

Goulburn Valley Pride Incorporated

2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Presidents Report 2019-2020

Prepared by Georgina Poort. 2019-2020 Senior Vice President



The 2019-2020 year for Goulburn Valley Pride has possibly been one of our biggest in terms of growth, leadership, and one of this year's buzzwords we all know, our ability to Pivot. Our organisation has again, strived to and has successfully achieved a number of accomplishments that, for a completely volunteer run registered charity we should be very proud of.

The day before our last AGM we launched our FLEDGE Leadership program with the support of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and a partnership with GOTAFE. Our leadership program saw 20 local LGBTIQ+ leaders attend 10 3-hour training sessions over this past year. Included in the training was governance, skill building, leadership styles, project work, capacity building and so much more. Our FLEDGE Graduates official celebration is set to take place in early December with a retreat in Beechworth. We are proud of all those that committed to this program and know that many of them will become our next leaders, those that will be reading reports like this one in the years to come.

OUTintheOPEN 2019 had 14 events included as part of the Festival line up, with some major success and partnerships, including; the Book Launch of "About a Girl" with well known actress Georgie Stone and author Rebekah Robertson visiting Shepparton for a special Q&A supported by GOTAFE; the Laramie Project, an incredible play performed by Shepparton Theatre Arts Group; our first ever Rainbow Storytime at Shepparton Library with many excited humans in attendance, young and old alike (back on the line up for this year too); and, Carnival Day which included amazing performances, many stall holders and one very popular reptile and animal petting zoo! OUTintheOPEN continues to be our organisations largest event and a primary focus of our work. As we move into celebrating our ninth year, I particularly would like to thank the volunteer committee from 2019 for their efforts and passion as well as congratulating this year's team for the ability to continue their work through what has been very trying circumstances.

Last year's free Christmas BBQ was held at the CWA Gardens in Dookie, the first time we haven't hosted it at the Lake in Shepparton and our community loved it. We still had many members come along, some of the locals even popped by for a visit. It was wonderful to see some of our local Rainbow Families enjoying the day with a fenced playground and lots of shady trees to lounge under.

Our local LGBTIQ+ elders had the opportunity to share their thoughts as part of the Victorian Governments Aged Care Consultation, a necessary opportunity for those in our community who are often forgotten more than others.

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There will be an aged care Community of Practice forum as part of the 2020 OITO Festival line up, and we continue to ensure that we are supporting the needs of our diverse community, age included.

Whilst we have been faced with COVID, and many of us have spent more time at home than ever, we have hosted 10 online community catchups, giving people the chance to check in, talk, see others and be with their community. Many of our committee have had one to one conversation with our financial members and also local people who reached out and needed someone to talk to. All of these efforts may not always feel like they contribute when we count them singularly but when we think about our overall impact and ability to continue to support our community I know we have gone above and beyond what many other LGBTIQ+ volunteer led organisations have been able to do.

In June OUTintheOPEN and GV Pride supported Pride-Solation, an event which saw the collaboration of 8 Regional and Rural LGBTIQ+ Pride Festival and Organisations. The event was 3 months in the making and saw the creation of our very own GV Proud video, where we highlighted the amazing contributions of local volunteers as well as local funded LGBTIQ+ youth program, The Diversity Project, and is such a great reminder of how truly proud we all should be for what we do. The live streamed event had almost 8,000 views and through the collaborative efforts we strengthened partnerships with many other regional and rural Pride organisations, an aim of mine which I am also really proud of.

Goulburn Valley Pride supported the incredible growth of LINE Wangaratta by providing auspice to three grants, one specifically which contributed to the Care Package Program. The 60 care packages went out across the region sending love and care to local LGBTIQ+ people. We can't wait to see what happens next in Wangaratta, we hear there may be a health forum coming in 2021 and we know there will continue to be growth across our region. Many of our members come from the regions surrounding Shepparton in basically all directions. We hope to continue our growth through to smaller towns nearby to allow all of our regional and rural GV Pride members social connectedness and support.

As the outgoing chair for the 2019-2020 year I would like to thank our committee; Emma Tang, Allison Winters, Laurin Harris, Tiani Hombsch, Jenni George, Beatrice Macague, Ian Smith, Kieran Murphy and Damien Stevens-Todd for their time, commitment, energy and passion. Without you our organisation would not be what it is, community lead, driven, resourceful and an amazing resource to all of our paid members.

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I have been lucky enough to have been involved on this committee for seven year now and have been in this role of 'chair human' for a while. I am excited to see who will join GV Pride for the next 12 months and beyond, as we continue to support, and advocate for, the LGBTIQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual +) communities in the Goulburn Valley & surrounds in a safe, inclusive space by:

- providing peer-lead initiatives, projects, and services, with a focus on reducing isolation and improving health and wellbeing;
- proactively facilitating access to, and creating engaging events and pride festivals, that highlight visibility;
- liaising, partnering with, and educating allies, businesses and organisations in inclusive practice;
- maintaining and promoting member engagement and striving to evolve with changing community needs;
- providing financial support through grants, funded projects, and member assistance.

Thank you again to our outgoing committee, for your efforts, support and time spent over the past twelve months and beyond. I look forward to seeing what the next year brings for Goulburn Valley Pride, thank you.