



behind the news

Wayne happy making a crust

Meet Wayne Bowman: there's no loafing around when he is baking.
Daniel Tang reports.

WAYNE Bowman's day begins in the early hours of the morning, kneading dough and baking it in large industrial ovens in the southern wing of Logan Hyperdome.

At 34, it is the eighth job he has had - legally blind, deaf and diabetic, it has not always been easy for him to find an understanding employer. But for the past two years he has been working at Coles Hyperdome, an environment that has adapted and changed positively for him.

Speaking through a sign language interpreter, Wayne said he was very happy working at the bakery.

"I like all the people here," he said.

"I like working with them - they are all good people with a good work ethic."

The workplace has increased its health and safety

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standards to ensure it is safe for Wayne; he is legally blind and has limited peripheral vision, meaning nothing on a shelf or a table can stick out.

Bakery manager Kerry Cox said Coles was happy to employ people with barriers to employment.

"He wasn't overly expressive when he first came to us," she said.

"Now that he knows us he will speak to us.

"We have eight pages of sign language on the wall at the bakery, to help staff learn to communicate with Wayne, and that's helping.

"We also have signs at head height for his eyes."

She said Wayne did a "magnificent" job baking.

Wayne's employment officer Gregg McDonald

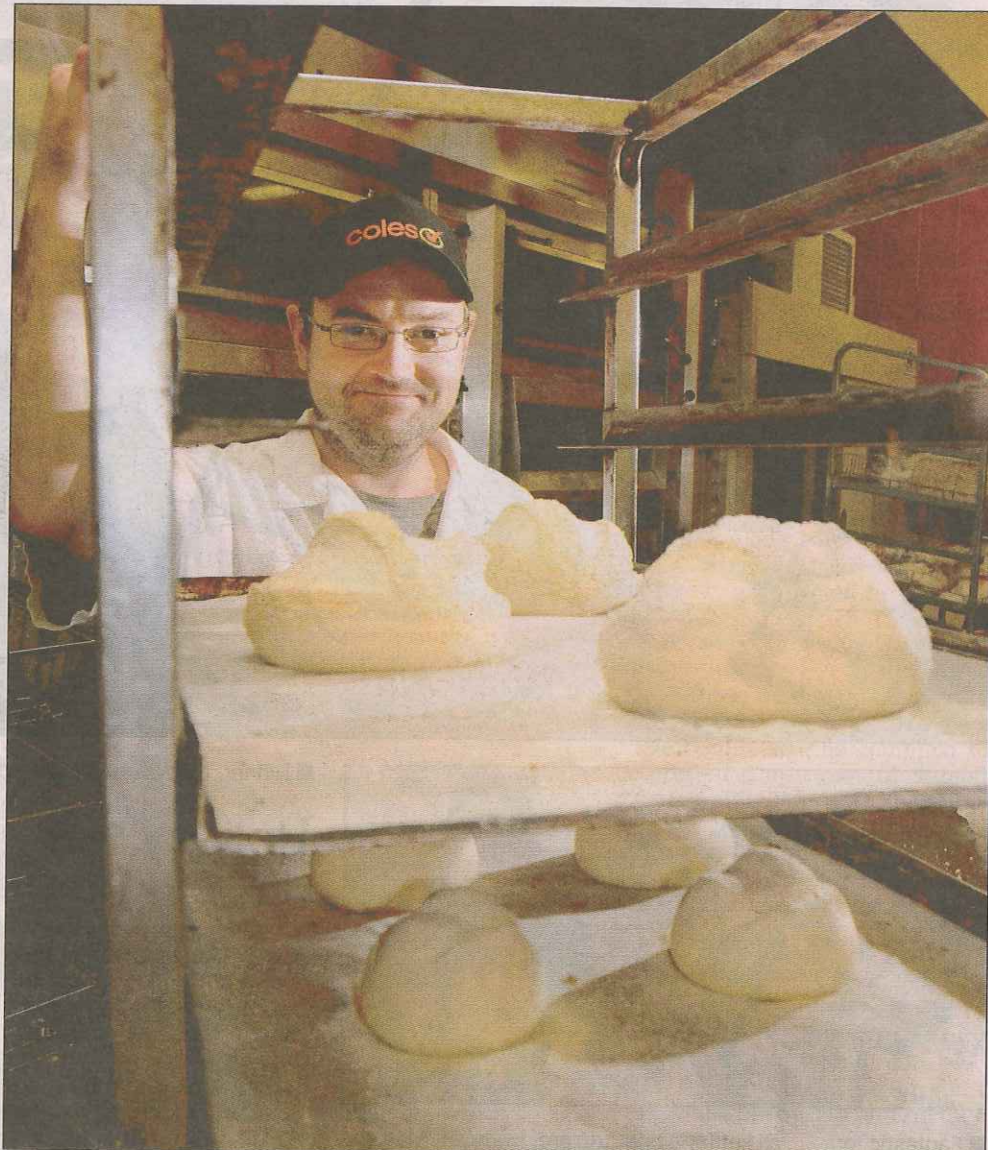
said only one reason prohibited someone from getting a job.

"A person's biggest disability is their bad attitude," he said.

For his part, Wayne said he was looking forward to a long period of steady employment on a permanent part-time basis.

His favourite task is making and kneading the dough.

"I don't like doing doughnuts, though," he said.



■ New horizons ... Wayne Bowman loves his job.

Picture: Dale Haberfield

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