

• FOR RURAL WOMEN & THEIR FAMILIES •

The Country Web

PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY

NUMBER 52 AUTUMN 2010 FREE NEWSLETTER



Lana Mitchell, Gundaroo, 2010 Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation NSW Rural Women's Award Winner.



Let's make it happen – together

Rural Women's Network

A SECOND CHANCE ■ GREAT EXPECTATIONS ■ UNCOVERING HIDDEN TREASURES

contents

THE COUNTRY WEB

The Country Web is produced by the Rural Women's Network (RWN, part of Industry & Investment NSW) and is distributed free, three times a year. For more about the RWN see page 5.

EDITING/DESKTOP PUBLISHING

Allison Priest

CONTRIBUTIONS

Letters, stories, poems and photographs from rural women and their families are welcome.

FREE MAILING LIST

If you live in New South Wales and would like to be on our free mailing list, contact RWN.

ADVERTISING

13 000 copies of *The Country Web* are produced each edition. We welcome advertisements and offer competitive rates. Contact RWN for more information. Sponsorship and insert options also available.

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COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

See page 23 for competition details.

1. Information on how to enter and prize details form part of the Terms & Conditions. By entering the competition, entrants accept these Terms & Conditions. 2. To enter, you must provide your full name and postal details, and in 25 words or less answer the competition question. 3. Entries must be posted to the stated address by the stated date. 4. This competition is a game of skill. The best answer as judged by the RWN will win. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Prizes cannot be transferred or redeemed for cash. The winner will be notified by mail within 14 days from the judging date.

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FEATURES

- 6 White Romance for Lana**
Meet our 2010 NSW RIRDC Rural Women's Award Winner and read about her plans for the future. You can also read about our past winners in our special 10 year 'Where are they now' update.
- 9 My heart, my home, my country**
Sydney awoke to a thick red cloud of dust in September 2009 that blanketed the city and caused traffic chaos, but in the north-west, landholders were confronted with horrific scenes, with stock losses of thousands of head of sheep, and 30 cattle buried alive. Patty Byrnes from Gol Gol tells us what it's really like living in rural NSW in the midst of the worst drought on record.
- 10 Dealing with drug addiction: finding a second chance**
This is the story of a stereotypical farm girl who grew up, went away to study, came back and married a local boy. Little did she know her life would be turned upside down due to her husband's drug addiction. So why did she choose to stay?
- 18 Great expectations**
Our unspoken expectations can affect our relationships in so many ways. They are hard to live up to, and they are hard to shift. Yet they sometimes seem to create the existence that we all live.
- 20 Women in Business**
This new column promoting rural and regional business women aims to provide ideas and inspiration for women to follow their dreams.



12

Beyond the homeless myth – it can happen to anyone!



14

Unearthing a gem-coloured looking glass. Lightning Ridge – baring its soul for all to see.

REGULAR FEATURES

3	Editorial	23	Book reviews	30	RWN SAC Update
3	Calendar	24	Grants/Funding	32	Web Watch
4	Letters	24	Health	33	What's on, What's new?
5	Across my desk	28	Women in decision-making	34	Resources
15	Parenting				

Welcome to this edition of *The Country Web* and my first editorial since becoming a member of the Rural Women's Network State Advisory Committee.

We have a interesting theme this edition and some informative articles to correspond to the theme – **Perception versus Reality**. It is also a great theme for me to start with as although I readily put up my hand to write this editorial and 'perceived' I had plenty of time to write it, the 'reality' is I am now writing it at the last minute in a week jam-packed with extra activities – beginning with a birthday party to send the kids to, the start of netball season for my eight-year-old daughter, karate lessons and a belt exam for my nine-year-old son, parent/teacher interviews, hosting two family birthdays, and attending a friend's art exhibition opening. And did I mention that in amongst all this, I still have work, a community meeting and the housework to complete.

What a week! Thankfully they don't happen that way all

the time. But I also have a great husband who helps with the extra activities and housework, reasonably independent children who just need some overseeing (and to be chauffeured), a fantastic Mum who makes the best birthday cakes and my lovely Dad – an extra chauffeur. Luckily I have this support all year through – even for a 'normal' week of work, school, and sports activities.

Unfortunately others may not be so lucky. They may have lost their connection to their family, friends and/or community – some may even be homeless. How this is perceived by others can be far removed from the realities for the people it occurs to, many of whom are women and children. There may be many reasons why this may happen – domestic violence, alcohol or drug abuse, mental illness or even financial hardship. On the flip side there are those who 'choose to stay' in relationships that may have domestic violence occurring in its many forms, and not know why they stay.

We hope this edition will provide readers with some insight into many of these issues, because, believe it or not, women can and do drive big trucks, The Country Women's Association is much more than tea and scones, and you can live a full and active life after cancer – even at 70-years-old.

Enjoy this edition and I hope it gives you a chance to escape your reality, to put your feet up and enjoy some chocolate and a cup of tea, which after this week is exactly what I need!



Donna Cruickshank.
Member of the Rural Women's Network State Advisory Committee

REALITY

Reality can sometimes be cruel
Nothing can hide from its sight
Not in the harsh glare of day
Or the softening shades of night
The need to cope is essential
To perceive that which is correct
Sort out problems looming
And deal with matters direct
Reality is an adult invention
For children pretence is a game
Dreams we dream create fantasy
A concept with seldom a name.

© JEAN OPPERMAN, PASCOE VALE

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 2010

10, ORANGE

Making e-business work for you in exporting. A free workshop for export businesses thinking of using their websites more effectively to boost global sales. Topics include: Strategic planning and action; Business language and concepts; Exporter websites – what to do, what not to do; Online marketing tactics; and Online trading issues. Contact Ian Sanders on Ph: 02 6360 8420 or Email: ian.sanders@business.nsw.gov.au

18, TAMWORTH

What Women Want. A free drought-event for rural women to help you get the most out of your

life in a season of change. Speakers include: Wendy Harmer, author and comedian; Lyn Sykes, family meeting facilitator; Sonia Muir, Community Engagement Manager, I&I NSW; and Genevieve Marchiori, Women's Well-being Coordinator, YWCA of NSW. Topics include: Getting and staying motivated; Managing difficult situations; Building and maintaining a support network; and Overcoming life's challenges. RSVP's are essential. Contact Jenny Croft, Drought Support Worker, I&I NSW on 0429 446 417 or Phoebe O'Shea on 02 6766 1394 to book your place.

22–23, GRIFFITH

Shaping Our Futures Together. This two-day leadership course

for women is free to drought-affected participants and includes a workbook and meals. Registrations close 15 June 2010. Contact Iva Quarisa on Ph: 02 6960 1331 or Email: iva.quarisa@industry.nsw.gov.au

AUGUST 2010

1, NATIONAL

Applications open for 2011 RIRDC Rural Women's Award. Contact RWN for an application package.

OCTOBER 2010

29–31, WENTWORTH

2010 Women's Gathering. A weekend of networking, learning new skills, laughter and friendships. See page 19 for more information.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The theme for the next edition of *The Country Web* is **Celebrating Creativity**.

Contributions are required by 28 June for publication in September 2010.

If you have stories, poems, pictures or other items of interest, we would love to hear from you.

Forward your contribution to: The Editor, *The Country Web* Locked Bag 21, Orange 2800. Fax: 02 6391 3650 or Email: allison.priest@industry.nsw.gov.au



I picked up a copy of *The Country Web* from our little shire office in Stroud this morning and wondered why I hadn't contacted you earlier. A couple of years ago I started keeping chooks and fell in love with them. It came late into my life as I was a city girl.

To honour these beautiful girls I would like to collect stories, poems, photos and the chook experiences of other women into a social history work. I would like to include the experiences of women in marginal groups such as those in religious communities, migrant communities and also Indigenous women. Any contributions would be gratefully received and can be sent by email: rosie@bobseal.com

Rosie Heritage, Stroud

I would like to express my thanks and sheer delight in receiving my prize in the free book give-away for *The Gospel of Joy*. I have won twice now to my great surprise – the other book was *The Better Woman*. This book was so good to read and I am already into *The Gospel of Joy*. Once again, many thanks for hours of enjoyable reading. As I indicated in my answer to the competition, I do intend to share the contents of *The Gospel of Joy* to a small group of ladies that I mentor so the 'gift' will go on.

Helen Lyness, Taree

I was delighted to receive the Sandra Cabot book, *Help for Depression & Anxiety*, as a winner in one of your recent book giveaways. The book has a lot of very useful, clearly explained information and links to gain further information about depression and anxiety.

I am an avid reader of *The Country Web*. Each edition is packed with articles which I am sure make women in regional areas feel less isolated. I often suggest to my clients that they read and subscribe to *The Country Web* because of the variety of information, issues and resources.

Chris Johnson, Armidale

After attending the RWN SOFT (Shaping Our Futures Together) course at Wellington earlier this year I feel compelled to say a huge 'thank you' to the facilitators, Sonia Muir and Sandy Prell, for the inspiration, direction and focus the course has given me.

I have been engaged in rural work for all my working life. For the past 25 years I have been a Livestock Health & Pest Authority (LHPA) Pest Animal Ranger. These years have been spent working directly with local farmers through some of the toughest times we have known regarding drought and economic downturns. I have always loved my job and have found a huge sense of self worth and reward working with my community of rural farmers, of whom the majority are men.

The recent changes to our organisation have had me change my role and function within the system and I was feeling very removed from the community engagement where I had always felt so secure. My focus and commitment had changed dramatically to cater for the new needs and direction of the LHPAs across the state and I was feeling removed from my comfort zone.

Attending the SOFT course not only reaffirmed my personal goals but brought me in contact with some of the dynamic women of the Wellington area. I had met the majority of these women in my Ranger role, but had spent my working time with their husbands initiating pest animal programs on farm. For me, being in a room with 20 women was daunting beyond belief, but after the first two hours of getting to know each other

through the course I soon learnt that we are all unique with talents, traits and troubles of our own, but to some extent these were common to all of us.

Like most women, I am very good at doing things for my family and forgetting myself, and then feeling guilty if I do actually have some 'me' time. Even attending the SOFT course was the start (and finish) of a guilt trip where I could have been doing something for others but not me.

The overwhelming energy that was generated within that learning circle of the SOFT course should be shared and experienced by all women. We shared personal experiences that had us shed honest heartfelt tears and we belly laughed so hard at stories you'd think we would wet our pants (I'm sure the caterers in the kitchen were ready to run in with towels and are still wondering what all the laughter was about)!!

The unity and companionship of women within the room grew quickly with recognition of personal values, self confidence and self esteem, traits we all have, but need to be encouraged, reinforced and recognised. The setting of small personal goals and then sharing this experience with a 'buddy' allowed us to get closer to individuals and experience each other's goals.

The course reaffirmed all the qualities we know are essential for healthy relationships especially within our family circles.

We have maintained our contacts by having a coffee morning once a month at a venue or home and the topics of conversation come back to our SOFT group learning experiences (plus our secret hand signal, the 'circle of control').

I find it difficult to express the overwhelming appreciation I have for being able to take part in this SOFT course which was attended by such a diverse and unique group of sensational local women. I fully encourage all people to take the opportunity if it presents itself and allow yourself some guilt free

growth time. Kind regards and many thanks to both of you.

Lisa Thomas, Wellington

Ed: Women interested in attending a SOFT workshop can view upcoming dates and locations on the RWN website calendar of events page: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn.



Congratulations to the following readers for their winning entries in the No. 51 book competitions.

Elephant Dance: Catherine Chaseling, Kirrawee; Margaret Harris, Kingscliff; Marie Hombsch, Bithramere; Marie Knight, Junee; Jenny Magner, Tenterfield; Gail Roberts, Merrylands; and Heather Shepherd, Woodhouselee.

Help for Depression & Anxiety: Julie Burns, Cowra; Chris Johnson, Armidale; Julie Moncrieff, Wagga Wagga; S Watson, Leeton; and Glenda White, Orange.

Missing: Katina Baker, Caringbah; Robyn Cartwright, Tuena; Cindy Earl, Coopernook; Natasha Frame, Maclean; and Glenda Watts, Kyogle.

Pieces of Me: Catherine Chaseling, Kirrawee; Marie Knight, Junee; and Jenny Magner, Tenterfield.

The Gospel of Joy: Caroline Collerson, Wilberforce; Teresa Griffith, Gloucester; Diana Harley, Merimbula; Helen Lyness, Taree; and Dale McIntosh, Stockinbingal.

across my desk



Community Engagement Unit Manager, Sonia Muir with RWN Project Coordinator, Allison Priest

The Rural Women's Network (RWN) is a statewide government program within Industry & Investment NSW. RWN works in partnership with individuals and agencies to share information and promote action on rural women's issues. The RWN:

- provides information and referrals;
- supports the development of local initiatives;
- works with rural women and families to identify and bring attention to priority issues;
- develops projects with other agencies to address needs;
- provides a medium for networking and information sharing;
- promotes the profile of rural women;
- provides a two-way link between government and rural women; and
- provides policy advice.

Contact RWN on:

Ph: 02 6391 3620

Fax: 02 6391 3650

Email: rural.women@industry.nsw.gov.au

In March I spent a fabulous week at the Adelaide Arts Festival with my mum, my sister and five girlfriends. The days and evenings were peppered with laughter and learning as we discovered artworks, listened to authors share stories, became enthralled by theatre shows and consumed wonderful South Australian produce. It has become a biennial tradition and we all look forward to it as a *gift* to ourselves and each other.

When we first started going to Adelaide over a decade ago, I felt a few twinges of guilt about being away from work and home because it always clashed with a very busy time.

Why do we so often sabotage great opportunities by *not* saying 'yes' to something we really would like to do because we put our needs at the bottom of the priority list and put everyone else's first?

I soon realised it is actually very good for my mental and emotional wellbeing to take time out of everyday life to be with a group of diverse and amazing women who never fail to inject me with ideas, energy and inspiration.

I now freely allow myself to take that special time out guilt-free every second year and that it is absolutely OK to make myself a priority now and again.

Enjoying time with special family and friends is a high priority for most people and yet sometimes we forget to make this a priority for ourselves. Life can be a treadmill if you don't punctuate it with regular small escapes with people who make you feel good about yourself and

whose company you enjoy.

Women so often feel a need to *do* everything and *be* everything for everyone. If we aren't around we perceive things will fall apart, the house won't be clean and tidy, the dishes won't be washed and nutritious meals won't be prepared. Just now and again it is good for your health to take yourself out of the everyday grind, walk out that door and leave others to take responsibility. Your husband and kids won't get scurvy if they don't have their quota of fruit and vegetables for a few days and so what if the cushions aren't on the sofa in a lovely row. You may even find after a week away the family have missed you and found a whole new level of forgotten appreciation for what you do!

If you would like to learn how to build your self-esteem and confidence, set achievable goals and set up networks then we would love to have you join us at one of the following drought-funded Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT) courses: Griffith (22–23 June) or Mt Hope (29–30 June). Taking time out to be with other women can be a good investment of your time.

Congratulations to Lana Mitchell, this year's RIRDC NSW Rural Women's Award winner,

and Alison McIntosh, who was named runner-up. These two women, along with Christine Weston (2010 NSW Woman of the Year), continue to show what rural women can achieve through tenacity, vision and hard work.

The RWN has launched a new partnership project with the NSW Centre for Volunteering and Office for Women's Policy. *Hidden Treasures* will put a spotlight on the diverse roles rural women volunteers play within communities and was launched this month. See the back page for more information or visit the RWN website for nomination details.

The overall winner of the recent Dubbo Speech Spectacular, a competition run by LandLearn NSW, was Lachlan Hoyle from Parkes. Lachlan wowed everyone and was invited to deliver a speech at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. You can listen to the speeches on the LandLearn website: www.landlearnsw.org.au/students/dubbo-speech-spectacular

SONIA MUIR
MANAGER, COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT UNIT

BEYOND THE KITCHEN TABLE

Keep an eye out for this new column in AgricultureToday which provides updates on activities and issues important to rural women. You can read the latest column online at: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/news/agriculture-today



Visit the Rural Women's Network internet site at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn



2010 RIRDC Rural Women's Award



Business is literally blooming for Lana Mitchell, who began a commercial cut-flower venture from her property at Gundaroo in the Southern Tablelands just five years ago. Today, Lana sells her native flowers across Australia and exports to the US, UK, Europe and Japan. She is also commercialising her flannel flower *White Romance* by setting up growers under license, helping establish Australian wildflowers as a staple for the international cut-flower market.

Lana's innovation, dedication and commitment to the industry has resulted in her being named the 2010 RIRDC NSW Rural Women's Award Winner at a special dinner, hosted by Minister for Primary Industries

Steve Whan, at Parliament House Sydney in February 2010. Lana was presented with her Award by Premier Kristina Keneally, who congratulated her on her success with her native flower business and helping to educate the industry. The Premier was clearly impressed by Lana's determination and leadership skills, as well as her ability to juggle her career with two young children. The Premier even took time to nurse Lana's young baby during the gala dinner.

As one of the key figures cultivating growth in the native flower industry, Lana believes Australia should obtain breeding rights for all native plants. She is Editor of the Australian Flower Industry magazine, which allows

her to communicate news, technology, and research and development across the national floral supply chain. She's also helping unify and educate the industry about the benefits of native wildflowers by running a national floristry design competition and an education campaign.

In addition to running her own business, Lana is a board member of WildFlowers Australia, a member of RIRDC's Wildflowers & Native Plants Advisory Committee, and a member of the New Rural Industries Australia Interim Management Committee. She believes native wildflowers have huge potential and has been working to achieve this by educating the floral supply chain

and setting up effective marketing and promotional strategies.

Lana receives a \$10,000 bursary and will join other State and Territory winners and runners-up in a week-long Australian Institute of Company Directors leadership program in Canberra during May. The title of the Australian RIRDC Rural Women's Award Winner will be announced on 25 May in Canberra – we're keeping our fingers crossed for a NSW win.

Lana will use her award bursary to travel to the UK and Europe to research how the flower industry can improve its market share.

Runner-up in the 2010 Award was Alison McIntosh from Crookwell. Alison is a strong

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

NSW RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD WINNERS 2009 – 2000

New South Wales has been showcasing extraordinary rural women for over a decade. These remarkable women are making significant and lasting contributions to their industries and the broader community. They continue to be valuable role models and leaders, with many holding positions on government and community boards and committees.



2009
KIM CURRIE,
ORANGE

Kim used her bursary to fund a study tour in France and Italy to investigate successful farmers market models and how they contribute to paddock-to-plate marketing and agri-tourism. She is recognised for her commitment to improving agri-tourism and using farmers markets and other initiatives to boost awareness of food production efforts in NSW and helping to strengthen rural communities. Kim was recently appointed as a Councillor to the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW.



2008
TRACEY KNOWLAND,
BROOKLET

Tracey used the bursary to fund her participation in the 2008 Nursery & Garden Industry Association National Conference, followed by a study tour of Victoria's largest wholesale production nurseries to look at sustainable growing methods. Bangalow Wholesale Nursery has since released three patented compact Australian trees for the landscape and development industry which are being grown by numerous producers and marketed throughout Australia. Tracey is a Managing Partner with Bangalow Wholesale Nursery and an Executive Member of the Nursery & Garden Industry Association, NSW & ACT. She is also coordinator of Bangalow Business Women's Group, sharing her experiences and mentoring other women.



2007
ELEANOR COOK,
COOLAH

Eleanor won the Award for her efforts to establish a community-managed trust fund model where individuals, families and businesses could bequeath funds and keep them within their own communities. She used the bursary to research the concept and how it could be extended across rural communities. She is continuing to explore the complex trust structures needed to establish a community foundation. Since winning the Award, Eleanor has graduated from the Australian Rural Leadership Course 15 program and is the current Chair of the Coolah District Development Group.



2010 NSW Rural Women's Award Dinner: Steve Whan, Minister for Primary Industries; Lana Mitchell, 2010 RIRDC RWA Winner; Alison McIntosh, 2010 RWA Runner-up; Kristina Keneally, Premier of NSW; & Peter O'Brien, Managing Director, Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation..

advocate for young women in primary industries. She is the Chair of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Youth Group and also provides services and training to beef producers so they can comply with the National Livestock Identification System requirements. Read more about Alison on page 28.

Special thanks to the following 2010 NSW RIRDC Rural Women's Award sponsors whose support made this Award possible: Department of Environment, Climate Change & Water, Office for Women's Policy Department of Premier & Cabinet and NSW Farmers' Association. ■



2006
KATE SCHWAGER,
WEE WAA

Kate won the award in recognition of her pioneering work in promoting rural towns and their links to agriculture through her Rural Towns Package initiative. The package is an easy-to-use web development program that builds small town websites in a user-friendly way and at minimal cost. Kate continues this work, with nine rural towns' websites established to date. Currently, Kate is the marketing officer for Webteam Australia and the Community Officer at the Cotton Catchment Communities Cooperative Research Centre. Since winning the Award she was also a finalist in the Business Enterprise Awards for NSW in 2006 and 2007 and is participating in a RIRDC mentoring pilot.



2005
JENNY BRADLEY,
ARMATREE

Jenny used her bursary to travel to New Zealand to research lamb marketing techniques and visit world class producer groups with the aim of improving Australia's lamb marketing. At the time, she was the sole female director of the highly regarded Tooraweenah Prime Lamb Marketing Cooperative. The information and contacts made during her study tour led to some exciting developments for the Co-op. The Co-op now employs a Field Officer, and this year the group will endeavour to market lamb under its own brand. Jenny is currently the Chair of the Co-op, an Industry Representative on the TAFE NSW Animal Welfare Council and a member of the Trangie Information Nucleus Site Advisory Group.



2004
REBECCA ARNOTT,
SCONE*

Rebecca used her bursary to find more effective ways of promoting Australian beef products. She travelled to Europe and the US to gain first-hand knowledge of integrated supply chain structures and management within overseas beef industries. After winning the Award, she was offered a position with the Australian Agricultural Company in Queensland as their National Brand Manager, where she worked for four years. She now runs her own agribusiness marketing company, Precision Operations Pty Ltd, which specialises in food and agribusiness marketing. Rebecca is a graduate of the Australian Rural Leadership Course 12 program.
* Rebecca now lives in Queensland.



2003
MILADA SAFARIK,
DORA CREEK*

Milada developed the first marine worm farm in Australia, Aquabait, for the recreational fishing bait industry. Using her bursary she travelled to Spain to develop export markets, present a paper on her work at a world conference, and develop the marine invertebrates and aquaculture industry. Aquabait has grown significantly, progressing from pilot commercialisation stage to full production. The business continues to grow in strength and innovation. Milada has since found a passion for education and teaches aquaculture at TAFE and biology and chemistry to secondary school students. She is a committee member of the NSW Government Aquaculture Research Advisory Committee.
* Milada now lives in Sydney NSW.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

NSW RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD WINNERS 2009 – 2000



2002
ROBBIE SEFTON,
COONABARABRAN

Robbie is the Director of Sefton & Associates – a national communications and marketing consultancy based in Tamworth NSW. She used her bursary to develop and pilot the Hunters and Gatherers project – a unique network of communication 'hunters and gatherers' creating a two-way flow of communication between the bush and leaders in industry, politics and business. Twenty locations across Australia provide regular information on the social, political, industry, business and media mood, helping to identify the local 'influencers' and current issues, which in turn determine the direction and focus of policy decisions. Robbie is passionate about changing the conversation about rural Australia and encouraging young people to return to the country, once they've gained education and experience, to create successful businesses and caring communities. Robbie is a board member of the Australia Day Council, was a member of the Regional Women's Advisory Council and is a retired board member of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation and Australian Wool Services.



2001
JON-MAREE BAKER,
NARRABRI

Jon-Maree used her bursary to develop a training program for women in the cotton industry focussing on technical, business and leadership skills, to meet the challenges of a dynamic and demanding industry. She was involved in the cotton industry until 2007 and helped establish WinCott, the Women's Industry Network Cotton. Her focus then shifted back to her family of four children and her own farming enterprise which includes irrigated pasture, Australian Stockhorses, Santa Gertrudis cattle and Border Collies. She now manages a program focused on mental health and mentoring in Narrabri.



2000
DIANA GIBBS,
COOTAMUNDRA

Diana is the cofounder and managing director of Riverina Wool Growers. She used her bursary for an overseas study tour to finalise her business plan, and to develop business relationships with potential manufacturing channels. The *Diana Gibbs Australian Collection* was launched at the Mercedes Australian Fashion Week in Sydney in 2003, featuring fine Merino wool accessories woven with designs that tell stories of our unique landscape, inspired by indigenous culture. In February 2008 a second range, the *Diana Gibbs Natural Collection*, was launched, featuring wool and other natural fibres in scarves and wraps. From 2000 to 2007 Diana was Chair of the NSW Regional Communities Consultative Council.

BOWER BIRDS

They came before the dawn one day
A clownish mottled pair
Green bowerbirds both immature
To practise courting there.

Just metres from our window
A feast for sleepy eyes
He a strutting chauvinist
With her the luscious prize.

'Oh, look at me,' he pleaded
'Behold my azure eyes
Listen to my warbling song
And clever clicking cries!'

Casually she poked some leaves
With slow and practised knack
'Look, look at me,' more strident now
She glanced, then turned her back.

He pranced, he danced, he twirled about
Arranged new twigs with care,
'I'm the greatest chance you'll ever have',
She paused and said, 'oh yeah!'

'I don't think you are such a steal
You call this heap a bower
Where's my toys and jewellery
Where's my promised flower?'

He slaved and toiled from dawn to dusk
By her firmly ignored
And day-by-day with fortitude
He build a little hoard.

My missing clothes pegs nestled there
Bottle tops, blue flowers
Biros, paper, cellophane
Rewarded busy hours.

Eventually he spread them round
Stamped all down real tight
'Oh, look at this, could you live here?'
'Well,' she said, 'I might!'

Just then with mighty rushing wings
There came into our view
A warrior clad in rich array
His plumage vivid blue.

It was a satin male matured
Stating his adult claim
'I'll fix this cocky teenager
'I'll stop his little game!'

He tore the whole shebang to bits
Tipped our girl a wink
'Stick with me babe, not this kid
And you'll be wearing mink!'

Oh, what pandemonium
Such rage and wilful shrieks
Such ripping from the despoiler
Such swearing from the sharp beaks.

Continued page 21

My Heart, My Home, My Country

By Patty Byrnes, Wamberra Station. Member of the Rural Women's Network State Advisory Committee

My heart, my home and my country mean different things to rural women compared with those in urban environments.

My heart has always been attached to the land and the people who farm and care for it, whether it has been my childhood in the Mallee, mixed farming country in South Australia to living and working on horticultural properties on the Murray and Darling rivers, and then a completely new life-style and challenge, living in the semi-arid pastoral region in NSW, my heart is where my home is.

My home is now on Wamberra Station in far south western NSW, a family-owned property purchased by my husband's family in 1907. On Wamberra we produce wheat and beef cattle and have areas set aside in permanent private conservation reserves.

My country is situated within the Western Division of NSW that comprises over 40 per cent of the state, an area that had experienced ongoing drought for over a decade but is now blooming following the good rains that have fallen since late spring 2009.

Dorothea McKellar certainly said it all in her iconic poem *My Country* – a poem that captures our emotions, our sometimes harsh but beautiful landscape and the ever-changing seasons that we have learnt to live with in our patch of country.

Over the last six to eight months we have seen parts of the Western Division transform from the worst-ever conditions in many areas to its best for over a century or in living memory.

In September last year Sydney woke to a thick red cloud of dust that blanketed the city and moved on to eventually reach Brisbane. The dust storm, reported as being possibly the worst since the 1960s, caused some inconvenience to city dwellers and sent the media into a frenzy. Dirty cars, red images of the Opera House and Sydney Harbour Bridge and traffic disruptions made the headlines for days.

In the north-west, land-holders were confronted with horrific scenes. Stock losses of 2330 sheep and 30 head of cattle were recorded, and repair costs estimated at more than \$439,000 to excavate sand from water points, troughs, stock yards and fences were expected. Pasture and crops were also wiped out and landholders were left without food for their stock. Natural Disaster Relief Assistance was offered to farmers in the Western Division in October in the form of low interest loans.

Ironically good rains have fallen in this area since summer and flood waters have isolated some properties, but the future does look good for the year ahead.

The stresses of drought have a huge effect on the whole family and it is not until the season turns around that you realise how much pressure you were under. It is like a huge weight being lifted off your shoulders.

The good rains and flooding that is being experienced at present really get the senses working overtime and 'put a spring in your step.' The smell of

the fresh grass is invigorating, the brilliant colours of the bush and wildflowers, some we haven't seen for years, are a picture postcard and the sounds of the birds and frogs are soothing to the ears.

It is a long way from the sheer exhaustion we as rural women can often feel in drought. We often work on the property all day with our husbands, filling the role of a workman and then come home and start the equivalent of another day's work – doing the property bookwork, trying to keep everyone's spirits up and providing emotional support for our husbands or partners.

The stresses placed on children in drought are also significant, but they are rarely mentioned. Children feel the tension in the home, see the stock in poor condition, take on extra jobs around the property and become very attached to the orphaned calves or lambs – not all can be saved, even with all their love and attention, and this can leave them with a real sense of loss and failure. Undoubtedly it is more difficult for them to study and concentrate on schoolwork and as a result that again can put them under enormous pressure.

I tend to keep my true feelings and emotions locked away during drought and I may appear to be very hardened and lack emotion. While this is not the case many hard decisions have to be made and I prefer to avoid discussing or re-living the images of drought.

In the late 1990s I was asked to speak to the Rural Adjustment



Bourke property – cleaning up after the September 2009 dust storm – the worst since the 1960s. Photo : Rose-ann & Martin Myors, Ourimbah Station, Wanaaring

Scheme Advisory Council about the effect of drought on families. The Council was touring the area to assess the region's application for Exceptional Circumstances Relief. (This role is now undertaken by the National Rural Advisory Council.) I barely got through my opening address when my lip started quivering and my eyes started running as the memories and images of the drought were brought to life again. Eventually, after considerable consoling, I was able to blubber my way through a difficult presentation as it was a story that needed to be told so that the reality of drought was portrayed to the group.

Last year we had to sell quite a few breeding cows as our feed was scarce. This year we have spare grass and pasture and have been able to have agistment stock on the property. Our house dam filled for the first time since 1989 and our cropping paddocks have good moisture reserves for the coming year's crops.

What a huge turnaround, in this, our country of 'droughts and flooding rains' that is the 'core of my heart, my country' and definitely 'the wide brown land for me'. ■

Dealing with drug addiction: finding a second chance

Anonymous. Source: RRR Network News Summer 09 edition (www.rrr.wa.gov.au). Re-printed with permission



I was the stereotypical farm girl who grew up, went away to study, then came back and married a local boy. Ten years and two children later, I was working part-time in my career, and managing the books for the family business in my spare time. My husband was working nightshift and working for himself during the day. Things hadn't been good for a while: my husband was moody all the time, rarely slept (a consequence of nightshift) and was spending money like there was no tomorrow. After six months of questioning and becoming a detective, the penny finally dropped. My five-year-old said, 'Mummy, Daddy and I went to that house but he told me not to tell you'. It took my beautiful son to make sense of it all.

Speed. The nightshift worker's drug of choice. I had never had any exposure to it. I didn't even know that in 'that house' lived a speed dealer, but it suddenly all became clear. I confronted

my husband, he denied it—for months. I just kept paying the debts, freaking out at the massive bills and continual reminders we were receiving and the complaints from unhappy customers because jobs that my husband had been paid for weren't finished. In a town with 1000 people, whom you've known all your life, nothing was private. Although the company he worked nights for did drug tests, addicts know how to beat them.

I phoned the parents' drug line and they were very helpful. They told me how big his problem was, based on how much I'd guessed he was using. For six months I'd been living with a daily amphetamine user and I had no idea. This doesn't happen to farm girls with PhDs; or so I thought.

Naively, when he eventually admitted the problem months later, I booked him into drug counselling in a nearby town and thought that would fix

everything! Another six months or so passed before I took the kids and left.

'She said I'm not standing by, to watch you slowly die, so watch me walking, out that door.' Paul Kelly's lyrics summed it up well.

We legally separated and split our assets without getting divorced, and although I had no intention whatsoever of ever going back, I just felt that I wasn't ready for divorce. The legal separation was to free me from any debt he incurred. I still supported him when he needed it: food, toothpaste, deodorant. Loving a drug addict is horrendous.

My son and three-year-old daughter kept me sane. My boy asked me, many times, to tell him what was really going on. 'When you're an adult' soon turned into 'when you're a teenager', and then, 'when you're ten'. Finally, I sat him down and explained to him that what I was about to tell him was very tough, and that it was okay to

speak to myself, Daddy, Grandma and Grandad, his teacher or his aunty about it, but he couldn't tell his friends. Then I explained to my now six-year-old the issues and physiology of amphetamine addiction, why it makes people do irrational things, and why I had no choice but to leave Daddy.

My amazing son understood, asked very mature questions, and was a gem. He forgave me for leaving, making him move towns and change schools. And most importantly, he understood that his Dad's unreliability and irrational behaviour were drug-induced and would disappear if Daddy ever sorted his head out.

We went through many ups and downs, frustrations, tears and anger. I tried to hate my ex-husband but I never quite managed. I gave him another chance after he'd been clean for six months but that failed too. Never again! Once more I told him to 'go away and never come back' but I wasn't so polite about it this time and I was stronger and stood my ground. Never again!

Twelve months later, I rented out the house I'd bought, packed up the kids, and moved across the state to reunite! I figured you only live once ... He had spent twelve months proving to me that he was better: emotionally, financially and physically. He regained the weight he'd lost after two years of being an addict and established himself in a new place mentally and geographically (in a slightly larger country town!).

He has now been clean for three years, although it feels like a distant memory. He beat the drugs, which surprised me, but even more—he grew up! I never expected that! Trust takes a long time to re-build but it can be done. Our family relationship is so much better now than it ever was before his drug problem.

The strength for me came from talking about the issue. I was open about it with those I trusted, and very surprised that I wasn't alone. Solidarity came from the most unexpected of places and people. Addiction is addiction, whether it's drugs, alcohol or gambling. And as I found out, many families have to deal with addiction at some point.

Our children are well-adjusted and the whole saga now feels like a small speed hump on a long journey. I look back and wonder how we managed and how he survived. Three years ago I thought I'd be burying him. My family has been amazingly supportive and forgiving, and his family have realised the son they put so much pressure and

expectation on was not infallible.

Some of our new friends know what we've been through and our old friends are very forgiving and treat us like it never happened. There is a future and you can survive this sort of upheaval, as hard as it may seem at the time.

For anyone going through a similar issue, my advice is to ask questions, talk to people, and be strong. Don't feel ashamed, because friends and family will support you. At the time I worried about being judged, or him being judged. If we were judged, it didn't last—at least not with the people who matter, and I don't care what others think!

I'd also suggest that if someone close to you has a drug problem

or other addiction, go and see a drug counsellor yourself. I learned about addiction cycles, how long it takes to physically recover, and how to manage the relationship with an addict while protecting yourself.

I also learned a lot about myself. I learned to forgive, to relax, and not to stress about the little things. I learned that kids are very resilient. And I learned to be a bloody good detective! But mostly I learned that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. For us, this did.

Postscript: I have just shown this to my husband, who choked back a few tears and didn't say much other than 'Send it in. It might help someone else'. Did I mention he grew up too? ■

Families & friends affected by the drug or alcohol use of someone close

If you're living with the alcohol or drug use of someone close, you probably have lots of questions or maybe you're not sure how to cope. This free booklet contains information about how to look after yourself and support your family; facts about drug and alcohol use and drug dependence, and treatment options; and where to go for support and help. Download a free copy at: www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs

Why doesn't she tell someone?

Often, when people think about 'domestic violence', they assume it involves physical violence, however Domestic Violence (DV) is so much more. DV is abusive behaviour by one person to control and dominate another person within a close relationship. It may include physical assault but can also include psychological abuse, social abuse, economic abuse or emotional abuse.

You could be experiencing DV if someone close to you is:

- punching, hitting, kicking, slapping or choking you
- using weapons such as knives to threaten you
- forcing you to have sex (rape)
- forcing you to look at pornography
- forcing you to have sex with other people
- constant humiliation, insults, calling you names
- threatening to hurt or kill you
- threatening your children or other family members
- threatening to destroy things that are important to you
- threatening to call and have your visa revoked
- controlling your finances
- preventing you from working or seeing your friends and family
- monitoring your mail, emails and phone calls

- locking you in the house
- making frequent, unfounded accusations of being unfaithful
- often making unreasonable demands.

WHY SOME WOMEN LIVE WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Some women keep DV a secret for reasons such as:

- fear of judgement or an unsympathetic response
- fear that people will blame her
- fear that the violence will worsen if outsiders get involved
- worry about her future if she leaves her abuser – she may think she will not be able to cope, or may be financially dependent
- guilt, shame or because she's made to feel that she's responsible for the violence
- she may still love her partner, and hope that he will change
- cultural reasons that prevent her from disclosing the abuse
- fear that her children will be taken into care.

If you or someone close to you is experiencing DV there is help available. The **Domestic Violence Line (1800 65 64 63)** is a free, statewide 24 hour telephone crisis counselling and referral service and is staffed by trained female counsellors.

Source: Domestic Violence – You can live without it. Produced by NSW Department of Community Services. To download the full brochure go to: www.community.nsw.gov.au/DOCSWR/_assets/main/documents/DV_broch.pdf



Beyond the homeless myth

By Aileen Solowiej
HOMELESSNESS AUSTRALIA

Homelessness is just an old guy on a park bench, right?

In Australia, homelessness has come a long way in the past 100 years. And not for the better. There are multiple definitions for the word homelessness: primary (people sleeping rough), secondary (staying with family or friends) and tertiary (people living in insecure accommodation like boarding houses). We also have multiple demographics experiencing homelessness: children, young people, men, women and older people. For example, 12 per cent (or 12,133 people) are children under 12, more than 16 per cent of Australia's 105,000 homeless are homeless with other family members and women are 40 per cent of the primary homeless, 28 per cent of the tertiary homeless, and 48 per cent of the secondary homeless.

So how does a woman of 35 years of age become homeless?*

Imagine you are partnered with two children, living in a house on some land; then the weather,

productivity and money eventually runs dry.

Your partner over time gets stressed and takes it out on you verbally which turns to physical abuse. You decide to leave the abuser and attempt it several times but there's no money, the nearest town is 20 km away, your partner hides the phone, the mobile has no credit and the car no petrol. Finally a break comes with a friend who drives in when your partner is not around and takes you and the children to the nearest shelter – it's the safest option at this stage to keep your partner from finding you.

Even before the woman leaves her home she could be regarded as homeless. She and her children live in fear; there is constant mental and physical mistreatment. They may not have access to ordinary commodities such as the internet, the phone, the mail and transport and possibly even food and health items. The journey to homelessness can sometimes be the above story as domestic violence is the largest

cause of homelessness; it is usually a build-up of cascading life experiences such as drought, lack of income, an accident or a mental health issue, with homelessness as the resulting factor.

What can be done?

Homelessness may only happen once in your lifetime and is usually a result of situations which can be lived then moved on from. There is immediate help in the form of Lifeline and domestic violence services on the internet and phone however more needs to be done in insuring adequate emergency accommodation, intermediary housing and access to services such as counselling and child care, then the final stage of finding a secure and safe home.

The perception of the old guy on the park bench does befit a small percentage of homeless people, however, tragically, the real picture is – homelessness can affect anyone.

**Taken from a real account in rural NSW.*

Perception versus Reality

■ Perception: Homeless people like it on the streets. Reality: The longer someone's on the streets the harder it is for them to live what we may regard as a normal life – but it's what most of them would want, if they could get it.

The largest single cause of homelessness in Australia is domestic and family violence, which overwhelmingly affects women and children.

■ Perception: All homeless people live on the street. Reality: Of the 105,000 people listed as homeless, only some 16,000 experience 'primary' homelessness. Many have access to some form of shelter, some of the time. What they lack is stable, safe, suitable shelter they can count on for the long term.

■ Perception: Homeless people are different from you and me. Reality: Many homeless people have work and family histories much like everyone else's. However, they may face one or more challenges

(unemployment, family breakdown, poor health, lack of support from family and friends as well as the general lack of affordable housing) that make establishing or maintaining stable, secure accommodation difficult.

■ Perception: Homeless people are old. Reality: Almost half of Australia's homeless people are children and young people under 25.

FACTS

■ 105,000 people are homeless in Australia each night (if they were in the same place, they'd be a town the size of Albury).

■ Some 16,000 of these people are living on the street or in improvised shelters, while the rest are in temporary accommodation.

Source: 'Giving Doctor: Helping the Homeless', GiveNow News' Edition 1, 2009 (www.givenow.com.au)

Support & Resources

If you are homeless and need accommodation, call the **Homeless Persons Information Centre on Toll Free: 1800 234 566**. Hours of operation: 7 days a week: Monday to Sunday: 9am–10pm (closed each day from 1pm–2pm)

If you need a place to stay immediately, ring **LifeLine on 13 11 14** or the **Kids HelpLine on 1800 55 1800**. They each have a database of emergency accommodation and food services, many of which are free. Centrelink can also put you in touch with emergency and refuge accommodation.

YWCA NSW

Supporting communities for 130 years



Participants from the YWCA NSW Rural Health & Wellbeing Program 2009
Photograph © Erin Louise Johnson 2010.

YWCA NSW assisted 35,000 people across NSW last year. Over the past 130 years, since the charity's inception in 1880, over two million lives have been changed for the better. However for those that haven't been directly involved with YWCA NSW, the perception about its name, what it stands for and who it actually helps may differ from the reality.

Originally known as YWCA of Sydney, the charity was founded by a group of 11 pioneering women whose aim was to help women and young girls.

In the early years YWCA of Sydney helped migrant women who were vulnerable to exploitation. It set up the first women's employment agency in 1890 and also established the first savings bank for women in 1904. 130 years on, YWCA NSW has evolved to meet the needs of NSW communities and now delivers programs for men, women, families and communities, aiding them to be safe, productive and healthy.

Despite its name, YWCA NSW (Young Women's

Christian Association) is non-denominational and it's not just for young women! The organisation delivers dozens of life-changing programs in metropolitan and rural areas for people of all ages, genders and religions.

Everyone can experience times of crisis in their lives whether it's struggling as a new parent, dealing with a difficult teenager, going through a divorce, recovering from an illness or losing a job. YWCA NSW's mission is to develop strong people engaged in and connected with their community through programs that give them the skills and confidence they need.

One recent initiative was the pilot Rural Health & Wellbeing Program, which reached over 6000 people. The program included a range of initiatives in smaller communities in the Goulburn, Dubbo, Tamworth and Orange regions between March 2008 and June 2009. Events focused on aspects of wellbeing and included a range of activities and speakers ranging from

exercise programs running over a number of weeks, one-off workshops, field days and informal forums.

Genevieve Marchiori, YWCA NSW – Manager, Health & Wellbeing Programs, says that the response was fantastic: 'In reaching over 6000 people we believe that we have made a substantial and positive difference to many individuals and communities. Participants reported a change in attitude or outlook, increased social interaction and connection to the community, as well as gaining new tools for coping with personal stress.'

To mark its 130th anniversary, YWCA NSW is embarking on a fundraising campaign to raise \$130,000 in 130 days. The campaign is already underway and will run to the end of the financial year, raising funds through a series of activities.

For more information on YWCA NSW and how you can help support your community through the '130' appeal go to: www.ywcansw.com.au/130

Unearthing a gem-coloured looking glass

By Jenni Brammall, Lightning Ridge & Rebel Black – Principal Consultant – Community Practitioners Australia & Member of the RWN State Advisory Committee

If you have taken a road trip – anywhere – you'll know that passing through, you really only see the 'show and tell' aspects of a community. Rarely do you get a warts-and-all perspective – and truth be told, most of the time that's the way you'd prefer it.

The outback NSW town of Lightning Ridge, however, is a community that bares its soul for all to see. There's no artifice and you barely have to scratch the surface to see local colour. Just a little deeper, you will not only feel the heartbeat of the place, but also discover that Lightning Ridge is a magic looking glass into Australia's deep past.

Lightning Ridge is best known as the world's largest producer of magnificent Black Opal – the most rare and valuable form of Australia's National Gemstone. Australia is the world's major producer of precious opal. NSW provides perhaps half of that, mostly from the Lightning Ridge district in the state's north-west. The estimated value of opal production in NSW in 2003-04 was A\$29 million.

Incredibly, this precious and economically important gemstone is mined entirely by individuals or small, often family-based companies. There are no multi-nationals, big employers or huge work teams—just determined, hard-working individuals trying to make a living.

A lucky few strike it rich. Even luckier are those who, amidst millions of tonnes of dirt, find fossils of creatures that lived 110 million years ago, when Lightning Ridge was on the shore of an ancient inland sea.

The fossils are relics from a time when Australia was joined to Antarctica; south-eastern Australia was near the south pole; the world was warmer and Lightning Ridge was a forested coastal paradise, braided with streams and rivers.

These are fossils made of opal. Bone, shell and wood transmuted into gem. Australia's opal fields are the only places where opalised animal fossils have been found. The diversity of these fossils at Lightning Ridge is unparalleled.

Even seemingly bare ground camouflages marvels: in discarded dirt, palaeontologists and keen-eyed miners find fossils previously unknown to science. It's part of the rich heritage of the opal field landscape.

There are the opalised fossils of fish, turtles and crocodiles, yabbies, snails and mussels, swimming reptiles called plesiosaurs and flying reptiles called pterosaurs, and dinosaurs, mammals and birds.

There are teeth of vicious little predatory dinosaurs, deceptively beautiful with their hypnotic play of opal colour; exquisitely detailed pinecones; and crayfish gastroliths, known locally as 'yabby buttons'. Opalised yabby buttons are found nowhere else on Earth.

Where are these marvels? The people of the Australian opal fields are amassing their valuable opalised fossils in an incredible national collection at the Australian Opal Centre – another of Lightning Ridge's surprises.

In a small showroom at the back of a small carpark, behind an orange door, is the beginning



Behind the orange door: the Gegg family were delighted to discover the Australian Opal Centre showroom at Lightning Ridge as they home-schooled their way around Australia.

of something big: a multi-million dollar national centre for the preservation, exhibition, research, education and enjoyment of Australia's opal, opalised fossils and remarkable outback opal mining communities.

Relaxed, unassuming Lightning Ridge harbours extraordinary people from all walks of life. The managers of the Australian Opal Centre and its collection include no less than three university-trained palaeontologists, with others skilled in the arts, cultural development, education, management and business.

And the local team has been joined by esteemed architects

Glenn Murcutt and Wendy Lewin, who are designing a world class building for the Centre – an underground structure that will regulate its own temperature, generate power and collect water, creating new paradigms. One of Australia's most distinguished architects, Murcutt regards the Australian Opal Centre as his greatest work.

The people of Lightning Ridge imagine and create their own realities, some privately and some in exuberant public display. This incredible unearthed community secret teaches us that digging a little deeper is more than worth it. ■



Six-year-old Jessica doesn't want to go to sleep in her own bed. 'You stay with me Mum', she says. Jessica's Mum reads another story. Her Mum gives her one more kiss and leaves.

A few minutes later, Jessica appears in the doorway. 'I'm scared something might happen to the house. The roof might blow away.'

Mum: 'Nothing's going to happen to the house.'

Jessica: 'But I saw it on TV!'

Jessica had not seemed to be bothered about the TV before. Now her parents realise she must have become worried after seeing TV news items about recent storms.

Children get scared for all sorts of reasons. Often their fears seem unreasonable to adults. But even what may seem illogical to adults can be very real to children.

Some fears are very common amongst children, with different sorts of fears appearing at different ages. Preschool children are often afraid of imaginary things like monsters hiding under the bed. In early primary school children are usually more fearful of real things that might happen, like being hurt. Later fears are more typically about possible failure at school or in sport.

It's not always easy to tell when a child is frightened or worried. Obvious things that the child

responds to immediately, like thunder, are easy enough to recognise. But some things are not as obvious. Children may not tell you they are scared. Often they show it through their behaviour instead.

When children are scared or worried they may:

- become clingy or demand that a parent or carer stay close to them;
- have sleeping difficulties or want to sleep in their parents' or carer's bed;
- lack confidence to do things they did happily before;
- avoid situations that make them feel scared or anxious;
- ask a parent or carer to do things for them or with them;
- complain of tummy aches or headaches.

HELPING CHILDREN TO COPE WITH FEARS

Children need adult support in order to learn to cope with fears. They need reassurance to reduce their anxious feelings, and skills for coping so that they can gradually learn to manage fears themselves.

You can help by:

- Acknowledge how your child is feeling.
- Stay cool yourself so you can model positive coping.
- Tell them how you learned to get over fears when you were their age.
- Positive self-talk can help children put fears into perspective. For example, "The storms on TV are far away from here. Our house will be OK."
- Asking what a favourite hero might do in this situation

can sometimes be helpful for encouraging children to be brave.

- Learning relaxation skills is often very helpful for dealing with fears.
- Help the child put realistic limits around the scary situation. For example, Jessica's parents could explain that the TV pictures she saw were about something that happens rarely and only when the weather is extreme.
- Monitor television viewing to minimise exposure to things that may be frightening.

THINGS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT:

It takes time and effort for children to learn new coping skills.

Younger children usually learn best when you do it with them.

Though older children may be able to use coping skills independently, they still need your support when scared.

All children feel more secure and confident when they have regular quality time with parents and carers.

Bedtime is often when children's fears surface. Try to ensure that children have calming time before bed to unwind. A regular bedtime routine or ritual helps children feel a sense of safety and security.

The following examples show some possible ways a parent or carer might help Jessica:

Feels scared and worried:

Acknowledge feelings: e.g. 'You're having trouble going to sleep because you're worried something might happen.'

Feels unsafe: Reassure: e.g. 'That storm was only on TV. It's not going to happen here.'

Can't think through logically:

Reality check: e.g. 'The wind would have to be really strong to blow the roof off. We don't get those kinds of winds here.'

Feels overwhelmed by scary thoughts:

Label: e.g. 'That's just a scary thought. You don't have to keep it.'

Lacks skills for coping:

Demonstrate coping skill: e.g. 'Let's blow the scary thoughts away. Take a deep breath and together we will blow them all away.'

Has trouble relaxing:

Younger children often respond well to relaxation techniques that help them to visualise calming images – e.g. a waterfall or clouds floating gently across the sky.

Doesn't feel confident about managing fears:

Encourage helpful thinking: e.g. Tell those scary thoughts 'I know I am safe and I won't let you scare me!'

May not believe in own ability:

Praise and encouragement: e.g. 'You did it. You're getting braver and braver!' or 'You're trying really hard to be brave. Good on you!'

Source: KidsMatter (www.kidsmatter.edu.au). *Helping children cope with fears and worries*, © Commonwealth of Australia 2008, reproduced with permission.

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From trash to treasure

By Sally Green, Mandurama

There are many things in life which are perceived to be very different from the reality, especially when it comes to farming. Take the farmer's 'junk' heap down behind the shed. Many a frustrated wife/son has wished the heap to 'kingdom come', only to have to bite their tongue when they want a piece of 'something' to fix a hole, mend a piece of machinery or repair a shed. This usually happens when time is limited and a trip to town impossible! Then down to the heap for treasure!

Farm clearing sales have a pile of 'junk' which no one appears to show any interest in, but come auction time, and farmers are there poking into boxes, looking for treasures. Beauty is always in the eye of the beholder!

Try driving around the countryside looking at the scenery and you'll hear, 'Ah, look at that beautiful pile of *stuff!*' Envious of the content, you have to be careful that a visit is not suggested and you end up in the car/ute reading a book! The moral here is – never leave home without a good book!

Look at composting, now there's a case of trash to treasure! Left-overs from the kitchen table, cuttings from the garden and anything else you can think of, declared as rubbish, turns into a beautiful useful product envied by many. This can also be done on a much greater scale for farming with manure from feedlots mixed with a waste

product from manufacturing (e.g. plasterboard) and natural mined products such as aglime.

Recycling, that certainly is a way of turning trash to treasure! There must be many more items discarded in manufacturing that could be useful in agriculture: it's just a case of driving around looking for 'stuff', researching and testing it!

Take the Paddington Markets in Sydney. Twice a year they have Second-Hand Sunday where residents can offload their surplus 'stuff' and Woollahra Council assists with flyers, posters, maps and even the sausage sizzle to draw the locals in!

The perception that milk and eggs come in a carton and the rest of the food consumed is produced at the supermarkets is an issue that is being constantly addressed with education and displays at Agricultural Shows. When you see the students farewelling their steers after auction at the Sydney Show knowing full well they are going for slaughter and judging 'on the hook', you know that reality has suddenly dawned on them as to the fate of their charges.

The perception that farmers and their families spend most of their time at Picnic Races, B&S Balls or at the Saleyards having their photos taken for the paper is another myth. The reality is that it is on these rare days out to catch up on news and to mix with others of similar interest as well as have some fun that pictures get taken.

Many a calf has been pulled with the farmer still in black tie or dinner suit before a social outing or in their pyjamas having been called from their beds!

No-one sees them up all night with a sick animal, baling hay,

milking cows or fixing machinery ready for the next day. The perception that some farmers sit around all day waiting for the stock to be fat enough for market so they can be sold for profit is far from reality!

I guess it all boils down to education and communication. What is perceived is not always reality: it is up to the individual to investigate and learn. ■

More than just tea and scones

By Kate Lorimer-Ward, Orange

The Country Women's Association (CWA) – an organisation that has a history and reputation that is both valued and often poorly understood. We get called all sorts of things, Cranky Women's Association, Chicks With Attitude, Curlers And Walkers – but if you were to be more reflective, you would actually describe a CWA woman as resourceful, informed, committed, motivated and connected.

Most people have memories of the CWA within their community, mainly for cake stalls, but all of the baby health centres, community halls, a lot of fundraising and community resources are there because of the CWA. I am the President of a branch called the Byng-Emu Swamp branch. We are a new branch, now in our third year, and with a membership of around 30 ladies. Our branch age ranges from 80ish to 30ish, and what is special about this is that we meet monthly to spend time with women in our community that we would not normally meet. Together we share a lot of laughs, experiences and life skills, but we also share the knowledge that we know the women in our community better now than we did three years ago.

We have beaded, baked, been boating and belly danced, but most of all we have chatted.

Our priority is the women within our community and getting to know each other better, but we have taken our advocacy role seriously, such as being active in the campaign to retain the services of Dalwood School for rural children.

It is this level of flexibility that is the biggest myth that needs to be broken – your branch can be what you want it to be – and that is what we love. We can lobby, fundraise, support schools in their activities, do handicrafts, cook, cater, volunteer etc, these are all valued and important activities of the CWA, and your branch can tackle all of these, or just one – you and your group decide what your community and women need.

Are we more than tea and scones? You bet! We provide service to our community, through country women, for country women, by country women. ■

Focusing on 'Ability'

By Andrew Buchanan, AB Communicates. Chair, NSW Disability Council

I was invited to speak recently at the 70th anniversary of Novita Children's Services (former Crippled Children's Association of SA) about how disability has impacted on children over the past seventy years and what the future may hold.

It reminded me years ago of an elderly family friend who said, 'You are the nicest cripple I know'. My ego was shattered when my wife said, 'Don't get a swelled head, Andrew, she doesn't know any others'.

There were two aspects of life I learnt that night: our future is limited only by our imaginations; and every child deserves to dream without limit, achieve without constraint and have the freedom to seek out their own happiness and aspire to be whatever it is they want to be.

I believe we should focus on how a child's potential can be harnessed; how ability can confront disability. Mahatma Gandhi once said, *'If I have the belief that I can do it, I will surely acquire the capacity to do it, even if I may not have it at the beginning'*.

You and I need constant encouragement, disability or no disability. One can take opportunities and one can create opportunities – I believe in doing both and feel strongly that the greatest part of creating opportunities is to create them for others.

We all know how challenging, frustrating, and fun it can be as a child to grow up, to develop, to extend and test ourselves against our dreams and expectations, to say nothing of the dreams and expectations our parent's have for us!

We dream and hope of nothing but the best for ourselves and our children, even when they have a disability. But life is not always, in reality, quite the same as we dreamed it might be. Life as a child with disability, as the parent of a child with disability or dare one say it as the brother or sister of a child with disability can be tough, but it's not without its rewards either.

Many people, particularly those who have no experience of childhood ups and downs, when disability is involved see only what they wrongly perceive to be the tragedy of childhood with disability.

One of our aims must be to work together to make sure everybody understands the realities of childhood, disability and family life.

Speaking personally, growing up outside Bathurst NSW as a child with disability in a loving and supportive family, I was fortunate to never have the time to not dream and hope or to wonder if I wasn't normal, whatever the word means. We were too busy living life to be held back by the misconceptions and prejudices of others. So we dreamed and hoped as any family does and we expected, as everyone does, to win some dreams and lose some along the way. Isn't that how life is meant to be, disability or no disability?

It has been a privilege, as Chairman of Best Buddies Australia and a member of the NSW Disability Council, to meet and work alongside children and young adults with disability who are making vital contributions to Australian life – people like Denise Beckwith, a Paralympian



Every child deserves to dream without limit, achieve without constraint and have the freedom to seek out their own happiness and aspire to be whatever it is they want to be.

swimming medal winner, who went to Beijing in 2008 to deliver a motivational address to the Aussie team, and Fiona Given, a lawyer and disability advocate and former intern at Tony Blair's No.10 Downing Street, who communicates with the world through an electronic voice box.

Young or old, child or adult, person with a disability or not, various individuals remind me of the importance of the irrepressible force that is the human spirit. Their stories inspire us all to go farther, try harder, and dig deeper. In short, to never give up and to meet every challenge with grit, determination and optimism.

It is always fascinating and yet frustrating when perceptions are discussed. What is a perception? We are told perception is reality. I would argue or suggest to you how much of what we perceive is our own inadequacy or fear or guilt in coming to terms with the broad issue of disability. If we are honest with ourselves, do we transfer any 'hang ups' to help ourselves avoid confronting our own issues, our own demons?

Life on the land as a child allowed perceptions to be exchanged by family friends about my disability. If I fell off a horse, which I did regularly, my father insisted I got back on the horse immediately. I believe this

insistence should apply, disability or no disability, and I applaud my father for his decision. However, there were some who felt he was too tough and that he lacked empathy and didn't understand my disability. Again, perceptions versus reality? I suggest to you, it is and was reality!

What is worrying is the perception that a child with disability is always a burden, as was reflected in a recent ABC Four Corners program. I take the opposite view and believe the majority of Australians would follow suit.

Having been bold, I am not naive to ignore the perception that there are some people who never face reality and who hide behind their disability. I suggest there is no time for the 'victim mentality'.

We could also concentrate on the idea 'subjectivity versus objectivity'. What I perceive as a challenge and reality you may not, and your reaction may vary according to whether you have a disability or not.

The reality is, it's a lot easier to recognise reality in someone else than yourself. The crux of this issue is the way a person deals with challenges—how you and I cope, how we reflect and learn from life's experiences. And in a humble way, how we influence or inspire others. ■

Great expectations...

By Lucy Dawson. Reprinted with permission from Barefoot Magazine
www.barefootmagazine.com.au



I guess now is as good a time as any to confess that I actually enjoy washing up. There — I've said it.

I enjoy the feeling of hot water on my hands, the somewhat meditative quality of cleaning plate after plate, bowl after bowl and the satisfaction of a clear bench with a full tray of washed dishes. So why has washing up been a sore point in our house for over a decade? One word — expectation. I hate the expectation that if dishes are left on the bench, they'll get cleaned up by someone else (aka me!) So even though I enjoy doing the dishes, I don't like the assumption that I'll do them. Take away that expectation and I don't blink an eyelid.

All my life I have had expectations placed on me. Whether reasonable or not, they have often determined the rhythm of my day, the mood of my evening and the relaxation at the end of the day. They are hard to live up to, and they are hard to shift. Yet they sometimes seem to create the existence that I am living.

My own expectations are a driving force in the evenings at our place. How strange that when my partner is home for the evening rituals, I often get frustrated and annoyed that he is not running the bath, or cleaning up after dinner, or getting the kids' pyjamas. There's an overwhelming expectation that he 'should' be helping, since

he is home and in the space with us. How dare he sit down and start reading a magazine, when I'm running around after children doing the 'nude dance' and escaping all efforts to get them dressed!

I find it equally intriguing that the evenings when my partner is not home, the day-to-day rhythm runs smoothly and I just get on with it. When there isn't the expectation of help, it just happens — no stress, no frustration. Expectation — how it weighs me down!

Perhaps in every relationship we develop a set of expectations that occur early on in the piece. Who does what, who looks after who, who plays which role within the relationship ... they all start to stack up, and place more pressure on the people involved. I'm sure I'm not the only person who has decided to sit back and 'wait' for someone to ring me, because I 'always' ring them. And then in the waiting, realised that I've missed that person and don't want to have to wait until they ring me? Perhaps it's the expectation of a family member to always drink too much at family gatherings and be the life of the party — how disappointing when they're pregnant and not drinking at all! Or, the expectations we have of ourselves—what we hoped and imagined we'd achieve in life and how it can affect us if we don't achieve those goals.

Hearing a well-known author speak the other night, something he said resonated about how we have expectations of our children well before we have even met our partners!

The expectations that surround parenting start so early: the expectation that we will fall pregnant straight away, have a trouble-free pregnancy,

an intervention-free labour and birth, the ability to breastfeed with ease, a smooth transition into being a parent, and so it continues throughout the child's life. I know I've had expectations shattered on many of these fronts, and have struggled to let go of past experiences because of my own desire to fulfil what I expected. How hard it is to let these go—I still can't convincingly talk about my emergency caesars as 'the best thing for my baby'. My heart still yearns for that long-dreamt-of home birth.

Everyone grows up imagining how their children will act and behave, what they will achieve and become. More often than not, our children are the complete opposite. I never imagined my daughter would love pink and nail polish and hair clips — coming from a mother who doesn't own one item of makeup or a hair brush, let alone nail polish and sparkly jewels! How premature it was to have all those expectations of a child who was not even born!

Our unspoken expectations can affect our relationships in so many ways.

I have been fumbling through a hard patch recently with my partner and I'm convinced so much of our struggle was about what we have expected of each other. So I've been digging, trying to get deeper under my own layers, and was surprised to find this: I squirm at the idea of feeling owned in a marriage, of assumptions being made of me as a wife and of being expected to play a certain role as a mum. When I shared these ideas with my partner, what a wonderful surprise that he sympathised with me! So many of my expectations were my own, partially imagined

and unfounded, and without addressing them, I was letting them weigh me down.

How different it has been since, to cook a meal filled with love and passion because I want to, rather than because I feel I should. How liberating it has been to lie in bed while my partner gets up with our kids, and sleep in without feeling like I should get up. But the best discovery has been how wonderful it is to feel so in love with my partner as 'me'. Not as mum, not as housewife, not as Jill-of-all-trades, not as anything other than me. It's like being back on our honeymoon, camping under the stars with no-one else around but each other.

Take away the expectations and everything has become a surprise. There are fewer disappointments and so much more space to meet each other unexpectedly. It's like breathing in fresh air after being in the smog of the city for too long. Unspoken expectation has been replaced with an even balance of honesty and hope and it has been such a lovely thing. ■

Cancer causes questions.

Call us for the answers.

13 11 20



CANCER COUNCIL HELPLINE

A free and confidential telephone information and support service available to anyone with questions.



Wander West ... to Wentworth

By Chris Larwood, Anabranch

No matter what age you are, wherever you live in the state, across the border, in a town or the outback, all women are invited to join us for a weekend not to be missed from Friday 29 to Sunday 31 October 2010!

The Wentworth Rural Women's Gathering committee has been busy co-ordinating a weekend full of fun, excitement and entertainment.

The weekend program begins Friday afternoon with registrations, afternoon tea, and an opportunity to tempt your appetites with 'Tastes of Sunraysia'.

We want you to taste the difference at Wentworth with our array of local produce to tantalise your taste buds – from seasoned Outback Almonds and sweet pistachio nuts, to dried fruits of the vine and tree, from Curlwaa Fresh Orange Juice to Maree's Woolshed Pantry. Then there's the local wines!

You can then enjoy an evening meal and entertainment at the Wentworth Services Club where you can catch up with old friends and make some new ones!

With a great array of workshops, there will be every opportunity to learn some new skills: try your hand at painting, get started on your family history, participate in a forum, cook up a storm in the kitchen with delicious Thai cuisine, update your computer skills, enjoy a tour of The Australian Inland Botanic Gardens or a cruise along the Mighty Murray River. There will also be plenty of time to stroll through the trade exhibits, showcasing local talents or to just relax and 'discover the beauty of Wentworth'.

Some great entertainment and speakers are also on the program including 2009 Telstra South Australian Business Woman of the Year and Commonwealth Bank Business Owner Award winner Susan Chase, of Cowell Electric Supply. Susan is the Managing Director of Cowell Electrics, which provides powerline, water, gas and communication infrastructure systems to remote and regional Australia.

We also have Bronwyn Roberts from 'Let's Laugh', who is one of Australia's most popular and leading experts on the benefits of laughter. Laughter is so basic and so simple—can it really be good for your health? Clinical research proves that the answer is a definite YES!

The Gala Dinner on the Saturday evening will start with pre-dinner drinks on the bank of the Darling River and feature

fine food and wines from the Sunraysia region. You'll then be entertained by local theatre company Ratbagz with their production 'Greece is the Word'.

Not to forget the men, we have a Men's Program planned with a range of local tours including: vintage machinery, an organic farm visit, golf, fishing, rowing, lawn bowls or even a trip to the 'Men's Shops'.

Wentworth has enough accommodation for everyone with motels, cabins or even a houseboat moored at the venue. So get a group of friends together, come along and have a great weekend.

The next edition of *The Country Web* will include program and registration details or you can visit our website: www.bendigobank.com.au/wentworth

For accommodation, directions or general enquiries contact:
Cathryn Dawes (Secretary)
Ph: 03 5027 3526
dcdawes@hotmail.com or
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Ph: 03 5027 0220
pclarwood@bigpond.com



Wentworth
2010



Barb Grey

Primary Producer,
Mungindi, Qld

women in Business

therubyconnection.com.au

This new Women in Business column will promote rural and regional business women and aims to provide ideas and inspiration for other women to pursue their goals and dreams. The column is sponsored by Westpac's Ruby Connection program.

“ There are negative perceptions held about living and working in rural and regional Australia, usually held by people who have not visited or had the experience. ”

What were the key stepping-stones that led you to where you are now?

I married into cotton farming and have been farming for 30 years. What and how we farm has changed dramatically with time. In fact, we're best defined now as food and fibre producers.

I've always worked in partnership with my husband and for a very long time I looked no further than the farm gate. I was there for my family. Head down, tail up, I worked on the farm.

I began looking at how we could recruit and retain good people, and it was a light bulb moment to realise that human resources (HR) practices are essential to business, including agriculture. I realised I knew little, so to learn I enrolled in a Bachelor of Business.

I loved the study and it has been a lifelong dream to obtain a uni

degree. It was the beginning of my journey involving 'off farm' activities. I only wish I'd started earlier...

I had to sell my husband on the idea of implementing HR strategies into our business. My strengths are in people management (the 'soft' skills) and my husband's are with the soil, the water, the farm's physical resources.

We operate a multi-million dollar business and to be professional and achieve high standards in all areas, I believed HR management needed to receive the same attention. We'd had no real HR strategy before this. Now, we view our people as an investment, not a cost. It makes us very selective about who we recruit.

In 2007 we won Cotton Australia's Innovative Grower of the Year award. That put us on the radar for our practices, and it was the beginning of my journey in off-farm development. I actually began my own recruitment business which in the end I sold to restore some balance in my life.

In 2008 I was awarded an Australian Rural Leadership Program (ARLP) scholarship. Course participants come from

all over Australia, from all walks of life. This has been an exciting developmental opportunity that's taken me from 0 to 100 in a very short time. It's about leaving your perceptions and assumptions parked at the gate, a willingness to relearn, and rework your attitudes, and address your values. We've worked with the homeless in Sydney and been in survival situations in the Kimberleys. We also undertake an international leadership study tour in September to India.

What are some of the problems facing you in rural life?

There are negative perceptions held about living and working in rural and regional Australia, usually held by people who have not visited or had the experience. A rural move is often viewed as a backward lifestyle step, and the stereotype of the whinging farmer certainly doesn't help. We need the good news stories, the positive stories of the bush, and there are many.

Australian farmers are the best in the world. This is not about blowing our trumpet. It's a true but little-known fact. And for those of us who live it, it's important to get this message across the divide and into the media. Australia is the most water-efficient producer of the best quality cotton in the world, however, the negative perception among people,

young and old, about cotton and what we do needs redressing.

Many people living in urban, non-rural environments have lost touch with where and how we produce our food e.g. they think milk now comes from a carton in the supermarket. In the past we all had links to the land, either through family or friends, but now for most urban people that isn't the case. Consequently, Aussie farmers have a struggle with profile and relevance. Considering the looming imbalance between global food production and population growth, and the consumer's focus on accountability and transparency in food production, I believe Australia's agricultural producers need to actively promote their sustainable practices – that is, the practices undertaken with consideration to the triple bottom-line (economic, social and environmental factors).

What would you say is your biggest challenge as a rural business?

Succession planning. Succession planning is extremely difficult because convincing young people to move into agriculture, especially women, isn't easy. Remoteness adds to the difficulty of attracting suitable staff.

I understand it takes time to change attitudes, but in the end it's about how we market agriculture as a job and a

lifestyle. There's this fantastic program being piloted by the cotton industry for Year 10 students called Cotton Seed. It introduces students to a career in cotton, showing them that agriculture is more than just driving tractors or mustering stock. If they learn about careers in agriculture at an early age, they may better understand the multitude of opportunities – that it's a highly technical resource management environment.

What would you say is your biggest challenge as a rural business?

Agriculture is an exciting, dynamic environment, with new challenges and learning experiences every day. There is a vast array of career opportunities, such as science, agronomy, business management, engineering and natural resource management. An individual's success is only limited by their determination and their imagination.

“ Don't park your ambitions at the farm gate... Agriculture needs women at the executive and decision-making levels. ”

However, my main advice is to young women. Don't park your

ambitions at the farm gate. You can get caught up in being the farmer's wife and a mother, and neglect your own professional and personal development. If you become engulfed by the farm and in fulfilling its demands and the needs of others, you can lose your own sense of identity. From my own perspective, I had made myself domestically indispensable to my family – and then had a reality check. I was selling myself short and underperforming: surely I could contribute on more fronts. When this realisation struck me, it was even harder to re-start my development because I had lost traction and lacked confidence.

Thankfully I have a supportive partner and family. Undoing the position I had so energetically constructed over the years and redefining my role was challenging for my family, because they were comfortable with the status quo.

So, my take-home message for young women. I believe to develop you need creative tension and intellectual stimulation in your life, to keep hold of the next interesting challenge. Agriculture needs diversity; it needs women at executive and decision-making levels. ■

Improve your health!

According to beyondblue regular aerobic and strength-training activities of light or moderate intensity can result in up to a 50 per cent reduction in symptoms of depression and anxiety, especially for women and older people.

Ideas for activities include:

- go for a 20 minute walk
- go bushwalking
- ride a bike
- go to the gym
- do some gardening
- go swimming

Source: beyondblue: the national depression initiative website: www.beyondblue.org.au

Shadows meet

The spirits of the people cavort upon the ground
Each greeting the other, they never make a sound
Uninhibited to know what is right or what is wrong
They dance around together in life's merry song

The sun can make them huge and ominous to fear
Then at the tick of noon, they completely disappear!
In the afternoon when the sun sinks in the west
All the earthly shadows with people go to rest.

The buildings all stretched fall, like a pack of cards
All the grays are mixed as in burning shards
The trees make a mottled pattern to display
Their reality of being, for another day

The shadows are all gone and the spirit lies in wait
As twilight melts the moment, just before the gate
Is opened to the moonlight to enter and shine down
Soaking up grey shadows in her filmy gown

Hiding all the bad bits and softening the edge
She hypnotises some to make an earthly pledge
That if her die is cast and there is interplay
It will last forever and always be that way!

Shadows merge when the earth meets the sky
Babies are born and some old people die
Life casts its memory all along the ground
We can then look back and maybe turn around
To see where we have been and what we have done
Our shadows tell the story, before the setting sun.

© BETT TAYLOR, KYOGLE

Continued from page 8

BOWER BIRDS

Drooping now and in despair
Our youthful hero stands
Amidst the ruin of his work
Yet still he seeks her hand.

Regarding him with sympathy
She says, 'You know it's sad
To see tough guys fight over pegs
In fact I think you're mad'.

As for me, I'm outta here
But remember in the end
It's sapphires not your azure eyes
Are this lady bird's best friend'!

© SALLY WICKERS, TUROSS HEAD



Christine wins NSW Woman of the Year

Christine Weston from Cumnock was named the 2010 NSW Woman of the Year at a special reception held at Parliament House Sydney as part of International Women's Day celebrations in March.

Her contribution to the rural village and community of Cumnock has been a tremendous example of how ideas, enthusiasm and positivity can lift a community to new heights. Through her involvement on a large number of organisations, she has conceptualised, developed and supported the community through a number of unique and vivacious experiences which have literally put Cumnock on the map.

Christine developed the Rentafarmhouse concept which has proven to be so successful that Christine is presently working with 19 communities across NSW to implement the scheme. She has continued, selflessly, to support each and every family ensuring that social inclusion is paramount to the project's success and for the sustainability of the community.

She is an incredibly compassionate person who will go to incredible lengths to help families in any way possible. This has included sourcing funding for disadvantaged families so their children could attend preschool; assisting families with support to have water delivered to their farms during the drought; and her latest project to obtain a community bus to support women without a license or vehicle, so they can attend the weekly playgroup. Her latest successful project was the Animals On Bikes concept which saw 42 farm art sculptures erected between Molong and Dubbo, to draw tourism traffic through the rural villages of Cumnock and Yeoval.

What's good for you? Food label claims explained

By Alexandra Drobiszewski, Dietician,
Greater West Area Health Service, Orange



While we are all being told to eat low fat, increase Omega 3s, or choose products with no added sugars, what is actually good for our health and what is just clever marketing?

Claim No. 1: Low fat

Fat is present in food to provide texture and flavour, so often when it is taken out more sugar gets added. This adds extra energy (calories/kilojoules) in the process. Low fat products such as low fat dairy foods are excellent choices for heart health, however low fat snack foods such as biscuits and muffins should still be 'sometimes' foods. These foods are often very high in energy and won't help you in maintaining a smaller waistline!

Claim No. 2: No cholesterol

Many cooking oils state they contain no cholesterol however this doesn't mean they are low in fat like they lead many to believe! Many oils such as olive, canola and sunflower (to name just a few) contain heart healthy 'unsaturated' fats but are still pure fats – so use them in moderation. This claim can also confuse people on products such as crisps, which may be cholesterol free but are still high in the 'bad' saturated and 'trans' fats.

Claim No. 3: No added sugars

When a product states that it contains no added sugar it may still be high in kilojoules or contain naturally present sugars from fruit (fructose) or milk (lactose). Often when the sugar is taken out, artificial sweeteners are added to ensure the product is still sweet.

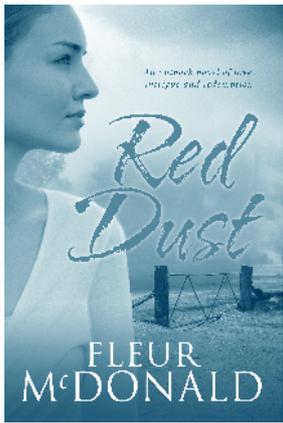
Claim No. 4: All natural

Although all natural can appear on some healthy food choices, remember that sugar, oils and cream are all natural ingredients that add extra kilojoules!

Claim No. 5: 'Light' or 'Lite'

A product claiming that it is light/lite can be referring to many things such as light in colour, flavour or texture! For example Extra Light Olive Oil can be light in flavour or colour while containing the same amount of fat as normal olive oil.

book reviews



Red Dust

By Fleur McDonald

Reviewed by Lucy Nesci, Cooma

Red Dust is bestselling author Fleur McDonald's first novel. The setting for the novel is the country, a setting much like Fleur's childhood home.

The main character is young widow Gemma Sinclair. We follow her story's many twists and turns after she loses her husband in a plane crash. Gemma loves farming and is determined to keep Billbinya Station, the property that her husband left her.

Along the way, Gemma has to battle town rumours and accusations about herself and her dead husband stealing stock, realising that life as she knew it was a lie and the man she had married was not who she thought.

Determined to prove that she is capable of looking after her property, and in a bid to clear her name, she gets help from her best friend Jess, her brother Patrick and a new stock agent who has just arrived in town.

Together they try to get answers to the whole complicated situation that Gemma finds herself in, with upsets and surprises—she may even have a chance at romance again!

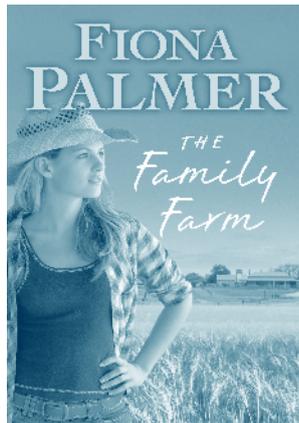
I was hooked from the first sentence. I couldn't put the book down and wanted to keep reading to find out what would happen to Gemma and the property she worked so hard to keep. And I wasn't disappointed.

Published by Allen & Unwin

ISBN 9781741756296

Available at bookstores.

RRP \$32.99



The Family Farm

By Fiona Palmer

Reviewed by Sharon Uthmann, Bellingin

The Family Farm is a wonderful farm drama about a young girl, Isabelle Simpson, trying to prove to her stubborn father that she is able to work as hard as any man doing farm work.

Unfortunately for Isabelle a past family tragedy has made her father reluctant to allow her to work on the farm. After a fight with her father, Isabelle leaves the farm and makes a new start even though that means, with mixed emotions, leaving the handsome Will Timmins behind.

When her father falls ill, Isabelle finds her chance to step up, and returns to the family farm with an even greater determination to resolve the family feud. With the help of Will and her friends, Isabelle succeeds in keeping the farm running. Add in a bit of romantic tension and past mystery, and you have a great current day country Aussie farm story.

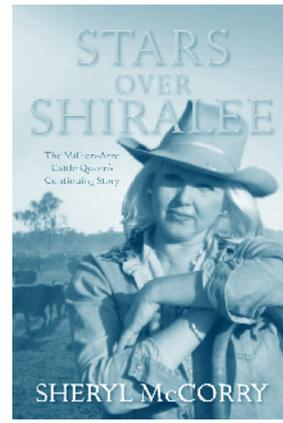
I can't wait for Fiona to bring out her next novel. If you like this style of writing you may also like Rachael Treasure's novels – *Jillaroo*, *The Rouseabout*, *The Stockmen*, and her latest book, *The Cattleman's Daughter*, or Bronwyn Parry's *As Darkness Falls* and *Dark Country*.

Published by Penguin Australia

ISBN 9781921518096

Available at bookstores

RRP \$32.95



Stars Over Shiralee

By Sheryl McCorry

As the first woman in the Kimberley to run two million-acre cattle stations, Sheryl McCorry had proved to herself that she was a woman capable of handling anything life threw her way. Or so she thought.

In 1998 Sheryl moved from the Kimberley to a property called the 'Shiralee' in the south-west of Western Australia. Rocked by the death of her husband, Bob McCorry, she perseveres and makes a new life breeding cattle. She soon meets a man from Broome who pursues her with ardour and is seemingly a wonderful match for her. Sheryl agrees to marry him but, on the eve of her wedding, receives some terrible news.

This is the story of how a woman having conquered life on her own terms can succumb to circumstances that threaten to undermine all her achievements. What will it take for Sheryl to find the strength within?

Published by Pan Macmillan Australia

ISBN 9781405039604

Available at bookstores

RRP \$34.99



To win a free copy of *Stars Over Shiralee*, write to us and tell us in 25 words or less why you would like to win a copy.

Entries must be received by Friday 9 July 2010.

Send your entry to: The Country Web, Locked Bag 21, Orange 2800.

See page 2 for Terms & Conditions.



Speak up to close Aboriginal cancer survival gap

By Rajah Supramaniam, Cancer Council NSW

Barriers to health care have resulted in Aboriginal people being three times more likely to die from some cancers than other people living in NSW.

Cancer Council NSW has revealed the figures as it encourages Aboriginal people to join a new study investigating why this gap exists in cancer death rates and what measures are needed to close it across the state.

Research from other states has shown that Aboriginal people in remote communities often had their cancer diagnosed later and they received less treatment than non-Aboriginal people with the same types of disease.

Now, the Cancer Council's study will focus on the cancer

death rate gap that exists for Aboriginal people in NSW, and in particular those living in urban communities where there is good access to hospitals and cancer care facilities.

Lack of transport to treatment centres, limited childcare facilities and feelings of isolation while undergoing treatments are some of the barriers that may prevent Aboriginal people from accessing healthcare.

These issues are putting lives at risk, with NSW's Aboriginal population being up to three times* more likely to die from some types of cancer, and 60 per cent more likely to die from all cancer types combined than non-Aboriginal people.

The Cancer Council needs Aboriginal people to join their study so they can understand why this cancer death rate is so high. Your participation could help to remove any barriers to treatment and improve the unacceptably low survival rate from cancer.

The study is open to Aboriginal cancer survivors, carers of Aboriginal people affected by cancer and Aboriginal Health Workers. For more information, call Freecall 1800 247 029 to speak with an Aboriginal liaison officer. Participation involves a face-to-face interview at a convenient location.

Cancer Council NSW is conducting the research in collaboration with the universities of Sydney and NSW, and several of the researchers are Aboriginal. It is funded by the National Health & Medical Research Council.

Cancer information is available at: www.cancercouncil.com.au

**Death rates are three times higher amongst Aboriginal people than non-Aboriginal people for the following cancers: oesophageal for men and kidney and cervix for women. Lung cancer is the most common cancer death in Aboriginal men who are 50 per cent more likely to die from the disease than non-Aboriginal men. Meanwhile, for women the figure is double.*



A sleep-in on the weekend could do more harm than good!

Long sleep-ins on the weekend to catch up on sleep make your body clock think you are jet lagged – and the effects can last for days. Getting up at a similar time every day can help to avoid this, and will make it easier to fall asleep at the right time. Source: 'Riding the Sleepwave: Sleep + Young People' information sheet (www.oyh.org.au)

GRANTS & FUNDING

AIM FOR THE STARS

Provides grants up to \$6,000 for young women to further their education and/or professional development. Grants open November 2010. For more information go to: www.aimforthestars.com.au or call 0422 600 733



ANZ STAFF FOUNDATION

Funds small projects up to \$5,000 in the areas of: Skills and independence, – giving people skills to manage their lives; Environment – assisting communities to conserve resources and protect the environment; Local initiatives – innovative projects from local community organisations; and capacity building (especially in rural areas). Applications close 15 July. For information go to: www.anz.com/aus/aboutanz/Community/Programs or call 1800 808 910



MERCY FOUNDATION

Provides small grants up to \$5,000 for social justice and community initiatives. Priority is given to small organisation and groups that receive no other funding. Applications close 30 September.

For more information go to: www.mercyfoundation.com.au or call 02 9699 8726



Productivity & food security

By Renata Brooks, Executive Director, Science Innovation & Performance, Industry & Investment NSW

The I&I NSW Productivity & Food Security Symposium held in Sydney in October 2009 highlighted a need to address global food security now for future generations. Several key themes emerged during the symposium, including:

- Food security is one of the biggest issues facing our planet.
- Providing food has been a challenge for society for centuries, but the primary industries sector is experiencing rapid change.
- World-wide food shortages, rising food prices, the global financial crisis, a changing climate, other environmental issues, skill shortages and increasing biosecurity threats are issues affecting food security right now.
- Fortunately, consumers in NSW are unlikely to go hungry in the foreseeable future, however for the developing world the food crisis has already arrived with recent global food

shortages pushing between 130 and 155 million people back into absolute poverty, according to the World Bank.

■ NSW plays a vital role in directly feeding people in developing nations because we export around half of our agricultural produce and our research helps developing nations address food security issues.

NSW is currently self-sufficient in food production but faces significant challenges in the future. These challenges include climate change, increasing pest and disease threats, increased fuel costs and declining genetic diversity, all of which threaten this status.

For example, the recent drought that NSW has experienced has severely depleted the resources and resilience of farming communities within NSW. Rice production has been significantly impacted in the last 10 years, permanent plantings have decreased, and the NSW sheep

flock – particularly breeding stock – is at its lowest for over a century. Food for domestic production is currently harder to source and more expensive for the end user.

PRODUCTIVITY RESEARCH IS THE KEY

The recent Cutler Review on Australia's Innovation System identified food security as a key global challenge. According to the Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO), global food output must increase by 75 per cent by the year 2025, and it must double by 2050 to meet expected demand. Put another way, we must produce as much food in the next 50 years as we have produced in all of human history. This means primary producers globally need an annual productivity improvement of 1.8 per cent to achieve this.

Research, development and extension is one of the best ways to avoid any future food shortage.

I&I NSW – A NEW DIRECTION

Productivity & Food Security Research is one of the new research theme areas established by our Department over the last two years. Our future Research & Development priorities for investment are focussing on issues clearly linked to food security and productivity in which I&I NSW has leadership capability.

Other key research areas are Climate & Water Research, Biosecurity Research, and, Fisheries & Ecosystem Research. They are all linked to production and food security, however all three cover the major challenges to natural resource management within Australia.

A NATIONAL APPROACH TO PRIMARY INDUSTRIES R&D

I&I NSW is well placed to link with other State and National R&D programs that are investing in these areas.

NSW leads some of these national programs and is a major collaborator with industry, R&D corporations and universities across Australia.

Continued page 28

Windy Woollies

Information from 'Delve: NSW producing the goods', produced by I&I NSW

We've heard about low emission cars, but what about low emission livestock? A quest for low methane emitting sheep is underway in Armidale, with I&I NSW and Sheep Cooperative Research Centre researchers evaluating the methane output of hundreds of sheep.

Sheep and other livestock like cows release the greenhouse gas methane during digestion. The emissions account for 66 per cent of agricultural greenhouse emissions.

The Armidale study aims to identify genetic characteristics that set apart lower-methane producing sheep. First, the viability of methane outputs in a sheep population must be established. The research team has developed a world-class polycarbonate booth to allow

rapid screening of sheep. These high-tech booths are positioned in a standard sheep pen—sheep walk into the booth, their methane output is measured for one hour, and then they walk back to the paddock.

Seven hundred sheep have been measured so far, spanning 20 different genetic lines. The data from the first screening will be complemented by further investigations on 200 selected sheep to determine whether low methane traits are inherited. Other associations such as weight gain and wool growth are measured, as well as the role of nutrition in methane production.

With over a decade of climate change research, I&I NSW is committed to helping the state's farmers reduce their greenhouse footprint, as well as sequester carbon to offset emissions from agriculture and other sectors.



Daring to Dream



Allaine Duncan is passionate about dragon boat paddling and hasn't let two mastectomies quell her zest for life. She lives on a goat and cattle property at Yeoval near Dubbo in Western NSW with her husband Colvin. Although in her 70s, Allaine continues to work on their farm while training for dragon boat racing three days a week. Each training session includes paddling with her team and building muscle strength with exercises. Allaine's goal is to compete at an International Dragon Boat Regatta in Canada during June 2010.

There is no limit. You have to believe you can achieve anything in your life and have faith in yourself.

WHAT GAVE YOU THE MOTIVATION/INSPIRATION TO FOLLOW YOUR DREAM?

My passion is dragon boat paddling and racing. A cancer survivor group came to Dubbo just after I had my first mastectomy at the age of 66, and I was so inspired. They did tap-dancing and showed us so many things that women with breast cancer can do. It was very encouraging. They also had images of breast cancer survivors paddling dragon boats. I thought I would love to do something like that as did some of the other women. A local breast cancer survivor decided to start a dragon boat team in our area and the Orana Dragon Boat Club was born. It is one of the fastest growing sports in Australia. Our club is not only about breast cancer survivors - we also have people interested in dragon boat paddling as a sport.

AT WHAT POINT DID YOU REALISE THAT YOUR DREAM WAS ACTUALLY POSSIBLE AND WHAT WAS IT THAT MADE YOU THINK YOU COULD REALLY DO IT?

I was never a sporting person but because I grew up near Botany Bay I always enjoyed swimming. After my first dragon boat paddle I knew I could do it and attended my first regatta at Darling Harbour in Sydney in 2005. Dragon boat racing shows there is life after cancer.

WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD, WHAT DID YOU WANT TO 'BE' WHEN YOU GREW UP?

I wanted to be worthy of having a life in this world and not just living it for my own satisfaction. Some people become nurses. I became a speech and drama

teacher. I continue to live by the ethos of living and giving to others.

HOW DID YOUR CHILDHOOD INFLUENCE YOU IN LATER LIFE?

I was originally a Sydney girl and went to Dubbo with my first husband, who had an accountancy business. We raised four children. Sadly my husband died of cancer. It was seven years before I'd agree to marry again, and I married Colvin who had also lost his partner to cancer. Colvin and I have now lived on the farm for over 16 years. My spiritual journey has greatly influenced the way I approach the world. I grew up in a strong Salvation Army family where giving was a way of life. There was no drinking, smoking or gambling. It took some courage to grow up separate from a world where most people drank, smoked and bet! I now follow the Bahai faith. Bahai believe all people are equal and we aim to serve humanity.

WHO ARE YOUR ROLE MODELS?

My mother was an outstanding lady, very brave and spiritual. My approach to challenges has probably been handed down to me from my mother and aunties.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS MEAN TO YOU?

I think success for me is meeting my challenges and coping with them because I know I can get through to the other side feeling sane and centred. Success is also a chance to speak out for breast cancer sufferers and encourage women to realise how much they can still accomplish even if they have had their breast removed.

WHAT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE BIGGEST BARRIERS YOU HAVE HAD TO FACE, WHAT HAPPENED, AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME IT?

I have had a few challenges over the years. My mother, auntie, grandmother and great grandmother all the way down the line have had breast cancer. I kind of half expected it to happen to me at some stage. And it did happen.

My mother died when I was 15. Having helped to nurse her, I was then asked to look after the house and rear my seven-year-old younger brother. It was a big responsibility for a young girl, to deal with grief and to step into my mother's shoes trying to fill that gap and make life a bit easier for my father and two brothers. But I did it. I educated myself along the way and left home at 19 to get married. My husband wanted to move to Tamworth so I was taken away from all my family, which was hard. We had four children, and while in Tamworth I taught and also did a women's radio program on the ABC for many years.

I certainly didn't know what I was letting myself in for when I went to Colvin's farm, but I'm not sorry. Learning how to live on the land at my age was pretty hard for me. I had to learn to drive a tractor and front-end loader from scratch. Distance is always a barrier when you live in the bush - I live a 45 minute drive from town so travelling to the dragon boat training sessions three times a week as well as working on the farm and being involved in other volunteering activities like Red Cross is always a challenge.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 10 YEARS TIME? WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE?

Well, I am nearly 74. I would like to think I can keep dragon boating for a couple more years as I am healthy at the moment and keeping fit as best I can. The farm is always a challenge. Like most farmers my husband is not interested in retiring. He sees himself going on forever even though his body isn't getting any younger, so who knows what the future holds there. Colvin has a son and a daughter. His daughter lives on the neighbouring property and she has two little children who are beautiful! I get a lot of enjoyment out of them. I know there will be challenges ahead and I will do whatever I can with those years to help others.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY TO OTHER WOMEN WHO MAY BE JUST STARTING OUT ON A DARING TO DREAM JOURNEY?

There is no limit. You have to believe you can achieve anything in your life and have faith in yourself. Take your mind away from yourself. So often, people worry about themselves and worry about what is going to happen to them. Have an outward look at the world and see the many things women can help with. Contribute and pour your energies into things that are going to help the world and other women. Living on a farm doesn't mean you have to restrict yourself to local stuff – look out further and see the world for what it is. ■

Copies of the *Daring to Dream* book are available for purchase from the I&I NSW Bookshop. See back page for details.

Dubbo Speech Spectacular uncovers a rising star

By Carmen Perry, Schools Education Coordinator, LandLearn NSW

Thirteen talented students from across NSW recently took part in the Dubbo Speech Spectacular, an event organised in conjunction with the NSW Beef Spectacular.

Responding to the topic, 'That sustainable agriculture can feed the future' the participating primary and secondary students were resoundingly positive and full of practical ideas for a more sustainable future.

Nicolas Clark from 'Willona', Wee Waa used his long family history of farming to deliver the speech reproduced here.

THAT SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE CAN FEED THE FUTURE

The land itself will be our tutor.

It knows what it needs,

It lives and it breathes.

But it has to be loved and nurtured and tendered

When its bountiful fruits to us it does render.

If all of mankind can be fed all their days,

Farming families should be encouraged and praised.

To embrace those methods of farming when able,

To make their farms truly sustainable.

People say "If you don't use it – you will lose it!"

Well, farming families know when it comes to our land – where all our food, fuel, fibre

and timber come from...

"If we abuse it – we will lose it!"

Farming families grow the food that keeps our families fed. They graze the livestock that become our meat. And the cows that are milked everyday. They grow wheat for our bread. And trees for the timber to build our homes. And they do it all from the soil up!

While most people think farmers are always looking up to the sky for rain, truth be told – they spend more time looking down at their soil!

Australian soils are some of the most ancient on the earth. Yet we have only farmed them for just over 200 years.

Today's farmers are the current stewards of our land. They are the ones who have the responsibility of caring for the soils they crop, graze and agro forest.

The general public don't realize today's farmers are constantly changing their farming practices to improve the quality of their soils.

They minimum till and no till. They mulch and disc in stubble.

They farm organically and biodynamically. They reduce chemical use.

They under graze and lock up paddocks. They fence off waterways and rivers. They dry land farm.

They control noxious weeds and feral pests. And they manage animal health to keep Australia's "Clean Green" farming image.

But mostly they do it because they love what they do and the land they do it on!



Nicolas Clark says you can own your own lifestyle in Western NSW and you get to care for a living breathing investment as a farmer.

My family have farmed for five generations. That love of what we do and the land we do it on has been passed on to my brother, sister and I!

My Dad and Mum say if you love what you do the money will follow! But I think the real reason for farming sustainably is knowing that in the future people are fed because we left our land in a better condition than when we first farmed it.

Yes ... I believe "That Sustainable Agriculture CAN feed the future!"

Nicolas, a primary student from Bourke Walgett School of Distance Education, was recognised as a Rising Star at the event for his potential to think through and talk passionately about farming for the future.

You can meet all the winners from the event and listen to the speeches which got the students to the final on the schools education website LandLearn NSW: www.landlearnsw.org.au

Women in leadership & decision-making



ALISON MCINTOSH, CROOKWELL

2010 NSW RIRDC Rural Women's Award Runner-up Alison McIntosh is a strong advocate for rural women and is forging an impressive career in agriculture. She lives on a property near Crookwell in the Southern Tablelands, specialising in Angus breeding cows.

With a degree in Rural Business Administration and experience in cattle management, she runs her own business providing services and training to beef producers. She utilises the latest technology to capture and manage cattle data and also offers services to farmers and stakeholders in complying with the National Livestock Identification System.

Alison believes success starts at the farm gate, and can be assisted through simple but effective use of technology. She wants to produce an industry training package to encourage the adoption of new technology in beef enterprises.

Alison was recently appointed as a Councillor to the Royal Agricultural Society (RAS) of NSW, where she will fill a position on the cattle committee. She is the

youngest female to be appointed to the RAS of NSW. She is also currently the Chair of the RAS of NSW Youth Group and is Vice President of her local Crookwell AP&H Show Society.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO BECOME INVOLVED?

My passion for agriculture and my industry are the two key things that motivated my involvement. Opportunities I have had through the RAS have encouraged this motivation – I was a Rural Achiever at the Easter Show in 2004 and since then have remained involved, which has led to the positions I hold and the work I am now doing.

WHAT DO YOU GET OUT OF BEING INVOLVED IN THESE ROLES?

I love being involved in something that's making a difference to agriculture. I love sharing the great stories about agriculture in Australia and this is something the RAS does very well. I really enjoy working with other like-minded, passionate and motivated people on the committees; they encourage me, and together we succeed in what we set out to do. It's a real sense of 'making a difference'.

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY OBSTACLES?

There are always obstacles in life, but these are the things that build us and make us stronger. Being female and young are two major obstacles that I have faced in roles of leadership.

WHAT'S ONE OBSTACLE YOU HAVE OVERCOME?

As Chair of a group, I have found the role quite different to that of a member. I've had to learn to work with a variety of ideas and challenges, and I learnt to not only motivate and encourage myself but also the members of my group. It's an extreme balancing act.

WHERE DO YOU GET MY SUPPORT?

I am lucky to be involved with groups of wonderful people, and I have found them all to be supportive. I also get support and encouragement from family and friends who are distanced from the activities, which is also great.

WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE TO OTHER WOMEN WANTING TO BECOME INVOLVED IN DECISION MAKING?

I am new to this role as well, so I have a lot to learn from other women who have been in leadership and decision-making roles for a lot longer. However, I believe if you're passionate about your industry and want to be involved, take every opportunity that comes your way to be more involved and to enhance your skills.

My experience as the NSW RIRDC Rural Women's Award Runner-up is going to have a great impact on the skills I can take to any future leadership role, and many opportunities I have grasped in the past have also helped to build me to where I am today. ■

Productivity & food security

Continued from page 25

NSW has a unique capacity to undertake research within temperate, sub-tropical and semi-arid environments. We have large Centres of Excellence strategically located across NSW, and over 700 scientists and technicians conducting over 900 projects at any one time.

R, D&E programs deliver R&D to the farm-gate

Research programs alone are not able to deliver the innovation and advances in technology required by primary producers within NSW. Feeding off our research are extension programs aimed at delivering current and targeted advice to industry and landholders by assisting industry adopt innovative technologies and practices.

The research and extension programs cannot act independently. The extension groups have close ties with industry and pick up current trends and industry needs for R&D.

The success of the extension programs is demonstrated by industries' adoption of several important programs including Lambplan and the Beef'N'Omic ProFARM courses among many others, as well as wide adoption of no-till practices.

By positioning ourselves for the future, we help protect our State economically, protect regional communities that are reliant on primary production, and also protect the most important resource of all—the land.

High utility bills – what can you do?

Source: www.ewon.com.au

The Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON) has provided the following tips for customers who have received a bill that they think is too high:

1. TRY TO IDENTIFY A POSSIBLE REASON

Check your usage – are you using more energy or water?

Compare the usage on your high bill with a bill from a similar period (e.g. the previous year).

If your usage has increased for a similar number of days, consider the following:

- If there was extreme weather and/or extended periods of very cold or hot weather during the billing period, did your household use more heating or cooling?
- Did you purchase any new appliances?
- Have you checked for faulty appliances or leaks?
- Did you move into a new property?
- Did you have guests staying or additional people living at your property?
- Were you or someone in your household at home more often during the day?

Does the billing period include price increases?

Price increases for energy and water come into effect each year (typically on 1 July) and impact on all customers. Regulated prices for customers on standard contracts are set

by the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal of NSW (www.ipart.nsw.gov.au).

Check current and previous bills for estimated readings.

Retailers can estimate your bill if there's a problem accessing your meter. If your previous bills were estimated and you were under-charged, you may receive a higher than expected catch-up bill when the meter reader gains access to your meter and takes an actual reading.

2. CONTACT YOUR RETAILER

Ask your retailer to explain the charges on the bill. If you need more time to pay, ask about an extension or an installment plan arrangement. Your retailer may also be able to offer advice on ways to save energy or water.

3. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Ask your retailer about agencies in your area that distribute EAPA (Energy Accounts Payment Assistance) vouchers or PAS (Payment Assistance Scheme) vouchers for water. These vouchers can be paid towards your energy or water bills, and are distributed by community agencies throughout NSW such as neighbourhood centres, Anglicare, St Vincent de Paul or Salvation Army. If you cannot obtain EAPA vouchers contact EWON on Freecall 1800 246 545.

Low-income customers may be eligible for NILS (No Interest Loan Schemes) to help replace old appliances with new energy or water efficient appliances. Visit: www.nilsnsw.org.au for more information.

4. CONTACT EWON

If you are not satisfied with your retailer's response or you are unable to negotiate a payment arrangement, contact EWON on

Freecall 1800 246 545 or visit: www.ewon.com.au to lodge a complaint online.

ENERGY SAVING TIPS

Being efficient with the amount of energy and water you use is not only good for the environment, it will help you save money on your bills and avoid high bills. You can ask your

energy or water company for tips on how to save money on your bills. Some companies also offer energy or water audits.

For more information visit: www.nabers.com.au
www.energysmart.com.au
www.waterforlife.nsw.gov.au
www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Women take advantage of heavy vehicle driver training

By Hugh Haynes, TAFE Western



Catherine Wright, Sandra Riley, Lisa James & Marsha Riley are the first students in the state to use a truck simulator as a base for their Heavy Vehicle driver training. Photo by Amy Griffiths and courtesy of 'Dubbo Daily Liberal'.

Four Aboriginal women enrolled at the Dubbo Western TAFE campus have become the first students in the NSW to train for the road transport industry using a truck simulator. The new simulator allows students to experience different types of vehicles and driving conditions such as hills, freeways, diverse weather conditions or even specific issues like a tire blow-out without having to go out on the open road! The TAFE training also includes modules such as Load Restraint, OH&S Transport Blue Card, Planning & Navigating Routes and Workplace Documentation which can improve employment prospects in the industry. The women said they enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to making it over the last hurdle and once they get their license take on work in this traditionally male-dominated area.



The Rural Women's Network (RWN) State Advisory Committee (SAC) is made up of women from key networks. It provides advice and strategic direction to the RWN by promoting and evaluating its initiatives, exchanging information and progressing issues relevant to rural, regional and remote NSW communities.

The SAC is currently co-chaired by

- Richard Sheldrake
Director-General, Industry & Investment NSW; and
- Nerida Cullen
Livestock Health & Pest Authorities

The SAC invites your views, ideas and questions.

Committee representatives:

- Joy Beames, Dunedoo
Country Women's Association of NSW
Ph: 02 6375 1173
edgefield57@bigpond.com
- Rebel Black, Lightning Ridge
Far West Area
Ph: 02 8007 4812
rebel.black@gmail.com
- Patricia Byrnes, Gol Gol
Natural Resource Management
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- Sally Green, Mandurama
Minister's representative
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- Angela Martin, Mullaley
NSW Farmers Association
Ph: 02 6743 7813
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- Assoc. Prof. Dr Frances Parker, Sydney
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RWN SAC update

The recent rains have greened the country miraculously here on the Southern Tablelands. Old hands have told me they have never seen the country looking so good at this time of the year. The dams are fuller than they have been for some time and our country gardens have revived after the terrible conditions that accompanied the winds and heat of November. However, there is concern that this is a green drought, especially as the weeds have had a renaissance. Our joy has again been tempered by uncertainty and we hesitate to predict that the weather patterns that have dominated our lives have changed.

We have learnt over the past decade not to be complacent as far as the weather and water are concerned. We know we can never beat drought but we can be better prepared both physically and psychologically to protect our families and communities. Our strength is our resilience and our belief in ourselves even though we know both have the potential to be weakened and diluted by forces beyond our control. The fact that we continue to support and worry about others spurs us to quietly achieve small miracles—miracles that never appear in the mainstream media.

Hidden Treasurers

At our February meeting, members of the Rural Women's Network (RWN) State Advisory Committee (SAC) discussed how we could celebrate the contribution of the many women who help others—the ones who create the miracles that maintain the ethos of our communities. We endorsed the creation of an annual honour roll to pay tribute to rural women volunteers whose commitment and effort builds self-worth and community spirit. The 'Hidden Treasures Honour Roll' will feature profiles of the women volunteers who are nominated and will be posted on the RWN website. We hope it will also be a significant feature of each Rural Women's Gathering. It is timely that the vision, commitment and activities of these women who are the backbone of their communities, and who ask for little acknowledgement except a quiet thank you, be recognised as a counter balance to the wave of celebrity

shenanigans that flood the media we read, listen to and watch. They are indeed our treasures and their contribution to the wellbeing of society is now to be heralded.

Hot and emerging issues

We continue to probe issues and search for solutions. Some resonate with us, including the connection between women's health and pesticide usage, the exhaustion of rural families in coping with the prolonged drought and the impact of government assistance schemes in helping or hindering individual response and action, as they do not appear to have an easy or simple solution.

To ensure the currency and relevance of the issues we raise, the members of the SAC have resolved to strengthen our stakeholder relationships. We welcome your input into the issues we discuss as your contribution will enrich and widen our recommendations and advice to the government. We invite you to participate in our deliberations on issues that affect your community.

Premier's Council for Women

Our February meeting is held each year in Sydney to facilitate a meeting with the Premier's Council for Women (PCW) and to coincide with the RIRDC Rural Women's Award. Both of these events clearly demonstrated that women have a strong urge to improve rural life and industry.

Our meeting with the PCW had us exploring three questions:

1. What are the two to three most important challenges rural women will face in the next five to ten years?
2. What are the two most important things the government could do for rural women and why?
3. What's the smallest change that could make the biggest impact?

Unfortunately the time allocated for discussion was not long enough to really explore the implications and intricacies of



**NERIDA CULLEN,
RWN SAC CO-CHAIR**

the three questions. But we did raise health issues, especially women's experiences with hospital discharge and emergency procedures, succession and financial planning processes, and the need for equity on industry committees and boards. You are welcome to contribute to the debate.

RIRDC Rural Women's Award

The achievement of the two RIRDC Rural Women's Award finalists (and by implication the contribution of all rural women to primary industries) was celebrated in style at a special Gala Dinner in Parliament House hosted by the Hon Steve Whan MP, Minister for Primary Industries.

The Premier, Kristina Keneally, announced Lana Mitchell from Gundaroo as the 2010 RIRDC Rural Women's Award winner, recognising her pioneering work in the flannel flower industry. Alison McIntosh was the runner-up and was acknowledged for her dedication to the cattle industry and her initiatives associated with the NLIS (National Livestock Industry Scheme) and helping farmers with data capture and management.

Both Lana and Alison are impressive in their visions and dedication and it provided quite a challenge for the judges to select the 2010 winner. As part of their awards Lana and Alison will participate in a Australian Institute for Company Directors Course to prepare them for their leadership roles in primary industries.

Last year's winner, Kim Currie, has completed her agri-tourism tour of France and Italy and was impressed and amazed by the variety of farmer's markets, from the unsophisticated to the sophisticated, she explored. She intends to pass on the trends she saw to our farmer's market sector. We will be eager to hear the impressions that Lana Mitchell brings back and the comparisons she will draw with our floral industry from her overseas tour.

The success of these three women reinforces our belief in the significant contribution women make to rural Australia and its sustainability and to their commitment to improve and develop their chosen industry.

Meeting with Primary Industries Minister

As part of our February meeting we met with Minister for Primary Industries, Steve Whan MP. A briefing paper, based on the Committee's submission to the Rural & Regional Taskforce (Dec 2007) and the issues that have arisen since formed the background for this meeting and the Minister was very receptive to the messages we brought from rural women across NSW.

This meeting was held in Parliament House and the continual ringing of the bells calling members into their respective Houses gave us an immediate insight into the pace of the working lives of our MPs. Whilst we found the bells disconcerting, Steve Whan's commitment to our meeting was not interrupted. His generosity with his time showed his interest in the issues we raised and his commitment to the rural sector and his portfolio.

We hope that meetings with the Minister will happen again as we found our dialogue with him was open and positive and has the potential to benefit rural NSW.

2010 Wentworth Women's Gathering

Some members of the 2010 Wentworth

Women's Gathering Organising Committee brought us up-to-date with their plans for the 2010 Gathering to be held on 29-31 October. Their passion for their corner of NSW shone through their presentation and we found their commitment and enthusiasm infectious.

The Wentworth Gathering promises to be a memorable weekend at the meeting place of two great rivers. I am sure the women who attend will leave with a deep appreciation of this unique part of NSW which the Committee is so proud to showcase.

Our next meeting will be held in Orange at the end of July where our discussions will be stimulated not only by our belief in rural women but also by the invigorating winter climate.

I hope between now and then the dams remain full and that miracles continue to happen in your lives. May the grass grow deep and lush, your families and communities thrive, and your resilience be strengthened as we work together for the benefit of rural, regional and remote NSW. ■

New!

Women Out ... back blog

AN ONLINE FORUM FOR REGIONAL WOMEN TO SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT IMPORTANT ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THEIR COMMUNITY.

Rural Women's Network State Advisory Committee member Rebel Black has set up a new *Women Out ... Back* blog in an effort to extend her network and share information of interest to women in western NSW.

The blog is accessible to everyone and will highlight current opportunities as well as provide a chance for people to comment on current issues, events and anything else that interests you.

Rebel is urging everyone to become a follower of the blog to ensure they are kept up-to-date on what's happening – especially if you live in the far west of the State.

For information about the blog or to become a blog editor, send Rebel an email at: info@communitypractice.com.au

To view the blog go to: www.womenoutback.blogspot.com



By Kate Needham, Internal Communications Manager, Industry & Investment NSW

Have you ever glanced at the computer screen when your child was chatting online, and found that you couldn't understand what was being said? Or received a text message that looked like alphabet soup? With each generation, parents struggle to come up with ways to communicate with their children. It can be difficult at the best of times, but when they communicate in what looks like a secret code it can be next to impossible.

Learning some abbreviations your children are using online will not only help you decipher what they're saying, but it will also help you converse with them in text messages, instant messages, and email. This 'shorthand' is also becoming increasingly common in professional life. And, with the boom in social media sites like Twitter, taking time to get to know some texting lingo can also be helpful for people who want to be tech savvy and stay current with today's trends.

In the interest of speed, and because of limited space (text messages are limited to 160 characters; tweets on Twitter are limited to 140 characters), messages are written with strange combinations of letters strung together with no punctuation, grammar or even separation.

Here are some of the more popular words and phrases to get you started:

- 2 – To/Too
- 2DAY – Today
- 2MORO – Tomorrow
- 2NITE – Tonight
- 4 – For
- 4EVR – Forever
- 4GOT – Forgot
- B – Be
- B4 – Before
- BF – Boyfriend/Best friend
- BFN – Bye for now
- BRB – Be right back
- BTW – By the way
- C – See
- CU L8R – See you later
- CYA – See you
- DYK – Do you know

- G2G – Got to go/Get together
- GF – Girlfriend
- GR8 – Great
- IDK – I don't know
- IMHO – In my humble opinion
- IMO – In my opinion
- JK – Just kidding
- K – OK
- LOL – Laugh out loud
- MYOB – Mind your own business
- N – And
- NVMND – Nevermind
- OMG – Oh my God/gosh
- PAW – Parents are watching
- PIR – Parent in the room
- PLZ – Please
- PPL – People
- R – Are
- ROFL – Rolling on the floor laughing
- RUOK – Are you OK?
- THX – Thanks
- TMI – Too much information
- TTYL – Talk to you later
- TY – Thank you
- U – You
- W8 – Wait
- XLNT – Excellent
- Y – Why
- YW – You're welcome

The world of text messaging evolves quickly. There are many SMS acronyms, abbreviations and short forms for popular phrases and the list is growing daily. There are now entire websites dedicated to helping people decipher text messaging lingo such as: www.lgdtxt.com

HTH (Hope that helps)!

Texting tips

Text messaging etiquette takes a while to get used to. Here's some tips for deciphering messages:

- Words are rarely spelled out in full.
- Vowels are often removed from words.
- Numbers and symbols often replace words or sounds.
- Popular phrases often become acronyms.

WEB WATCH

www.landlearnsw.org.au

Looking for information on climate change? Check out LandLearn's new 'Climate Change' pages. It answers questions like: 'What impact will climate change have on the way we grow, harvest, process, purchase and consume primary produce in NSW?' You'll find great information including facts, producer case studies and science news.

<http://delicious.com>

This is a great website if you're having trouble keeping track of all the interesting websites you find and you also want access to your favourites from any computer, whether you're at home, work or on the road. By joining Delicious and becoming a member you can save all your bookmarks online and even share them with other people.

www.leverduredelmioorto.it

An overseas agricultural company are giving people the opportunity to reconnect with the origins of their food through a new website, The Vegetables from my Garden. Users can build an organic garden from their web browser choosing the size of the garden and selecting what vegetables to grow. As the food grows, it's picked and delivered to the user's door. For help translating try: <http://translate.google.com>

www.womenaustralia.info

The Australian Women's Register was established to build knowledge and recognition of the contribution made by women to Australia. It is a great source of information about Australian women and their organisations. You can also find links to archival repositories and libraries where records are held.

what's on, what's new?

s0ccket – more than just a soccer ball!

s0ccket is a fun, portable energy-harvesting power source in the form of a soccer ball. It captures the energy from impact that is normally lost to the environment when the soccer ball is kicked, dribbled or thrown and stores the energy for later use. It addresses a need for cheap, clean, simple, off-grid energy solutions that are available for immediate use. In most African countries 95 per cent of the population is living off-grid with no access to electricity. With s0ccket, people in developing nations will no longer need to walk three hours simply to charge their mobile phones. The power will literally be in their hands. To find out more go to: www.soccket.com

CLOSING THE GENDER GAP

A study has found that part of the reason boys tend to out-score girls in science classes may be that most textbooks show predominantly male scientists' images. The study, on 81 high-school students, saw the 'gender gap' reversed when youths were tested based on a text containing only female scientist images.

Source: *World Science*, 23 April 2010 (www.world-science.net)

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE AUSTRALIA

Tourism Australia are running a competition as part of their new global tourism campaign. They are looking for the places and experiences you tell your friends about, the photos you always go back to, the stories you tell again and again – basically your favourite holiday memories in Australia.

To enter, upload a photo of your favourite Aussie holiday moment and describe your picture in 25 words or less, beginning with the words: 'There's nothing like...!' Your entry will be used on a 'map' of the best Aussie holiday experiences. Find the map at: <http://nothinglikeaustralia.com> and www.australia.com

By participating you will be in the running to win a \$25,000 Australian holiday and other weekly prizes.

Mudgee Readers Festival – A book heaven

The Mudgee Readers' Festival has been established to promote the joy of reading for all ages. It started with a series of author lunches and dinners and will finish with the full Festival on 10–11 September 2010.

Melanie Trethowan, Chair of the Mudgee Readers Festival said the Festival is being coordinated by a group of passionate readers from the Mudgee region who love books but can also see the economic benefits an event like this can generate for the region.

The Festival has been established as a readers' festival as opposed to the popular writer's festivals concept so people can sit back and simply be entertained by the authors and have an opportunity to discuss their books in detail.

The September Festival will feature a range of authors including those who appeal to children. The Festival has already brought a range of well-known authors to Mudgee including Peter Fitzsimons, Judy Nunn, Trisha Dixon and Anita Heiss

The full program will be released in July 2010 and all events are updated on their Mudgee Readers Festival website: www.tiny.cc/readfest Readers are also encouraged to sign up to the email database to receive the most current information.

For festival tickets contact the Mudgee Tourist Office on Ph: 02 6372 1020.

The Doll Collectors Club of NSW Inc
29th Annual Doll Fair
Toys, Bears & Collectables

WHITLAM LEISURE CENTRE, LIVERPOOL
50A Memorial Ave, Cnr Hume Hwy

SAT 24 July 10-4PM Adults \$10

SUN 25 July 10-3PM Adults \$5
Under 15's free entry with paying Adult



200 Trader Stalls - Antiques, Vintage & Modern Dolls, Toys, Bears & Collectables
Kits & parts to make your own. Miniatures, greenware, doll houses & much more

Talk to Doll & Bear Traders, Collectors & Makers
Valuations, Identifications, Raffles. Learn about dolls & collecting at our short forums

See Members Dolls & Toys in the Modern Doll Display. Bring the kids for the free Sunday Dress Up Fairy Tale Parade for 3-10yr olds

Fair enquiries Jan Armstrong 02 9525 8291
dollfairnsw@gmail.com
www.dollclubnsw.com.au

Club Meets from 12 noon for 1.30pm meeting, Granville Town Hall
1st Sat each month. **Visitors Welcome!**

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STATE OF THE CLIMATE

Prepared by the CSIRO and Bureau of Meteorology, the State of the Climate Snapshot provides readers with information about how the climate has changed and what it means for Australians. It includes observations and analysis of Australia's climate and the factors that influence it.

To download a copy of the free report go to: www.csiro.au/resources/State-of-the-Climate.html

RENOVATE YOUR RELATIONSHIP: A MANUAL FOR MEN

More often than not separations are initiated by women and when the relationship breaks down, men often feel gutted and their trust and confidence is knocked big time – as if the building has suddenly collapsed. The challenge for men is to see the tell-tale cracks appearing and take action.

Men often report they didn't see the problems in their relationship before it was too late. They wish they had done maintenance work on their love lives, before things deteriorated too far.

This booklet, compiled by Mensline Australia and Relationships Australia Victoria provides a set of instructions to renovate your most important relationship. It covers topics such as:

Working together; Avoiding misunderstandings; Sharpening up your listening; When the roof blows off: anger and frustration; Who has the power? – abuse and violence; Valuing differences; Appreciation; When trust breaks down.



To download your free copy go to: <http://relationships.com.au/resources/pdfs/books-booklets/renovate-your-relationship.pdf> or call Relationships Australia on 1300 364 277

FREE Guide for Community Board Members

This handbook is the second in a series designed to help build the financial capacity of Australia's 700,000 community groups and not-for-profit organisations.

The handbook recognises the important role Board members play in the lives of community groups and the influence they can have in ensuring the organisation survives and thrives.

It is designed to help Board members of community organisations of all shapes and sizes to take on their role with greater knowledge and confidence – fully understanding the financial reports presented to them by their Treasurer.

To download a copy go to: www.ourcommunity.com.au/financial and click on the 'Free Financial Literacy Guides' section. You can also request a printed copy of the guide by completing the online request form.

More than 65% of Australians belong to at least one community group – these organisations are vital for the development of a thriving and vibrant Australia.

Stand Up 4 U!

Stand Up 4 U! making positive choices in relationships is a free DVD for young women on the early signs of potentially abusive relationships. It demonstrates behaviour which is controlling, isolating and undermines confidence. It also provides details about where young women can get more information and support if they need it.

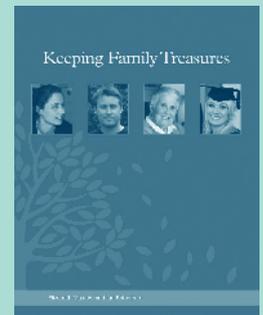
Produced by the NSW Office for Women's Policy, Stand Up 4 U! has been designed for young women to watch on their own or in a group. To watch online go to: www.women.nsw.gov.au/publications/stand_up_4_u!

Stand Up 4 U! is also a useful resource for teachers, youth workers and other professionals working with groups of young women. To request a copy Ph: 02 9228 3141 or email: contact_us@dpc.nsw.gov.au

KEEPING FAMILY TREASURES

If you're interested in preserving letters, photos or other items for future generations you may find this latest book from the National Archives of Australia a great resource.

The book provides clear and helpful preservation advice from National Archives conservators for people caring for precious family items. A range of contributors – including food writer Margaret Fulton, ABC presenter Andy Muirhead, singer Hayley Jensen, and actor and historian Alice Garner – offered a special family object of their own for preservation advice. The various chapters include caring for letters and personal papers, photographs and albums, diaries and notebooks, scrapbooks, and precious objects and textiles. Preservation of audio and video tapes, home movie film, CDs and DVDs, and time capsules is also covered. The book offers additional tips on salvaging heritage items for those facing floods, fires or other disasters.



Keeping Family Treasures costs \$24.95 and can be ordered online at: <http://eshop.naa.gov.au> or by calling 02 6212 3609.

Getting to work on men's health

Did you know that hosting a men's health event is a great way to engage your community and to raise awareness of men's health. To make sure you are supported in holding a successful men's health event in 2010, Andrology Australia has a range of free men's health promotional resources.

The Men's Health Education Kit assists you with planning, promoting, holding and evaluating a men's health event. The comprehensive kit contains everything you need to know, including tips, templates and interactive men's health presentations. There is a limit of one per organisation, however the kits can be kept and used again in the future as needed.

General men's health promotional flyers, promoting key men's health messages, are also available to hand out at the men's health event. This year's flyer is themed 'Men: how to look after your most important tools' and focuses on the need for everyone to 'get to work on men's health'.

If you are wondering when to hold your men's health event, you may like to consider International Men's Health Week (IMHW). As many high-profile events and activities are held during this week, it significantly raises public awareness of men's health issues and may help you to raise the awareness of your own event. Posters promoting IMHW 2010 from 14 –20 June are available to assist you in promoting your event and men's health in general in your local community.

To order the free resources or for more information on the resources available go to: www.andrologyaustralia.org and click on the button 'Get to work on men's health'.

ADVANCED PROSTATE CANCER – A GUIDE FOR MEN & THEIR FAMILIES

About 18,000 Australian men are diagnosed with prostate cancer each year. While not all will progress to advanced prostate cancer, if they do, access to quality and up-to-date information on prostate cancer is essential. This free guide, produced by the Australian Cancer Network and the Australian Prostate Cancer Collaboration, includes information on advanced stages of prostate cancer, its treatments and how men can manage their health and well-being. For a copy call Andrology Australia on 1300 303 878 or go to: www.andrologyaustralia.org or www.prostatehealth.org.au

REDUNDANCY REMORSE

These tips for fast-tracking redundancy remorse are from Andrew May's book – *Between Jobs: A Redundancy Survival Guide*.

- Talk honestly and openly with your family.
- Stay healthy and fit.
- Work through mental chatter and keep a thought journal.
- Focus on looking after yourself.
- Avoid taking on extra stress.
- Allow time for grieving and for nature to take its course.
- Stick to a daily routine.
- Remain optimistic and laugh when you can.

'I know many people who have said that redundancy was one of the best things that happened to them: not at the time and probably not in the first few weeks or months, but eventually they gained a totally different perspective of the event. Yes, redundancy is an end. But it can also be a brand new beginning.'

Source: The Australian, October 10–11, 2009

Growing up strong Buraay

This booklet is designed especially for parents in the Riverina Murray and Central West regions of NSW. It provides information on children's behaviour and how best to care for them, together with ideas for simple games and activities, incorporating Wiradjuri language terms. Copies are available to download for free from www.families.nsw.gov.au. The Families NSW website provides parents and carers with information on a wide variety of services for families in NSW, and how families can access them.

Being the author of your life

Being the Author of Your Life was a new series presented by Sarah Cornally. If you have things that really matter to you and you want to equip yourself to have the best chance of achieving them, this six-week tele-learning series will enable you to write the script that will give you that delicious sense of a life well lived. Sessions can be downloaded for \$55 per session or \$264 for all six sessions. And best of all, there's no travel, fuel, accommodation or childcare expenses to worry about and you don't have to take time out from your farm or business to participate. For more information and/or to download the series go to: www.faaw.org.au/seminars/seminar/18



Henty is a town with an attitude and the volunteer spirit is alive and well! With a population of about 1000, Henty services a wide farming district and is situated on the busy Olympic Highway, midway between Melbourne and Sydney on the main Southern rail line. Henty was formerly called Doodle Cooma – the Aboriginal name meaning 'sweet water'. Settlement took place after the 1860s, with the influx of farming families lured by the promise of fertile country and generally reliable rainfall. Around this time the much-feared bushranger 'Mad Dog Morgan' roamed the area instigating a reign of terror. In 1975 footage was shot at nearby Cookardinia for a film portraying some of his infamous exploits. Henty lays claim to being the birthplace of Headlie Shipard Taylor who designed and produced a series of header harvesters. Taylor went on to produce his machinery at Sunshine, Melbourne, with Hugh Victor McKay. Their unique design ensured the efficient harvesting of damaged crops and, in this way, this innovative farmer revolutionised the grain industry throughout the world. The Henty Field Days, staged annually in the third week of September, are a nationally acclaimed showcase for the best of products and technology and attract over 50,000 visitors each year.

Connie Ross, Henty

We'd love to hear from you, so why not send us a postcard or photo from where you live, and share your news and views! Post to: The Country Web, Locked Bag 21, Orange NSW 2800.

Visit the Rural Women's Network internet site at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn



Hidden Treasures

honouring rural women volunteers

Hidden Treasures acknowledges the important volunteer roles women play within NSW rural communities. It is not an award program but a public tribute to the vast number of women who give their time and energy to help others.

Nominations close 1 September 2010 and forms are available at: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn or by calling the NSW Centre for Volunteering on Ph: 02 9261 3600.

Hidden Treasures is a joint project of Rural Women's Network I&I NSW, NSW Centre for Volunteering & the NSW Office for Women's Policy.



Industry & Investment

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NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

P/CODE: _____

PHONE: _____

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background Culturally & linguistically diverse background

Age Group: <20 20s 30s 40s 50s 60s 70s 80s+

The Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998 obliges the Rural Women's Network to make you aware of the purposes for which we might use the contact details you have supplied us with. This information will be used by RWN for the purposes of disseminating information (including mailouts). Any information supplied by you to RWN will not be disclosed to any other person unless prior consent has been given.