

EERN provides donated furniture, white goods, bedding, kitchen items and electrical appliances to people in need through member welfare agencies. Our goal is to make a difference to those in need with Community, Compassion and Respect

Merry Christmas

Yes, we know it is still November. But it's nearly December and the next Newsletter will come out until after Christmas. So on behalf of all of us at EERN we hope you have a very happy Christmas.

We know that Christmas means different things to many people. To Christians it is an important time to celebrate the birth of Christ. To others it may just be a time to celebrate with family and friends, a happy time to sing, give presents and watch with joy as our children and grandchildren grow up. But to others it can be a lonely time, particularly when they have lost a life time partner. So remember to contact your old friends and family who you don't see often and say hi.

Whether you are looking forward to Christmas or a bit sad, one thing you should do is have a look at this video



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXtCSUgKNTk> It will bring a smile to your face to see two guys putting everything into the song 12 days of Christmas. And then follow it up with another fantastic and fun version. [12 days of Christmas Flushing High School](#)



What do you want for Christmas?

As children, most of us had a wish list for Christmas presents. Some even sent a letter to Father Christmas in the North Pole listing what they wanted. Things are still the same now and most children still have a wish list. Then as we get older, our children or grandchildren start asking us what we want.



The problem is that many of us already have everything we need and want. So, if you are one of those people with everything you need, here is a suggestion. Why not ask for something that you can donate to someone else.

I once went to a gentleman's 70th birthday party. On the invitation it said he didn't need a bottle of wine or chocolates. In fact he said the only thing he needed was some handbags, preferably filled with ladies supplies. As a result he received over 50 handbags which he passed on to Share the Dignity (an amazing charity that supports women in need).



There are many other charities that would love to receive gifts such as Escabags (supporting women and families leaving domestic violence), Reaching Out Because We Can (supporting the homeless with warm clothes and meals) and Berry Street (\$35 will buy a child a Christmas gift) to name a few.



escabags
your first step to freedom



World Vision

You could even buy some chickens through World Vision in your children or grandchildren's name. Then when you give them their Christmas present also give them a card saying that they have given a family in another country a Christmas present of two chickens (\$10 - that's 1000 eggs/year) or even a bicycle for a girl (\$100) .

Or if you want to do something closer to home, then how about a microwave or other item to donate to EERN for our clients, or speak to a friend or local service Club to find a charity that suits you. Remember, giving can be just as enjoyable as receiving.



Christmas Hampers

Each year, recognising that not everyone can celebrate Christmas with a nice Christmassy meal, EERN puts together hampers and this year we are making them more culturally diverse. Hampers are then given, through our member agencies.

This year we have again collected a lot of great food, some of it donated by service clubs, schools and businesses and the rest purchased. (We will name our generous supporters in the next newsletter as there are still a few who have indicated that they will add to the hampers).



It is easy to forget that when we buy a Christmas pudding or some other Christmas treats, there are other people who can't afford to do this and others who may not buy treats as they have few people to enjoy them with. But many may still enjoy a treat if it is given to them and it may remind them of happier times.

So thanks to those who provided the food for these hampers, the EERN volunteers who put them together and our member agencies who deliver them. And along with each hamper goes love from all of us at EERN.

Sustainability

One of the words of today is sustainability and EERN prides itself on being a leader in sustainability.

Since 1996 we have been collecting donated household items, many of which would have ended up in land fill. But instead of going to land fill, these items are passed on to individuals and families in need.

It's not only reducing land fill and helping people in need, it also

- makes people proud to have donated an item to someone in need
- makes others happy that an item that used to belong to a parent has been passed on to be used again and not disposed of as rubbish
- reduces the cost to Councils (and rate payers) associated with picking up hard rubbish and disposing of it.



Mum liked our plain white crockery set, so we got some for her. Now she has passed it was good to give them to EERN for another family. Mum would be pleased



Sustainability was one of the ways EERN promoted its activities to the community at the recent Maroondah Festival. We had a booth at the Festival supported by the Maroondah Council where our volunteers promoted what we do, encouraged people to donate items and hopefully attracted new volunteers.



To raise attention we had a large poster with a picture of items in front of a house ready to be picked up for hard rubbish. But many were items that could be distributed by EERN. These included a fridge, mattress, food processor, vacuum cleaner and lamp.

Next to that was a picture of the EERN warehouse showing that people had a choice – land fill or families. (the poster also has our contact details).

By the way, if you would like a copy of the poster to display in your office, work area or other place we can send an electronic copy. It includes information on EERN and can be printed any size (from A2 to A0).

Food Waste

Talking about sustainability and waste highlights a major area of concern – food waste.



Both are good bananas

In Australia, 7.6 million tonnes of food is wasted every year and 70% of this was perfectly edible. There are many reasons for this including that many stores (and customers) only want fresh food that looks perfect. So bananas or other fruit that have marks, are too straight or too bent, end in land fill.

So when you look for fresh fruit and vegetables, go for the ugly one, it will taste just as good. And if there are marks on some parts, cut them off and eat the rest.

Another major cause of food waste is misunderstanding of the Best Before date. While the Use by Date is the date beyond which you should not eat food, the Best Before date is just a guide as to when food may start to lose some of its peak flavour. It is still fine to eat for a very long time after. So don't throw it out, use it. You probably won't notice any difference in flavour anyway. And if in doubt, do the sniff test. If it smells fine, eat it, if it smells off, compost it.



It is estimated that about 50% of food waste comes from households. This means that households are spending \$2,000-\$2,500 per year on food that is wasted. Added to this, food disposed of into land fill produces harmful greenhouse gases.

EERN booking system

The new agency visit booking system is working really well despite a few minor hiccups that will soon be addressed. But if you do have any issues please drop a note to our Secretary Gabby (eensecretary@tpg.com.au).



One issue being fine-tuned is where an agency only requests whitegoods. In these cases the warehouse volunteers select and tag the whitegoods, if available, so there is no need for an agency/client to visit.



We are also developing a means for agencies/couriers to make their own bookings for pickup/collection of tagged items. Again if any issues arise please let us know. The next step will be to develop a means of recording and scheduling furniture donation pickups.



At this time it is appropriate to thank our volunteer software developer Richard for his persistence and efforts to develop these systems. He is one of our amazing volunteers who work in the background to enable EERN to run effectively and efficiently.

People's choice raffle to support EERN

For the last couple of years EERN has participated in the People's Choice Community Raffle. This is a raffle supporting a wide range of charities across Australia including EERN.



All prizes are donated so the \$2 used to buy each ticket will go directly to the Charity you want to support. It will also give you the chance to win one of 42 terrific prizes.

The first two prizes are Toyota cars and the third, a solar panel/battery package (\$23,490). Other prizes

include TV's, travel vouchers, coffee machines and \$2,000 Myer gift cards. Even the last few prizes are great - a stay, climb and dine Experience worth \$1,012.

The raffle is drawn on 9 March 2023 but why not buy some tickets now, and maybe some more later. To support EERN click on [Community Lottery – Eastern Emergency Relief Network](https://www.communityraffle.com.au). Alternatively go to the raffle site www.communityraffle.com.au and search for Eastern Emergency Relief Network.

Walking Stars – a 21km night walk around Melbourne

Christmas is a great time for eating and maybe a drink or two. So why not enjoy a bit of exercise and help achieve a cancer free future. The Walking Stars event is to be held on the night of 3 December. This is a 21 km walk around Melbourne. To find out more and to register go to: www.walkingstars.cancervic.org.au.



Have a great Christmas



Let's hope the warm weather comes soon so we can all have a relaxing time on the beach. Or maybe just have a few friends and family over for a nice casual meal.

Whatever you do, on behalf of EERN have a great Christmas and if you can, have a bit of relaxing time.

If Christmas is a sad time for you, we wish you well and send a big hug and hope that 2023 will be a better year.

Contacts

Donate Household Goods

If you have items to donate please contact the Warehouse to make an appointment, preferably by emailing to warehouse@easternemergency.org.au with a list of items to donate and your suburb. Or phone 9874 8433 between 9:00am to 12:30pm weekdays. Remember, sometimes we have to say "Thanks, but no thanks".



Support

If you would like to support EERN as a volunteer, financially or in any other way please email our Secretary eensecretary@tpg.com.au and she, or another Committee member, will call you back.

Alternatively call the Warehouse (ph 9874 8433) between 9:00am to 12:30pm weekdays (or leave a message) and someone from our Committee will call you back.

Please note that if you would like to donate financial support we can issue you a Tax Deductable receipt. You can also nominate whether the donation is for general operations or for the new truck.

Find Out More

If you are interested in finding out about EERN please have a look at our website www.easternemergency.org.au. For more detail, such as how your organisation can join EERN, please contact our secretary. A speaker from EERN could also visit your organisation to give a presentation.

