



Sandra Conlan, Les Conlan and Dawn Conlan.

Townsville's Conlan family could easily be described as the definitive example of what it is to volunteer.

Les and Dawn Conlan along with their daughter Sandra Conlan and grandson Karl have been volunteering with the Townsville Enterprise Visitor Information Centres for a combined total of more than 50 years.

Les and Dawn joined the volunteering program in February 1991, after the death of their son. Dawn's cousin was working in the program and convinced the couple to volunteer their time for a few hours a fortnight to "get them out of the house and back on their feet".

The couple enjoyed their regular outings and convinced their daughter Sandra to join in March 1992. Sandra's son Karl kept the family tradition going and began volunteering when he was 8 years old.

The Conlan family has dedicated a substantial portion of their time, over towards promoting the Townsville and North Queensland region. Not only does the family team volunteer their time at Townsville's Visitor Information Centres, they also volunteer for the Heart Foundation and Guide Dogs Australia. The main duties carried out at the Visitor Information Centres include; providing an accurate and comprehensive information service for visitors, giving directions and advice for things to do and see while in Townsville. The overall goal for these centres is to encourage longer stay of visitors and encourage them to return.

Throughout the years the Conlan's have been invaluable assistance to Townsville Enterprise. They have not only worked in the Visitor Information Centres but have assisted Townsville Enterprise, with administration, filing, photocopying, correspondence and brochure packing activities. They have even taken work home to do in the evenings.

No job is too small or too large - whether organising and cleaning out storage cupboards, sorting through old stock and filing or updating all the spreadsheets for visitor statistics for the region, from Mission beach, Charters Towers, Bowen and Magnetic Island to help Tourism Queensland to total how many overseas, local and domestic visitors come to Queensland each year.

The Conlan's service to the community and passion for Townsville is further evident in light of Les's vision impairment and failing health. The family continues to volunteer their time each fortnight to man the Mall Visitor Information Centre. With Dawn and Sandra at the helm the Conlan's are a formidable source of local information and an invaluable asset to Townsville Enterprise team.

**Story submitted by Brett Judge,
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