

• FOR RURAL WOMEN & THEIR FAMILIES •

The Country Web

LEADERSHIP & MENTORING

NUMBER 41 SPRING 2006 **FREE NEWSLETTER**



ARTWORK BY CARMEN FRENCH



Let's make it happen – together

Rural Women's Network

GREAT BOOK GIVEAWAYS ■ WOMEN'S GATHERING PROGRAM & REGISTRATION

THE COUNTRY WEB

The Country Web is produced by NSW Department of Primary Industries' Rural Women's Network (RWN) and is distributed free, three times a year. For more about RWN see page 5.

EDITING/DESKTOP PUBLISHING

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CONTRIBUTIONS

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

FREE MAILING LIST

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

ADVERTISING

10,000 Country Webs are produced each edition. We welcome advertisements and offer very competitive rates. Contact RWN for more information. Sponsorship and insert options are also available.

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See page 33 for competitions.

COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

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 is 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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Mentoring is a great way to learn, grow, share experiences and develop business knowledge, skills and confidence. Jo Eady from Rural Women in Business shares her thoughts on what makes a good mentor and some principles for effective mentoring.

8 Great Australian Leaders

Jane Schwager has been at the cutting edge of social leadership in Australia for 20 years. She is Chief Executive of Nonprofit Australia, an independent organisation to assist the non-profit sector in Australia to become more cost-effective and innovative. Jane shares her thoughts on leadership and provides some personal insights and advice for other potential leaders.

11 Online help to get kids active

Parents and professionals now have access to a comprehensive resource that will help provide practical ideas about how to get kids active as well as providing ideas and tips for healthy eating. Includes a quick quiz for parents.

19 2006 Grafton Women's Gathering Program & Registration

28 Date rape: Spotting the warning signs!

This article looks at some important safety tips for young people and lists 10 key warning signs to look out for. Also includes information on where to go for help and resources.

28 How to network your way to your next board appointment

It's not what you know – it's who knows what you know!



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Creating the life you want.
Article by Kim Deans, Inverell.



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Involving young people in community organisations.

FRONT COVER:

'Journey to the Gathering' was created by artist, Carmen French from Grafton. The design symbolises the journey taken by all women travelling to the Women's Gathering and shows all the paths travelled by women from near and far who have come to share in this unique and special experience. The coloured dots in this design represent each woman who has made this journey.

REGULAR FEATURES

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We seem to discuss, at great length, mentors and mentoring for various programs. Not entirely sure just what the literal meaning of mentor is, I went to the dictionary. Mentor, *noun*, is a wise and trusted counsellor (from *Mentor*, friend of Odysseus and teacher and guardian of his son). Now this I can relate to. It means friend, ally, mate, pal.

I have a story of some really terrific mentors. Some 34 years ago, I packed my bags and left all my friends and family in Sydney to come to the 'bush'. At the time it was just a bit of an adventure as I was extremely ignorant about the western area of NSW. The adventure is continuing to this day.

I arrived in Bourke on a very warm January day to be a governess on an outback station. I was collected by my employer, a mother of five children. Fords Bridge was (and still is) a tiny village some 70 km north-west of Bourke. Until I arrived there on that day, I had not realised that not all Australians could have electricity at the flick of a switch, clean running water from a tap in the house, and I most certainly didn't know that such a thing as a 'long drop' toilet actually existed. What an education I have received, from that time to this.

Two years after I arrived at Fords Bridge I married my husband and we moved to our first home at 'Clifton Downs'. Clifton Downs is approximately 135 km north-west of Bourke and this is where my story of my mentors begins.

Being extremely ignorant of all things agricultural, I turned to some really wonderful ladies of the local Country Women's Association (CWA) who took me under their wings – they were friends, mothers, advisers and, in the very literal meaning of the word, my mentors. The association with these wonderful and generous women enabled me to learn what I needed to know but also to accept the more difficult aspects of life in those isolated areas. They made me feel welcome and I felt I belonged to the community. I can never thank them enough for this.

I have now been a member of the CWA for 32 years. In that time I have made friends from all over the State. I have been given the opportunity to learn new skills, have fellowship and find lifelong friendships. I have been educated, and all the while I have been able to contribute to my own community and to the great worldwide community through the vast network that is the CWA.

I hear people say that the CWA is an 'old women's organisation, the tea and scones brigade', but to me the CWA represents my lifeline, my sanity, and my mentors.

As a member of the CWA we often discuss making our organisation more modern and progressive. I agree to some extent, but I will never forget my wonderful friends in the Yantabulla CWA nor their true mentoring spirit and I hope that our organisation never changes so much that we lose that spirit.

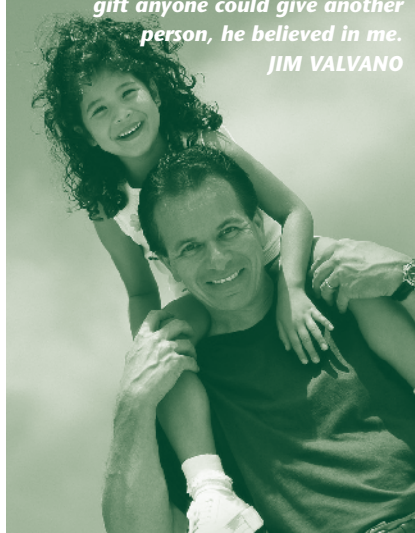
This edition of *The Country Web* looks at the importance of mentoring and leadership and includes stories of rural women who are making a difference in their community. As well, you will find information and contact details on some of the many networks, organisations and resources that are available to assist you in your daily life.

Denise Turnbull, Bourke
Member of the Rural Women's Network
State Advisory Committee

COMPETITION WINNERS

Congratulations to Colleen Wray, Coleambally and Gwen Pickette, Purlewangh, winners of the *Mahboba's Promise* book competition, and to Penny Marr, Orange, winner of *Talking Constitutions*.

September 3 – Fathers Day
My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person, he believed in me.
JIM VALVANO



SEPTEMBER 2006

14, BALRANALD
Farm Safety Field Day.
Includes displays, demonstrations, child safety, chemical safety and more. Contact the Rural Safety Hotline on 1300 799 003

19–20, BALRANALD
Henty Machinery Field Days.
Contact Kerry Wratten,
Ph: 02 6938 1877.

OCTOBER 2006

5, NARRABRI
Farm Safety Field Day.
Contact the Rural Safety Hotline on 1300 799 003

7–8, SYDNEY
Women's Health Expo.
A 2-day expo focusing on women's health and wellbeing. Includes free seminars, advice clinics, presentations and more. Ph: 02 9517 3498 or Visit: www.womenshealthexpo.com.au

8–11, MELBOURNE VIC
International Landcare Conference: Landscapes, Lifestyles and Livelihoods. Ph: 03 9645 6322 or Visit: www.internationallandcareconference2006.com.au

WHAT'S NEXT?

The next edition of *The Country Web* will focus on '**Adaptive Management**'.

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

Contributions are required by 6 October for publication in December 2006.

Send your stories to: The Editor, RWN, Locked Bag 21, Orange 2800, Fax: 02 6391 3650; or Email: allison.priest@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Wake up Australia!

Congratulations on the marvellous article by Susan Ainge McLeish in the last edition – what a great title for an article. I hope many Australians take notice. We do need to ‘wake up’ before Australia becomes a suburb of China or USA. We have such a wonderful country, however I don’t think we appreciate the beauty or the uniqueness of it. So how do we encourage the average Australian to be proud of one’s country? Buy Australian products: pay a little more, but support our own farmers and industries. Think of the future as well as the present.

Julian Campbell, Warren

Valuing womanhood!

Thank you so much for your quality publication and

communication with the ‘outside’. Sometimes I can get so enclosed in my own situation and life that it closes everything else out. You offer a glimpse and window to peek out of. Looking forward to many more positive and affirming articles which value womanhood!

Ann-Louise Stonestreet, Narromine

Ménière’s Disease

I am writing in response to Judith Harland’s letter in the last edition regarding Ménière’s Disease.

I was diagnosed with Ménière’s Disease four years ago. For a year I had to lay in bed for 24 hours every third day. During this time I was very unwell. The vertigo was so bad I did not dare to move as this would cause vomiting.

On the days when I was well enough to get up and about, I would try to organise life, as I had three young children to care for. It was such a difficult time – I didn’t know what the future would hold.

Medical diagnosis states that Ménière’s is an incurable disease. What this really means is that they have not found a chemical drug to mask the symptoms. In desperation, I turned to alternative therapies, as these offered my only hope.

I have a very good homeopath whom I started seeing every month following my diagnosis. I also went to a traditional Chinese acupuncturist for about six months. I am not sure which of these treatments was effective but after nearly a year I got over this disease, although I did lose a degree of hearing and now use a hearing aid.

I still continue to visit my homeopath, just not as frequently. Four years later I have not regained my hearing but I have also not had an attack for nearly three years. I feel that this disease is still with me as I can get very tired at times and often need to go to bed and have an afternoon rest for about half an hour then I am fine. If you are prepared to try alternatives to conventional medicine you may also overcome this disease.

Lynette West, Queanbeyan

Women’s game meat cooperative

Just a quick note to say that I am inspired by your magazine and love the articles in it.

I would like to make contact with women in my surrounding area who have an interest in the feral pig meat industry, aquaculture, game birds, or other types of game meat.

I would like to establish a cooperative in one of these areas if I can meet up with like-minded women. If you are interested please call me on

Ph: 02 6331 0493 during business hours.

Katherine Rawson, Bathurst

I would like to pass on a special word of encouragement to Barbara Gregory from Coffs Harbour who wrote a poem in the 40th edition of *The Country Web* titled ‘Who am I?’

The poem was so good that my son who is 24 made it a special priority to make sure he read the poem to me. As a woman it seems to me that we don’t really realise all the things we are and the impact we have on so many! Not one of us is insignificant and in God’s eyes we are all so special and the ‘apple of His eye!’. No matter what our role, each one is important and should be cherished and held high.

Congratulations Barbara on a wonderful and heart-warming poem.

Helen Lyness, Taree

I came across your website accidentally, while looking for something similar in the States (where I live). Leave it to the Australians to have such a wonderful place for women who love rural life. I loved the website and have ordered the *Living Out Back* book. I will visit the site often as we don’t have anything like this in the States that I know of. It is a great support for rural women and makes me want to come and visit. Congratulations!

Michele Pfaff, USA

2007 RIRDC RURAL WOMEN’S AWARD

You could be the next NSW winner

Are you involved in primary industries? Do you have a great idea for your industry, community or your own skills development but don’t have the resources to move forward?

The 2007 RIRDC Rural Women’s Award recognises and encourages the vital contribution women make to rural Australia. The Award is open to all women involved in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, natural resource management and related service industries. The NSW Winner will receive a \$10,000 bursary and a place on the RIRDC Australian Institute of Company Director’s Course (AICD). The NSW Runner-up will also be awarded a place on this course.

Nominations close on World Rural Women’s Day, 15 October 2006.

For more information and/or an application package, contact Allison Priest, RWN on Ph: 02 6391 3620, Fax: 02 6391 3650 or Email: allison.priest@dpi.nsw.gov.au





The RWN team: Allison Priest (Assistant Coordinator) and Sonia Muir (Coordinator)

The Rural Women's Network (RWN) is a statewide government program within NSW Department of Primary Industries and is based at Orange. 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 the RWN on
Ph: 02 6391 3620 or Email:
rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au

rwn report

By Sonia Muir, RWN Coordinator

I think throughout our lives we are taking on leadership and mentoring roles though they are not often recognised by ourselves or acknowledged by others.

Most parents and especially mothers display extraordinary leadership and mentoring skills as they guide their children through childhood and beyond.

The 'girlfriend' relationship between women, that can last an hour or a lifetime, is another example of mentoring that I am sure most of you will have experienced. I love the fact that I can meet a woman briefly, over a coffee, and we can be sharing thoughts on life philosophies and deepest feelings. It comes so naturally to women and helps to unburden and soothe the soul. I regard my women friends as treasured mentors. They provide such incredible 'mental security'. It is comforting to know that we are there for each other as a sounding board for problem solving, someone to provide support when things are down or help to celebrate when life is floating above the clouds. Have a think about who is in your mentoring circles and reflect on how they enrich your life.

DARING TO DREAM

The *Daring to Dream* book is now available. It includes 27 stories of leading women from rural backgrounds and will be a useful resource for anyone wanting more motivation to follow their passion and achieve their goals. Each participant has included her

contact details so she can mentor others.

The stories cover a wide range of women from across NSW. You can read about Patty Byrnes, a farmer from Pooncarie, who initiated a successful western biannual field day, and Maggie Gordon, from Trangie, who wrote a successful musical while droving sheep. There is Lisa Thomas from Wellington, who was the first female Rural Lands Protection Board 'rabbit inspector' in NSW, and Rebel Black, who is pioneering a unique restaurant experience in Lightning Ridge to reflect outback culture.

Daring to Dream is an ongoing RWN project and I am already starting to interview women for the next bank of stories, so please let me know of rural women who may like to be included. For more on *Daring to Dream* see page 25 or Visit: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn

A RELUCTANT LEADER

We often become leaders and mentors without even trying! I have just returned

from travelling to Mongolia with my 67-year-old Mum (Veronica Pansaru) who has had a lifelong dream to go there. She has been sending hand-knitted jumpers to the Christina Noble Children's Foundation (www.cncf.org) in Ulaanbaatar for a number of years and when an opportunity arose to deliver 53 jumpers in person she jumped at it.

Mum doesn't consider herself a 'leader' and has reluctantly been swept into the limelight. Her local paper wrote a story on her and she has been asked to speak to various interest groups. Mum is working through her public-speaking fear in order to tell people about the Children's Foundation. I hope her story will encourage others to do something for those who aren't as lucky as we are here in Australia.

I look forward to meeting many of you at this year's Grafton Women's Gathering from 20 to 22 October. Like all past Gatherings it too is shaping up to be another fabulous event so make sure you try and get there!



Veronica Pansaru with children at the Sunshine Ger village, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

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

