

Giving Matters Tomorrow:Today Foundation News

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2009.

To start the year after a busy 2008 the Board held a strategic planning session to review progress and plan for 2009 and beyond.

Activities during 2009 will include, building on our Donor base, increasing the awareness of the Foundation through the Ambassador Program and moving ahead with our special projects such as the Education Program and the ongoing stages of the Indigenous Community Garden Project.

One of our long term Directors, Alana Johnson, has retired from the Board to pursue other interests. Alana, a Director since 2001 has contributed immensely to the early years of the **Tomorrow: Today Foundation**. We will greatly miss Alana's input into our forward planning and especially in the Grants program area, which was her keen interest.

We welcomed Geoff Oliver to the Board in September 2008 and I am sure Geoff will prove to be a valuable addition as the Foundation continues to grow. Geoff is a very well known Benalla identity, businessman, and former Benalla Rural City councillor (16 years!). He has a keen interest in development.

Our Board membership is as follows:

- Wayne Weaire, Chair
- Adrian Aldous
- Liz Chapman
- Bill Dobson
- Sally Gamble
- Tanya Mitchell
- Geoff Oliver



More than one hundred people helped to plant large garden beds at the Indigenous Community Garden

As an Ambassador for the **Tomorrow:Today Foundation** we hope you'll help spread the word about the Foundation. Do you need any information, flyers or stickers? Please contact us on 5760 2317 if you need more resources or would like to discuss any aspect of the work we do. We will keep in touch with our Ambassadors throughout the year, so if you have any ideas or contributions to make to our newsletter please let us know.

Wayne Weaire, Chair.

Indigenous Community Garden

The Indigenous Community Garden took a leap forward last September as numerous large garden beds were planted in the area surrounding the coolamon shaped stone wall. More than one hundred people helped

over five days of planting: including students from five local schools and members of groups such as the Lions Club, Garden Club and Friends of the Benalla Botanical Gardens and Riverine Parkland.

Tomorrow:Today Foundation have undertaken this project to acknowledge our indigenous past and provide education on indigenous culture and the environment. The project has been a great success, with many residents using the garden for special occasions such as birthdays and weddings.

Regular working bees will be held at 9am on the last Friday of every month (except December) to weed beds, rake paths and generally keep the Garden looking as good as possible. If you can spare some time and would like to be involved please contact Sally Gamble on 5762 1159 or sallyg@benalla.net.au

together we make a difference



Education Program

David Dore, known to many for his community leadership in the performing arts and natural resource management, was appointed in November as our Education Program research project officer. The Education Program has been a key focus of **Tomorrow:Today Foundation**, following on from the findings of the national report by Tony Vinson "Dropping off the Edge – the distribution of disadvantage in Australia" which highlighted that education is the key to not being disadvantaged.

Philanthropy and public education can work together to improve student outcomes, and a strong partnership between **Tomorrow:Today Foundation** and the Hume regional office of the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development has put the program's development on a very solid foundation. Benalla's schools have been adapting and responding to meet student needs within the school system for a number of years. However it is the impact of social disadvantage at home and in the community, as well as at school that is limiting our children's life chances. Our commitment is to achieve substantial measurable change in levels of student educational attainment, via a whole-of-community response that spans family, community and school.

Many of you have shown a keen interest in the development of the Education Program. Liz Chapman will outline the Program at the Ambassador meeting in March, and we will provide updates in each edition of the Ambassador newsletter.



Photo courtesy of Benalla Ensign

FRRR/Sidney Myer Back to School Vouchers

Tomorrow:Today Foundation is very pleased to continue our involvement with the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal 'Back to School' program. This is a great example of how our local knowledge and connections can help to attract funding into Benalla. **Tomorrow:Today** secured 300 of the \$50 Back to School vouchers, totaling \$15,000, to distribute throughout



Photo courtesy of Benalla Ensign

Benalla district schools in 2009. This year we also responded to a challenge grant: by providing \$1000 of donated funds we received another 43 \$50 vouchers, worth an additional \$2150. This brings to approximately \$80,000 the value

of vouchers distributed since 2005. These vouchers go via school principals to local families in need. The program supports families' at the most expensive time of year; buying books and clothes for children to go to school. A positive start to the school year is a vital step on the path to a good educational experience.

2009 Grant

Tomorrow:Today Foundation were delighted to fund the "Homework Group Programme" an initiative of the Anglican Parish of Benalla. This program provides teacher supervision along with volunteer assistance from many wonderful Benalla residents to young children after school. The project fits well with **Tomorrow:Today Foundation's** aim of building a more prosperous and resilient rural community.

To find out more:
Tomorrow:Today Foundation
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www.tomorrowtoday.com.au

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