

## Volunteer Week

This week was National Volunteer Week, so Council would like to take the opportunity to thank all of South Gippsland's volunteers for the – often overlooked – work they do for their community.

Across South Gippsland, there are numerous volunteer programs, including but not limited to; Meals on Wheels, the Coal Creek Volunteers, the Leongatha Skate Park volunteers, and the Information Centre volunteers.

Thankfully, volunteering is on the rise; approximately 36 percent of Australians volunteer, which equals over fourteen billion dollars of volunteer hours.

Not to mention, young people are getting involved; youth volunteering has jumped from 16 percent (1995) to 27.1 percent (2010).

Ninety six percent of volunteers say it “makes people happier”, according to surveys – not just the people the volunteers are helping but also themselves; it releases a kind of natural euphoria, a helper's high, experienced when directly helping others.

South Gippsland Shire Council Mayor Cr Ray Argento is an active volunteer himself. “Volunteering is on the rise, which shows positive signs for our community,” The Mayor said, “Seeing so many valuable members of this region giving back is touching and it increases the morale of the public. It makes South Gippsland a happier place, which is something we strive to do.”

Communities wouldn't run the way they do without volunteers helping out. In South Gippsland 32 percent of our residents volunteer to give back to their community.

South Gippsland is teeming with dedicated individuals who give up their spare time and energy to make our community an all-round happy and connected place.

To celebrate volunteers and the roles they play in their community a photo exhibition Catch A Volunteer In Action is being held at Manna Gum Community House Main St Foster on Thursday 11 May - 5pm – 6.30pm (for more information visit <https://www.catchavolunteerinaction.com> ).

The final word goes to the Mayor: “Thank you, volunteers!”

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