

Wednesday, 27 January 2016

MEDIA RELEASE

Bland Shire crowns youngest ever Citizen of the Year

The Bland Shire has crowned its youngest ever Citizen of the Year.

The announcement of 28 year-old Todd Pereira as the 2016 Citizen of the Year drew a huge cheer from a large patriotic crowd of more than 600 people at the annual Bland Shire Australia Day breakfast held in McCann Park yesterday.

Mr Pereira was lauded for his fierce community spirit, work ethic, compassion and loyalty.

The president of the West Wyalong branch of Country Hope, Mr Pereira has become a leader for his generation.

He started volunteering with Country Hope in 2010 and, as well as the countless hours of volunteer fundraising he conducts in and around the West Wyalong community, takes leave from his work each year to attend the annual Country Hope camp for children who have been diagnosed with cancer or other life threatening illnesses.

Mr Pereira is also an active and valued volunteer with the West Wyalong Girral Australian Football and Netball Club and various other community events and projects.

He was chosen as Citizen of the Year among an outstanding line-up of candidates including Jacqui Bolte, Patricia Daly, Lionel Fuller, Cassie Geddes, Paul McNeill, Gloria Mueller and Bernadette Pettit.

Meanwhile, quiet achiever Danielle Steele was named Young Citizen of the Year.

Ms Steele clocked up more than 150 hours of volunteer work before leaving school and continued to volunteer her time to local community groups while undertaking a full-time traineeship during 2015.

The West Wyalong Men's Shed was announced as the Bland Shire Community Group of the Year in recognition of the various social and community benefits it continues to provide since opening in 2011.

The Ungarie Bogeye Cup was named as the Community Event of the Year. The Bogeye Cup brings the small community of Ungarie together each year, attracts large number of visitors and has raised over \$100,000 for charity.

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Ray Smith
GENERAL MANAGER

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Special Olympics World Games gold medalist Thomas Preston won the Bland Shire Achievement in Sport individual award while the West Wyalong Rugby League Club reserves won the team award after capturing a fourth successive premiership in 2015.

Justine Henley was presented with the Bland Shire Contribution to Sport award in recognition of her volunteer work for junior basketball, netball, cricket and tennis.

Earlier in the morning, the large crowd was inspired by an address from Paralympic champion and Australia Day Ambassador Matthew Levy OAM who has set his sights on a fourth successive Paralympics in Rio this September.

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