



Media Release

Sunday, 26 January 2020

Cockburn's award-winning citizens recognized on Australia Day

The City of Cockburn has added five new recipients to its coveted list of Australia Day Community Citizen of the Year Award winners, including joint winners of the overall title for 2020.

John De'Laney and Felicity Bairstow have been named the City's joint Community Citizens of 2020 in recognition of the care and compassion that drives their volunteer work to help others in Cockburn, and the wider community.

Mr De'Laney, of South Lake, has been instrumental in a push for greater recognition of Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day, now commemorated annually on 15 October.

Ms Bairstow has worked tirelessly to protect and promote biodiversity, sustainable practices and community advocacy for more than 25 years, volunteering with The Wetlands Centre Cockburn, the Save Beelias Wetlands campaign and the Wetlands Conservation Society.

The awards were presented by Mayor Logan Howlett at the City's annual Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony where 135 new Australian citizens – 38 more than in 2019 – pledged their commitment to our country on the 71st anniversary of Australian Citizenship.

Mayor Howlett said the City's annual Australia Day Community Citizen of the Year Awards recognised the individuals and groups that made a difference through their inspiring actions and dedicated service.

"Our recognition of these people, who reflect positive Australian characteristics, is integral to fostering community pride and an important thread in the fabric of the Australian story," Mayor Howlett said.

This year's winners are:

- Community Citizen of the Year – **Overall**: John De'Laney, Felicity Bairstow
- Community Citizen of the Year – **Youth (under 25 years of age)**: Zal Kanga-Parabia

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- Community Citizen of the Year – **Senior (over 65 years of age)**: Noleen Jesser
- Active Citizenship – **Group or Event**: Cockburn Chinese Community Association Incorporated

John De'Laney of South Lake has been instrumental in pushing for greater recognition of Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day, now commemorated annually on 15 October.

Following his and wife Kate's struggles in starting their own family, John founded Pregnancy and Infant Loss Australia in an effort to honour not only the babies that they had lost, but also to help others through their grief when losing babies through miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, and stillbirth, as well as death in infancy.

In 2012, John was successful in having Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day commemorated in WA, and in 2019 in Victoria.

To mark the day in 2019, almost 60 landmarks across Australia and New Zealand were lit up in pink and blue. John is now petitioning the Federal Government to make 15 October a day of national commemoration.

Felicity Bairstow has worked tirelessly to promote and protect biodiversity, sustainable practices and community advocacy.

Felicity has volunteered for more than 10 years with the Wetlands Centre Cockburn, helping run environmental education programs and supporting volunteers. She has volunteered for 25 years for the Save Beelir Wetlands campaign, and for many years with the Wetlands Conservation Society.

Felicity has participated in working groups with state government, works with local Aboriginal people to foster environmental awareness and has helped many young people to connect with the natural environment.

Zal Kanga-Parabia is an energetic volunteer who pours his 'heart and soul' into projects that support local artists, youth, and not-for-profit organisations, becoming a leader for young people in his community.

The Hammond Park local works with Propel Youth Arts WA, and volunteers with The Perth Observatory, the National Science Week committee, and many other groups, programs and festivals.



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Zal volunteers with Koondarm and Madjtil Moorna reconciliation choirs, translating popular songs to Nyungar, and with community groups Walyalup Kannajil and Dilbi Kannajil giving people an opportunity to come together to learn the Nyungar language.

Noleen Jesser is a member of Cockburn Seniors Centre, and coordinator of the Cockburn Seniors Travel Club.

Noleen has always enjoyed travelling, but arriving in Cockburn from Queensland four years ago and not yet knowing many people, meant she'd have to travel alone.

After discussing her idea of starting a travel group with the Seniors Centre manager, the Travel Club immediately took off, with many interested seniors who had previously found it difficult to travel as a single person joining up.

Since then, Noleen has organised many trips within WA, Australia and overseas, allowing seniors from her community the opportunity to form new connections and experience the joy of travel.

Cockburn Chinese Community Association (CCCA) formed in 2018 to facilitate and foster relationships, integration and social cohesion between the Chinese and broader community in Cockburn.

The Association connects the Chinese community in Cockburn with services and also provides an Australian Citizenship workshop to help applicants prepare for their citizenship test.

The CCCA regularly hosts events and activities for juniors, seniors and new migrants to help the local Chinese community adapt to the Australian culture and way of life.

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