



Worktrainers News

Summer Edition 2009

Back to doing what he loves

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Life is looking pretty good for Bamawm's Dave McPherson.

A motorbike accident years ago saw his world turned upside down, but, after a long rehabilitation process, Dave is back working and doing what he loves most - landscaping.

For the past month, Dave has been working at Kennaugh's Sand, Soil and Garden Supplies, maintaining the gardens in the yard, as well as the yards of other surrounding businesses two days a week.

Mowing lawns, weeding, mulching and general maintenance of the business have helped him

achieve a new lease on life.

Dave was employed through the Work Trainers Disability Employment Network program, with his employment consultant, Jarrad Nuttall, finding work for him which was in line with his interests.

Jarrad said the Disability Employment Program provided people like Dave with the chance to get back into the workforce and be a part of the community again.

Dave said he was enjoying working with Kennaugh's and said he was grateful for the opportunity.

"It's really good. The fellas here are all really good. I

like to work hard and keep busy," he said.

"I love to landscape. I get a big buzz creating something and then seeing the result. I'm really grateful and hope I can stay here for a long period."

The Echuca Worktrainers branch has about 70 disabled people involved in the network, with around 80 per cent in some form of employment.

Site manager Sharon Prendergast said changes to the Disability Support Pension (DSP) meant finding part-time employment was now easier for people with a disability.

Previously, if disabled people were referred to Worktrainers, Centrelink would automatically review their DSP, making some people scared of searching in case their DSP was lost.

However, Sharon said under the changes introduced, if people were referred to the disability employment program, no review was necessary.

Worktrainers hope to recruit more people to their disability employment program following the changes.



Source: Riverina Herald

A new bike brings independence

Did you know:

Worktrainers has been working to get unemployed people into sustainable employment since 1989.

Worktrainers has grown in size since this time from one site with two staff to a multi site operation, directly employing approximately sixty staff across North East Victoria.

Worktrainers Seymour prides itself in helping people with disabilities obtain ongoing employment.

Recently, staff illustrated the lengths they will go to when helping Michael Harris of Seymour.

Michael came into the Disability Employment Network in Seymour to seek work in the open labour market. After his skills were assessed, Michael was placed as a gardener with GAME to assist with their gardening contract at the local TAFE.

Plunkett Fowles Winery at Avenel was then approached with a view to obtaining more hours in gardening for Michael, with GAME being the employer.

"There is plenty of

mowing and brush-cutting to be done, and Michael has had good exposure in this area so we are more than happy to engage him into this work," winery manager Ian Firth said.

The next hurdle for Michael was to remain independent. "I want to work and be able to manage myself," Michael said.

As Michael lives in Seymour and the winery is in Avenel, and without transport, it was discovered that he was able to catch a V/Line train that allowed him enough hours' work at the winery.

Keen to help Michael, Worktrainers purchased him a bike to assist him in getting to and from the railway station and the

winery, which is a distance of about 4 km.

When Michael found out about the bike and helmet, he said: "Are you for real, that would be great and I'm looking forward to starting work already."

The staff at Worktrainers do their best to assist job seekers to become employed in suitable work that matches their skills and abilities. They believe it is all about commitment and looking after both the employer and the job seeker.

Michael continues to flourish in his roles and is looking forward to the warmer weather to enable him to increase his hours even further.

Source: Seymour Telegraph



Michael with his new bike.

For holiday makers the change in season means they put away the skis and beanies and dust off the boat or bushwalking gear. For some people who live and work here it also means a change of jobs!

After the snow season finishes at the end of September the focus in employment changes to seasonal work like:

Weed Spraying (Nov – May)

Cherry Picking (Dec – Jan)

Lawn Seed growing/bagging – (Dec – Feb)

Grape Picking (Feb – Mar)

Last September & October were dry which affected the growing period for the lawn seed industry. The rains in the last 2 weeks of November to 1st week of December have also affected quality of the crop, resulting in the farmers having a poorer crop and requiring less staff than previous years.

Weed spraying season has been inconsistent as well with the rains affecting time being available to effectively spray in the area.

The cherry picking has started in the district with over 100 pickers working feverishly from early December. Heavy rains late November affected the quality of some of the crop but most is ok. We have referred over 40 pickers so far with some of them being

permanent pickers who move from district to district and pick a variety of fruit. Also had many backpackers from various countries including Germany, Netherlands, Korea & the U.K.

During October Site Manager Peter Grey attended a regional youth forum which was attended by about 50 community minded people. The result was a sub committee was formed to ensure all youth issues in the Mansfield Shire are addressed. Peter is on that sub committee and says "it is early days however we are looking to see what areas are not being satisfactorily met. Our focus at the moment is setting up a mentoring program that provides benefits to both the youth and the mentor. An example could be a young person is interested in farming while the mentor lacks computer skills. Through their association they could help each other".

Our community spirit doesn't end there with Rochelle Whalen heavily involved in the Mansfield Netball Club as secretary which involves a year long commitment. As well as the winter Saturday matches; they also hold competitions at other times of the year including the mixed netball competition which is very popular with up to 12 teams. Peter Grey is involved in the Mansfield Tennis Association and one duty is being in the tournament box for 2 days putting



Craig's Hut—A popular High Country attraction

matches on. Peter says "the tournament is an open tournament in December with players vying for prize money and national rankings. The 2 days are hard work but enjoyable as long as the weather is fine."

The economic concerns have hit Mansfield and surrounding areas with 4 large businesses all reducing staff because of lack of work or financing issues. In addition the tourist influx from Cup Weekend to Easter is down on previous years. People come here to enjoy activities ranging from bushwalking, motor bike riding, mountain bike riding, 4 wheel driving, water skiing, fishing and camping. This affects both those trying to find work in the hospitality industry and those with existing work who find their hours are reduced.

Despite this, Mansfield will survive and thrive as it is such a great place to live.

Workshops in Wodonga

Commencing February 2009 Worktrainers in Wodonga will be delivering the following workshops at their office & if you would like to participate, please let one of the Wodonga team members know.

Worktrainers Wodonga

3/91 Hume Street

Ph: 02 60566101

- Mature Age jobseekers
- Youth jobseekers
- Parents returning to the workforce
- Self-Esteem/Motivation
- A Workshop with Employers
- Job Interviews
- Resume Writing
- Barriers to Employment (Real & Perceived)
- 'You Are Employable' – looking at your skills, values & interests
- How to address a Key Selection Criteria
- Developing a Letter of Application
- Job Search Strategies



No stopping GAME Traffic Management

GAME Contracting, a part of Worktrainers launched a new business late last year—GAME Traffic Management. Shane O'Sullivan manages this business along with GAME's other divisions, Waste Management and Gardening Services and is pleased with the steady growth of the business since its inception.

Wodonga residents would be aware of GAME Traffic Management as they have been involved in the road closures every Friday night for 'Lounging on High' a summer promotion by the City of Wodonga.

One of the highlights thus far has been providing Traffic Management services for the Scott People's Memorial Race held in Mid December. It was a busy weekend for Shane and his team of 14 Traffic controllers, with a ride held on the Saturday and the official race being run on the Sunday.

The event was held in memory of Scott People's, a promising young cyclist from Shepparton who was tragically killed in 2006. The race was approximately 130 kms in length, starting and finishing in

Shepparton and taking in Violet Town, Nalinga and Dookie townships. Around 180 riders took to the open road, which meant that professional Traffic Management was imperative to ensure their safety for the duration of the ride on Saturday and the race on Sunday.

The event was a great success and those involved were complimentary of the work done by GAME Traffic Management.

Well done to Shane and his team!

13 sites across North East Victoria

Benalla
03 5762 6065

Bendigo
03 5443 0377

Bright
03 5755 1033

Castlemaine
03 5472 2011

Cobram
03 5871 2716

Echuca
03 5480 6422

Mansfield
03 5775 2800

Myrtleford
03 5752 2320

Shepparton
03 5831 2511

Seymour
03 5792 2333

Wangaratta
03 5721 2222

Wodonga
02 6056 6101

Yarrawonga
03 5744 2960

Freecall

1800 802 277

If you are interested in gaining employment in the Traffic Management Area you will need to obtain a Traffic Controllers Licence.

If you are currently receiving New Start or the DSP you may be eligible for assistance in gaining this qualification, so be sure to speak to your Employment Consultant about this at your next appointment.



There is no stopping Shane and GAME Traffic Management

