

Volunteer Update

Welcome to a new year at Warrigal!

We hope you had a wonderful holiday break with your loved ones and are now recharged for another exciting year ahead.

In this newsletter, we're looking at the heart of why you chose to volunteer at Warrigal and the profound impact of **connectedness**. We cherish hearing your stories of connection with our residents, the diverse activities you engage in, and the beautiful friendships you've nurtured along the way.

Each visit you make holds immeasurable significance for our residents and is deeply valued by our staff and families. Your presence not only keeps our residents connected to their community but also brings sparks of joy into our homes.

As we commence a new year, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering dedication and the invaluable contributions you make. Your commitment to our community truly makes a difference, and we want you to know just how valued and appreciated you are.

If you're looking to reconnect or explore new volunteer opportunities, please don't hesitate to have a chat to the Lifestyle Team Leader or Community Facilitator at your home. They are here to support you and ensure that your volunteering experience is fulfilling and rewarding.

Thank you for making a difference and here's to another year filled with meaningful connections.

Michelle Chate, Volunteer Coordinator



Volunteer Feedback Survey 2024



All volunteers were sent the Warrigal Volunteer Feedback Survey 2024 via email or post last week.

As volunteers, you are an essential part of Warrigal's journey, and we encourage all volunteers to complete this annual survey. Your feedback will play a pivotal role in enhancing the volunteer experience and ensuring that we provide a quality program that supports older people to live their best lives.

Please complete your survey by **Friday 16th February, 2024**

2024 Volunteer Events



National Volunteer Week 20-26 May 2024 - *'Something for Everyone'*

Southern Event - Tuesday, 21 May 2024
Illawarra Event - Thursday, 23 May 2024

Volunteer Christmas Lunches

Southern Event - Tuesday, 26 November 2024
Illawarra Event - Thursday, 28 November 2024

National Student Volunteer Week - 5-11 August 2024

International Volunteers Day - Thursday, 5 December 2024



Connecting through Pastoral Care

Lesley and John Kadwell commenced their volunteer journey in 2020, dedicating their time to providing pastoral care and facilitating church services every fortnight at Albion Park Rail.

“When we moved into a Villa at Warrigal, we were looking to volunteer in some way”. Having previously worked with children and teenagers, they were eager to extend their support to the residents at Albion Park Rail.

Lesley and John find fulfilment engaging with the residents, cherishing moments when they see smiles and engage in meaningful conversations. Lesley fondly recalls a particular resident who was not having a good day. “We watched this resident start to cheer up, join in with singing, and return to her old cheery self”. When we see moments like this, “it’s such a nice feeling to know we are making a difference”.

It is heart-warming to hear these stories of how simple gestures through volunteering can foster meaningful connections and bring joy to older people.



Connecting through Companionship

Michael is part of our Golden Angels program being run at Warrigal Stirling. This program offers companionship to people living with dementia by way of specially trained volunteers.

Michael and Bill have formed a wonderful friendship and connect over their love of football. Bill is a mad Canberra Raiders supporter and as part of his one-on-one visits, Michael showed Bill all the Canberra Raiders grand finals from 1989 onwards. “Bill sure does love the Canberra Raiders”. Michael said.

Michael wasn’t prepared for the joy these YouTube highlights would bring Bill, who watched with tears of happiness as he reminisced these games.

“I enjoy looking at the residents photos, hearing their stories and words of wisdom”.



Connecting through Bus Driving

Klaus has been a dedicated volunteer bus driver for over three years, where his commitment to brightening the lives of residents shines through. As a bus driver, Klaus goes above and beyond to ensure the safety and comfort of residents, greeting each with genuine friendliness and respect. Klaus takes the time to engage with residents, listen to their stories and foster a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Known for his reliability and selflessness, Klaus often fills in for other drivers, ensuring that no resident misses out on the opportunity for a special day out. Klaus’ volunteer service stands as a reminder of the profound impact that one person can have when driven by a genuine desire to make a difference. Klaus is an inspiration, connecting residents through shared experiences and creating a sense of belonging within the community.



Connecting through Warrigal Social



Jan and Fran have collectively dedicated over 30 years to volunteering at Warrigal, through their fundraising work on the Warrigal Care Auxiliary.

This funny and energetic duo have extended their volunteering work to Warrigal Social, which offers individual programs that stimulate and entertain our customers, while socialising with their peers.

“When our customers first attend, they are quite reserved, but then we see them come out of themselves and show their humorous and cheeky personalities. Jan and I both love it and gives us a sense of purpose knowing we are making people smile and have fun”. Fran said.

Volunteering at Warrigal Social has also led to them acquiring new skills, such as learning “board games we never knew existing” and Jan learning how to play cards for the first time in her life!



Connecting through cycling



Our residents at Warrigal Wollongong recently has a fantastic time going for a bike ride with the volunteer team from Cycling Without Age.

The volunteers fundraised to purchase a special trishaw bike (a three-wheeled bike with a bench seat at the front), to take older people on bike rides out in the community.

When they returned, our residents had smiling faces and expressed their absolute love for the experience, enjoying the fresh air, ocean views, and seeing what’s happening around town.

We are very thankful to the wonderful team of volunteers at Cycling Without Age for bringing this amazing experience to our residents!



Why social connection is important for older people

We all have an need for meaningful social connection, and these connections have an even more vital role for an older person’s quality of life.

Social connections have various health benefits including a sense of purpose, increased self-worth, better physical health through group activities and improved mental health by reducing feelings of loneliness and anxiety.

Research has shown that maintaining social well-being may contribute to lower levels of age-related disorders like Alzheimer’s disease and cardiovascular disease. Additionally, remaining socially active can reduce the risk of depression, support brain health, and potentially delay the onset of dementia, according to the Alzheimer’s Association. By prioritising social engagement, this can have a positive impact on both mental and physical health as people age.

Volunteers play a crucial role in facilitating healthy social connections at Warrigal by encouraging residents to join in interest-based activities, connecting with the local community through outings, keeping connected with their faith via Church services, just to name a few. Through your volunteering you offer residents opportunities for engagement, fostering a sense of belonging and avoiding the risk of social isolation.

RE-CONNECT Cards

For those of you engaging in one-on-one visits or visiting groups of residents, we have acquired RE-CONNECT cards to enhance your volunteering experience.

These cards are specifically designed to facilitate enjoyable, effortless, profound, and impactful conversations.

If you would like to make use of these cards, we currently have three sets available for you to borrow to support your volunteering efforts.

To borrow a set, please email me at mchate@warrigal.com.au, and I will send the cards to you.



Volunteer Polo Shirts

While wearing our volunteer polo shirts is not mandatory, we highly encourage our volunteers to wear their polo when volunteering.

We've received numerous positive comments from families, staff, and residents who appreciate being able to easily identify our volunteers within our services.

If you haven't received a polo shirt yet, please contact us at volunteering@warrigal.com.au or text 0436 806 723.

Sizes range from XS to 6XL.



Quiz - Sayings and idioms (numbers)

1. 'Behind the _____ ball'
2. 'It takes _____ to Tango'
3. 'Ten to _____'
4. 'Feel like a _____ dollars'
5. 'No _____ ways about it'
6. '_____ for the road'
7. '_____ Wise Monkeys'
8. 'On cloud _____'
9. 'All in _____ piece'
10. 'Possession is _____ of the law'
11. 'Catch _____'
12. '_____ winks'
13. 'At the _____ hour'
14. 'A bakers _____'



Community Facilitators

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