

GREAT COMMUNITY TRANSPORT VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER



SPRING 2016

Hi all,

There is so much happening at the moment at GCT. I have tried to include as much information as possible in this newsletter so that everyone is up to date.

As you are probably aware our founder and Manager of almost 30 years Helen Walker retired from GCT on 23rd September 2016 – more details on Helen’s amazing contribution to our communities later.

In response to Helen’s departure on 5th October the Board of Management appointed Milad Jonaidi, who has been the Coordinator at the Penrith office since September 2015, to the position of Service Operations Manager. I hope you will join me in congratulating Milad on his appointment and supporting him in his new role.

You will see quite a few changes happening in the next couple of months, some of this is in response to Helen and Phillipa’s retirement and some as a result of restructuring that is required due to the implementation of RouteMatch. I have given a brief description of some of the changes that have happened recently and ask that you are patient and work with us as we move forward. It is also extremely important that we give the clients only positive messages about GCT. If they are concerned or are experiencing problems using the service, encourage them to contact the office. We always welcome feedback to ensure that we are offering a service that meets the needs of our clients.



And please be assured that although the organisation is going through some changes and things are busy, the volunteers are and always will be my number one priority, so please feel free to contact me.

Sharon

FAREWELL

Helen Walker OAM

On Friday 23rd September 2016, founder of Great Community Transport Helen Walker retired after nearly 30 years as Manager.

Helen received the Order of Australia Medal for her services to community transport and has been a strong advocate for community transport, the frail aged and people with a disability and their carers for many years.

Helen started Mountains Community Transport in 1986. In 2004 Mountains Community Transport & Nepean Community Transport amalgamated to become Great Community Transport, which provides transport to people living in an area that covers 1834 square kms.

In 2014-2015 Great Community Transport provided transport to 3291 individuals, with a total of 78,080 trips.

In 2008 Helen was the winner of the University of Western Sydney *Women of the West International Woman of the Year Award*.

Great Community Transport was also awarded *CTO Community Transport of the Year* in 2011 and *WSCF Zest award for Outstanding Volunteer Organisation* in 2012.

During her time with the service Helen has seen many changes. From being the sole employee & driver & sharing a room with another community service in 1986, GCT now has 26 employees, over 100 volunteers, 25 vehicles and 2 offices. Helen set up Smartlink Transport in 2006 which has allowed a significant number of community groups to go on various outings using either the BMCC Access Buses or other vehicles on the Smartlink Register.

All at Great Community Transport wish Helen a long, happy & healthy retirement.

A retirement function will be held for Helen on Friday 18th November. You will receive a separate invitation to this event please ensure that you RSVP if you will be attending – transport will be provided from Lawson if required.



OUR LIST

Milad Jonaidi	<i>Service Operations Manager</i>	Kingswood
Mina Neary	<i>Finance & Administration Manager</i>	Kingswood
Andrew Mitchell	<i>Service Coordinator</i>	Lawson 3 days / Kingswood 2 Days
Kendra Herron	<i>Client Intake & Assessments</i>	Lawson (occasionally Kingswood)
Sharon Sloan	<i>Volunteer Support Worker / Training Officer/ Travel Training Coordinator</i>	Lawson 5 days
Susan Pearce	<i>Accounts</i>	Kingswood
Michelle Atkins	<i>Administration</i>	Kingswood
Grahame Edwards	<i>Smartlink / Special Outings / Assessments</i>	Lawson 3 days



WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS (WWCC)

It is a requirement of our contract with Transport for NSW that **ALL** workers with GCT have a current WWCC. A huge thank you to all those who have already completed their check and provided me with the relevant paperwork.

To complete your check go to www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/working-with-children/working-with-children-check click on “start here” and follow the instructions (it is a really easy process) – select volunteer and purpose if transporting children. You then print out the form with the “APP” number or make a note of it, and go to the RMS (formerly RTA) with your driver’s licence to verify your identity (there is no cost) and you will be emailed your clearance. You can then print and drop in to me or forward to my email sharons@gct.org.au.

I ask that everyone provides this check by 31st October to ensure that we meet our obligations.

VOLUNTEER REIMBURSEMENTS

To ensure that you get paid your reimbursement in a timely manner please provide you BSB and Account number to me or the girls in finance.

Payment by cheque can cause delays due to the need to have cheques countersigned.

MARKETING

If anyone is able to assist to deliver brochures to medical practices, allied health professionals, dentists etc in their local area or even just to the places that they have an appointment, please let me know. Also if you can check the GCT posters that you see to ensure that the Penrith number is correct (4722 3083) as some posters have our old number which is no longer connected.

As Grahame now has extra duties he is no longer able to do these deliveries himself and would really appreciate your help.

JEAN HALE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Jean Hale was a mountains client who passed away about 5 years ago. Jean had no family and upon her passing left money to GCT to acknowledge the wonderful service she received from our Volunteers.

To ensure that this money was used in a way that also acknowledge Jean's generous gift we now present the "*Jean Hale Volunteer of the Year Award*" at our end of year celebration.

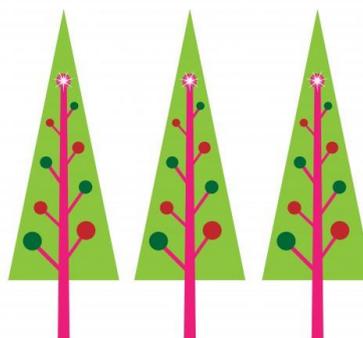


Two awards are presented so that one volunteer from the Penrith office and one from the Lawson office are recognised.

We have posters in all of the buses and vans advertising the award and all of the drivers should have nomination forms and there is a supply in each office. I encourage all volunteers, staff and clients to complete a nomination form so that the volunteers who provide exceptional service receive the recognition they deserve.

CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

Both offices will be closing at 12pm on Friday 23rd December 2016 and will reopen at 8.30am on Tuesday 3rd January 2016.



END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

Will be held at Warragamba Workers Club on Friday 9th December 2016 from 11am – 3pm. Transport is available from both offices. Anyone wishing to attend **MUST** RSVP to Sharon by **Monday 28th November** as this is a catered function.

TRAINING

We had a wonderful training session with Barbara Bonfield and her guide dog Sam in September. It was a shame that we had so few participants as it was a really informative session and Barbara is a truly inspirational speaker and gave us some great tips on assisting people who are vision impaired or legally blind.



UPCOMING TRAINING

We finish the year with Assisting Techniques training. It is important that all of our carers and driver attend this training to ensure that they provide appropriate assistance to our clients. **There are only a few places left so please book early.**

Your coordinators and I are here to support you!

Please feel free to talk to us about any concerns you have regarding your volunteer role.

A big thank you to Sharon at the Lawson Office (the other Sharon) for compiling this newsletter