



All together for 'Every Generation'

Recognising contribution of seniors in communities

SOUTH Australia's senior citizens have plenty to keep them busy this month.

The COTA SA (formerly known as Council on the Ageing) Every Generation Festival is one of a number of initiatives supported by the State Government to help South Australian seniors maintain their independence.

Minister for Ageing, Jennifer Rankine, (pictured) said the festival is an opportunity to recognise the fantastic contributions older South Australians make to communities right across the State.

"South Australian seniors have so much to offer and our community has so much to gain from their experience," she said.

"There will be activities for every age group and, most importantly, events that bring everyone together."

The festival recognises the contribution older South Australians make in regional communities.

"As someone who has lived in country towns for a large part of my life, I have seen first hand how much a community



benefits from the skills and experiences older people can offer," Ms Rankine said.

COTA SA Chief Executive Ian Yates said events will run throughout the month of October making the Every Generation Festival one of South Australia's largest community events.

"With more than 1,350 planned activities across the state and a record 205 groups participating, the 2011 Every Generation Festival is set to be the biggest in the event's history," Mr Yates said.

"Events on offer include concerts, theatre shows, exhibitions, luncheons, open days, classes, bush walks, talks, forums, tai chi and meditation classes, dances, open shop fashion parades and inter-generational art sessions, picnics and games afternoons.

"The aim of the festival is to develop new friendships and



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connections, and create on-going communities that encourage and promote the philosophy of positive ageing," Mr Yates said.

COTA SA general manager, Robert Dempsey, said a partnership with Country Health SA this year has seen the support of rural and regional events that focus on the mental health and wellbeing. It is estimated that through these subsidised events alone some 5,600 people across country South

Australia will be able to participate in the Every Generation Festival.

"Current research reminds us that living an active lifestyle is essential to our emotional wellbeing, and that being active in mind and body and staying

connected to our friends and community is a key to maintaining mental health as we age", Mr Dempsey said .

"This subsidy has encouraged rural and regional groups to plan an event that focuses on and enhances the wellbeing of older people in their community, and the uptake of this funding has been tremendous".

Ms Rankine said the State government recently introduced the \$3.1 million home visiting program to prevent social isolation and loneliness and keep older people connected to their communities..

"We have increased support for older people who want – or need – to keep working, and \$2.9.m to provide a rebate for eligible people to purchase and maintain a monitored personal alert system,"Ms Rankine said.