



How will your community celebrate Neighbour Day in 2009?

Residents thinking of holding a street party or a major community event or festival for the 7th annual Neighbour Day on Sunday 29th March should talk to their council or shire now.

That's the message from Neighbour Day founder Andrew Heslop who warns some municipal bodies have detailed application and planning requirements which need to be considered.

"It's great to know many councils and shires have really embraced Neighbour Day by developing official 'street party kits' to make it easy for residents to apply to temporarily close their street," said Andrew.

"But not every street can be closed and that's why it's important to find out today what is possible in your area. Since Neighbour Day began many local government bodies in the city and country have made available free bbqs, portable coffee machines, cricket sets and other games to encourage neighbours to get together on the last Sunday in March.

"These initiatives have turned Neighbour Day into a great celebration of community, ultimately bringing people together simply to say thanks for being a great neighbour and for helping to make our street or town a great place to live," Andrew said.

Founded in Melbourne in 2003 following the eventual discovery of the lonely death of an elderly woman, Neighbour Day has grown from a simple idea in a Letter to the Editor of The Age to be an annual celebration endorsed by neighbours, community leaders and local, state and federal politicians from every party.

Globally it has gained the support of HRH The Prince of Wales and former President Bill Clinton.

In 2006 former UN Secretary-General Mr Kofi Annan pledged the organisation's support to promote Neighbour Day worldwide. Now steps are in place for it to become an official UN Observance Day which could lead to an International Year of Neighbourliness being declared following ratification by the UN General Assembly.

Following Mr Annan's support Neighbour Day was invited to the United Nations in May 2008. The presentation can be viewed here <http://au.youtube.com/watch?v=dqYP7pxm9kQ>

"The great thing about Neighbour Day is that it costs nothing to participate and what you do to celebrate is really only limited by the imagination of you and your neighbours. After all, the community you want starts at your front door," Andrew added.

For more information visit www.neighbourday.org



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