

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: 3 January 2018



COORONG ANNOUNCES INSPIRING OZ DAY WINNERS

A Tailem Bend couple with volunteering 'in their veins', plus one of Meningie's most progressive community leaders have been awarded the Coorong District Council's *Australia Day Citizen of the Year Awards*.

Local lakeside hero, Meningie's own **Andrew Dawes** was named one of the worthy recipients for his inspiring commitment to volunteering on a range of town beautification projects, community events and environmental action.

Further north, much-loved Tailem Bend couple **Margaret and Bill Jaensch** were also awarded the dual title for their commitment to the Tailem Bend district, amassing 50 years of volunteering with various organisations and garnering the respect of everyone around them.

In the *Community Event of the Year* category, two deserving winners came from Tintinara and Meningie.

In a one-of-a-kind event, the Tintinara community got behind the **Dr Temple Grandin Event** hosted by the Tintinara Regional Areas Development Enterprises Inc. (TRADE) group in earlier this year in July. The visit from Dr Temple Grandin was so popular it was run over four days, offering opportunities for people hear about her expertise in the areas of animal science and autism.

Back to Meningie, it was also the ever-growing **Meningie Food, Fun and Family Fair** to also be handed Australia Day event accolades, with its humble beginnings back in 2011 now growing into an event firmly planted on the regional calendar. Most recently, a crowd of more than 500 people attended the event, where families were a focus and the wider community came together to celebrate the district and its people.

The Australia Day Awards are proudly presented by the *Australia Day Council of South Australia* in conjunction with the Coorong District Council.

Mayor Neville Jaensch said the awards recognised outstanding contributions in the community in any number of areas, and was a celebration of the rural volunteer culture.

"This year's winners are a worthy and inspiring mix of quiet achievers, proud local volunteers and exceptionally positive community events," Mayor Jaensch says.

"Volunteers and community-run events make small communities like ours tick. Without them, our social capacity dwindles and opportunities for our towns to thrive can diminish.

"These awards are integral to recognising the exceptional people and events in our community. Our award winners and event organisers don't volunteer for the accolades, but because they're passionate local contributors – so this is a small 'thankyou' from the district."

Postal Address:

PO Box 399
TAILEM BEND SA 5260
Email: council@coorong.sa.gov.au
Web: www.coorong.sa.gov.au

Coorong Civic Centre

95 – 101 Railway Terrace
TAILEM BEND SA 5260
Phone: 1300 785 277
Fax: 08 8572 3822

Meningie Information Hub

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MENINGIE SA 5264

Tintinara Customer Service Centre

37 Becker Terrace
TINTINARA SA 5266

A bit about the winners ...

- **Citizen of the Year – Tailem Bend: Bill and Margaret Jaensch**

Known as community role-models, Bill and Margaret Jaensch are entrenched in the Tailem Bend community, whether it be through their involvement in local sports clubs, youth programs or town beautification projects – they have always invested their time to make Tailem Bend a better place to live, work and play. Both have collectively contributed more than 50 years of volunteer work to causes like the local sporting clubs, Lions club, Meals on Wheels, Blue Light Disco and Tailem Bend Progress Association. As well as this, they lend their skills to community projects, with Bill volunteering his time to build the main street and Visitor Information Centre banner poles and map frames. In the nomination to Council, the selfless duo were named as being “*generous, dedicated and passionate ... helping make Tailem Bend a place proud to call home*”.



- **Citizen of the Year - Meningie: Andrew Dawes**

Andrew is often the backbone of Meningie’s community events and projects, consistently putting his hand up to help out, and leading by example with a positive attitude – even during drought periods. Andrew has headed up the Meningie Progress Association, and his progressive attitude has helped drive a number of initiatives, including the Meningie Flip Flop Windmill, Lions Jubilee Park, Memorial Park, Ashville History Trail and the Meningie 150th Celebrations. He was also a key leader in Meningie’s recent KESAB success at both State and National level. Andrew’s efforts help to make Meningie a great district to live in, do business and visit. He is a well-loved and respected leader in the community, and doesn’t look like slowing down with his contributions any time soon.

- **Community Event of the Year – Tintinara: Dr Temple Grandin Event**

A four-day event, with a visit from international livestock expert Dr Temple Grandin was one of Tintinara’s shining lights during 2017. More than 120 volunteers invested time, gaining external funding and sponsorship to make it go ahead – attracting hundreds of people to the town, and some exceptional media coverage. It took a huge amount of time and energy from community groups, and invested money directly back in to the community. Dr Temple Grandin ran four information/education sessions, offering a unique opportunity for local farmers and other interested parties to learn from one of the global leaders in animal science and autism.

- **Community Event of the Year – Meningie: Meningie Food, Fun and Family Fair**

This proactive community event, now in its sixth year has gone from strength to strength since being established. What initially began as family day out, has become one of the region’s favourite events, with key organisations coming out to support it.

It now boasts on-water activities, live music, petting zoos, health checks and so much more, with the 2017 event attracting more than 500 people. The whole fair is run by local, passionate volunteers – specifically members of the Meningie Garden Club, who oversee the event.

The awards will be formally presented at Australia Day celebration events to be held in Tintinara, Meningie and Tailem Bend on Friday, 26 January 2018.

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Contact:

Nat Traeger

DIRECTOR COMMUNITY & CORPORATE

Phone: 1300 785 277 | E: ntraeger@coorong.sa.gov.au

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