



Upper Yarra
Community Enterprise

upperyarra.net.au

Newsletter 2011

June

Putting kids first



The Upper Yarra is the historic home of countless 'quiet achievers'.

For more than fifteen years, a locally-based not-for-profit organisation, the team at Melbourne Youth Initiative (MY Initiative) – which includes more than one hundred volunteers – have been providing support and opportunities for children with a disability who engage in behaviour of concern.

Their success and growth over the years required MY Initiative to establish the position of Incorporations Manager last year, a part-time position which UYCE will be funding for the next twelve months with a donation of \$14,248.

'Working with families and schools, MY Initiative delivers a targeted Behaviour Support Consultancy, training and specifically designed respite services,' said CEO, Will Mithen.

'Having this paid position in place frees up the time we formerly spent on administrative tasks, allowing myself and the Board to devote our energy to sustainably growing the organisation, developing new projects and partnerships ... helping us become the kind of community resource we envisage.'

MY Initiative has built strong linkages over the years, with bodies as diverse as Melbourne City Mission, Casa Pallotti – in Millgrove – and the Ritchies chain of supermarkets.

'One really exciting development is that over recent years we have worked closely with Upper Yarra Community House in a unique "mentor-mentee" relationship,' said Will, 'which is helping us both to identify and build our capacity to meet community need.'

A longstanding activity organised by MY Initiative is its school holiday camps for eligible children.

Once or twice a year – as funding permits – 'MY Camps' run for four days and can accommodate 24 children.

'The kids get to enjoy all the usual camp stuff,' said Will, 'such as rock-climbing, swimming, canoeing, flying foxes, games, drama, craft and so forth ... activities that most children find enjoyable, challenging, and often both.'

But all MY Camps offer some special features to ensure everyone can feel included and have fun.

'For example, the child chooses their own activities ... if and when to participate ... and we match our resources and support to their individual, unique needs.'

'We ensure a minimum ratio of one volunteer support worker per child at all times to ensure no one is overlooked or pressured ... and, just as importantly, each volunteer is closely supported by other team members.'

This year's Spring camp will be run at its traditional base, Casa Pallotti in Millgrove.

Learn more at: www.myinitiative.org.au



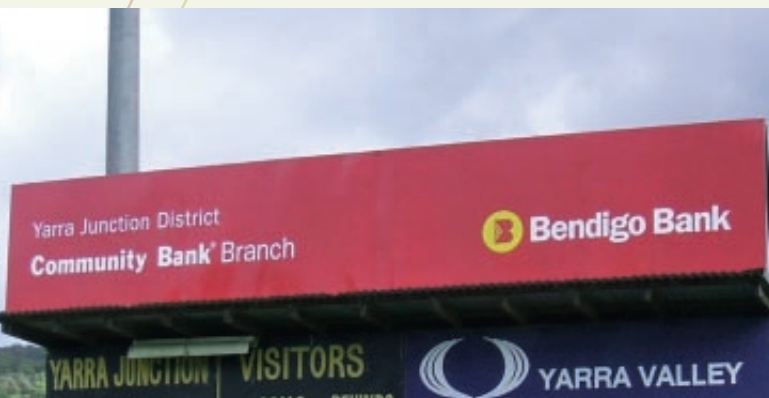
Donations & Sponsorships

Yarra Junction Football and Netball Club – donation and sponsorship totalling \$10,000

Stalwarts of the Upper Yarra community, Yarra Junction Football and Netball Club is enjoying a phase of strong growth.

After languishing at the bottom of the league table for the previous three years, the Senior football team were grand-finalists in 2010.

Improved facilities for netball – partially funded by UYCE – have encouraged greater participation in the sport by women and girls, reinforcing the presence of young women in the Club and the importance of their participation in sport.



UYCE's contribution will pay for new football jumpers and netball uniforms – all with 'Bendigo Bank' branding – plus the construction and installation of a very large sign (mounted over the scoreboard at the ground) and ongoing sponsorship of the signage space.

'Our membership is currently around 300,' said Secretary, Sally Brennan, 'and we expect a significant increase after last year's success.'

'We are proudly an inclusive, family-friendly Club with a reputation for a positive culture and quality management.'

'With several exciting projects in the pipeline and even greater onfield success looking likely, we are delighted to be sharing this journey with our partners at UYCE.'

SHARES AVAILABLE

There are currently interested parties looking to sell shares in Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited through the company's low volume market.

To register your interest in purchasing shares please contact Geoff Vickers (Executive Officer) on 5966 9028.

Warburton Advancement League – \$300 for a new bench seat

The wonderful Warburton environment is often best enjoyed from a comfortable, seated position!

Our small donation will pay for the construction and installation of a bench seat near the Water Wheel Centre.

Stalwarts of the town since 1954 and one of the original backers of local community banking, the League always welcomes enthusiasm and ideas.

Contact Jeff Gill (President) on 5966 2373.

Upper Yarra SES – \$2963 for technology upgrades

Most people are by now familiar with the invaluable contributions of our volunteer State Emergency Services workers in times of emergency and natural disaster, from storms to road accidents to search and rescue.

The UYCE donation will cover some much-needed IT equipment, comprising two new laptop computers, a wireless printer and a network router.

Yarra Valley ECOSS – \$8000 contribution toward a tractor and slasher

UYCE's donation will be matched by other stakeholders to a total of \$12,000 for the purchase of a second-hand four-wheel-drive tractor and slasher.

The next phase of development at ECOSS is a sustainable farm, for which a tractor will be indispensable.





Probus Club of Upper Yarra – \$749 contribution toward a new PA system

Probus aims to advance intellectual and cultural pursuits among those retired (or semi-retired) from their former PROfessional or BUSiness occupations.

A long-established and very successful club with 116 members, Upper Yarra Probus meets monthly at Yarra Junction Bowling Club.

The new PA system will feature radio microphones, replacing several cables and power leads which have raised concerns about safety and have proven awkward for those with limited mobility.

Membership enquiries can be emailed to Fred Gaudion: frederic.gaudion@bigpond.com

Warburton Christian Playgroup – \$5200 for part-time facilitator over 12 months



Warburton Christian Playgroup holds sessions twice a week at the Redwood Centre and serves about sixty families from across the Upper Yarra.

Established several years ago under seed-funding from the Shire's 'Best Start' program, the playgroup hosts children up to five years old, each accompanied by a parent or carer.

While the playgroup is structured around the needs of the children, it is also focussed on providing support for families through companionship and networking opportunities.

It has achieved Five-Star Accreditation with Playgroup Victoria and is proactively engaged with other care facilities, local community groups and professional services providers.

Upper Yarra Toy Library – \$1630 for new equipment

A quiet achiever in our community, the Upper Yarra Toy Library is run by volunteers and offers pre-school children and families the opportunity to experience a broad range of toys and experiences in return for a small membership fee.

The UYCE funding will cover the costs of storage racks for the toy library's puzzle collection plus equipment to make up 'Party Packs' – tables and chairs, plus activity sets for party games.

Enquiries: Terri Spencer – terrispencer@iprimus.com.au

Yarra Valley Soccer Club – \$5000 contribution toward equipment



Established in 2003 and currently running several teams in both junior and senior competitions, Yarra Valley Soccer Club is committed to keeping the sport as inclusive and affordable as possible.

With its home ground located at Millgrove Recreation Reserve, the Club works closely with a series of local bodies such as Millgrove Residents Action Group and River Valley Church, as well as the regional primary schools cluster – offering training clinics and skills development to both girls and boys up to 12 through its Junior Development program.

Our \$5,000 donation will assist the Club with a range of equipment and operational overheads, including a computer and peripherals; playing strips; training gear; accredited junior coaching courses; replenishment of first aid kits, and the Club's financial hardship fund, which is used to assist players with fees.

Enquiries: Graham Williams – 5967 4210.



Warburton Cerini Community Centre – \$4580 contribution toward kitchen upgrade



Over the years the famous Cerini Centre in Warburton has evolved into a very popular multi-purpose community facility.

On school-days it hosts VCAL and PreCAL programs run by Upper Yarra Community College.

Outside school hours, the building is used for a range of community activities – martial arts, meditation, meetings, parties and even weddings.

The fifty-year-old building, originally constructed as Warburton's Catholic primary school, has stood up well to tens of thousands of users over the years but its kitchen is overdue for a major overhaul in order to conform with modern health and safety regulations.

The Cerini Community Centre Committee have already raised \$6,000 toward the upgrade, which will benefit all users – particularly those VCAL students who are enrolled in Hospitality courses and need an appropriate facility for 'hands-on' learning.

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. Forward your expression of interest to: UYCEL, P.O. Box 434, Warburton, VIC. 3799.

Who is Upper Yarra Community Enterprise?

Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Limited is a community-owned company whose core purpose is the advancement of the Upper Yarra Community.

During its relatively short life since February 2000 UYCEL has provided more than \$1.3 million to local community based projects and organisations.

How can I support my community and UYCEL?

By simply doing an everyday activity, your banking.

UYCEL earns its income by operating the franchises of Warburton and Yarra Junction **Community Bank**[®] branches of Bendigo Bank. A cornerstone of the **Community Bank**[®] model is the distribution of profits to the community.

How can my community group access funding from UYCEL?

Upper Yarra Community Enterprise distributes funds to worthy community projects through Donations and Sponsorships.

Major sponsorships and Donations

Applications for major sponsorships and Donations are received twice a year, closing at the end of February and August.

Sponsorships

Sponsorship proposals of up to \$3000 are welcomed throughout the year; a response can be expected within six weeks of submission.

Sponsorship is defined as: The purchase of association with an event, entrant, activity or organisation which results in increased brand awareness, communication of key messages and increased customer base.

Upper Yarra Community Enterprise Ltd owns and operates the Warburton and Yarra Junction **Community Bank**[®] branches. Sponsorships will be assessed on their capacity to promote these brands.

Donation applications and Sponsorship proposals can be completed and submitted via our website: www.upperyarra.net.au

For assistance with donation applications and sponsorships or any other queries about UYCEL please call in to either of our **Community Bank**[®] branches or call 5966 9028.

Our talented youth

UYCE is once again delighted to support Yarra Valley Youth Theatre Group – and its partners, Misfit Theatre – with a donation of \$3,694 to cover the purchase of a shipping container for storage of costumes, sets and props.

Based at the Upper Yarra Arts Centre, and with about 50 members at present, the long-established troupe comprises young people between the ages of six and twenty-six.

‘Each group rehearses twice a week to perform two shows per year, with audiences of more than a hundred each performance,’ said Misfit Theatre’s Director-Producer, Sarah Ward.

‘Within the groups we teach performance skills – acting, singing, dancing – and encourage opportunities for people to develop their confidence and create new networks and friendships.

‘We aim to provide a place where anyone can belong. We share stories about difference, acceptance and being strong in who you are.’

Front of House Supervisor for Yarra Ranges Shire Council, Lori Kravos, praised the groups’ professionalism and success.

‘The Youth Theatre Group and Misfit Theatre offer the young people of our community a very valuable service and we look forward to continuing to work with and support them on their journey,’ she said.



Interest growing in no-interest option

Yarra Junction-based EACH Social and Community Health have successfully applied to UYCE for \$10,000 in funding to help seed Yarra Valley NILS (No Interest Loan Scheme).

‘The NILS will offer low-income residents of the Valley with the opportunity to borrow and repay small loans – up to \$1,200 – with no interest or charges applied,’ said Program Co-ordinator, Elizabeth McCarthy.

‘These schemes have proven extremely valuable in building and empowering communities on many levels.

‘They offer a real alternative to regular lending, which is not always accessible to those on lower incomes and those who may only be able to access credit at high interest rates over extended periods,’ Elizabeth said.

‘The program is quite rigorous: all loan applications must meet strict criteria through our assessment process and approval is determined by a committee of management.

‘Money will only be loaned for essential household goods and services; for example, refrigerators, washing machines, hot water services, heating and cooling appliances and so forth.’

As well as providing an affordable line of credit, Yarra Valley NILS will emphasise the importance of educating borrowers in the process of saving money and repaying loans, which, in turn, builds individual confidence around managing the household and personal wealth.

Back to the future?

As news headlines become increasingly dominated by stories related to environmental issues – climate change, energy consumption, pollution, waste and how best to combine technologies for optimal social benefit into an uncertain future – a UYCE committee, which started life as a community initiative, has been quietly investigating the feasibility of reintroducing one of Warburton’s original sources of power.

‘Given the abundance of permanent watercourses around our town it will surprise no one that hydroelectricity was in practical and, of course, sustainable use in Warburton over many generations – right up to the 1980s,’ said ‘Warburton Hydro’ team member, Nick Killey.

After more than 12 months of research and data collection the team have found Ythan Creek, which feeds into the Yarra through the golf course, not only exceeds required

minimum reliable flows for energy generation but also features existing infrastructure – such as a reservoir and a weir – which could expedite and value-add the project.

‘It’s early days yet and our target is modest: around sixty kilowatts – enough power for up to sixty homes,’ said UYCE Executive Officer and committee member, Geoff Vickers, ‘but the feasibility looks very promising.

‘That said, there is a lot of work ahead: further technical research – including, of course, all environmental impacts – and a range of consultations with a series of stakeholders, before we apply for any approvals.

‘As always, the most important stakeholder is our community ... we envisage that, when the time comes, Warburton Hydro will be owned and managed by local people, with benefits flowing to the community.’

Radio Yarra Junction!

Over recent years schools have become increasingly innovative in educating our children, providing life skills and helping to build better citizens ... connected with each other and with the broader community.

Yarra Junction Primary School has demonstrated this approach in their plans to establish their own radio station, supplementing a program called 'The Leader in me'.

'Through this program we aim to encourage children to develop the skills to effectively lead their lives, personally and professionally,' said Assistant Principal, Dee DeKlijin.

'The radio station will not only provide opportunities for students to express their own voice on matters that are important and relevant to their lives – building confidence and social skills – the facility will also provide an environment to help develop skilled radio programmers, producers, reporters, school events leaders, presenters and writers.'

UYCE's donation of \$10,000 will fund both equipment and the necessary renovations at the school.



Reefton ROCS!

Upper Yarra Landcare and Reefton CFA have developed a plan to establish permanent outdoor facilities at Reefton for the annual Reefton R.O.C.S. (Remembering Our Community Strength) event – established in 2009 following the Black Saturday fires to bring the community together, to promote environmental awareness and to raise funds for the Reefton CFA as well as for Landcare projects.

UYCE's donation of \$2500 will help pay for three shelters and provision of fixed electricity and water services, with most of the labour being provided by volunteers.

'In addition to hosting market stalls for the ROCS event, facilities will be used for fundraisers, community workshops and educational programs,' said Jane Abbott, secretary of Reefton ROCS.

The only emergency service within 25km, Reefton Brigade is raising funds toward a new vehicle and other equipment.

Upper Yarra Landcare gets together twice a month for ongoing projects such as weed eradication and revegetation, which are performed on both public and private land. Partners in these works include Yarra Ranges Council and the Scouts.



History in the making

The provenance of ten of Warburton's significant buildings will soon be more accessible to the general public, thanks to a proposal from Warburton & District Chamber of Commerce & Industry – locally known as 'the Chamber'.

UYCE will be contributing \$2,300 for researching, manufacture and installation of brass plaques on buildings selected for their colourful history.

'This project has been on our wish-list for a long time,' said Norman Orr, Secretary of the Chamber – one of our largest local organisations, with a membership of 67.

'These plaques will add interest to any visit to Warburton,' he said.

'Most people, tourists and locals alike, are curious about the history of places they visit – and particularly interested in sites which exhibit some character and uniqueness.'

'This generous donation from UYCE will not only help promote our wonderful town,' said Norman, 'It will provide a small but significant boost to the local economy: the background research will be performed by locals and the plaques themselves will be made and installed by locals.'