



Speech by

STEVEN RODGERS

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

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INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE VOLUNTEER

Mr RODGERS (Burdekin—ALP) (11.08 p.m.): I take this opportunity to enlighten members about a celebration in my electorate that will remain in the memories of locals for many years to come. The 2001 International Year of the Volunteer awards day held in the Burdekin's beautiful Anzac Park was everything myself and co-host the Burdekin Shire Council hoped it would be and more.

From the announcement of the state government's 2001 International Year of the Volunteer initiatives grew a pile of nominations in my office. People from all sectors of the Burdekin were nominated for their volunteer contributions to local sporting, cultural, welfare, educational and environmental groups within the community.

After much organising of our appropriately named 2001 International Year of the Volunteer community celebration, the day finally arrived and award recipients began their march down the main street of Ayr. Vintage cars transported the more elderly volunteers during the march, and locals clapped and cheered as the mass of volunteers passed by. Following the march, which ended at Anzac Park, an array of patriotic entertainment, tucker and fun for the kids kept the crowds pleased. The official awards ceremony soon began and it was certainly the highlight of the day. To present the Queensland government 2001 International Year of the Volunteer certificates, badges and medallions to people who invest so much of their time, skills and kindness in their community was a very rewarding experience.

Although each volunteer made a significant contribution to our community, one person who stands out is Gertrude Farmer. Gert, as she is affectionately known, is a long-term working member of the Australian Red Cross. Now aged 81, Gert still works in the local Red Cross shop. She also visits the hospitals and the homes for the aged, and gives magazines, gifts and love to all. At Easter and Christmas she takes gifts and spreads her joy to all the hospitals. Such simple acts of kindness have a very positive impact on the lives of the sick and elderly in our community. For that, Gert certainly deserved her 2001 International Year of the Volunteer medallion. In fact, the 2001 International Year of the Volunteer can be described only as a complete success, as it provides each volunteer with the respect and recognition that they deserve.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the quiet achievers in the community—those people who were not nominated but whose efforts are appreciated by the community. It is certainly a great year to recognise all of the volunteers in our community. It is a tribute to all of those people, their families and their children who give up their time to care for their parents and loved ones.

Time expired.
