

# MONDAY'S People

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SEEKING NEW MENTORS: After five years of volunteering with NESAY'S L2P Program, Don Heath is retiring from the role. He is ready to hand the keys to the next eager volunteer.  
PHOTO: Emma Hillier

## Don hands over to future L2P mentors

By CAITLIN SARTORI

OXLEY resident Don Heath has recently retired from the passenger seat of NESAY Wangaratta's L2P Program.

A volunteer of five years, Don clocked up an impressive 224 hours and 30 minutes mentoring three learner drivers on their way to their 120 logged hours of supervised driving.

Don is handing the keys over to the next future mentor as the local program is on the hunt for mentors.

Two of Don's mentees gained their probationary licence while the third is imminently on their way to going for the probationary test.

"I had worked with young people all my life working as a teacher in both primary and secondary," Don said.

"I think the most nervous thing about applying was having your own driving assessed as part of the application process," he added with a laugh.

Don had spent time teaching his three daughters to drive and thought the program would be a good way to keep in touch with local youth in his retirement.

"For me it was about maintaining contact with young people and helping them advance with their life," he said.

"One of my main motivations is that by

seeing someone gain their licence, it opens up a world of opportunity for them.

"I felt there were aspects the program also taught them about responsibility like keeping appointments which would help them progress overall in life in a positive and safe manner.

"I would urge anyone thinking about becoming a mentor to give it a go.

"You would need to offer one to two hours a week but also think about when you're going to get the hours in and factor in the night hours as well."

Don is among a group of volunteers who have donated copious hours to the program.

NESAY L2P coordinator Sue Watts said mentors had amazing dedication to supporting young people through the program, imparting information, skills and knowledge to mentees.

She noted fellow retiring mentor Doug James had logged 281 hours and 45 minutes while Ron Beurs has logged a grand total of 372 hours and is looking to be paired with a new mentee in the near future.

Ms Watts said a couple of mentors had clocked up more than 200 hours while another seven had recorded more than 100 hours.

Anyone interested in finding out more on the L2P Program, particularly becoming a mentor, can contact NESAY on 5720 2201.

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