

MEDIA RELEASE

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It was over ten years ago that Leila Featherstone commenced her volunteer role with Anglicare Central Queensland.

Not one to sit still after raising three active sons, Leila committed to remaining busy following her retirement from Illoura Child Care Centre, ensuring she remained physically and mentally healthy.

After kicking off with one day a week at Anglicare's Bargain Store, her immense worth was quickly recognised and with the store looking to close due to lack of human resources, Leila's community spirit took over, putting her hand up for the volunteer coordinator role.

Now working four days a week, Leila has surrounded herself with a team of 15 like minded, passionate volunteers that keep the store opening and operating smoothly every day.

"It takes patience and the art of listening, mixed with a lot of energy and enthusiasm to undertake this role," shares Leila.

"The customers are what keep me returning to Denison Street each day. They are the ones truly making a difference and have become part of my life."

Leila tells the story of a kind man fresh out of prison that she was able to support with clothing in order to restart his life back in the community.

"It is rewarding to be able to help someone get back on their feet after their life hurdles and genuinely be able to do this role for the right reasons," said Leila.

Being a member of St David's Northside Anglican Church for 45 years, it is no doubt Leila's faith is strong and her heart is in the right place.

"Every day you are alive after retirement is a real incentive, so this role has been a real blessing for me and never a burden."

Leila explains that the biggest challenge of her day is managing the enormity of donations coming into the Bargain Store collection bins.

"The amount of donations we receive is incredible. We just don't have enough room in the store for them all, resulting in the need to clear items out at a very low price all the time. It's a great opportunity for anyone looking for a bargain."

With her twilight years approaching, Leila is looking to serve her final customers at the end of this year and spend more time with her husband Greg playing croquet and raising their newly acquired puppy, Pippa.

"Volunteering at the Bargain Store has been a solid part of my life for many years now, and although I will miss it dearly, it's time to spend some more time with my family," shared Leila.

Although saddened to be losing such a valuable member of our organisation, Anglicare Central Queensland CEO Suzie Christensen is certain there is someone out there who can step into Leila's shoes and continue the success and growth of our Bargain Store.

“Leila has been an inspirational part of Anglicare’s success and we truly value the tireless effort she has contributed over the past years,” said Suzie.

“Volunteers are an integral part of our operations and we invite anyone who is ready to take on the Anglicare vision of working with people to make the best of their lives to contact us and start their volunteering journey.”

“We welcome people of all backgrounds, beliefs and walks of life to join our team.”

The Anglicare Central Queensland Bargain Store, located at 193 Denison Street in Rockhampton sells clothing and home wares at affordable prices. The store opens from 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday.

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