



ClubGRANTS scheme (formerly CDSE) 2011 Bega Valley Shire Council, Category 1

Following is a list of groups that Merimbula RSL Club, Pambula-Merimbula Golf Club and Club Sapphire Merimbula and Tura have supported through the Bega Valley Shire Council ClubGRANTS (formerly CDSE) Category 1 funding, 2011.

Category 1 funding is for specific community welfare and social services, community development, community health services and employment assistance activities. For more information about how you can apply for the ClubGRANTS scheme, please phone Bega Valley Shire Council on (02) 6499 2222 or visit their website www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au

- Alzheimer's Australia NSW
- Art in the Garage: Tulgeen Group
- Bandara Children's Services
- Bega District Volunteer Rescue Group Inc
- Bega Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Bega Preschool Association Inc
- Bega Valley Community Drug Action Team
- Bega Valley Community Transport Services Inc
- Bega Valley Meals on Wheels Plus
- Bega Valley Shire Youth Council
- Bermagui Historical Society
- Bermagui Senior Citizens Welfare Club
- Candelo Playgroup
- Eden Child Care Centre
- Eden Community Access Centre Inc
- First Cobargo Scout Group
- Men and Family Wellbeing NSW Inc

- Men and Family Wellbeing NSW Inc – on behalf of Wallaga Lake Bermagui
- Men of League Foundation
- Playability Inc
- Pambula Surf Life Saving Club – Special Nippers
- Panorama RSL Day Club
- Quaama Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
- Queensland and Victorian Flood Appeals
- Sapphire Coast Concert Band
- Skills Training Employment Program - Merimbula MOOSH
- Skills Training Employment Program - Eden MOOSH
- St Vincent de Paul Society Merimbula
- Southern Womens Group Inc Women's Resource Centre
- Sapphire Mobile Preschool Eden
- Tathra Children's Services Inc
- Workability -Disability Trust
- Youth off the Streets Ltd

Merimbula clubs distribute \$186,220 to community groups

Sapphire Coast community groups and clubs have benefited from a cash injection of \$186,220 through the ClubGRANTS scheme, 2011.

Merimbula RSL Club, Club Sapphire Merimbula and Tura and the Pambula-Merimbula Golf Club have distributed donations and sponsorships to community and sporting groups as part of ClubGRANTS, formerly known as the Community Development Support Expenditure (CDSE) scheme.

Under the scheme, which was introduced in 1998, each year clubs with an annual net income of more than \$1 million distribute a proportion of their poker machine revenue to the local community.

There are two categories, with category 1 funding distributed through the Bega Valley Shire and giving priority to community groups in the council's Social Plan and category 2 funding distributed directly by the clubs.

Merimbula RSL Club manager Michael Mutsch said the \$186,220 contribution represented only part of what the three clubs contributed to the community during a 12-month period.

"As well as the CDSE scheme, now known as ClubGRANTS, we provide a substantial amount of support through sponsorships and free use of our facilities for meetings and gatherings," Mr Mutsch said.

"We aim to support a wide variety of different clubs and groups within our community, because these small locally-run groups are integral to so many people's health and happiness."

"Merimbula RSL for example, supports a whole range of sporting clubs including Merimbula Grasshoppers Soccer Club, Merimbula Diggers Football Club, Merimbula-Pambula Junior Rugby League, SCAFL Football League and the Merimbula Basketball Association to name a few."

Club Sapphire manager Damien Foley said the clubs also provided significant employment opportunities in the region.

"Between Club Sapphire Merimbula and Tura, Merimbula RSL and Pambula-Merimbula Golf Club we provide more than 290 jobs. In dollar value, this equates to around \$9.6 million annually in wages and salaries," Mr Foley said.

"There is a huge flow-on effect as well, with many suppliers and contractors deriving a fair portion of their annual income from the clubs.

"Clubs are part of the fabric of our community and an essential component of the local economy."

Pambula-Merimbula Golf Club manager Noel Robertson said clubs played a vital role in providing professional facilities for various committees such as those who administered sporting clubs, hospitals and elderly care facilities.

He said the clubs were also a central point for friends, family and the community to meet.

"What the clubs provide are a great environment, good food and a nice ambience where people can meet casually or professionally," Mr Robertson said. "Added to that is the role we play in hosting major events during the year, attracting significant visitor numbers and hence boosting the local economy.

"For example, the Pambula-Merimbula Golf Club hosts two major golf tournaments in June and October – bringing more than 1500 visitors in total to the area during traditionally quieter tourist times.

"The broader economic impact of this, along with being a venue for other major events such as the Merimbula Jazz Festival and Carols by Candlelight, cannot be understated."

All three club managers expressed concern about future community funding and impacts to employment if the Federal Government's push for compulsory 'pre-commitment' for poker machine players went ahead.

"We are all very concerned about the devastating effects this would have on our clubs, as well as the rest of the clubs along the Sapphire Coast," Mr Mutsch said. "It would be a major blow to all the groups and individuals who benefit from our club contributions and to the local economy in general."

Clubs boost Vinnies Christmas appeal

When Howard Hutton went to a St Vincent de Paul Society conference 20 years ago to talk about establishing a centre in Merimbula, he didn't think the area needed one.

Looking around Merimbula's beautiful waterfront real estate, his first impression was that the area didn't appear to need help and that there were no poor people in the town.

But Howard was wrong. Twenty years later Howard and many others who were at the 1991 conference, are still volunteering their time to help the growing number of people in need in the Merimbula community.

Every year the Merimbula St Vincent de Paul Society give about 50 families and 20 individuals Christmas hampers, food vouchers and toys. But they do much more than that – they are also there for people who need someone to turn to all year round.

"We meet with people every week in our centre, and it is from these people that we work out how to best distribute the Christmas donations among the Merimbula, Tura Beach, Pambula and Wyndham areas," Howard, who is the Merimbula society president, said.

"You don't realise how many disadvantaged people there are in our community. The cost of living is just getting worse, and it's very hard for pensioners for example, to keep up. At the moment we've got people coming in with their electricity bills because they just can't afford the big increases in the cost of electricity under a privatised system."

Howard said the St Vincent de Paul Society relied on the generosity of the community and businesses, such as Club Sapphire, who have donated \$1000 every year for the past 10 years towards the Christmas appeal.

This year Club Sapphire has increased its donation from CDSE category 1 funding to \$2000. Howard believes club manager Damien Foley should also take the credit for the Merimbula RSL and Eden Fishermen's Club giving to the Merimbula centre for the first time.

"Club Sapphire has helped us tremendously over a very long time, and this year we've got even more to thank them for because they've increased their donation," he said. "We are also very appreciative of Damien who I believe really spoke up for us and promoted our work to the other clubs, who have made a donation this year to what is a very good cause."

To make a donation to the Merimbula St Vincent de Paul Society Christmas appeal please phone (02) 6234 7360 or drop into the centre at 82 Main Street.

Coffee and conversation at the RSL

Every Tuesday from 10am until 1.30pm, a group of elderly residents from Merimbula, Tura, Pambula and Pambula Beach get together at Merimbula RSL Club for coffee and conversation, music and merriment and most importantly – a good time.

The Panorama RSL Day Club is part of a structured Veterans Affairs day club program for elderly people who might not get the opportunity to socialise on a regular basis with their peers. Volunteers run the program, which is supported by the RSL sub-branch.

Administrator Carolyn McColl said about 30 people met at the RSL each week for a range of activities including passive exercises, mental stimulation, guest speakers, music, movies and special occasions with organised outings.

Local bus company Deanes Buslines and Bimbimbie Retirement Village provide subsidised transport for club members – picking up and dropping them off at their front door.

Carolyn said the group applied to the RSL for CDSE funding to help pay for the buses, other activities and day trips.

"A day trip can be as simple as a trip to Eden for fish and chips at the wharf and an icecream," she said. "The members just really enjoy being in each other's company and enjoy getting out and we wouldn't be able to do this without the CDSE funding."

Carolyn said the time and effort that RSL staff put into the program was also invaluable.

"The RSL are absolutely wonderful to us," Carolyn said.

"When we arrive they have the room all set up for us with tea, coffee and food. The sub-branch has bought us a keyboard so we can enjoy some music while we're there and a large television so we can have movie days. We really appreciate the support they provide, not only financially, but also in the way they look after us."

The Panorama RSL Day Club has just celebrated its 13th birthday, with some members including Arthur Hook, Laurel Powell and Ivy Brown being there since day one.

Carolyn said membership was \$8 per person per session which covered the bus fare, morning tea, lunch and entry into the day's raffles. To register for the club you can phone Carolyn on 6495 6602 or Stan Cox on 6495 7235.

Special program for Special Nippers

The award-winning Pambula Special Nippers program truly is something special.

An initiative of Pambula Surf Life Saving Club in conjunction with Bega Valley Respite Care, the program started in January 2000 with five children and 10 lifesavers. Since that time Special Nippers has grown to almost 20 participants aged from six to 36 and more than 20 lifesavers. Pambula SLSC has also introduced the program into six other surf life saving clubs around Australia.

Pambula SLSC chief training officer Michele Bootes, who was involved in getting the program up and running, said Special Nippers was for children and young adults unable to participate in junior surf life saving programs because of a disability.

"Special Nippers aims to allow participants to experience a regular sporting program that the general community takes for granted," Michele said.

"The children taking part in this program have developed both water skills and social skills. The parents of these special children also enjoy the opportunity to spend time with other parents who face the same types of challenges. The carers, all qualified lifesavers, also gain enormously from the program by sharing the joy these children show so openly."

Summer activities include a warm up run, exercises, flags, beach relays, ball games, board riding and swimming.

Michele said that thanks to donations from Pambula-Merimbula Golf Club, Merimbula RSL and Club Sapphire Merimbula, Special Nippers was able to run during winter at the Sapphire Aquatic Centre in Pambula.

"The winter program is helping our Special Nippers maintain their fitness and water safety skills in readiness for when the summer program starts up again," Michele said.

In 2004 the club introduced kayaking to Special Nippers using a club member's double ocean kayak.

"This proved to be such a popular activity with our special nippers that the club decided to purchase its own kayak with a generous donation from the Pambula-Merimbula Golf Club and Eatons Mowers and Marine," Michele said.

The program has received several awards including NSW SLSA Masons Award and the NSW Water Safety Award. To find out more visit www.pambulasurf.org.au or phone Michele Bootes on 6495 3375.