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Beswick store thrives through COVID-19 pandemic

Despite the challenges of a global pandemic, the Beswick store has recorded unprecedented sales increases - more than 90% - through the peak of biosecurity restrictions.

Not only did the store ensure a secure food supply for its own community, it also supported many people who were regularly travelling from neighbouring communities Barunga and Manyallaluk to do their shopping.

“The community was grateful to see a well-stocked store during the COVID-19 restrictions, said Beswick Store committee Chairperson Peter Lindsay. “Outback Stores who manage our store on our behalf, organised extra deliveries and made sure we had enough food,” Peter said.

“Beswick became the food security hub for multiple communities in the area. Our sales went through the roof. We were so busy, the store managers had to ask the directors to help people coming in and out of the store to maintain social distancing.

“The directors decided to re-invest \$10,000 of profit back into the community in the shape of \$50 store vouchers to purchase meat and fresh fruit and vegetables.

“This is not only for Beswick, but for the other communities as well. I know people really appreciated the gesture. It was great seeing more people eating healthy food,” Peter said.

The Beswick Community has been working closely with Outback Stores over the past 12 years on good governance and sustainable business practices.

“The community and directors are really proud of our store. Not only over the COVID-19 period but over the longer term as well. We have built a strong relationship with Outback Stores, which has delivered many positive outcomes for the community,” Peter said.

“We have a really good mutual respect; we pride ourselves on making good decisions together for the community. A great example was Outback Stores helping us apply for funding to install a solar setup and reduce costs. This has now been installed and will save the business in excess of \$30,000 dollars a year.”

“We can now put more money back into things that people need and want to see, like support for disadvantaged families with funeral arrangements, using the community bus to assist with transport, sports carnivals, a Christmas Party and maybe even a Beswick Festival in the future,” Peter said.

Photo* Beswick store staff ready for a busy days trade

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