

CUSTODIAN NEWSLETTER

July 2023

WELCOME to EDITION 1!

CMCA Park Custodians are an integral part of the success of our RV Park network. Without you, we would not be able to offer low-cost camping to our membership. And without you, we would not have the great product that our members so value now.

This newsletter is aimed at sharing ideas, thoughts and tips to help you in your roles, to share stories and to support you in your volunteer roles for our Club.

Please, send in comments, ideas, and thoughts for future editions. We will share this newsletter with all our custodians, of which there are nearly 300 solos and couples who have become certified. Not everyone who has undertaken the training has had the opportunity to be a Park Custodian yet, while some have nearly made this a full-time role for themselves as they travel our great country.

It is hoped that being a Custodian is an overall positive experience for all, but we understand that when dealing with humans, there can be some challenges along the way. Some will try it out and realise the role is not for them, that is okay.

Understanding the roles of the Park Custodians

The roles you are responsible for will depend on the particular park you are working at and the season you are there. For those working in our northern parks during the winter months, you will understand what bust means! Whilst those staying at our southern parks in winter are hoping that someone will stop in for a few nights and say g'day!

No matter where the park though, there are some basic activities our custodians undertake:

- Taking bookings on the iPad and checking-in guests
- Welcoming guests and siting them
- Coordinating happy hour activities - you may choose not to attend, but at least let them know what time to gather to meet others
- Grounds maintenance - this can include mowing, whipper snipping, weed spraying, clearing away sticks and branches
- Waste management – ensuring there are sufficient bins, ensuring they are emptied, coordinating contractors

- Knowing the Emergency Management Procedures and being confident to enact them in the unlikely event of an emergency
- Checking on self-containment and offering solutions to those who may not be fully compliant (we have great resources on the CMCA website to access)
- Sharing your knowledge of the local area and things to see and do whilst at the park
- Having a good time whilst at the park! This should not be a chore or something that you don't look forward to
- Ensure the park rules are adhered to
- Communicate with CMCA head office staff especially with issues arising or concerns or questions you may have
- Undertake a hand-over with the next custodians, don't just leave them with the keys and iPad and say goodbye, not everyone will have the same level of experience as you
- Equipment maintenance – ensuring the safe operation of all equipment is important, as is servicing of this equipment

July's hot topic is *"Dealing with difficult people"*



The Most Difficult People to Deal With

- People who never take responsibility for their own actions.
- Professional victims, (People who feel victimized no matter what the circumstances.)
- People who have a difficult time, or refuse to apologize.
- Passive aggressive people. (People who get back at you, or insult you, in an indirect sneaky way.
- People who never tell you how they feel, and expect you to read their minds.
- People who think the world revolves around them, and never consider anyone else's feelings.
- People who refuse to admit they are ever wrong.
- People who need control over everything and everyone.
- People who stab you in the back and act like they are the ones bleeding.

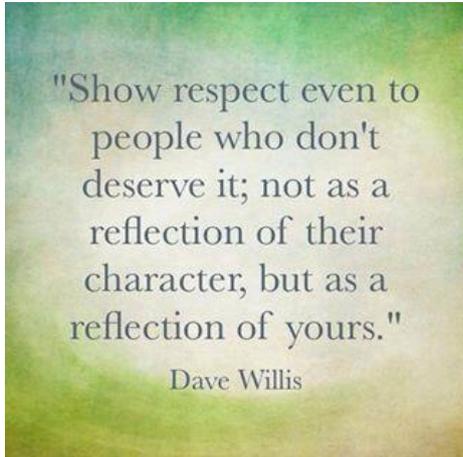
- MARIA CONSIGLIO | TheMindsJournal

MINDJOURNAL

To be fair, given we have a large membership base, you are going to come across all the above people at some time in your life, whether this be your professional careers or as volunteers. It is important to remember that the only person you can control is yourself. How you deal with a situation and respond will determine the outcome and the level of conflict that arises.

Conflict is not always as a result of the other person either. There are many situations where the custodian might have been the one responsible for the conflict. This can arise

simply by the way a guest is approached, the tone of language used, body language, or even miscommunication or misunderstanding. We at head office are always here to listen and help where we can but remember that old adage of "the customer is always right" is no longer the mantra we abide by.



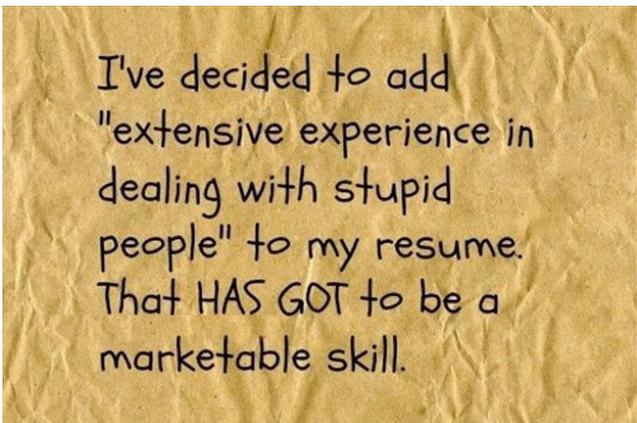
How a person delivers a message may not be how that message is received

When you are under stress, your communication may not be at its optimum, so take a breath, distance yourself from the situation, regroup and then think about how you would want to be communicated with yourself.

Many would rather avoid conflict, and that is a good attitude to have, however don't avoid conflict when it will result in the wrong thing continuing to be done. If in doubt, call head office and talk to someone about the situation and how to resolve it. It may be that you need a third party to talk to the guests to reinforce what they have been told, this takes the pressure away from you as Custodian and places the blame on CMCA staff.

We understand that you are volunteers, and for that reason we do not expect you to have all the answers. This is meant to be an enjoyable experience for you, the last thing we want is you no longer wanting to be a volunteer.

Many will relate to the following comment:



Stupid might be going a bit far, but there may be a lack of understanding from guests about what our park rules are or what it means to be self-contained. Don't forget that many have travelled our great continent for a lot of years and practices they are quite comfortable with in other campgrounds may not be acceptable in ours. Treat this as an education process for those who may have a different set of rules that they have operated under.

Some common areas of disagreement from our guests are:

- Releasing grey water to the ground
- Where they can smoke or vape
- Where pets are allowed and how they need to be handled within the park
- How the RV needs to be parked
- What is a compliant grey water system

We are here to help you, don't be afraid to contact our staff to talk through any issues or questions.



Happy hour at Humpty Doo Hotel, our park guests have a great night on Fridays with nibbles, raffles, and plenty of drinks.

If you are looking to be a custodian, or want to do more of it, please check the **Custodian Calendar** within the RV Parks page of the website. If you are not confident about doing this role on your own, talk to us about the opportunities to be co-custodians at some of our parks.

<https://rvparks.cmca.net.au/Home/CustodiansCalendar>

We hope that the time you do volunteer for the Club is a positive experience and that you will want to continue to provide this valuable service in the future.

FUTURE EDITIONS

Please send in your requests for what you want to see in future editions of this newsletter. It is your resource.