Youth Yarns

Youth Programs and Activities

Celebrating International Youth Day: Meet Will Pether

We recently celebrated International Youth Day by profiling some of the young locals who are making a positive impact in our community. One of them is our 2026 Young Citizen of the Year, Will Pether.

A Hills local since childhood, Will was inspired to join the Stoneville Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade after witnessing a fire near his home in 2023. Since then, he has completed extensive training, assisting with hazard reduction burns and responding to incidents across the region.

Will says the support, skills and friendships he has gained through volunteering have been invaluable, and he encourages other young people to get involved and give back to their community.

"They're people I can rely on and people who would have my back in everyday life situations. I'm so thankful they've taken me in and spent the time teaching me the necessary skills," Will said.

Read Will's full story on our website or head over to the volunteering page if you're interested in giving back to the community.

Read Will's story

Shire grant helps young basketballers reach the national stage

For local siblings Zeke and Neve McCormick, a passion for basketball led to an unforgettable opportunity thanks to support from the Shire's Youth Travel Grant Program.

Zeke (U12 Boys) and Neve (U12 Girls) travelled to Melbourne to compete in the prestigious Eltham Dandenong Junior Basketball Tournament (EDJBT) as part of the Aussie Prospects program. Recognised as one of the largest junior basketball tournaments in the world, the EDJBT attracts teams from across Australia and overseas, giving young athletes the chance to test themselves against high-quality competition.

Their mother, Sarah McCormick, said the experience was invaluable for both children.

"Through this experience, Zeke and Neve were able to challenge themselves against some of the best junior teams in the country, develop their skills, and gain valuable tournament experience in a highly competitive environment," Sarah said.

Participation in elite sporting events often comes with significant costs, including travel, accommodation and registration fees. Sarah said the Shire grant played an important role in making the opportunity possible.

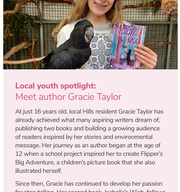
"The grant helped reduce the financial barriers for our family and made it possible for Zeke and Neve to participate in an experience that supports their development and pursuit of their basketball dreams."

Sarah encourages other local families to explore the opportunities available through the Shire's grant programs.

"Grants like this help turn aspirations into reality and allow young community members to represent their region with pride on bigger stages."

The Shire is proud to support young residents like Zeke and Neve as they pursue their goals, develop their talents and represent their community on regional, national and international stages.

Learn more about Shire grants



Local youth spotlight: Meet author Gracie Taylor

At just 16 years old, local Hills resident Gracie Taylor has already achieved what many aspiring writers dream of, publishing two books and building a growing audience of readers inspired by her stories and environmental message. Her journey as an author began at the age of 12 when a school project inspired her to create Ripper's Big Adventure, a children's picture book that she also illustrated herself.

Since then, Gracie has continued to develop her passion for storytelling. Her second book, Isabella's Wish, follows a young girl who discovers a magical ability and uses it to help protect Red-tailed Black Cockatoos and other wildlife by saving their habitat. The novel reflects Gracie's love of the Perth Hills natural environment and native animals, especially the cockatoos that frequent her backyard.

Gracie's commitment to conservation extends beyond the pages of her books. She donated $1 from every book sold to Kanyana Wildlife Centre, helping to support the care and rehabilitation of native wildlife.

Now, Gracie is busy writing her third book and continuing to pursue her passion for creative writing. If you'd like to be among the first to hear about its release, you can follow her journey on her social media channels or through her website, where she regularly shares updates about her writing, books and upcoming projects.

Follow Gracie's journey

Calling all young artists: Enter the Darlington Arts Festival Youth Art Exhibition

Young artists are invited to showcase their creativity in the Darlington Arts Festival Youth Art Exhibition and Competition, with entries now open and closing on 23 October.

The exhibition provides an exciting opportunity for children and young people to display their artwork as part of one of the region's most celebrated community arts events. Open to a range of ages and artistic styles, the competition encourages young creatives to share their talents and gain recognition for their work.

Whether you're an emerging painter, drawer, sculptor or mixed-media artist, this is your chance to be part of a vibrant festival that celebrates local art and creativity.

For entry details and competition guidelines, visit the Darlington Arts Festival website.

Enter here

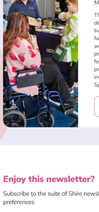
What's happening

03 - 04 September

The Mounties Miler
8am Sat, 4pm Sun • Mount Helena Primary School

The Mounties Miler: 100 Mile Endurance Challenge is a community event that brings people together to support the wellbeing, resilience and confidence of local children while raising awareness and support for youth mental health initiatives.

Register here



11 September

All Abilities Expo
10am to 1pm • Mundaring Arena

This free community event is designed to connect people living with disabilities, their families, guardians, support workers and disability providers. The expo will feature local disability providers and different inclusive sports with Sport4All.

Register here

Enjoy this newsletter?

Subscribe to the suite of Shire newsletters by updating your preferences

Update preferences

(08) 9290 6666
shire@mundaring.wa.gov.au
mundaring.wa.gov.au