

Meyer Vandenberg's 2013 Giving Tree, with its distinctive library feel, attracted other staff to the library and helped the RSPCA.



REACHING OUT TO THE COMMUNITY: WHY OUR LIBRARY IS FUNDRAISING FOR CHARITY

Alison Jones says Meyer Vandenberg Lawyers library service's recent involvement in the firm's highly regarded Community program is enabling the library to make new connections with other staff in the firm.

All librarians know the challenge of connecting constantly with clients to retain the library service at the forefront of their thinking. We want our clients to turn to the library as the place of information, assistance and connection.

ENSURING THERE IS A LINK BETWEEN OUR EVENT AND THE WORK OF THE LIBRARY HAS INSPIRED INTERESTING CONVERSATIONS, BRINGING ABOUT NEW UNDERSTANDINGS AMONGST STAFF AROUND WHAT A LIBRARY SERVICE CAN BE FOR THEM.

Meyer Vandenberg is Canberra's largest independent law firm. Our firm is strongly supported by the Canberra community and so aims to fill some of our community's social and legal gaps through our Community program. Staff participation in the program is valued by the firm's leaders.

The program includes staff selecting a Canberra-focussed charity and raising funds for that charity through the year.

In 2012, the concept of a Recycled Reads event was the ideal way for our corporate library to mark the National Year of Reading and this event lent itself to raising funds for the firm's charity.

Staff donated quality books for sale over one lunch time during the annual Get Reading campaign. In addition to raising over \$100, we fielded questions usually reserved for readers' advisors in public libraries.

In late 2013, as we battled to get a Christmas tree made of books to stay upright, we decided the effort was worthwhile if the tree had a real purpose.

So our library Christmas tree also became the firm's Giving Tree. Staff contributed around \$125 worth of pet food and toys in support of the RSPCA, with some staff making their first visit to the library to contribute items.

Apart from the money raised, our events have enabled us to work with a diverse group of our colleagues beyond our professional roles.

Ensuring there is a link between our event and the work of the library has inspired interesting conversations, bringing about new understandings amongst staff around what a library service can be for them.

For all these reasons, our fundraising event is now a tradition that will definitely continue.

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