



The Dr Edward Koch Foundation

Newsletter ♦ December 2021 ♦ Issue 53



Dulcie Bird, CEO

Message from the CEO

Reflecting on 2021, it has been a very busy year for the Foundation. As we herald the arrival of the festive season, we hope that the initiatives undertaken have had a positive impact on our community.

In ending another year, I sincerely thank all the volunteers of our organisation for their wonderful efforts. I very much appreciate their commitment and I have thoroughly enjoyed working with such a collaborative team of helpers.

Thank you to all our sponsors and donors for your assistance this year. Your generous contributions have helped immensely in the continuation of our established events as well as the introduction of new initiatives to support mental health and suicide prevention. The Rotary Clubs of Cairns Trinity and Cairns Sunrise deserve a special mention of thanks as they have been extremely helpful, especially with our Backyard Makeover Program and All of Us Festival. Century Cranes is a strong supporter of the Foundation and we are extremely appreciative of the donations that come in regularly from the use of a specific crane within their fleet.

Our 2021 highlights include: the successful All of Us Festival held as part of Mental Health Week; the many Mental Health First Aid courses offered to community members and local businesses; and the series of Life Suicide Awareness and Prevention Workshops provided for the Yarrabah community. All the Foundation's activities have been especially significant due to the many challenges presented by COVID-19.

In closing, I sincerely thank you for your support throughout 2021 and wish you a very Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year. Please stay safe and well throughout the forthcoming holiday season as travel resumes across the nation. Until next time..... Dulcie

FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce

The last meeting of the Taskforce was held on 8 December 2021. It has been a big year of activities for the Taskforce but members are undaunted by it all. They are looking forward to coming together again next year with fresh ideas for the many initiatives that the Taskforce will be developing and implementing.

Simply Ballroom

Our Monday night Simply Ballroom dance classes expanded to include regular social dances to which members of other dance schools were invited. These will continue in 2022 as they have proven to be enjoyable and successful.

As a community initiative, the Simply Ballroom Dance School held a dance display for residents from Regis Redlynch Aged Care on 7 December 2021. Others also attended the event. An enjoyable afternoon was held by all.

Recently, a new beginners' class was launched for Wednesdays at 5.30pm. This is proving to be popular. Simply Ballroom closed their year with a wonderful night of dancing at their Christmas Dance on 11 December. Simply Ballroom looks forward to welcoming you to some ballroom-dancing fun in 2022! For more information contact: 0409 765 305. Funds raised by the Simply Ballroom Dance School aid the Foundation's activities.

Backyard Makeover Project - calling for submissions

The Dr Edward Koch Foundation's FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce has developed and is implementing a Backyard Makeover Program in the Cairns area. Its aim is to improve mental, social and physical outcomes, reduce isolation and loneliness and increase social connection and wellbeing for residents who require assistance with a small makeover of their back yard. The Program targets those who are not in a position to maintain or care for their back yards. This could be due to a number of factors including: finances, skill base, psychological (including hoarding and recent trauma), time or the physical demands of home maintenance due to the impacts of ageing, injury or illness.

Members of the community are invited to nominate a family member, friend, work colleague or neighbour who needs assistance with a small makeover project in their back yard. Makeovers are categorised into three levels with Level 3 being a major project which may include building or replacing a deck or installing pavers. Level 2 will include a general tidy-up including shrub pruning, rubbish removal and small repairs. Level 1 will include mowing and weeding.

We will be carrying out one major makeover before Easter and smaller makeovers if funds permit. Nominations are open now and close on 31 January 2022. Nominations can be made on our website www.kochfoundation.org.au

Mental Health First Aid courses

A Mental Health First Aid Course was held in November for the community. We look forward to resuming our courses in the new year.

Functions

The CEO attended a lunch held by a Taskforce Member organisation, Selectability. This function celebrated their 2021 achievements and honoured their deputy chair, Dr Clive Skarott who has been instrumental in their recent expansion throughout FNQ. Well done, Selectability and Clive!

Stay Safe Over Christmas

Christmas can be very hard for families who have lost a loved one. It continually reminds them that their family member or friend is missing while seeing Christmas cheer all around them. A range of emotions may be triggered: some pleasant, some not. Here is some advice that may help you keep safe during the Christmas period.

- ✓ Do something different on Christmas day if you feel like it. Don't be afraid to change your routine. You can always change it back.
- ✓ Be aware that the Christmas period could be hard and give yourself permission to feel your grief.
- ✓ Do not try to block the bad moments. Let the hurting moments come, but also let them go.
- ✓ Limit your exposure to television and radio if you find that they are upsetting you.
- ✓ Leading up to Christmas, keep your routine normal but include activities that you find enjoyable and relaxing.
- ✓ Enjoy good meals with your family but still try to eat healthily and limit your alcohol intake.
- ✓ Keep yourself COVID-safe this Christmas: keep using hand sanitiser, wash your hands frequently, and maintain spatial distance as needed. Look out for each other, stay positive, and enjoy our newfound freedoms responsibly.

DONATIONS: Piccones Super IGA aids the Foundation, with a percentage of **your purchase dollar** being donated to us monthly. Thank you, Piccones, for your great community spirit! **REMEMBER: THE NEXT TIME YOU SHOP AT PEASE ST OR EDMONTON SUPA IGA STORES, SUPPORT THE FOUNDATION BY NOMINATING US. OUR NUMBER IS #5029.**