

neWs frOm The edge

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

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Repurposing Vogelmorn Bowling Club

The winter sun pours through the windows, as I sit chatting, on site, to Jeremy Macy — secretary of the Vogelmorn Community Group Charitable Trust (VCG). It is easy to be impressed by this community led and driven project.

In 2016, after an initial pilot they convinced the Vogelmorn Bowling Club to hand over ownership and they haven't looked back, as they forge a new model for a community owned space, whilst retaining the legacy of the club.

Jeremy believes the models for community spaces are changing.

He was impressed by the humility of the elders of the former Bowling Club when they acknowledged that they 'didn't have all the answers' for the future of the space; hence opening the way for a fresh approach.

The VCG have managed the space for three years and owned it for a one. 'Now the hireage covers the operating costs' says Jeremy 'but we are totally reliant on volunteers to keep the place running, stay on top of the deferred maintenance or implement new renovations — such as the recent addition of a commercial kitchen.'

VCG joined Volunteer Wellington two years ago and since then they have hosted several of our Business Friends who have helped with the renovations.

Most recently a



group of 25 managers from all over New Zealand, who work for Chorus, spent a day volunteering at the club.

Jeremy is effusive in his praise of these partnerships, 'It is brilliant when business volunteers come — it creates a whirlwind of activity.'

Chorus and a group from Texas A & T University helped to re-upholster chairs as well as working on the exterior of the building.

Jeremy describes how impressed the Chorus folk were with their community initiative, 'they will all go back to their various regions with seeds planted for looking at their community spaces differently'.

Many bowling clubs are in decline in our communities due to pressures on time, social changes, aging members and a myriad of local factors.

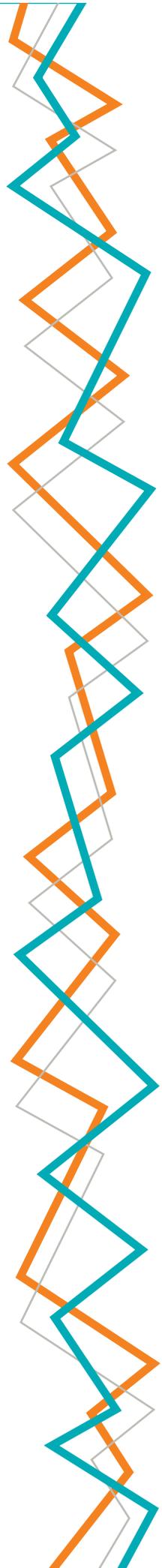
The VCG is forging ahead with a new model for community engagement that ensures these communal facilities are not lost.

We are happy to partner with them through the Employee Volunteering programme.

Film of the project:
<https://player.vimeo.com/video/135014419>

Greetings to you all. After the whirlwind start to the year with The Nikau Corporate Challenge, we have settled into a steady stream of activity over the winter. I have been finding projects for our newer Business Friends, such as the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment and Massey University College of Creative Arts. Both of these groups have helped out with the Bring Back the Natives Project in Newtown. This is a community planting initiative and it has been brilliant to have the help of business volunteers to get nearly 300 trees in the ground.

I am always astounded at the number of planting groups we have, all over Wellington, who are dedicated to improving the bio-diversity in our great city. There is still more work to be done in this area, so please get involved. Also check out the information on our Senior's Project inside. LYNE PRINGLE



The Employee Volunteering programme is off to a great start in 2017; we are tracking very well to meet or surpass last year's targets. To the end of July, 62 projects with 596 volunteers are confirmed with a further 33 projects in the pipeline which will include 322 volunteers: a total of 95 projects including 918 volunteers. Involvement in employee volunteering projects broadens a team's outlook, extends thinking beyond a work desk to community need and is generally fun in the process. Business skills applied to community projects add capacity and new ideas. Try it in 2017! Employee volunteering is varied and rewarding for both community groups and businesses. Business Friends recently completed these projects ...



MBIE movers and shakers

* The **MINISTRY OF BUSINESS INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT** joined up this year. They have been very active with the **BBTN** planting project in Newtown; painting a fence at **ST MICHAEL'S SCHOOL** in Taita and helping out with conservation efforts on **MATIU/SOMES ISLAND**. Their enthusiasm has been infectious.



A day at the office

* **DAC BEACHCROFT** have developed a long term partnership with **PORIRUA COLLEGE**. Recently they hosted a group of Year 13 students in their downtown offices. The students took part in a debate and learnt about what is required to have a career as a lawyer.



To the island

* **MERCER LTD** are a highly involved Business Friend, this is largely due to the efforts of Lauren Wilkerson who is their volunteering champion. Here she is leading the way for her crew on Matiu/Somes Island. Other recent island visitors include; **MBIE**, **IAG**, **ANZ** and **WAKEFIELDS LAW**.



Taking care of the forest

* Many of our Business Friends choose to spend their volunteer day at the **RIMUTAKA FOREST PARK**. Here they are hosted by the fabulous Peter Cooper who is the kaitiaki of this marvellous restoration project. Recent groups include **THE TREASURY**, **OFFICE OF THE CLERK** and **ACC**.



Revolution in Tawa

* **KIWI COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE** in Tawa deserve a medal for their efforts. They are constantly rescuing food from the local supermarkets and redistributing clothing and goods to families in need. Two groups from **CHORUS** spent their volunteer day helping them.



Chair-leaders in Vogelmorn

* Every now and then a request for volunteering options comes in from overseas. In this instance we were able to connect students from **TEXAS A & T UNIVERSITY** with the **VOGELMORN PRECINCT** (see our feature story) they helped with several projects in this bustling community hub.

Sowing and potting brings cheer

* Look at the grins in this picture – priceless. One of our great community partners Peter Gilbert hosted a group from **ACC** at the **CASHMERE HEIGHTS** rest home where they potted up native plant seedlings with local residents causing good vibes all around.



Senior's Project

October 16–20

We need you!
Email to find out
more about this
awesome project!

Keeping out the predators

* One of the jewels in the crown of Wellington is **ZEALANDIA**. Groups from **IAG** and **ACC** spent their volunteering day at the sanctuary doing essential clearing near the fence to ensure pesky varmints don't find a way in – enjoyable and extremely valuable work.



Baking up a storm

* **RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE**, where families with ill children can find respite, has once again been a popular volunteering option. Groups from **MERCER LTD** and **ANZ** each spent the day baking up a storm for the families staying at the house.

Bring back the natives

* This is a very cool project in Newtown. **MASSEY** volunteered for the day to help native plants to reclaim the hillside. One day there will be a spectacular forest of totara, rewa rewa, matai, tawa and more.



Five minutes with Jo Moar

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME ADVISOR AT CHORUS

How long have you been in your current role at Chorus?

3½ years though at Chorus nearly 5 years.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself?

I was an extra in the original Ghostbusters movie.

What is your background?

Quality Management and Health and Safety.

What is your take on the interface between Chorus and the community

Chorus knows that its employees, Customers and Stakeholders want it to be generous and to support the causes that they care about. The overarching ethos is that philanthropy should be about more than just giving money and Chorus also sees this as key part of employee Wellbeing. It gives us each a paid day of leave each year as a Volunteer Day to support the charity of our choice.

Why do you think volunteering is important?

For me it's a way of giving back to the community. I may not be financially well off enough to donate money but I have all the time in the world now my sons have grown up and left home that I can spend giving to help others.

What other volunteering do you do?

Being winter my time is mostly spent with Wellington United AFC, whether it is on the committee as Treasurer or in the kitchen on game days or cheering my ladies team on from the side lines on Sundays (rain or wind or sun). I also help out with Dress for Success as a volunteer during their Shop for Success fundraisers and am a NSO (Non Skating Official) for Roller Derby events in New Zealand. Most recently I was nominated as President of one of my three Toastmasters Clubs I am involved in and only just this week have agreed to become Area Director of five Toastmasters Clubs.



Office of the Clerk Volunteer Day by William DeVos

'It was Peter Cooper, our very enthusiastic DoC volunteer, who described the deputy clerks of committee and our manager as locusts. We had descended on a gorse-infested area along the river in the Catchpool Valley for our team-building day at the end of April. Removal of the gorse and other pesky plants would enable the native bush bordering the riverbed to flourish. Volunteers are critical to the work of DoC, and it felt good to have sharpened our planting, sawing and loper-wielding skills together in the name of conservation.'

Current Business Friends

ACC; ANZ National Bank; BNP Paribas; The Commerce Commission; Chorus; Contact Energy; DAC Beachcroft; IAG New Zealand; IBM New Zealand; KPMG; Massey University College of Creative Arts; Mercer Ltd; Ministry of Business Innovation and Enterprise; NZ Post Group; Parliamentary Counsel Office; The Treasury; Thomson Reuters; Z Energy.

ONE-OFF BUSINESS PARTNERS Office of the Clerk; Texas A&T University; Wakefields Law.

Earthlink and ANZ – a match made in heaven

Winners of The Nikau Foundation/Volunteer Wellington Corporate Challenge Partnership Award 2017

THE FIRST TIME I went to Earthlink in Wingate/Taita I was completely blown away. It was like walking onto the set of a Mad Max Movie – unlike anything I had ever experienced.

As I learnt more about this resourceful and innovative organisation I came to greatly appreciate their habitat of 'organised chaos'.

On that first visit, Katie Terris, manager of the Hutt office for Volunteer Wellington, introduced me to Shirley Cressy the CEO of Earthlink. She is a feisty energetic woman with a steely focus who outlined the incredible work that they do. Through the WorkSmart programme, Earthlink provides work opportunities and support for people facing barriers to employment, in particular: with mental health issues, learning disabilities or alcohol and drug dependency.

After our initial meeting I knew that I would like to deploy a large team from one of our Business Friends to assist Earthlink.

Two stars aligned to create a really magical volunteer project. The winners of last year's Corporate Challenge approached me to find another project for multiple ANZ teams; then Shirley made it known that they had to move warehouses and shift a daunting 200 tonnes of 'stuff'.

I took ANZ Project Leaders, Melissa Middleton and Kriselle Smith, to scope out Earthlink and

crossed my fingers. They immediately understood the work that Earthlink does, were quite enchanted by the place and definitely up for the challenge of selling the idea to their colleagues back at the bank.

It was great to get their email a few days later saying, 'Yes let's go for it'.

In March over a period of 2 weeks an army of 100 ANZ volunteers got stuck in at Earthlink and moved mountains of stuff. Along the way some of them learnt new skills: wrapping up pellets for shipping, breaking down computers and washing machines and the finer details of wall painting.

Melissa Middleton spoke to the Dominion Post about the experience: 'It absolutely has a huge feel good factor for us knowing that we made a difference, that we helped a worthy organisation that had what looked like an impossible task ahead of them that we were able to help make possible.'

On the flipside, Melissa, who volunteered herself, says the Earthlink project raised awareness of what she throws away, what can be reused or recycled.

'I also got to have an insight into the daily life of an Earthlink worker and a sense of how much they are doing for our community which unfortunately can go unrecognised, the work they do is amazing!'

The flow-on effects have gone even further, said Shirley to the Dominion Post.

'Through word of mouth and promotion by individual members of the teams we have received personal monetary donations, and people are constantly mentioning a family member from ANZ who was a volun-



teer, having told them about our project in support of others, when visiting the retail shop are dropping items off for recycling. Product continues to be donated regularly and sales have increased around our children's clothing lines made of our obsolete corporate apparel, all due to the commitment of the ANZ volunteers.'

I was immensely proud of the brokering that Katie Terris, Manager of the Hutt office, and myself did on this project. Its success symbolises all that is great about the Employee Volunteering programme and the wider work of Volunteer Wellington.

The Earthlink-ANZ project was indeed a 'match made in heaven' and they were the deserved winners of this year's Corporate Challenge.

"All of them [from ANZ] just came in and worked from the time they arrived to the time they went home, their manpower was invaluable, absolutely wonderful and really appreciated."

Shirley Cressy



MELISSA MIDDLETON, SHIRLEY CRESSY, LYNE PRINGLE, KRISSELLE SMITH

A CatALyst for INVOLVEMENT in the COMMUNITY

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