

Thursday 21 January 2010

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## Olinda Community House gets in the loop

The Olinda Community House today announced the successful installation of a new audio loop, thanks to funds received from the SP AusNet Community Development Fund.

The Olinda Community House was announced as one of five recipients of the SP AusNet Shire of Yarra Ranges Community Development Fund in late 2009.

SP AusNet's Central Regional Manager Craig Velt said the Olinda Community House had installed a new audio loop, which will form part of a larger upgrade of all audio visual equipment.

"This upgrade will allow more comprehensive use by the many schools, community members and social groups who utilise the facility," Mr Velt said.

"The improved audio visual equipment means all users of the Olinda Community House will benefit and it means people with a hearing impairment will also be able to enjoy the new features with just as much ease," Mr Velt said.

The audio loop comprises a microphone, an amplifier and a coil of wire in place of a loudspeaker. Sound waves from the speaker's voice going into the microphone are changed into an electric current, amplified and then sent through the coil, which emits a magnetic field.

This field is picked up by a specific component of the hearing aid, amplified and converted back into sound. Hearing aid users sitting within the loop system are then able to hear the speaker's voice with a minimum of distortion and background noise.

Olinda Community House's Program Coordinator Christine Riddiford gave special thanks to SP AusNet for the funding for the audio loop.

"This type of technology is the only one of its kind in the Dandenong Ranges area, so we're happy to be able to offer this to our hearing impaired residents in the Olinda community," she said.

With a total pool of \$15,000 available solely for the Shire of Yarra Ranges, SP AusNet received more than forty applications, with sixteen going through for assessment by the SP AusNet Community Development Fund Committee, made up of members from SP AusNet and the Shire of Yarra Ranges.

Mr Velt said SP AusNet looked forward to working with the other recipients of the SP AusNet Community Development Fund and promoting their successes as their ideas come to fruition.

Other community groups that received funding as part of SP AusNet's Community Development Fund included *Animal Aid, Eastern Volunteers – Yarra Ranges Transport Connect, Kallista Kindergarten and the Upper Yarra Netball Association.*

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