



Aged Care

**Volunteer**

**Visitors** Scheme

Funded by the  
Australian Government

# The Volunteer's Voice

**Edition 3: November/December 2025**



# 'Tis the season to celebrate you, our wonderful volunteers!

In this edition, we're celebrating some wonderful stories and updates:

- One of our dedicated volunteers has reached an incredible 10-year milestone – a truly inspiring achievement!
- We're also welcoming a new volunteer who has kindly shared his simple (and delicious!) lemon jam recipe. I recently tried it myself and can confirm it's absolutely perfect on a cracker with vintage cheese – and it would make a lovely homemade Christmas gift.

We're also sharing some important updates and upcoming events:

- December 5 marks International Volunteer Day – a special day to recognise the incredible contributions of volunteers like you, who generously give their time and energy to support their communities.
- New aged care legislation comes into effect on November 1, empowering older Australians through a new Aged Care Act.
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities is another important opportunity to celebrate achievements and continue promoting inclusion.
- A round-up of community events across the Riverina that may be of interest to you.
- And of course, the dates for this year's Volunteer Christmas parties in your local area!

You can also stay connected with us on social media; you'll find links to our Facebook and Instagram pages at the end of this newsletter. Don't forget to like, follow, and share with your friends and family.

Thank you for being part of our ACVVS family! ❤️

Have something you'd like to contribute to the next edition of **The Volunteer's Voice**? Please **email** [acvvs@riverinacc.edu.au](mailto:acvvs@riverinacc.edu.au) or **call Kylie on 0408 358 579**.





# A note from Santa

It's hard to believe this is our last newsletter for the year, the months have flown by! I want to take this opportunity to thank every one of you for your dedication to our program. Your visits mean the world to our older recipients and make such a difference in their lives. I continue to be inspired by the friendships and stories this program brings.

I'd also like to thank my co-worker, Kylie, for all the hard work she's been doing. Kylie brings fresh ideas and valuable skills to the program, including this very newsletter, which was her initiative and has been so well received. We've had lots of positive feedback, which is wonderful to hear.

Here's a quick recap of what we've achieved this year:

- I attended Government House as the NSW Volunteer Leader of the Year for 2024 — such a memorable moment!
- Kylie joined the team after Bev's retirement and was appointed to full-time hours.
- We now have volunteers in four additional aged care facilities, two in Wagga Wagga and two in Cootamundra. A huge thank you to our new volunteers who stepped into these roles.
- We've been promoting the program through expos, presentations, and ongoing advertising on 2AAA FM radio.
- Volunteers Narelle and Trish were nominated for the NSW Centre for Volunteering Volunteer of the Year Award and received certificates of recognition. Well done, Narelle and Trish!
- Two of our dedicated volunteers reached a 10-year milestone. Congratulations Bill C. and Narelle C. We're so lucky to have you both!

That's it from me for now! I hope you enjoy the last couple of months of 2025. Stay safe, happy, and healthy. If you're going away over the festive season, please don't forget to let us and your recipients know.

Thank you again for another wonderful year. Fingers crossed for funding in 2025 so we can continue this amazing program.

Kind regards,

*Kathryn*



# Hello from Santa's Elf

It's been so lovely hearing your positive feedback about this newsletter. I really enjoy putting it together, and it makes me so happy to know you enjoy reading it. If you ever have something you'd like to share, please reach out, I'd love to include your contributions in The Volunteer's Voice.

A big warm welcome to our new volunteers from Wagga, Cootamundra and Ganmain – Gaye, Jane, Reginald, Bernadette, Sheryl, Barbara and Sean. Kathryn and I are so excited to support you as you begin your ACVVS journey.

Over the past few months, I've been settling into my role as ACVVS Coordinator after taking over from Bev. What started as two days a week has now grown into a full-time role through to June next year. Thank you all for your kindness and support, it really means a lot.

As 2025 winds down, we want to thank you for the time, care, and connection you bring to the lives of older people in our region. Together, we've made such a meaningful difference, and we're excited to carry that momentum into 2026.

From Kathryn and me, our families, and everyone at RCC, we wish you and your loved ones a very happy and safe Christmas and New Year. May your festive season be filled with joy and precious time with those you care about.

Warm regards,

*Kylie*



# New Aged Care Act and Volunteering in Aged Care

On 1 November 2025, the new Aged Care Act 2024 will come into effect.

There won't be any changes to the activities, support, or services provided by volunteers. What will change is the focus of the Act — it's designed to empower older people and ensure their rights, needs, and personal choices are always respected. As a valued volunteer, you play an important role in supporting these values every day.

The Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has released a clear and helpful booklet about the new Act and what it means for volunteering in aged care. You can read it [HERE](#).

And of course, if you ever have any questions or concerns about the new Act, please don't hesitate to reach out, we're only a phone call or email away.

*“There is nothing stronger than  
the heart of a volunteer”*

JAMES H. DOOLITTLE -  
American Aviator and Army General in World War II





# The Volunteer's Christmas Party

*Save these dates!*

Details for the Volunteer Christmas Party are coming soon— Keep an eye out on your email/letterbox! Invitations will arrive in early November. We hope to celebrate some Christmas cheer with you!

- **Cootamundra** - Tuesday, December 2nd
- **Wagga Wagga/Coolamon/The Rock** - Tuesday, December 9th
- **Junee** - Wednesday, December 10th
- **Tumut/Gundagai** - Wednesday, December 17th

# Celebrating 10 years of dedicated service - Thank you Narelle!

On December 13, we're celebrating a truly special milestone for one of our amazing volunteers – Narelle C. from Tumut, who has been part of the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme for an incredible 10 years!

Over the past decade, Narelle has given her time, care, and energy to brighten the lives of residents in her local aged care facility. Her regular visits have provided friendship, connection, and comfort, showing just how much of a difference a familiar face and a kind heart can make.

Narelle's unwavering commitment and compassion are an inspiration to us all. Her dedication over the years has touched so many lives, and we couldn't be prouder to celebrate this milestone with her.

Thank you, Narelle, for your outstanding service and for showing what volunteering is all about. We're so grateful to have you as part of our ACVVS family, and we look forward to many more years of seeing the joy you bring to others.



# International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3<sup>rd</sup> December)

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities is recognised by the United Nations (UN) and takes place every year on 3 December. It's a day to raise awareness, build understanding, and encourage acceptance of people with disability across the world. It also reminds us how important it is to create a truly inclusive society that values people with disability in all parts of life.

Did you know? According to the Australian Human Rights Commission (2025):

- More than 5.5 million Australians live with a disability – that's about 1 in 5 people.
- Around 3 in 4 people say their main type of disability is physical, while 1 in 4 say it is mental or behavioural.

This year's theme is “**Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future.**” The theme highlights the vital role people with disability play in leading change and building a fairer world. It recognises their contributions as leaders, innovators, and decision-makers, and calls for greater representation in workplaces, community projects, and cultural events.



3 December  
**International Day of  
People with Disability**



# Celebrating International Volunteer Day



December 5th marks International Volunteer Day, a day to celebrate and thank volunteers around the world.

For us at ACVVS, it's a chance to reflect on the remarkable difference our volunteers make every single visit with their older friend. By offering friendship, kindness, and a listening ear, you bring joy and comfort to older people who might otherwise feel isolated. For many, your visit is the highlight of their week, a reminder that they are seen, valued, and connected.

Your impact goes far beyond the time you spend together. You help combat loneliness, create meaningful bonds, and build stronger communities. Small acts, a smile, a chat, a moment of laughter, leave ripples that last long after you leave.

Today, and every day, we say thank you. Your care and commitment make all the difference to your older friend.

**Happy International Volunteer Day!**

# Ready for a little pampering?

Whether it's a fresh haircut, a new style, or a tidy-up for your beard, our friendly Hairdressing and Barbering students at Riverina Community College would love to welcome you into the salon.

Every appointment gives our students the chance to build their skills and confidence, and gives you the chance to enjoy some well-deserved "me time" at a fraction of the usual salon price. All services are carefully supervised by experienced and qualified trainers, so you'll be in safe hands from start to finish.

Why not treat yourself (or a friend!) to a new look and a friendly chat while supporting the next generation of hair professionals? You'll leave looking, and feeling fantastic.

If you, your family, or friends are interested, please call RCC on 1800 000 212 to book your appointment.



# Homemade Lemon Jam

This recipe was sent in to us by one of our volunteers, Sean. It would make a great home made Christmas gift.

## Ingredients

4 large lemons (about ½ kilo)  
2 cups of sugar  
2 cups of water  
2 tablespoons of lemon juice

## Instructions

- 1. Prep the first lemon:** Slice 1 lemon (with peel) into thin rounds, then into strips, then small cubes. Place cubes in a medium saucepan.
- 2. Prep the other lemons:** Zest 3 more lemons (only the yellow part) and add zest to the saucepan. Peel those 3 lemons, remove all seeds and membranes, then chop the flesh. Set the flesh aside.
- 3. Boil to remove bitterness:** Add enough water to the saucepan to cover the cubes and zest. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Drain and discard the water.
- 4. Repeat:** Refill with fresh water, boil and simmer for another 10 minutes. Drain again and discard the water.
- 5. Cook the jam:** Return the cubes and zest to the pan. Add the reserved chopped lemon flesh, 2 cups sugar, and 2 cups water. Stir well and bring to a boil.
- 6. Simmer:** Reduce to medium-low heat and cook uncovered for about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Skim off any foam that forms.
- 7. Finish:** Stir in the juice from the zested lemons. Simmer another 5 minutes, then remove from heat.
- 8. Cool and store:** Let the jam cool (it will thicken as it cools). Transfer to a clean jar and refrigerate. Keeps 2–3 months.



# Regional events

## *‘Wagga and surrounds’*

I recently come across some information on some events happening in Wagga and surrounding areas from November to December that I thought could be of some interest to you. Most of them are free too!

- **1<sup>st</sup> November | The Rock Christmas Markets & Cootamundra Rodeo**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> November | Rotary Sunshine Wagga Christmas Markets**
- **4<sup>th</sup> November | Snake Gully Cup Carnival, Gundagai**
- **15<sup>th</sup> November | Snowy Valleys Markets, Tumut**
- **29<sup>th</sup> November - 21<sup>st</sup> December | Bald Archies, Temora**
- **13<sup>th</sup> December (7.30 - 9.30pm) | Christmas with the Con, Riverside Precinct Stage, Wagga Wagga**

For more information and events please click [HERE](#).

If you see any events in your local area, please let us know so that we can share it. Please email [acvvs@riverinacc.edu.au](mailto:acvvs@riverinacc.edu.au) with the details.



# Important reminder

There have been recent cases of COVID-19, influenza, the common cold, and other contagious illnesses in aged care facilities and among those receiving home care.

If you are unwell with any contagious illness, please do not visit your aged care recipient.

To help keep everyone safe:

- Always call ahead to your recipient or the aged care facility to confirm it is safe to visit.
- If the facility is in lockdown due to an outbreak (e.g. COVID-19, RSV, influenza, or gastro), please stay away until the outbreak is over and the facility advises it is safe to return.

Thank you for helping us protect the health and wellbeing of our aged care community.



# Happy Birthday!

Best wishes to the volunteers celebrating their birthday in November and December. We hope you have a great day.

## November

12th: Peter B  
18th: Michel  
19th: Val  
24th: Peter H  
28th: Indigo

## December

6th: Reginald  
12th: Georgiana  
21st: Bernadette



# Can you help?

If you have some time to spare and would like to make a meaningful difference in someone's life, or if you know someone who might be interested, we'd love to hear from you.

We are currently seeking volunteers to visit the following aged care facilities:

- Wagga Wagga Community Aged Care (Signature Care) – Turvey Park
- RSL Remembrance Village - Wagga
- Southern Cross Care - Cootamundra

To learn more or to become a volunteer, email [acvvs@riverinacc.edu.au](mailto:acvvs@riverinacc.edu.au) or call Kathryn Bredin (Program Manager) on **0408 855 157** (Mon - Wed)

**HELP!**

**needed**

# The ACVVS team



**Kathryn Bredin**  
**ACVVS Program Manager**

Workdays: Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday

Phone: **69 33 5555** or **0408 855 157**

[kathryn.bredin@riverinacc.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.bredin@riverinacc.edu.au)



**Kylie Learoyd**  
**ACVVS Coordinator**

Workdays: Monday - Friday

Phone: **69 33 5555** or **0408 358 579**

[kylie.learoyd@riverinacc.edu.au](mailto:kylie.learoyd@riverinacc.edu.au)

# Christmas Trivia



1. Which country was the first to use the tradition of the Christmas Tree?
2. What Christmas beverage is also known as ‘milk punch’?
3. What is the first line from the poem ‘A Visit from St Nicholas’?
4. Why do we celebrate Christmas?
5. In the classic Christmas movie, ‘How The Grinch Stole Christmas’ what are the 3 words how The Grinch is described?
6. In the “Twelve Days of Christmas” song, how many French hens does the true love give?
7. What Australian Christmas tradition began in Melbourne in 1938?
8. What is the name of the famous Australian song that replaces reindeer with kangaroos for Santa's sleigh?
9. Pavlova is a popular Christmas dessert in Australia. What is the basic ingredient of a pavlova?
10. Which sporting event/s begin every year on Boxing Day ? (there are 2 answers for this one)



## Answers

1. Germany | 2. Egg Nog | 3. 'Twas the night before Christmas | 4. To remember the birth of Jesus Christ who the Christians believe is the son of God  
5. Stink, stank, stunk | 6. Three | 7. Carols by Candlelight | 8. Six White Boomers | 9. Egg White | 10. Sydney to Hobart yacht race and The Ashes Boxing Day Test (cricket)

# Cheers!

That's a wrap on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of **The Volunteer's Voice!** and the last edition for **2025!**

Thanks for being here, keep on sharing your compassion and kindness with your older friend. Both they and us appreciate it.

Wishing you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas, and a new year filled with good health and happiness.

Warm regards,

*Kathryn & Kylie*

## Stay up to date

Check out our website or follow us on socials



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