

Thursday, 20 April 2022

## COLES JOIN FORCES WITH BRAVERY TRUST TO SUPPORT AUSSIE VETERANS

Aussie sporting heroes and veterans have joined forces to launch Coles' annual Bravery Trust Appeal to support service men and women facing hard times.

Australian cricket legend Justin Langer, Australian Wheelchair Rugby League star Pete Arbuckle and Bravery Trust chair and decorated veteran Lieutenant Colonel Garth Callender are among the high-profile Bravery Trust ambassadors, supporters and beneficiaries who are backing the six-day fundraiser. Richmond Football Club has also thrown its support behind Bravery Trust and is supporting the appeal.

From today until Anzac Day (April 25), Coles will donate 50 cents from the sale of every 12-pack of Coles Bakery biscuits and cookies sold in-store or online to military charity Bravery Trust, including favourites such as Anzac Biscuits, Choc Chip Cookies and Coconut Drops. Customers can also make a donation of their choice in-store at Coles checkouts.

To kick off the campaign, Coles will donate gift cards to Bravery Trust to help around 100 veterans and their families buy emergency food and groceries.

Australian Army veteran and Bravery Trust beneficiary Pete Arbuckle, said small amounts of money can mean a lot when battling unforeseen expenses on a fixed income. Pete, who lost his left leg in a motorbike accident in 2015 after being medically discharged, urged shoppers to get behind the appeal.

"Bravery Trust is such a vital charity - they can help when other agencies can't. They've not only provided financial assistance when I needed it most but also moral support and hope when I was recovering from my injuries," he said.

"The Coles Bravery Trust Appeal is not just about raising funds, it is also about raising awareness of the great work of Bravery Trust and encouraging other veterans to reach out and seek help."

Since it was founded 10 years ago, Bravery Trust has provided financial support to more than 6,000 veterans and their families across Australia by helping with medical fees, energy bills, rent, education costs and food vouchers. The charity also offers a veteran-specific financial counselling service to help rebuild lives.

Bravery Trust Chair Lieutenant Colonel Garth Callender said funds raised will help some of Australia's most at-risk veterans and their families.

"Seventy per cent of veterans assisted by Bravery Trust have left the ADF due to a physical or mental illness, meaning their departure can be sudden and unplanned," he said.

"We understand each veteran has their own unique journey to recovery – and we begin by assisting with their immediate financial needs to resolve the crisis. We then work longer term with veterans and their families to grow skills and confidence."

"Money raised in this year's Coles Bravery Trust Appeal will not only help individuals, but their families and communities as well – nearly three quarters of our beneficiaries have children to support and 70% are aged 50 years or younger."

“We’re also delighted with the extra support Coles is providing this year with gift cards to help around 100 of our clients to buy emergency food and groceries – financial circumstances can be complex, and this is one gesture that will go a long way.”

Coles Group General Manager Corporate & Indigenous Affairs Sally Fielke said Coles is proud to support Aussie veterans and their families and encouraged shoppers to buy a Coles Bakery biscuit or cookie for the cause.

“Coles is honoured to raise funds in our stores again for Bravery Trust in the lead up to Anzac Day and to provide them with gift cards for emergency food relief,” she said.

“Our connection to the Australian Defence Force goes back to the First World War when Coles founder GJ Coles and his brothers served in Europe, and today we are extremely proud of our team members who are active Army Reservists, helping local communities in times of need.”

“We hope our customers can get behind Bravery Trust and help those who have served our country by buying a Coles Bakery Anzac Biscuit or other Coles Bakery 12-pack cookies and biscuits this Anzac Day.”

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