

Friday 13 November 2020

RE: Media Statement - WA Seniors Awards winners show the way in 2020

The 2020 WA Seniors Awards Recipients are:

- **WA Senior of the Year Award Metropolitan: Sheena Edwards**
- **WA Senior of the Year Award Regional: Sheila Twine**
- **WA Age Friendly Local Government Award: City of Albany**
- **WA Age Friendly Business Award: Gerald Burns Pharmacy**

Technology trainer Sheena Edwards and Mandurah community identity Dr. Sheila Twine take individual honours in the Western Australian Seniors Awards.

Gerald Burns Pharmacy in Bicton and the City of Albany awarded for services to seniors during COVID-19 pandemic

Winners helping make Western Australia age-friendly, vibrant and safe.

Sheena Edwards is WA Senior of the Year – Metropolitan.

Sheena Edwards has been awarded WA Senior of the Year - Metropolitan, for her work creating and managing Switched on Seniors, a group dedicated to helping seniors in the City of Rockingham to improve their digital skills in a friendly group setting.

Switched on Seniors was inspired by Sheena's own self-education journey with technology, and encourages seniors to become confident and comfortable with technology and get the most out of small handheld devices at their own pace, to ensure they feel included in an increasingly digital world.

Dr Sheila Twine is the WA Senior of the Year – Regional.

Dr. Sheila Twine is President of Halls Head Country Croquet Club, but that is only one of her many contributions to the Mandurah community, which have seen her secure the title of WA Senior of the Year - Regional.

Sheila is a former Serpentine-Jarrahdale Shire President, a former President of the Mandurah University of the Third Age, a Principal Patron of the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre, and an academic who has authored over a dozen books for teachers and parents of struggling children. She was instrumental in starting the POOPs (Pets of Older Persons) group in Mandurah, a volunteer organisation providing free pet care service for elderly or disabled pet owners.

Gerald Burns Pharmacy in Bicton received the WA Age Friendly Business Award for its 'above and beyond' services for seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pharmacy instigated a twice-daily contactless delivery service for its customers, delivering medication in a safe, contactless way. Its changed opening hours also aligned with major supermarkets and enabled older customers to be safely home by 8am, provided 'in car' vaccinations for 70 of their most vulnerable customers and even facilitated a 'pen pal' program during the pandemic between Bicton Primary School students and local seniors.

The City of Albany earned the WA Age Friendly Local Government award for its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which recognised the specific needs of the high proportion of seniors who live in the Albany area.

The City of Albany developed a number of special programs and measures to support seniors during COVID-19. This included 'welfare check' phone calls to around 3,000 people aged 65 and over and purchasing tablet computers to lend to seniors who were without home internet to keep them connected to essential services like Telehealth, and to continue 'face to face' social connection for those self-isolating at home.

The 2020 WA Seniors Awards were presented by the Council on the Ageing (WA) in partnership with the State Government. The annual awards are celebrated as part of WA Seniors Week, which this year runs from 8-16 November 2020.

Comments attributed to Seniors and Ageing Minister Mick Murray

"The judges of the 2020 Western Australian Seniors Awards found all this year's applications of extremely high quality, and it was gratifying to see so many individuals, local governments and businesses contributing to an age-friendly Western Australia."

"Sheena and Sheila are thoroughly deserving winners in the individual categories of this year's WA Seniors Awards - and it is worth noting that both of their incredible contributions involved directly assisting other seniors to live their best lives."

"The proactive response by both the City of Albany and the Gerald Burns Pharmacy to the COVID-19 pandemic was outstanding, and ensured our seniors were safe, valued and included during this most challenging time."

"All of this year's award winners are to be congratulated on making our State not just age-friendly and vibrant, but safe as well."

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For More Information

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About Council on the Ageing Western Australia (COTA WA)

The Council on the Ageing Western Australia (COTA WA) was established in 1959 and was recently appointed by the Government of Western Australia as the Vulnerable Seniors Peak Body.

COTA (WA) is a federation member of the National COTA network.

COTA WA focuses on policy issues affecting seniors and seeks to promote, improve and protect the circumstances and wellbeing of older people in Western Australia.

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