

Rotary 'Tree of Joy'
Delivers over 900 Christmas gifts
to those in need

The Rotary Club of Ryde organised a very successful 'Tree of Joy' again this year in the Eastwood and West Ryde Shopping Centres. The Eastwood Centre celebrated its 20th year this year of generous community spirit and West Ryde Shopping Centre a new addition celebrated its 2nd year, with an overwhelming response from local residents and shop owners.

These gifts are donated to a number of local charities who provide them to children, families in need and the elderly.

Janis Redford, General Manager of Catholic Community Services thanked Duncan Taylor and Ron Taffa from the Rotary Club of Ryde for the generosity and goodwill generated by the 'Tree of Joy'.

"These gifts go to people who often have very few friends or family to support them at this time of the year". Ms. Redford said. "They receive enormous joy from knowing that someone else has thought of them and we are very appreciative to the Rotary Club of Ryde for organising this great community service."

Ryde Rotary brought the Tree of Joy concept to Australia after seeing a similar project in Maryland USA. The Ryde Rotary Club was able to start Australia's first 'Tree of Joy' in the Eastwood Centre in 1989.

"The project was started in collaboration with Rotary, the local community support groups, the Eastwood Centre and of course the generosity of the general community." Said Duncan Taylor, from the Rotary Club of Ryde.

"The general community are invited to choose a card and to purchase a gift, wrap and return it to the Centre where the Rotary Club arranges for it to reach the recipient in time for Christmas.

In the first weeks of the initial year, it was obvious that the response from the Community was so great that the Tree needed to be moved to a more visible spot (outside Woolworths) where it stands today 20 years later." He said

Through the Rotary Club of Ryde Trees of Joy were in 24 Shopping Centres by the second year and are now all over Australia as well as many countries all over the world.

In the last 20 years the community has given an average of 900 gifts per year to the needy through the Tree Joy in the Eastwood Centre and over the past two years West Ryde Shopping

The generosity of the Community is overwhelming and provides true JOY to those who are forgotten and/or in need in the community especially at Christmas time. Thanks must be given to the Eastwood Centre and West Ryde Shopping Village, the general public and the members of the Ryde Rotary Club.

About Catholic Community Services

Catholic Community Services works with a diverse range of people and communities to enable and maintain sustainable and vibrant lives. We work with the elderly, financially disadvantaged, people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, people with a disability, people with a mental illness and carers.

Catholic Community Services is a division of Catholic Healthcare
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