

Message from the Administrator



Last week I attended the final session of a programme called Changemakers, which aims to encourage those who have accepted leadership positions in their organisations. It provides participants with the skills and ideas needed to help them be more effective in their roles. The programme is based on learning by doing and was made possible because of the generous support of the Victorian Government.

Each of the fifteen participants – who hailed from right across South Gippsland, from Korumburra in the west to Welshpool and Sandy Point in the east – nominated a project they wished to complete.

Projects included developing a course to attract more adult leaders for a large youth organisation; strengthening the sense of identity of a small community by creating a common theme for signage; developing a support network for community groups; and developing and building community facilities in a small town.

As the participants developed strategies and exchanged ideas with each other about how to achieve their goals, they learnt a number of lessons. These included knowing what Federal, State and Local Governments are responsible for; handling differences of opinions within groups; making sure somebody is made responsible to get something done; and knowing what is achievable and what is not; and being flexible enough to find other ways to achieve what you want if your ideas will not work.

South Gippsland residents are rightly proud of their level of involvement in community organisations. The community is indebted to those who take an extra step by accepting leadership positions in these organisations and even more so to those, such as the fifteen people who participated in this programme, who sacrificed the time and made the effort to learn how to do the job better.

Leadership matters. Without it there is a risk that much of our enthusiastic effort is ill-directed and not as effective as it could be. We also tend to take leadership for granted. It is hard work, often for little reward other than the satisfaction of getting a job done. Too few of us put up our hands to take our turn. While we may not notice leadership when we have it, we notice when we do not.

You only have to look around the world to see what happens when leaders go missing in action, take the people they claim to lead for granted or appear to spend most of the time promoting the interests of the people around them rather than the famous silent majority.

It would be nice if there were others who were inspired by the sacrifice and commitment to the community of these fifteen participants. It may even prompt more people to think it was time for them to become even more involved in contributing to the community.

Rick Brown - Administrator