



**December 2015**

## **Volunteering a piece of cake**

Thanks to volunteer Catherine Ryan, local women are getting to grips with Australian idioms and conversational quirks like “piece of cake”.

And with language comes cultural understanding – Australian customs such as “bring a plate” are explained so the women in the group feel they can join in Australian life.

Catherine has been volunteering at the Nedlands Library Women’s English Conversation group for eight months. Her background in education made her an ideal fit for the role.

Local women, from countries as diverse as Brazil, China, Italy, France, Italy and Kazakhstan, among others, had expressed the need for English conversation classes because they wanted to improve their language skills. This in turn is helping these women to themselves volunteer in their community.

The Nedlands Volunteer Resource Centre put out a call to the community for someone to fill this role. Enter Catherine, who was a primary school teacher, and worked for many years in schools where many students spoke English as a second language.

Catherine loves the opportunity to meet new people and help them out. She says she enjoys the insights she gains into other people’s culture and customs.

Over tea and biscuits, members of the group have the opportunity to practise their English, ask questions in a supportive environment, meet people and make new friends. There are always laughs, as when people explain the difficulties they may have had in fulfilling the request to “bring a plate”!

Volunteers like Catherine are being celebrated as part of International Volunteer Day held annually on the 5 December.

The Nedlands Volunteer Resource Centre helps fit the right volunteer to the right opportunity, whether it is within the City of Nedlands, as with Catherine’s role with the conversation group at Nedlands Library, or with the many other organisations that seek help from the Nedlands Volunteer Resource Centre.

The City of Nedlands and its Volunteer Resource Centre would like to thank every volunteer who gives their time freely to the City and many other organisations. It is an opportunity for us all to say thanks to volunteers for their time, compassion, generosity and dedication and for their enormous contribution they make to the community.

If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering and opportunities available, contact Robyn Forrest at the Nedlands Volunteer Resource Centre on 9273 3640 or [volunteering@nedlands.wa.gov.au](mailto:volunteering@nedlands.wa.gov.au).



Catherine Ryan, Far right in pink, facilitates the Women's English Conversation class at the Nedlands Library.

ENDS

**About International Volunteer Day**

International Volunteer Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1985 and is now celebrated worldwide.

Held each year on December 5, it is a day to celebrate the important role volunteers play in their local communities.

**About the City of Nedlands**

The City of Nedlands is situated 7km from Perth and stretches from the banks of the Swan River to the edge of the Indian Ocean. A population of over 21,000 live in the suburbs of Nedlands, Dalkeith, Mt Claremont, Swanbourne, Karrakatta, and parts of Floreat and Shenton Park.

---

*For further information please contact [communications@nedlands.wa.gov.au](mailto:communications@nedlands.wa.gov.au) or 9273 3500*