

## LIFELINE BOOKFEST AN AWARD WINNING EVENT

Bookfest bookworms can attend the Bookfest in January in the knowledge that they are attending an award winning event.

After 23 years and over 40 events, the Lifeline Bookfest was formally recognised as one of Queensland's biggest fundraising successes with a Fundraising Institute of Australia State Award for Excellence in Fundraising.

Bookfest Coordinator Roy Frith said the Lifeline Bookfest is an intrinsic element of Brisbane's history and future.

"In 2010, the Lifeline Bookfest will see its 24<sup>th</sup> year in Brisbane – that's older than some of our customers," Mr Frith said.

"Over the years we've been in three different locations and continued to grow in every sense.

"The first Bookfest was operated by a handful of volunteers who were mainly Lifeline Brisbane staff, and now we engage up to 400 volunteers to run one event," Mr Frith said.

The growth of the Bookfest can certainly be understood when you visualise what the event looks like today versus what it looked like in 1986.

"Today we use over 4km of tables to stock over 2 million books – in the beginning, we didn't use tables at all," Mr Frith said.

"The first Bookfest was run out of our warehouse and we stacked the books up on hay bales.

"We've certainly come a long way since then," Mr Frith said.

The Lifeline Bookfest has steadily increased in popularity over the years which have allowed Lifeline to provide consistent and growing services to the community.

"The range of services we can provide has grown considerably because of the success of the Bookfest and because of the generosity of the Brisbane community," Mr Frith said.

"The success of the Bookfests manage to blow me away every year. We exceeded our budget last year and made almost 17 per cent more than the 2008 events.

"Between the January and June events, we raised over \$1.5 million this year. We hope to beat it again in 2010," Mr Frith said.

The Lifeline Bookfest is a win-win event for Brisbane – there are bargains to be found for everyone, the money raised goes back into the community, and the event itself creates a community.

Lifeline Community Care Volunteer Manager Anastasia Magriplis said it takes 600 volunteers to run the 9-day event.

"Hundreds of our volunteers have been with us for up to five years, and a handful have been with us for 15 years," Ms Magriplis said.

"We have families, couples, friends – one volunteer even met his wife at the Bookfest.

"It really is a community in itself. So much so, I call it the Bookfest family," Ms Magriplis said.

The 2010 Bookfest will be running from January 16-24 at the Convention & Exhibition Centre, South Brisbane. Opening hours are 8:30am – 8:00pm on weekends and 8:30am – 5:00pm on weekdays. For more information visit [www.lifelinebookfest.com](http://www.lifelinebookfest.com).

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