

MEDIA RELEASE

FIREFIGHTER, YOUNG SPORTS STAR AND NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL NAMED MID MURRAY'S AUSTRALIA DAY WINNERS

A new music festival, a long-serving volunteer firefighter and a young dirt go-kart star have been honoured in the Mid Murray Council's annual Australia Day awards.

The winners were formally announced at an afternoon tea on 11 January, which also recognised the efforts and achievements of all nominees.

Mannum CFS volunteer **Barry Burdett** – who has served with the fire service for 48 years – was named the **2022 Mid Murray Council Citizen of the Year**. He is also a volunteer with bushfire recovery organisation Blazeaid, and a long-standing member and office bearer with the Lions Club of Mannum, through which he has been instrumental in driving and supporting projects including the construction of the Hermann Gass Reserve walkway, Mannum Skate Park Shelter and creating a garden for elderly residents at the Aminya Village Hostel. Barry also serves as the Deputy Chair of the Mannum Health Advisory Board and volunteers with the local Lutheran Church.

Cordola Camping and Recreation was recognised for its efforts in organising the new **Cordola Rocks the River** event held on 30 October 2021 with the **Community Event of the Year Award**. The festival attracted over 300 visitors to Cordola (south of Morgan). It gave local artists and musicians affected by reduced performance opportunities due to the COVID-19 pandemic the opportunity to shine, and raised funds to send one senior performer and one junior performer to the Tamworth Country Music Academy. Organisers deemed the inaugural event such a success that planning is already under way for a 2022 festival.

Young sports star **Hayden Mason** has achieved national and State level success in his sport of dirt go-karting and is the recipient of the **2022 Mid Murray Council Youth Achievement Award**. Getting behind the wheel of his first kart at the age of 3, and competing locally as a junior with the Blanchetown Kart Club, Hayden has gone on to win many major titles and blue ribbon events. In 2021 he defended his title as SA's number 1 in his class, winning SA Junior Light Champion for the second consecutive year. He's also a three-time grand final player with the Mannum Roos Football Club, where he has played since the age of 8, and trains with the Mannum CFS Cadets – all while balancing school and his part-time work.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said the winners and all the award nominees displayed outstanding commitment and dedication to their local communities.

"Each year we seek to recognise the Mid Murray's unsung heroes – and each year we are reminded that community spirit and the value of service to others are alive and well in our district," Mayor Burgess says.

"Our volunteers go above and beyond in many areas – from those in the emergency services keeping us safe through to our sporting clubs, community service organisations, event organisers, tourism volunteers and many more.

"These awards are a way to shine the spotlight on some of our quiet achievers who have made a significant contribution to our district.

"Without their efforts, we wouldn't have the same level of services, events, sports and recreation offerings, programs or facilities that Mid Murray residents currently enjoy. We are grateful for their enthusiasm and commitment to our community."

Those honoured during the Australia Day Awards afternoon tea were:



Citizen of the Year

- **Vaughan Mustard** – a quiet achiever who established the Blanchetown SES and served as Controller for 21 years and was recognised as a Life Member with over 30 years of service. Vaughan is also a long-serving member of the Blanchetown Lions Club, and a dedicated volunteer with the Blanchetown/Swan Reach Football Club and Blanchetown Dirt Kart Club.
- **WINNER: Barry Burdett** – the Unit Controller with the Mannum CFS brigade, who has served 48 years with the CFS. Barry is also instrumental in his long-running volunteer roles with the Lions Club of Mannum, the Mannum Health Advisory Board, and the local Lutheran Church.

Event of the Year

- **Purnong Family Fun Day** – A community celebration featuring old-style games, family fun and an outdoor cinema that attracted 70 people, creating new connections and strengthening the community of Purnong and surrounds. The event also raised almost \$2560 for a new walking trail.
- **WINNER: Cordola Rocks the River** – A newly-established music festival celebrating local music that provided a much-needed performance opportunity for musicians affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The event attracted over 300 visitors to Cordola, many of whom stayed on in the area, and raised funds to send one senior performer and one junior performer to the Tamworth Country Music Academy.

All awards will formally be presented at the Council's **Australia Day celebration, Breakfast in the Park, at Mary Ann Reserve in Mannum on 26 January 2022.**

The community event is supported by the Lions Club of Mannum, which will also present its Lions Youth Achievement Awards on the day.

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