper Yarra Dam.

The UYCEL funding will help UYVHS preserve our past for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations.

Millgrove / Warburton Branch of TOWN (Take Off Weight Naturally) – \$2000 to upgrade computer

A non-profit organisation established in Melbourne in 1968 and with branches established all over Victoria, TOWN provides a support group for those who wish to lose weight through a healthy diet and a sensible lifestyle.

TOWN's new laptop will replace much older equipment and will be used to help members track their progress in losing weight. It will also record the group's financial transactions and help generate reports.

Club member, Sue Slusarek, praised UYCEL's support.

'Finding the money from our shoestring budget was close to impossible. As it has done so often in the past for so many worthwhile local campaigns, our Community Banks have helped us build a platform for the future.'

Warburton Highway Tourism – \$1400 for video display at the Visitor Information Centre

Founded in 2004, Warburton Highway Tourism's mission is to assist locals and visitors to participate in and enjoy the natural resources of the Upper Yarra region, and to support and promote its 80-plus tourism-related members.



The grant will pay for a large, flat-screen TV which will act as a focal point for visitors to the visitor information centre in Warburton, staffed entirely by volunteers seven days a week.

The unit will be linked to a DVD player and will display videos and photographs, encouraging visitors to further explore local attractions.

Warburton Primary Out of School Hours Care (WOOSH) – \$3000 for air-conditioning

Now entering its second successful year as the only provider of before and after hours care for primary school students in Warburton, in late 2008 WOOSH was approved to deliver 'Vacation Care' over school holidays as well.

WOOSH is located in the School's large 'multi-purpose' room, which can get extremely hot over the summer months, according to the program's co-ordinator, Melissa Hall.

'We have been concerned about the health, safety and comfort of both children and staff who attend the program,' said Melissa. 'This problem also threatened our future viability, as some families may have chosen to opt out of WOOSH.'

'Installing an air-conditioner will benefit the program immensely: it will keep everyone comfortable on those many hot summer days and help ensure we remain viable into the future,' she said.

Upper Yarra Chaplaincy Committee – \$2000 contribution toward pastoral care at UYSC for 2009

The many activities of the Upper Yarra Chaplaincy Committee include co-ordinating the delivery of pastoral care to students at Upper Yarra Secondary College, with a total cost of about \$25,000 over the current year.

Beyond offering a religious education, the work undertaken by the Chaplaincy program includes both education and loving support to students in overcoming personal issues and in avoiding substance abuse and self-destructive behaviour.

UYCEL's grant will assist in employing two chaplains – one full-time and one part-time – to spend quality time with troubled young people, many of whom come from difficult backgrounds, gaining their confidence and trust and encouraging them to participate in a range of self-affirming programs, including special extra-curricular activities during weekends and holidays.

Warburton Primary School – \$3500 funding for School Choir

Established only last year, Warburton Primary's choir has already become a valued activity on the School curriculum.

'Staff and parents alike have commented that children really love being part of the program,' said co-principal, Kerry Jorgensen.

'It raises their self-esteem and offers an extra dimension to their education at an early age.

'Through its participation in many community events the Choir has also helped raise the profile of our School.'

The grant will cover employment of the singing teacher for 2009, a sound system, uniforms, music and CDs.



UYCEL Sponsorships

We allocate Community Grants funds, essentially, on the merit of each application in how it addresses community needs.

In supporting some projects, however, the Board requires a commercial return for investment – generally in the form of visual branding for our Branches.

The two following initiatives fall into this category.

Valley Productions Theatre Company – \$3000 sponsorship

A fairly new but active organisation with a volunteer membership of 25 (and growing), Valley Productions Theatre Company is planning to perform six shows of the musical 'Grease' in the near future and intend to produce two shows each year thereafter..

The production, which will be professionally organised and choreographed, will give aspiring singers, dancers and actors an opportunity to showcase their talents, according to President of the VPTC, Sally Kellerman.

The Theatre Company has already received a huge amount of interest in the project and are hopeful of a sellout season.

The Trail Bike Project – \$3627 sponsorship of a community noticeboard

The Trail Bike Project is a Statewide initiative, co-ordinated by the Department of Sustainability and Environment, to help ensure trail bike riders can continue to enjoy using our State forests without disrupting residents' rights to enjoy living nearby.

The noticeboard – to be prominently located in Yarra Junction – will inform riders of the legal track network in the local forests and encourage them to use purpose-built facilities at Limberlost Road between Powelltown and Noojee, rather than unloading and starting their rides close to residential properties in Yarra Junction, Wesburn and Warburton.

Project Officer, Joy Harte, is optimistic about the project's potential.

'We have worked closely with locals via a Community Reference Group to try and solve some of the issues with sharing the use of forest areas,' she said.

'By providing information in the township of Yarra Junction – the gateway to the State forests – riders will be able to make an informed decision on the best places to ride without annoying the locals.'

The Trail Bike Project has already invested \$150,000 in the Trail Bike Visitor Area near Powelltown, with further funding spent on rehabilitation works at the Wesburn 'Log Dump' – to be renamed Cemetery Junction.



Upper Yarra Chaplaincy Committee – hard at work.

Have a say in the **future** of your **community**

Director, Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited

Expressions of interest are invited for the position of Director of Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited, operators of Warburton and Yarra Junction **Community Bank**® Branches of Bendigo Bank.

As a volunteer Director you will act as an ambassador for our Branches, actively building their customer base. You will also provide the leadership and management skills at Board level to support and drive the Company's strategic direction, goals and objectives.

Although the position is voluntary, as a director of our Company you will have a real say in the future direction of both **Community Bank**® Branches and your community.

Further information is available from Geoff Vickers on 5966 9028. Please forward your expression of interest to: UYCEL, P.O. Box 434, Warburton, VIC. 3799.

Directors on the move

Retiring – Barry Sharman



A hard-working Steering Committee member who helped establish our Yarra Junction Branch, Barry joined the Board last year.

'Barry is a man of diverse talents and experience who brought a range of skills and inputs to the Board,' said UYCEL Chairman, Rodney McKail. 'We look forward to working with him into the future.'

New Board member – Steve Freestone



Steve and his wife Sue moved to Warburton 20 years ago and ran the Warburton Newsagency for four years.

He has been a member of the Warburton Advancement League and was on the inaugural Townscape Committee, which finalized the first

Warburton Townscape Plan.

Steve has served in Apex for many years, holding the positions of President and Treasurer. He also has been on committees for an annual air show, a jazz festival and a variety of community fundraising initiatives.

He is a teacher at Yarra Valley Grammar in Ringwood East, where he has held management positions.

Steve has a Fine Arts Degree and an Honours Degree, a Graduate Diploma of Education and a Graduate Certificate in Multimedia, plus Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment.

Steve and Sue raised three children in the Yarra Valley – Katie 26, Amy 24 & Jessica 22. They attended Warburton Primary School and Upper Yarra Secondary College.

New Board member – Sharon Hawkins



Sharon was born and raised in the USA, moving to Yarra Junction in 1989 to marry Norm. She has two sons and two grandsons in Oregon.

Having graduated from Springfield High School in Oregon, Sharon holds a Diploma of Office Administration II

from Western Business University, Eugene, Oregon and the Certified Professional Secretary Certificate from the State of Oregon, USA. She worked as an Administrative Assistant to the Director of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Athletics at Lane Community College, Eugene, Oregon.

In 1995 Sharon retired from Yarra Valley Community Health and from directorship of Hawkins Haulage, a family business, but remains involved as a member of the Yarra Junction Community Bank Steering Committee, a member of Upper Yarra Ladies Probus and as Founder/Queen of the local Chapter 77064 of Red Hat Society – Gaggles of Giggles.

Community FOCUS

Wesburn Junior Football Club

Wesburn Junior Football Club is a family friendly club focused on providing a safe, positive atmosphere for kids of all ages to develop their footy skills and self worth by playing and having fun as part of a team.

Through support from a strong committee of volunteers and local businesses the Bulldogs' membership and club facilities are getting bigger and better every year.

'In 2009 we'll have seven teams – one in each age division in the competition – which is a great achievement for a club

of our size,' said WJFC Treasurer, Kelly McIntosh.



'Our teams needed new jumpers, which our Community Banks have generously



sponsored, and the recent renovations to our bathroom facilities were also completed thanks to Community Enterprise funding.

'These improvements have benefited not only our club, but other groups such as Yarra Junction Cricket Club and emergency services groups,' said Kelly.

If you want to know more about the WJFC Bulldogs, phone Kelly on 5966 2047 or email mcintosh@arrabri.com.au

Board of Directors, Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited
Registered Office: 3399 Warburton Highway, Warburton, VIC 3799

Rodney McKail, Geoff Vickers, Max Magee, Rodney Woods, Elizabeth Fox, Barry Marshall, Jaqui Hall,
Sharon Hawkins and Steve Freestone