



2016 Finalists – Heart of the Community

Blacktown Workers Club Group

Jhan Leach – A Real Hero

A courageous local woman, Jhan Leach, volunteers at the Blacktown Women and Girls Health Centre. Jhan's journey from victim to advocate has inspired many in the local community. Since being with Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Centre, Jhan has achieved the ASES Quality Improvement Program Accreditation for the centre and in securing ClubGRANTS funding for the organisation. Jhan has also enabled her staff to engage with increased counselling services, provided crisis support to women and children on a daily basis and worked collaboratively with the Domestic Violence liaison officers throughout the Blacktown Police Local commands and with other agencies locally to help meet their crisis needs.

Byron Bay Services Club

Kimberley's Kokoda Walk for Clubs and Community

Over the 18 years Kimberley DeRighetti worked at Byron Bay Services Club, she came to meet many old Diggers in their 80s and 90s who had served in Papua New Guinea during WW2. Inspired by their stories, Kimberley decided to pay homage to their spirit by walking the Kokoda Track, taking defence force medallions for locals and the RSL sub-branch with her on the trek. Kimberley was touched by the villagers she met while on the tour, and upon returning to Australia, put the call out for items which could be of help. Locals answered the call, with over 150kg of donated clothes, blankets, shoes, sporting goods and toys sent back to New Guinea and handed out to children in the mountainous villages.

Ettalong Diggers

Megan Napier – Not a Material Girl

Megan Napier has been nominated for her tireless volunteer work in the community. Through her newly created business Material Girlz Event Styling, Megan has become the go-to expert for charity events, offering her services free of charge within the community

for different fundraising initiatives. An example of this is Pink in the City – a huge fundraiser primarily organised by Megan to raise money for the Cancer Council. It was a sold out event held at Ettalong Diggers, and Megan motivated the entire community to assist. The venue was transformed by Material Girlz into a set from *Sex in The City* and as a result of three months of hard work, which raised \$40,000 for the Cancer Council.

Gwandalan Bowling Club

Ian (Red) Wall – Small Community, Big Star

A member of Gwandalan Bowling Club, Ian Wall has been, and still is a friend of the community. More commonly known as Red, he has been involved in the past 13 years in various activities for the betterment of the Gwandalan/Summerland Point community including the management of junior rugby league, nippers, golf and lawn bowls. Red has received a recognition award for Zone 15 Volunteer of outstanding bowls administrations, two sports achievement awards from Australian Government for outstanding contribution to Gwandalan Bowling Club, and in 2009 he received the Annual Community award from the Gwandalan Fishing Club for unconditional Community support.

Halekulani Bowling Club

Halekulani Bowling Club and Rotary

Since starting the annual Christmas tree sales in 2009, the Rotary Clubs on the Central Coast have sold over 6000 Christmas trees; raising nearly \$140,000 for local rotary projects. Out of the money raised \$90,000 has been passed onto the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) program. The GRG program seeks to help Grandparents with the challenges raising their grandchildren can have, such as legal issues, isolation, parenting issues and family conflict. The GRG program is managed by the Central Coast Family Support Services (CCFSS); with generous support from 10 Rotary Clubs, Inner Wheel, Lions and The Pandora Committee. However, the community

has just as much involvement in this program. By buying a Christmas tree you are investing in the future of this program. Today the GRG program has over 160 families with over 490 children.

Katoomba RSL

Nick Darius - No Finer Man

NOVA Employment & Training Program Inc (NOVA) has nominated Nick Darius and the Katoomba RSL for working over the last five years to take a proactive stance when it comes to hiring people with a disability. People with Intellectual Disability, people with Physical Disability and those experiencing Mental Health barriers are all employed as testimony that Katoomba RSL's inclusive hiring policies are more than paper documents but practices lived through the day to day operations of the club.

Katoomba RSL

Ray Wiles - Our Mountains Need this Man

Ray's inexhaustible service and engagement in the wider Blue Mountains community has been extraordinary, with his current community involvement including Leura Gardens Festival, Central Blue Mountains Rotary, Greystanes Foundation, and the Leura Harvest Festival. Ray has also been 'hands on' with Clean Up Australia for 20 years, a team member of the local Cancer Council Fundraising Committee, and is a co-chairman of the local Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal Committee.

Lightning Ridge District Bowling Club

Laurence & Karnie Walford - Big Hearts of Lightning Ridge

Laurence and Karnie have been together for 33 years and have devoted all of that time working in the community and especially the Indigenous community. Karnie is currently working in maternal and infant health running the 'Did you Know Program?' Her role is to engage Indigenous women and educate them about postnatal care, the importance of immunizing their children, and building resilience. This program, running since 2011 has significantly reduced the death rate for babies. Karnie also delivers another program called 'Now You Are a Family' and which includes education for Indigenous men. She delivers this program in Lightning Ridge, Goodooga, Colli, Walgett, Brewarina and Bourke. Laurence is currently serving on the Lightning Ridge/Walgett Council and has done for 12 years. He is also President of the Lightning Ridge Bowling Club and as such volunteers to drive the club courtesy bus to pick up the Indigenous preschool children from home in the morning and return them after school

Muswellbrook RSL Club

Karen Egan a Passionate Fundraiser and Volunteer

For the past five years, Karen has been the volunteer organiser of the 'Girls Night In' in October - in aid of the National Breast Cancer Foundation. In 2015, \$20,228 was raised, and over the five years close to \$100,000. Each year around 300 tickets are sold to women in the local area for the event. Last year, Karen also decided to hold a night for the men of the district by organising 'The Boy`s Night Out'. The night included: a local Doctor with a talk on Men`s Health, free finger food, raffles, lucky door prizes and a female comedian. The first event raised \$16,000 and all money raised went to the Muswellbrook Men`s Shed.

Roseville Memorial Club

At the Heart of the Local Society

Roseville Memorial Club is a finalist for its impressive commitment to supporting live music and local sport. This energetic commitment has not gone unnoticed in the community with membership of the Club doubling in recent years.

Wests Ashfield Leagues Club

Alan Wilson - Small Steps for Kurt

Alan Wilson has made the finalist list for his tireless fundraising to help severely injured rugby league player Kurt Drysdale. Kurt was left a paralysed after a freak accident on the field in June 2015. Setting up a Facebook page 'SmallstepsforKurt' soon after, Alan started organising events to help with the medical expenses associated with Kurt's care. Additionally, Alan organised a high profile walk with more than 30 NRL identities which raised more than \$40,000. Alan was also instrumental in organising the Unite4Kurt fundraiser at Wests Ashfield Leagues which raised \$140,000.

Woonona Bowling & Recreation Club

Connected with Community

Woonona Bowling Club is nominated in The Heart of the Community category for its commitment to the community through the establishment of barefoot bowls, increased involvement in local fundraising events and partnering with schools in the area. An initiative the club will implement this year is to award 10 students scholarships for school expenses, while Headway and Aspect Autism School Corrimal will receive a \$5000 injection of funds after a charity day held at the Club recently.