There’s a quiet revolution taking place at Meander Valley Council, based around health and wellbeing. Over the last 2 years, a series of initiatives have been introduced aimed at encouraging employees towards healthier lifestyles. These include regular skin, eye, hearing and medical checks, a fitness gym installed at Council offices and access to massage and counselling services.

Perhaps the most significant development has been the emergence of a Council road cycling group who now regularly ride together up to three times a week. Most are beginners who are discovering the benefits of pedal power for the first time. This interest has been prompted by the fact that Meander Valley is one of the first Local Government councils in the state to establish its own cycling strategy.

The ‘Weds Night Riders’ are easy to spot on the road as they have recently acquired loud lycra uniforms through the generous sponsorship support of Technologyone, Community Road Safety Partnerships and Westbury Pharmacy.

Led by Mayor Mark Shelton, the group also took on the New Horizons Great Western Tiers Cycle Challenge in March and was successful in winning the Corporate Challenge, having collectively ridden the greatest distance across the municipality.

General Manager Greg Preece said there is so much research to indicate that employees who are supported in improving their health become more productive and motivated at work. “It is important, however, that senior management lead by example,” he said. “The evidence at Council is that there is much more interdepartmental contact these days and a positive buzz about the place that I attribute to these health initiatives.”

Meander Valley Council is committed to promoting health and wellbeing and encourages other employers to do the same.
Get Walking Tasmania!

Council’s are encouraged to hold a Get Walking Tasmania event during October to promote walking as part of everyday life.

Get Walking Tasmania is a statewide initiative of the Premier’s Physical Activity Council and is being coordinated by the Heart Foundation with support from Sport and Recreation Tasmania, the Department of Economic Development, the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, ACHPER, and the Healthy House Project.

Suggestions for walking events include:
• Launching Heart Foundation Walking in your council area;
• Participating in Walk to Work Day;
• Coordinating a lunchtime walk for the community and getting the mayor involved; or
• Leading a bush walk, historic walk, or scenic walking tour to highlight the local attractions in your area.

Registered walk organisers will receive a free information kit, a certificate and the opportunity to win great prizes.

To be a part of Get Walking Tasmania, visit www.getmoving.tas.gov.au, or email Shannon.Anis@heartfoundation.org.au.

MISS Hope Provides Support for Cancer Sufferers

Cancer Council Tasmania (CCT) has hit the road, taking support and service information to all corners of the state, with the recently launched MISS (Mobile Information and Support Service) Hope initiative.

A valuable addition to CCT resources, MISS Hope is funded jointly by the Australian Government, Cancer Australia and through funds raised by CCT’s Relay for Life and other activities.

MISS Hope now enables CCT to take their services to those touched by cancer, particularly in remote areas of the state, and mirrors the resources available at CCT’s existing support and information centres in Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie.

Specially trained CCT staff and volunteers man the bus, which has room for private consultations, offering support to patients and carers living with cancer in the Tasmanian community. The bus is available upon request and would make a valuable addition to community events. Covered in daffodils and with personalised ‘HOPE’ number plates, MISS Hope is hard to miss as she travels the state.

To book MISS Hope for your community event, please contact Cancer Council Tasmania on 13 11 20.
health and wellbeing

StandBy Response Service Now Available in Tasmania

Lifeline Hobart Inc. and CLS (Choose Life Services) have recently contracted with United Synergies, on behalf of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, to implement the StandBy Response Service in Tasmania.

The StandBy Response Service is a national suicide bereavement service that provides a 24-hour, co-ordinated community response to families, friends, workplaces and communities who have been affected by suicide. The service commenced in Tasmania this month.

The service works in partnership with local groups and services within the community with the aim of reducing potential adverse health outcomes and assisting to prevent further suicidal behaviour.

The StandBy 24-hour crisis number is 0400 183 490. For further information about the service, phone (03) 6224 3450.

Heart Foundation Walking – Get Involved!

With 69% of Tasmania’s adult population not sufficiently physically active to achieve health benefits, Heart Foundation Walking is an excellent way for communities to get active and enjoy social interaction at the same time.

Heart Foundation Walking is Australia’s largest network of free, community-based walking groups, led by volunteer walk organisers. The walking groups are suitable for people of all ages and fitness levels, helping to motivate by providing a friendly, social environment as well as a walker recognition scheme.

Huon Valley Council was the first council in Southern Tasmania to launch a Heart Foundation Walking group, now involving over 45 registered walkers from the

The Geeveston Gatours at the launch of Heart Foundation Walking in the Huon Valley

Geeveston community. The group was joined at the launch by Mayor Robert Armstrong, Deputy Mayor Laurie Dillon and Clr Mike Wilson.

Heart Foundation Walking groups have also commenced in the council areas of Break O’Day, Burnie, Central Coast, Devonport, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Glenorchy, Hobart, King Island, Launceston and Meander Valley.

To get the program underway in your area, contact Sally Bush on 6336 5116, or email Sally.Bush@heartfoundation.org.au.