



Media Release

10 June 2022

Rocco Zagari dances his way to Cockburn's 2022 WA Day Award at City's 50th Pioneer Luncheon

Rocco Zagari has taught hundreds of local seniors how to dance their cares away in the past decade, passing on his love for the healthy fun activity with patience, passion and pizzazz.

The volunteer Ballroom, Modern Latin and New Vogue dance instructor has been named the 2022 recipient of the City of Cockburn WA Day Award at the City's 50th annual Pioneers Luncheon.

Born in Italy, Mr Zagari has lived in Cockburn for 60 years after arriving in WA with his parents about 66 years ago as a 10-year-old. His parents ran a market garden in Spearwood for a decade when he was a youngster.

He was nominated by Cockburn Seniors Centre Coordinator Julie McDonald who said Mr Zagari had the experience and patience to support seniors with their dancing lessons, especially beginners.

Mr Zagari initially supported the Centre's well-respected local dancing instructor, Shirley Bickley (dec), for several years, stepping in to teach Ballroom beginners after her retirement.

A former student of Ms Bickley, learning his craft from her as a student after taking his first lessons in his 30s, Mr Zagari is joined at the Centre by fellow volunteers Christine Cooper and Peter Fallon who teach the popular Social Dance classes.

"Volunteering is good for the soul. Living in the community for 60 years, Rocco wanted to give back to local Seniors and teach them new skills to live a full and active life," Mrs McDonald said.

"He is proof we are never too old to teach and learn new things."

Rocco is also a mentor supporting children at South Coogee Primary school, a role he has been committed to for the past seven years.



Media Release

Presenting the award at today's luncheon, Mayor Logan Howlett said Mr Zagari's weekly lessons had been a highlight for many Cockburn's Seniors Centre members for many years.

"Dedicated volunteers are what helps the Centre provide important social enrichment for local seniors," Mayor Howlett said.

"The waiting list for activities and memberships speaks volumes for their popularity and the Centre's general regard in our community.

"Rocco is very well known locally and he is an important part of the fabric of the Cockburn community."

In the past two years, the annual Pioneers Luncheon has been held over two weeks as a community health safeguard in response to the pandemic. This year, luncheons held on 3 and 10 June have been attended by more than 300 guests.

ENDS

For more information contact:
Media and Communications Officer
City of Cockburn
T: 08 9411 3551
E: media@cockburn.wa.gov.au