

the COUNTRYWEB

for RURAL WOMEN & their FAMILIES

YOUNG WOMEN OF INFLUENCE

ARE ASTRONAUTS SEXIER
THAN AGRICULTURE?

THE ART OF DIFFICULT
CONVERSATIONS

MEN'S MATTERS:
MIND YOUR MIND



THE COUNTRY WEB

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

EDITING

Allison Priest

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

Belinda Keen

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

FREE MAILING LIST

You can download *The Country Web* from our website and receive an email alert when a new edition is available. See our website to subscribe. If you live in NSW and would like to receive a copy in the mail contact RWN.

ADVERTISING

11 000 copies of *The Country Web* are produced each edition. We welcome advertisements and offer competitive rates. Sponsorship and insert options also available.

CONTACT DETAILS

Rural Women's Network
Locked Bag 21 Orange NSW 2800
t: 02 6391 3620 f: 02 6391 3543 tty: 02 6391 3300
e: rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au
w: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn

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 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.

DISCLAIMER

© State of New South Wales through Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services [2014]. You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services as the owner.

Published by NSW Department of Primary Industries [part of the Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services]. Recognising that some of the information in this document is provided by third parties, the State of New South Wales, the author and the publisher take no responsibility for the accuracy, currency, reliability and correctness of any information included in the document provided by third parties. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.

Regular features

Editorial 3 | Calendar 3 | Letters 5 |
Across my desk 4 | Parenting 20 |
Communities in focus 25 | Health 28 |
Men's Matters 31 | Women Leaders 32 |
What's on, What's new? 38 | Resources 39 |

Features

6 | Today's visionaries, tomorrow's leaders

Pip Job from Cumnock and Edwina Beveridge from Young are part of a new breed of innovative and inspirational rural women who are changing the face of agriculture and making a difference in a diverse range of industries.

9 | Social alchemist & change agent

Phoebe Maroulis from Armidale believes there is a unique magic in rural communities that comes to light when the right people, add the right ingredients, in the right way, at the right time.

16 | Are astronauts sexier than agriculture?

Bessie Blore believes agriculture is not about farmers – it's about the people. People who believe in the health, wealth and happiness of all Australians. People who believe in celebrating diversity, sustainability, creativity and progress. These Young Farming Champions are doing just that!

19 | Being an Australian woman is a privilege

Jennifer Star from Goulburn is a young and enthusiastic teacher, who has always excelled academically and in sport. Despite having many options for a bright future in a comfortable, safe environment, Jennifer has chosen to dedicate her life to women and children who don't have access to the education and resources that most of us take for granted.

20 | Parenting: choose your mindset

When you're confronted with a challenging task do you: a) give it your best shot; b) have a nap? Your answer is probably best determined by the kind of mindset you have.

21 | Building emotional resilience

Emotional resilience is the willingness and capacity to accept that there will be good and bad times ahead and to understand your reactions to these experiences. Learn some key strategies to build your resilience.

25 | Now were talking!

Saul Nightingale talks about how to have successful difficult conversations that are honest, respectful and productive.



p 16

Are astronauts sexier than agriculture? Bessie Jennings believes that being a farmer is just as cool as being an architect, lawyer, teacher, doctor, or an astronaut.



p 32

Women Leaders: Aged just 29 Georgie Aley has achieved significant success at executive management level within the agricultural sector in Australia and internationally.

editorial

It's time to act

Lynne Strong, Founder and National Program Director – Art4Agriculture

Journalist Sacha Bonsor wrote, *Women are powered by values like cooperation, communication and inclusiveness, flexibility, collaboration and compassion.* I believe if we truly want to influence the world, these values are the perfect foundation for operating in the 21st Century and particularly modern agriculture.

Everyone has the potential to influence or to hold positions of influence, but women traditionally have lacked the confidence. American writer Jeff Goins wrote, *We have a bad habit of talking ourselves out of greatness. We doubt ourselves, thinking we don't have what it takes. We give in to fear and sabotage ourselves before we even begin. We are our own worst enemy.*

It takes great courage to change things; it can be painful and scary. For me, the key to starting my journey was to surround myself with people that 'get it.' I sought out others who had already embraced the kind of culture I wished to see in agriculture. In the first instance they were young women – women who put their hands up to be the trailblazers to launch the Art4Agriculture Young Farming Champions (YFC) initiative. (See story on page 16). It was through my interaction with these wonderful young women that I became obsessed with the identification and development of talent, and with nurturing and celebrating that talent.

I am also obsessed with changing the way we equip our young people, to assist them to build a new DNA and culture for agriculture, and I recognised the need to take many stakeholders with me on that journey.

Looking at agriculture's leadership programs, I was disappointed that our people were too often forgotten once they had finished their formal training. To me, it's imperative that we identify, engage, nurture and support our young people, allowing each to build their knowledge and skills. It is vital that we provide ongoing training and development to help them stay energized and become more effective so they can take on bigger and more significant challenges and roles.

This will require us to establish an environment that will allow individuals to engage in the process of learning and

adapting to change. We want them to dare others to be different. At times they will need to be fearless, but they needn't stand alone – if we find, elevate and celebrate the champions, we can leverage their impact and catalyse even greater change. More importantly, our generation will leave behind capable people, who can do it all again, and again... even backwards and in high heels! But do it they will, because of us.

If you believe you have something to contribute, if you believe you've sabotaged yourself one too many times, if you believe the world needs your voice and your vision, it's time to act. Be the change you want to see in the world.

I have found that there are many eager, talented and inspiring young women who are ready to act – all it takes is our guidance and support. I leave you with these words from one of them...

Hannah Barber, Meat & Livestock Australia Cattle and Sheep Young Farming Champion: *My role as a YFC, and the opportunities its given me to work with MLA, have provided me with endless opportunities to connect with consumers, and be a part of changing the conversations farmers are having with the world. The highlight so far has been running the cattle experience at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, where I witnessed the sheer joy on children's faces when they interacted with a live beast, and being able to share my experiences of the Australian cattle industry with interested adults. These types of connections are priceless in our goal to build partnerships and understanding with the community.*

Finally, in the words of Tom Peters, *Leaders don't create followers, they create more leaders.*



Calendar of events

August 1, Australia-wide Entries open: 2015 RIRDC Rural Women's Award

Don't miss this amazing opportunity to develop your skills, make a difference and inspire others. See back page for details on how to enter.

September 12–14 Coolamon NSW Rural Women's Gathering – Heritage with Heart

A fantastic weekend of inspiring speakers including renowned author, speaker, social commentator and sex therapist Bettina Arndt, lots of great workshops and networking. You'll make new friends and come away with fresh ideas and skills.

Program and registration information: <http://nswruralwomensgathering.org>

September 13 Coolamon 2014 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll Launch

Recognises the important volunteer roles rural women play within NSW rural communities. More at: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn/activities/hidden-treasures

September 24 Canberra 2014 Australian RIRDC Rural Women's Award Dinner

This dinner brings together our 2014 winners and runners-up to celebrate their remarkable achievements and to announce the 2014 Australian winner and runner-up.

October 15 World Rural Women's Day

Recognises the role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty. More at: www.un.org/en/events/ruralwomensday

What's next?

The next issue of *The Country Web* has the theme 'A new you'. It will include stories of women who have reinvented themselves, risen from the 'ashes' to overcome adversity, changed roles or careers for something new, started up new businesses, stepped out of their comfort zone, and more. We invite you to share your story and tips and strategies for women looking to see life through new eyes.

Contributions due 1 November 2014 for publication in March 2015. Send your contribution to: The Country Web, Locked Bag 21, Orange NSW 2800 or email: allison.priest@dpi.nsw.gov.au

The Rural Women's Network (RWN) is a state-wide government program within NSW Department of Primary Industries. RWN works in innovative ways to share information and promote action on rural women's issues, often in partnership with individuals, groups and non-government and government agencies.

RWN can help:

- » Promote activities and share information via our networks
- » Give presentations and facilitate workshops at women's events or send relevant information to you to distribute
- » Connect you with key individuals, groups and agencies and provide contacts.

Current projects

- » *The Country Web* magazine
- » RIRDC Rural Women's Award: a leadership and development opportunity
- » NSW Rural Women's Gathering
- » Hidden Treasures Honour Roll: recognising rural women volunteers
- » Rural Women Connect: a platform for women across our regions to share ideas, have a voice, and to provide feedback to improve government's understanding of rural women's issues.

Connect with RWN

t: 02 6391 3620

f: 02 6391 3543

e: rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au

w: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn

b: nswruralwomensnetwork.wordpress.com

tw: @NSW_RWN

YouTube.com/nswrwn

Across my desk - Allison Priest

Welcome to this 60th issue of *The Country Web* magazine.

As I write this update it is a cool 5 degrees here in Orange with a definite crispness to the wintery air.

As the saying goes ... 'a change is as good as a holiday', but as I can't always have a holiday I have been going through some changes within the Rural Women's Network (RWN)... let me tell you about these.

I have just been speaking to one of our regular readers asking when to expect the next *Country Web* in her mailbox. Thank you for your patience while we have been working on a more modern design to celebrate turning 60 and we hope you enjoy the fresh new look. Our next issue will include a reader survey to get your feedback and ideas on how we continue to improve the newsletter's content, look and feel, but please remember comments are welcome anytime.

The RWN has had a few staff changes. Sonia Muir (previously the RWN Coordinator) has taken on a new role as Leader of Agriculture NSW's Community Education & Support program which encompasses the RWN, the Rural Support Workers and a new Rural Resilience Program.

Emma Regan and I continue in our regular job-sharing role which includes delivering the RIRDC Rural Women's Award, Hidden Treasures Honour Roll, supporting the NSW Rural Women's Gathering Committees and of course *The Country Web*. We will be using social media and technology more and more to interact with rural women and their communities and we hope you will join us 'online' and participate in our various forums.

There have been lots of interesting things happening since our previous issue including the announcement of the 2014 RIRDC Rural Women's Award winner Pip Job and Runner-up Edwina Beveridge.

You can read about their activities on pages 6 and 7. Applications for the 2015 Award open 1 August so I encourage you to apply or ask other women with a great idea to consider this amazing opportunity.

State winners receive a \$10 000 bursary and the opportunity to participate in a RIRDC Australian Institute of Company Directors' Course.

The annual NSW Rural Women's Gathering was held at Scone last October attracting several hundred participants so congratulations to that dedicated organising team of vibrant women. As part of the weekend, Lucinda Corrigan Chair of the Primary Industries Ministerial Advisory Council launched the 2013 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll, adding to the growing list of women volunteers who have been acknowledged by their local communities. The 2014 Honour Roll will be launched at the next Rural Women's Gathering to be held at Coolamon on 12-14 September. We hope some of you will join us for this fantastic weekend program. Please come and say hi at the RWN stand. To register for Coolamon visit the Gathering website <http://nswruralwomensgathering.org> (you can read about the Scone event on page 30).

Earlier this year, a group of committed Rural Women Connect members participated in a face-to-face meeting in Sydney. Several stakeholders attended the meeting, including a representative from Women NSW who provided an overview of the new Domestic Violence (DV) Reforms. As part of Rural Women Connect activities we have produced a special insert to give you up-to-date information on DV tools and services available within NSW. There's some great information for anyone impacted by DV such as what to do if you're a victim or how to help a friend. The meeting was also an opportunity to rethink Rural Women Connect's future direction which you can learn more about on page 34. We are hoping the new approach will provide a range of opportunities for women to have a voice to decision makers, exchange ideas as well as raise concerns.

Thank you all for being part of the RWN journey - we look forward to meeting you at upcoming events but in the meantime don't forget to follow us on Twitter and subscribe to our Blog to stay plugged in!

Women of Influence: Pictured at the 2014 NSW-ACT RIRDC Rural Women's Award Gala Dinner is Minister for Primary Industries The Hon. Katrina Hodgkinson MP, 2014 NSW-ACT RIRDC RWA Winner Pip Job and 2014 Runner-up Edwina Beveridge. These remarkable women are leaders and change agents within agriculture and rural communities and are leaving a lasting legacy for future women leaders to take a lead role in rural Australia.



NSW Rural Women's Network pioneers reunite after more than 20 years

I remember well the first weeks of May 1992 as State Coordinator of a new pilot program, the NSW Rural Women's Network. The fanfare of a press conference with then Agriculture Minister, Ian Armstrong, besieged by curious calls and interviews, then the hard yards – how to set up a communications network and deal with important issues armed with scant resources across a big state?

A key to success was our State Advisory Committee, a formidable team of diverse women and NSW Agriculture Director-General, Dr Kevin Sheridan AO. In October 2013 we met to celebrate those exciting years. We remembered our ambitious consultation with 500 women at 28 sites in the Rural Women's Satellite project, and devising projects to act on issues such as: the Country Care Link 1800 line with Sr Jude of the wonderful St Vincent's Sisters of Charity; Stepping Stones with Adult & Community Education; Building Stronger Communities with NSW Health; the Women in Decision Making Forum and long-term plan; and Women in Agriculture as a first non-nation guest exhibit at the Australian National Field Days.

Establishing a communications network was a new concept – there was no internet or social media back then. Central to this network was *The Country Web* magazine, aptly named by Marion Palmer from Jerilderie.

In 1993 Sonia Muir came on board to produce *The Country Web* and she has been a driving force ever since, as has Allison Priest who joined the team over 17 years ago.

Women of the Land Gatherings also kicked off in 1993 in Orange after Ronnie Hazelton of Farmsafe Central West and I returned inspired from a Victorian Women on Farms Gathering. Such foundations have grown and continue to grow to this very day.

Thanks to the efforts of many people over the years, the Network did not go the way of many other pilot programs, but survived and thrived.

It was an enormous privilege to work with thousands of women, SAC members, Dr Sheridan and the highly dedicated staff for nearly seven years.

Reunion talk just took up where we left off so many years ago – and we feel proud to have put in our two-bob's worth to rural women's business.

Margaret Carroll
Rural Women's Network Coordinator,
1992–98

Members of the original Rural Women's Network State Advisory Committee gather in Orange, October 2013.

Clockwise from left – Audrey Hardman OAM (inaugural Co-chair), Dr Kevin Sheridan AO (inaugural Co-chair), Merrilie Slack-Smith (Minister's representative), Cathy McGowan AO (Vic RWN, now Federal MP Indi), Fran Rowe (Rural Financial Counsellor and Co-chair 1996-98), Pam Moore (Country Women's Association of NSW), Marg Carroll (RWN Coordinator, 1992–98), Vivienne Sinderberry (NSW Farmers). Unable to attend was Jenny Quealy (Landcare) and Pat Le Lievre (Western Division).



Country Care Link - caring for country families

A confidential family information and support service for Country NSW, *Country Care Link* provides:

- » a volunteer to meet country people in Sydney (48 hours' notice necessary for transport: exceptions in emergency situations)
- » assistance to find short-term accommodation for country people in the city

- » a referral service to find information
- » referrals for confidential personal counselling
- » a friendly voice for a chat
- » visits (on request) for country people in hospital.

Monday to Friday 9.30 am to 3.00 pm
t: 1800 806 160 or 02 8382 6434





RIRDC
RURAL WOMEN'S
AWARD

Today's visionaries, tomorrow's leaders

2014 NSW-ACT
RIRDC Rural Women's Award

A new breed of innovative and inspirational rural women is changing the face of agriculture and making a difference in a diverse range of industries including natural resource management, intensive farming, dairy, wine and new rural industries – to name just a few! These women are passionate about creating communities of women who have the adaptive capacity to manage the challenges of rural life, educating and raising awareness of the importance of primary industries, engaging youth in agriculture, and coming up with innovations and practices – women who have a vision to drive productivity and sustainability in primary industries and ensure our communities continue to thrive.

Once such woman is our 2014 NSW-ACT RIRDC Rural Women's Award winner Pip Job.

Pip Job, Cumnock

For Pip Job, primary industries is just who she is. As a landholder and environmental advocate from Cumnock in central NSW, Pip established her own beef enterprise at the age of 15 winning many awards and is highly regarded as a judge in Australia and New Zealand.

It's this love of the land which eventually led Pip to a career focusing on natural resource management and the mutual relationship it plays with sustainable primary production. Since beginning work with Landcare, in particular as Manager for the Little River Landcare Group 10 years ago, Pip has become increasingly interested in regenerative agricultural systems that have the capacity to create sustainable food and fibre production and environmental outcomes for many generations to come. She was also charged with looking after the social needs of the community, in particular the stress, anxiety and depression that was being seen in farmers during drought.

Today, Pip is the organisation's Chief Executive Officer, helping to make a distinct impact on the way farmers manage their landscape in our region, by developing training programs which have been attended by thousands of land managers. She is passionate about the impact that rural life can have on farmers and has instigated changes in the way Landcare operates to include the social needs of the community. This has included the 'Women in the Landscape' program which fosters learning, the exchange of experiences and the up-skilling of women to become more involved in farming businesses, a program which due to its success is now being rolled out nationally.

Pip has been working with various Landcare groups across New South Wales to help improve their governance and has provided planning and advice on policies, procedures and staffing. She is also a Central Tablelands Local Land Services board member and is an Executive Committee member of Landcare NSW Inc.

Pip has a vision for agriculture where farming family businesses are profitable and increase the ecological wealth of the land they manage. For this to occur Pip believes farmers need to adopt a holistic approach towards the way they balance their family needs, financial management and farming practices. She has been busy developing her facilitation skills to work collaboratively with families to bring about change that can help achieve sustainable outcomes.

Pip will use her Rural Women's Award bursary to create a rural women's training program entitled 'Positive Farming Footprints' using the principles and philosophies of Holistic Management and the Trinity of Management to create a community of women who have the adaptive capacity to manage the challenges of rural life. This program will increase the capacity of rural women to manage climate change and finances in a complex economy, as well as increasing their personal resilience using a social, ecological and economic platform.



Edwina Beveridge, Young

Runner-up in the 2014 Award, Edwina Beveridge has an undeniable passion for pig farming and the land. Along with her husband and three young children, Edwina owns and runs Blantyre Farms, a pig, sheep, cattle and cropping enterprise based at Young and Harden in south western NSW.

Edwina and her husband were early adopters of technology, investing millions of dollars in agriculture during the past few years, doubling the size of their pig farm and expanding their other enterprises. Edwina has renovated the old sheds and removed dry sow stalls from the property. She is continually working to improve efficiencies while maintaining sustainable environmental practices.

Edwina leads a team of 30 people, including women, in this traditionally male-dominated industry, and the farm made history by becoming the first 'carbon' farm in Australia.

The farm generates its electricity and fertiliser from pig manure and Edwina works with the Clean Energy Regulator to promote this farming model. The farm has the lowest carbon footprint of any pig farm in the country with half of its pig feed procured from waste from outside sources, which would otherwise end up in landfill.

Their initiative to capture methane from the manure and turn it into electricity was the first commercial project of its kind in Australia, saving the business \$20 000 per month in power and gas costs and allowing them to generate carbon credits.

Edwina is a member of the New South Wales Farmers Pork Committee and also works with Australian Pork Limited to host journalists, conduct interviews and create industry promotional videos.

Edwina's vision for the Australian agricultural sector is to improve efficiencies and compete on the international market, while maintaining sustainable environmental practices and high animal welfare standards.

Since the Award, Edwina has added 500 ha to the farming operation and is helping to direct Australian Pork Limited's R&D focus for the next few years. She recently spoke to a group of students involved in the pig industry at the Pan Pacific Pork Expo and has hosted two group visits to the family farm including high school students and key industry stakeholders. Edwina was also involved in producing an educational video with Australian Pork Limited, based on their methane/electricity production and pig farming enterprise, which is being shown to primary and high school students. So far 20 schools have taken part in the initiative and the aim is to have 200 schools participating in 2015.

About the Award

The RIRDC Rural Women's Award is Australian's pre-eminent Award for rural women. It recognises and supports their commitment and contribution to our rural industries and communities, and their strong leadership capabilities and potential. In particular it celebrates the unique way women approach leadership and effect change through connection and collaboration.

RIRDC Rural Women's Award State winners receive a Company Directors' course and a \$10 000 bursary to develop their vision into a project that will benefit primary industries and rural Australia. The Award is open to all women involved in primary industries and natural resource management. No formal qualifications are required and you can nominate yourself or someone else.

It's an amazing opportunity to develop your leadership skills, make a real difference and inspire others. It's a life-changing experience that will give you a platform to communicate your vision and connect you with positive and powerful alumni of women who like you are passionate about primary industries and rural Australia.

Applications for 2015 open 1 August and close 31 October 2014.

More information
www.ruralwomensaward.gov.au



Scholarship feeds Rozzie's career hopes

Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation (RIRDC)

Agriculture offers the most dynamic and diversified number of career pathways of any industry in Australia.

Across agriculture there is a hugely diverse range of jobs on offer for university graduates, including disciplines such as biochemistry, agricultural engineering, in-field agronomy, policy advice, investment analysis, industrial relations and many others.

With the pressures on agricultural production to address the challenge of feeding a rapidly growing global population and with a changing climate affecting productivity, agriculture will become an increasingly valuable career pathway with a high take-up of new technology and innovation.

The RIRDC Horizon Scholarship has been developed to support the next generation of agricultural leaders, who will take up the challenge of farming for the future. It is for young people who are passionate about agriculture, with a keen interest in the future of our industries and who are ready to expand their networks and learn new skills.

Rozzie O'Reilly is a recent recipient of a RIRDC Horizon Scholarship. When she finishes her Bachelor of Animal Science degree at the end of 2014, she intends to work as a nutritionist, combining knowledge from genetics and animal nutrition to optimise livestock production.

But unlike a lot of university students, Rozzie already has in-depth experience of her chosen career path, and agriculture in general, thanks to this scholarship.

As well as providing an annual bursary of \$5000, the scholarship has exposed Rozzie to industry placements and filled her contact book with the names of industry peers and mentors from across Australia.

Particularly influential was a placement she undertook at a 32 000-head feedlot in Glen Innes.

I believe that this placement truly cemented my passion to become a nutritionist, as it showed me just how influential nutrition is to production, Rozzie says.

Although she grew up on a small farming enterprise in Narrandera, this placement opened Rozzie's eyes to more intensive production practices.

I have since completed work experience at another two feedlots, completed a feedlot management unit at university, and attended the 2013 Australian Lot Feeders Association biennial conference – BeefWorks.

The University of New England student credits another placement, at Moxey's Dairy Farm in Forbes, as providing insight into an aspect of agriculture of which she previously had little experience.

This dairy is no ordinary dairy... Moxey's is the largest dairy in the Southern Hemisphere, and while I was there they were milking just over 2000 cows three times a day, producing 75 000 L of milk per day. On returning home, I gained a job in a dairy farm closer to home, and worked there all through my Christmas holidays.

Lallemand Animal Nutrition, a company based in Maroochydore, Queensland, sponsors Rozzie's scholarship, and she recently spent three weeks travelling around the countryside with the company's technical service manager. The trip centred on speaking to producers about Lallemand's products and offering nutritional solutions to aspects of animal health that were limiting production.

Rozzie has found her sponsor to be particularly nurturing of her aspirations, with Lallemand's Managing Director now a mentor.

The best part of the Horizon Scholarship is all the networking that is made available through the program, as well as the four-day Horizon conference held in Canberra each year.

Rozzie has seized other opportunities that have arisen through her university study, including being part of the 2013 Australian meat judging team, which travelled to the United States on a four-week study and competition tour. She has also participated in multiple industry conferences such as the Young Beef Producers Forum and the Charlie Arnott workshop, largely supported by the Horizon Scholarship program.

As a result of her broad experience of agriculture, Rozzie is a passionate advocate for the knowledge and care applied by Australia food producers to their work.

If producers didn't care for the welfare of their animals, their industries would not be sustainable, meaning they wouldn't be able to support their livelihood. The same principle applies to farming crops; if farmers don't grow their crops in a sustainable manner, then in the future there will be no agricultural industries.

The Horizon Scholarship is open to students entering their first year of university and studying a degree related to agriculture, such as agricultural science, rural science, livestock/animal science, veterinary science or agribusiness.

Applications open annually on 1 November. For more information and an application form visit www.rirdc.gov.au/horizon or call RIRDC on 02 6271 4100.

How you ever thought of studying to be a counsellor?

You can you know!

If you live in the New England and North West of NSW



- » you can study at home
- » attend regular local practical sessions
- » achieve an accredited qualification

College of Counselling Studies NENW Inc
24 Dean Street TAMWORTH NSW 2340
t: 02 67 669 400
e: registrar@counsellingstudiesnenw.org.au

www.counsellingstudiesnenw.org.au

ADVERTISEMENT

Social alchemist & change agent

By Phoebe Maroulis, Armidale



There is a unique magic in rural communities that comes to light when the right people add the right ingredients, in the right way, at the right time. I call this social alchemy.

As a social alchemist I am passionate about sharing the wisdom I am gathering along my life's journey, using it to inspire the individual and collective spirit in rural communities.

There is richness within rural communities. For some it is buried deep within the landscape, barely perceivable. For others it blankets the community, embracing and nurturing all who lie beneath its shelter. What creates this variation? How does one P&C group enjoy cohesion, progress and joy whilst another brings considerable angst? Why does one local council engage its ratepayers in a way that fosters ownership and engagement while the neighboring council struggles with infighting and opposition?

I believe the answer lies in how well the community knows the individuals who make up its whole. How well it embraces its citizens, how it fosters and nurtures the hopes and passions of its members. Not just the visible or vocal members but the whole community, warts and all.

Communities are like people and therefore to be the best versions of themselves they should 'know thyself' (Socrates).

The question many ask is, 'How do I influence this process?' How can I help bring the spirit back into a community where it seems buried and lost? How do I develop and maintain a sustainable contribution to my community, even though I have sometimes been burnt and jaded by the process to date? My journey has taught me that this is achieved by being true to oneself. By showing up whole and not dividing yourself into lots of parts or, worse still, showing up as someone you are not.

In my younger years I thought I needed to 'learn' different ways of being, so that I could make a difference to the world. I thought I needed to be on the executive of the committee and be vocal and assertive to have my point heard. I thought I needed

to be the one to perform the secretary role even though it made me sick to the core to even attend the meeting, let alone take the minutes. My thinking being, if I didn't do it the committee would fold and that would mean that I didn't care but I do care so I must take on the role! I thought that I needed to have a visible career to make a difference because of course no one listens if you're 'just a stay home Mum'!

But experience, often harsh, painful, scary experience, has taught me that I make the most impact as me; beautiful, wise, capable, intelligent me. I have learned that if life feels like a juggle you need to swap the tennis balls for one big beach ball. It has only been recently (and it is still very much a work in progress) that I have felt in sync with my purpose, able to make the unique contribution that only I can make and that my contribution is to take the essence of who I am and infuse it into all that I do.

It is such a great place to find oneself, grounded in the knowing that you, being you, as you, simply you, can, and in fact will, bring the change you wish to see in the world. This sense of security that comes from living whole brings tremendous comfort and hope.

I now listen to the discomfort, notice when I feel anger rising or a sense of overwhelming and ask where is this coming from? In what way am I dividing myself into parts or attempting to show up as someone I feel I should be, not who I am?

When the little voice pops into my head saying 'you SHOULD do that' I ask – would that make me feel whole? Would I come home feeling better or worse for the experience? Am I contributing in a way that is authentic or am I acting out of guilt and obligation? If there is a sense of guilt or obligation, shift your contribution. Look for a different way to show up and contribute, as *you*, in a way that nurtures and makes you feel whole.

'Find out who you are and do it on purpose.' – Dolly Parton

Phoebe works as a social alchemist, sharing her knowledge of community development through speaking, workshops, mentoring and writing. More information about her work can be found at: www.phoebemaroulis.com or www.facebook.com/phoebe.maroulis



our jobs, parked our lives and flew off to this tiny Pacific Kingdom as part of an Australian Government volunteer program.

Having no expectation can be a good way to start such a journey and we were pleasantly surprised and overwhelmed by what Tonga had to offer beyond the tourist trail.

Tongans are generous and open people who love to laugh, eat and sing – in and out of church. We adapted to these ways of living and became immersed in cultural life wherever we could. Consciously choosing to spend less of our free time with 'palangis' (westerners) gave us so many rich experiences and enhanced our understanding of a typical Tongan 21st century lifestyle.

Value-adding is a term familiar to those involved in business and agriculture. You start with a base product and develop it to create new markets and meet customer needs.

Our 'customer' was Gordon's host organisation 'Ahopaniolo Training Institute (ATI) and our value-adding came from many unexpected places.

We hosted 18 intrepid visitors throughout our 12-month stay and each and every one valued-added to our volunteer contribution in a myriad of ways.

They were willing suppliers and couriers of educational materials and items on ATI's wish list that were not easily available in Tonga. Some generously donated their time to do things such as develop a student registration program or website, contribute to solar panels or give computers and equipment to ensure students are not technologically disadvantaged.

Some even provided funds to support students from underprivileged backgrounds with scholarships which are enabling them to complete their vocational education and ultimately gain meaningful employment that will help not only themselves but more often their families and communities as well. Many ATI students come from poor backgrounds so being educated can provide a life changing opportunity.

Tongan life is on the whole lived communally. Extended families cohabit either under the one roof or within the same 'compound' on family land. This has obvious advantages and disadvantages.

Living in each other's pockets means privacy can be an issue, but on the upside there is a lot of support on tap just across the yard. This is especially critical when children need to be looked after if a mother is working to support her family.

It is a common sight to see older siblings caring for the younger ones. With very limited maternity leave for those lucky to be in employment, the ability to return to work can have huge benefits to family income.

Now we have returned to Orange, the routines of life and the reality of paid work, it is good to reflect on our year of wonders and the memories we shall have etched on us forever.

There was the elegance of Tongan music, church choirs, traditional dancing and dress alongside the natural beauty of beaches, swaying palms, sunsets, snorkelling and swimming with whales in warm waters ... the camaraderie of fellow volunteers, locals, friends and colleagues who broadened our knowledge and expanded our thinking.

To build our patience we endured challenges of language, two robberies, limited communications, cyclonic winds, earthquakes, humidity, rain and navigating un-signposted potholed roads but also had great pleasure in NOT relying on television for passive entertainment and read dozens of books or just spent time 'being'.

Along with the huge traditional funerary, wedding and religious feasts that certainly expanded our waistlines, there was the availability of glorious fresh seasonal foods at local markets along with some delicious restaurants to delight our palates and provided a break from root crops like taro, cassava and yam.

But above all being assigned to 'Ahopaniolo provided a gateway into Tongan society which was the bonus 'wild card'.

Through interactions with the dynamic Catholic Sisters, teachers, students and their families, we came to 'know' and 'see' our temporary island home in a new way. Pot Luck student training dinners, evening cooking classes, sports days, church services, beach parties, fashion parades, an aloha night and graduation day, glittery evening balls and even taking lessons with 'interesting' male students wearing size 14 stilettos were all highlights. We are very grateful to have been made to feel a part of the local community.

I highly recommend the Australian Aid volunteer program for anyone who wants to live outside their comfort zone... You may be like us and discover you gain more than you give.

More Information

www.austraining.com.au
www.australianaidvolunteers.gov.au

A mid-life gap year in Tonga

Sonia Muir, Leader — Community Engagement & Support NSW DPI

Taking a year off the treadmill of everyday life to throw ourselves into a different culture has been a dream fulfilled for my husband Gordon and I.

For many years I have been facilitating the Rural Women's Network's Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT) workshop and helping women to embrace change and put real substance to their personal visions and goals so they can be attained.

I am happy to report that a longer-term personal goal of volunteering and living overseas for a year can be ticked off my list.

We had intended to have our overseas adventure in 2012 but because of a health issue the project was delayed.

Sometimes we can have the best intentions but things which are out of our 'circle of control' mean we have to just ride with the easier waves into the shore before regaining our energy to paddle back out there and find that wave we really want to be on.

Even though our 'gap' year was delayed by a year it was well worth the wait.

Tonga has never been on our travel radar as a place to visit. I knew a little about Queen Salote who famously rode in an open carriage at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth in a rainy London, but that was about it.

So in March 2013 Gordon and I sold our car, packed up our home, took leave from

A proud history in wine, a passion for beef, a career with horses and a vision to help feed the world

Having grown up in the Hunter Valley on her family's historic 1012 ha property 'Cawarra', Gresford, Prue Capp always knew she would return to the country after studying in New Zealand to become an equine dentist.

Returning to Australia to start her Essential Equine Dentistry business in the Hunter Valley area, Prue later relocated to Wallacetown and commenced a Bachelor of Veterinary Science at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga.

In December 2013 she was named 2013 National Rural Ambassador following her success as a Royal Agricultural Society Rural Achiever in 2012. As National Rural Ambassador she hopes to encourage the younger generation to become involved and reap the benefits of what the agricultural industry and the rural achiever/ambassador award has to offer.

Prue's agricultural background and passion for the land has paved the direction for her future. She is a sixth generation grazier, whose family property was home to Dr Henry Lindeman and Lindeman's wines, which began growing grapes as well as producing and raising cattle in 1842. While the vineyard and winemaking ventures were moved to Pokolbin in 1912, the property continues to produce a successful primarily Hereford-based herd. They also breed Australian Stock Horses.

Asked what led to this career path, Prue says that like most 18-year-olds she had no idea what path she wanted to pursue, but was sure it would involve working in agriculture. She graduated from the University of New England with a Bachelor of Agribusiness (Marketing) in 2009 before travelling to South America, Europe and Africa.

Prue has a particular interest in the diversification of rural entities and is concerned for the many small communities such as Gresford, whose sustainability is under threat from challenges such as lack of employment opportunities, population deployment, struggling small businesses and lack of local education opportunities. This was a major contributing factor for her to study equine dentistry and target a specific niche market, as specialists in many industries do not travel to small communities like Gresford.

I believe in the future of farming and the sustainability of agriculture and I thrive on the opportunity to be an ambassador for agriculture.

When Prue returned to Australia and set up her business, she wanted to get more involved and became a member of the Agricultural Societies Council of NSW Youth Group.

I was very involved in my local Gresford show and realised that there were other young people my age with a passion for the agricultural show movement too. I have held an executive position on the youth group for four years now and spend many of my weekends at agricultural shows judging, stewarding, announcing, coordinating and getting involved.

Keen to do her bit to ensure the sustainability of agricultural industries Prue has also been actively involved in other groups and committees including the Australian Stock Horse Society and the Wagga Wagga Show Society.

While proud of her business and academic achievements, Prue had an ongoing thirst for knowledge. While she could not go too much further with equine dentistry she chose to undertake further study and in 2013 went back to university as a mature age student (all of 25) to study veterinary science.

I enjoy the course as it specialises in large animals, helping to close the divide between the number of city vets who specialise in small animals in comparison to the shortage of large animal vets. Once I have completed my degree I am looking forward to working in rural and remote areas.

Asked what hurdles she's faced along the way Prue says: *It's hard to accomplish what you want in life without facing hurdles and hardships, and I am no exception! However, with the goal in sight the hurdles seem to disappear faster than imagined — making the achievement all the greater.*

So where does she get her inspiration and determination? Prue will tell you her mother has been a key inspiration to her achieving more and be great at what she does.

Mum has demonstrated that doing the 'hard yards' is worth it in the long run and that I can do anything I wish to, no matter how far out of reach it may seem.

While Prue's Mum has undoubtedly been the most influential woman in her life there have been others too – women who operate their own businesses, hold positions of power, invest in their education and involve themselves in various community and agricultural aspects have also inspired her.

If she were to pass on one piece of advice to other young women wanting to pursue their dreams it would be: *You can do anything if you set your mind to it and are willing to make adjustments to achieve it.*

A young woman working and living in rural NSW, Prue is playing an important role in helping to build a thriving, sustainable agricultural future for tomorrow's communities. So where does she see herself in 10 years' time and what is her vision for rural Australia?

I see myself as a successful large animal veterinarian working in rural communities. I will still be engaged in agricultural issues and hopefully will spend some time working as a vet in the live export industry helping to continue the successful vision for rural Australia and ensuring our future food sustainability and securing Australia's role in helping to feed the world.

Prue's final piece of advice for young women reading this story is a quote by Audrey Hepburn: *I believe in being strong when everything seems to be going wrong. I believe that happy girls are the prettiest girls. I believe that tomorrow is another day and I believe in miracles.*

Be strong, be happy and most of all believe!





organisation that aims to facilitate sheep growers and service provider links with information, knowledge and research.

MerinoLink's membership is from a wide range of sheep businesses with varying production systems — from the farm to industry service providers who have been brought together by a common enthusiasm for profitable Merino sheep and a desire to continue to build the sheep industry's profitability as a whole.

I have also been privileged to be involved with another wonderful development, the Peter Westblade Scholarship (PWS). The PWS helps young enthusiastic people aspiring to a career in the sheep industry with in-kind and financial support to gain invaluable hands-on experience and network opportunities. The aim of the scholarship is to promote and deliver practical skills development, mentoring and networking with industry leaders and peers.

The scholarship honours the late Peter Westblade, who passed away in 2008, a true visionary of the sheep industry, epitomising compassion and devotion to a cause.

The scholarship is in its third year and has attracted applicants from all over Australia. The calibre of applicants is encouraging and inspiring in its own right.

I believe there is a strong future in the sheep industry and by encouraging and showing young people what opportunities exist, the PWS has been designed to add value to the many secondary and tertiary education funds that already exist.

Key lessons for me have come from passionate mentors, male and female, who care about passing on what they have learnt, sharing their time, skills and insight with young people wanting to have a go. I may never repay all the people that have helped me directly, however I endeavour to assist as many people who show the initiative to learn and grow. Our future is in their hands, and I am more than happy to hold a few.

More information

MerinoLink Limited
www.merinolink.com.au

Peter Westblade Scholarship
www.peterwestbladescholarship.com.au

Photo courtesy of *The Young Witness*

Our future in their hands

Sally Martin, Young

Three years ago I had the privilege to be named 2011 Runner-Up of the RIRDC Rural Women's Award. This opportunity reinforced the huge difference women can make in many agricultural industries and it gave me confidence to start my own consultancy business. I have also been privileged to be named one of the Westpac Group and *Financial Review* 100 Women of Influence in 2013, an extremely humbling experience.

I am passionate about rural communities, agriculture and more specifically the Australian sheep and wool industry. Often referred to as a 'sheep tragic', I have a great belief in the potential of a united wool and sheepmeat industry. Unifying these production systems via measurement and reason will provide clear direction for sheep producers and the industry as a whole.

Instead of choosing meat or wool, we can combine the best mix of the two to deliver better risk management and profitable solutions to farming businesses and secure product supply. The technology

and processes to make these production improvements exists and continues to grow within the public and private domains. I believe that the best way to communicate this to sheep producers and rural communities in general, is by building strategic relationships between public and commercial enterprises. This will create a sense of value for the information and increase the information distribution network.

I grew up on a grazing property on the Monaro in NSW. After studying agriculture at University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury, my career has taken a number of paths, from working with NSW Department of Primary Industries to setting up my own consultancy business in Young NSW that services commercial and stud sheep producers and service providers.

In addition to my consultancy business I am one of MerinoLink Limited's founding members and Chief Executive Officer. It is a recently formed not-for-profit

Online learning allows farmers to connect from the paddock

Michelle Fifield, Project Officer – Natural Resource Management,
NSW Department of Primary Industries

A new range of online training courses are available for agribusiness and farmers to study managing climate risk, carbon management, soil biology and salinity.

The EverTrain website currently offers accredited and non-accredited courses and was launched by the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and Future Farm Industries Cooperative Research Centre in December 2013.

Agricultural industries are currently facing a skills shortage, so we need to provide training in more accessible formats for people currently employed or seeking to join the industry such as we have done with the EverTrain online courses, DPI EverTrain project leader, Deb Slinger said.

EverTrain provides a flexible approach to learning which allows students, farmers and professionals who live in remote or isolated areas to connect with the latest knowledge.

Recently 50 Local Land Services advisory staff based across NSW completed the soil carbon and climate risk courses illustrating the flexibility of online learning with the EverTrain system.

The training program has a national focus, but also includes regional workshops. It has been developed to reflect the latest research and has been extensively peer-reviewed.

We are providing an opportunity for participants to update their skills and gain a nationally recognised qualification.

These courses are ideal for all land managers including farmers, agribusiness, extension providers and tertiary students looking to complement theory with an element of practical work experience.

The EverTrain course range currently includes:

- » Managing Carbon on Agricultural Land,
- » Managing Climate Risk in Agriculture,
- » Salinity Concepts NSW, SA and WA,
- » Salinity Management NSW, and
- » Soil Biology.

For more information or to sign up for a course go to www.evertrain.edu.au

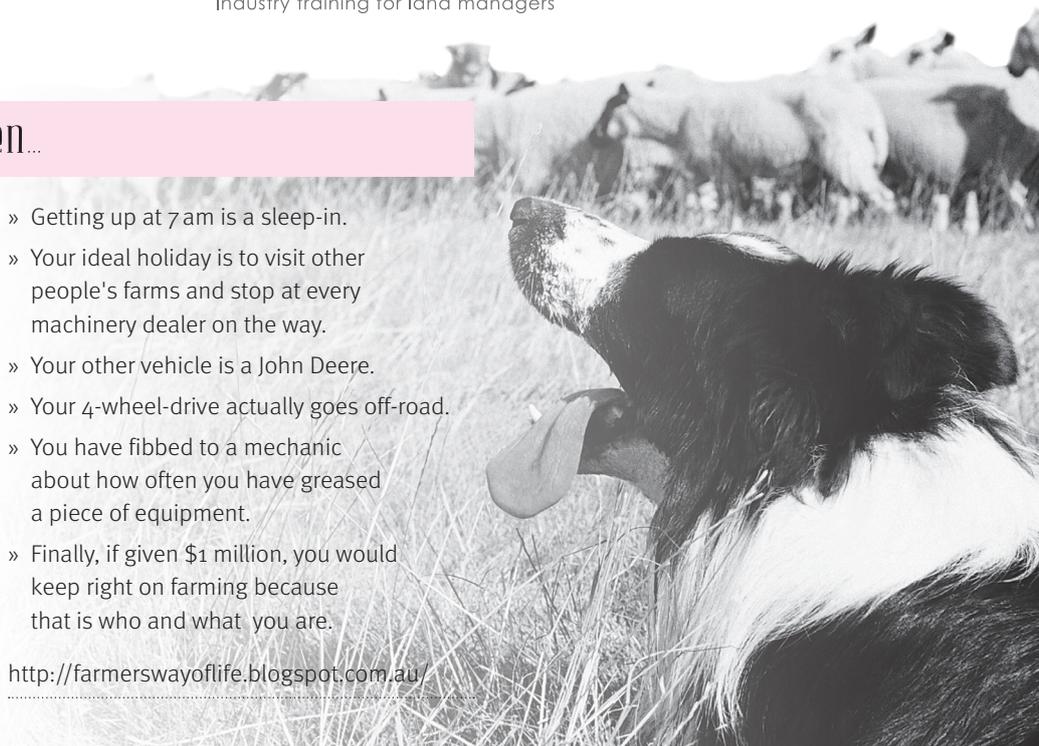
EverTrain.edu.au[®]
Industry training for land managers



you know you're a farmer when...

- » Your best dog sits on the front seat of the ute.
- » Your hands look like they are made from the same material as your boots.
- » You wave at every vehicle whether you know them or not.
- » You listen to ABC *Country Hour* and watch *Landline* on Sundays.
- » Over 50% of your clothing came from feed or seed dealers.
- » You fall asleep within 3 minutes of sitting in front of the TV.
- » You have used a front-end loader as scaffolding for roof repairs.
- » Getting up at 7 am is a sleep-in.
- » Your ideal holiday is to visit other people's farms and stop at every machinery dealer on the way.
- » Your other vehicle is a John Deere.
- » Your 4-wheel-drive actually goes off-road.
- » You have fibbed to a mechanic about how often you have greased a piece of equipment.
- » Finally, if given \$1 million, you would keep right on farming because that is who and what you are.

<http://farmerswayoflife.blogspot.com.au/>





Rural Fire Service sparks young passion

Kennedy Tourle, Dubbo

With over 700 000 members the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) is the largest volunteer fire service in the world. Women have played active roles in the NSW RFS since its beginning and a growing number are choosing to become part of this organisation which is dedicated to helping the community.*

Twenty-five-year-old Kennedy Tourle is a Community Safety Officer with NSW RFS at Dubbo, and a sixth generation farmer having grown up on the family's mixed farming property south west of Dubbo. Her upbringing provided her a strong work ethic and a passion to give back to the community. In 2013 she was honoured with the title of The Land Sydney Royal Showgirl.

My upbringing instilled in me a love of the land and agriculture, a respect for history and an appreciation of hard work and perseverance. It also gave me confidence to take on challenges knowing I am loved unconditionally and that whichever path I choose I have the full support of my family.

I feel blessed to have found employment with the local NSW RFS as it allowed me to remain hands-on at the farm. As the saying goes: *You can take the girl out of the bush but you can't take the bush out of the girl.*

When I was five I remember asking my mother if I needed to go to university to be a mum – it's still high on the agenda but I'm pleased to say that as I got older I broadened my outlook!

Growing up I didn't really know what I wanted to be but I was always ready to seize opportunities having been encouraged to find things that I enjoyed doing and always give them a go.

My parents have been a great inspiration – their zest for agriculture and involvement in community organisations, and their unconditional support has been a huge influence. My great Aunts Jess and Laura Tourle and my grandparents, Joan Tourle and Don Wotton have also had a strong influence. Recently my Grandmother phoned to say that being with the people you love is the most important thing in life – I hope to one day share the love that they have fostered in me with my own family.

My passion for the NSW RFS stems from family involvement with the local brigade. Dad always held executive positions within the brigade and is currently a Group Captain. From an early age I hankered to attend fires with him and joined the service

the day I turned 16. This was important to me and made me aware of the vital role volunteers play in rural communities.

Through the NSW RFS I've been fortunate to further my education and develop new business management and emergency management skills and become more involved in different organisations and community groups.

Being honoured with the title of 2013 The Land Sydney Royal Showgirl has by far been my greatest privilege. I have met and been inspired by so many wonderful people and I plan to continue my involvement and help promote the Show Society movement and be an advocate for the rural sector – hopefully encouraging more women into the industry.

There have been some hurdles along the way; however everyone faces these so I feel I am no different. I believe the hurdles and challenges we face meld who we become. Working in essentially male-dominated industries has made me appreciate more the value of women in the workplace – empowering women through education and recognition is an ongoing objective of mine.

While family has played a large role in my life, Aunts Jess and Laura have been the most influential. They were the epitome of grace, gratitude, generosity, kindness, endeavour and love. They were frugal and took nothing for granted. They taught me the value of engaging in conversation, being interested in all things around us, the importance of common courtesy and a strong work ethic.

Thinking about life 10 years from now I see a bright future. Let's face it – no matter who we are on this earth, everyone needs a farmer! I believe there is optimism in agriculture, particularly within young people, however I believe the challenge we face is to ensure agriculture is not only sustainable but progressive. We need to be able to replenish our resources and not just deplete them. Working with nature has always been the mantra of my family. For me, I would be content to realise the dream I had as a five-year-old, raising a family, and capitalising on opportunities as they present themselves.

More information

If you're wanting to contribute to the community, while learning new skills, developing new friendships and gaining confidence, find out how to get involved with the NSW RFS at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au For more inspirational stories of women in firefighting see the 'Publications page and

look for the 'volunteers' link to download the **Making a Difference: Women in the NSW Rural Fire Service* booklet.

For more on The Royal Showgirl Competition see: www.sydneyroyal.com.au/Showgirl.htm

The Land Sydney Royal Showgirl recipients Sarah Groat (Runner-up), Kennedy Tourle (Winner) and Sally Ormiston (Second Runner-up). Photo courtesy of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW.

Healthy life balance – taking control

If you feel you're being overwhelmed by commitments, here are 10 ideas to help you find the balance and regain control of your life.

Slow down. Take steps to stop and enjoy the things and people around you; don't make plans for every evening or weekend.

Avoid procrastination. Putting things off because you're overwhelmed is stressful. Set realistic goals and deadlines, and then stick to them.

Share the load. Taking care of the household, children or parents should not be the responsibility of just one person.

Let things go. Easier said than done, but learn to recognise the things that don't really have much impact in your life and allow yourself to let them go.

Get help. Within the NSW RFS there are counselling and support services for members and their families, or look around your community for support options.

Take charge. Develop a list, set priorities and then enjoy the satisfaction of crossing things off your list.

Simplify. Do you take on too many tasks and responsibilities? Drop unnecessary activities and start saying no where possible.

Take breaks. A break can be going on a holiday, but it can also be as small as time to just listen to music, meditate for a few minutes or take the dog for a walk.

Define your goals. Articulate them, and write them down.

Forget the guilt. No matter how much you get done, there is always more you could have done. Don't beat yourself up about it.

Source: *Making a Difference: Women in the NSW Rural Fire Service*, March 2011, Pg 19.

Pix still young at heart

Pix Jonasson is a single mother living in Port Macquarie and running her own successful business. She is a positive, community-minded role model for her two teenage children and many other young people, having spent the past 20 years working with youth.

Pix says it all started with national conservation organisation Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers where she worked with young Aussie and international volunteers on significant conservation projects. At 23 she led a team of seven Aussie volunteers, all aged under 25, on a three month exchange with the California Conservation Corps.

Throughout her 16-year career with the Victorian and NSW governments Pix was often involved with educating or working with young people on nationally significant water-based projects.

In 2011 Pix organised the inaugural White Balloon Day (WBD) on the NSW Mid-North Coast. WBD is the signature event for Bravehearts – Australia's leading agency on child protection that aims to empower, educate and protect, by providing healing and support, engendering child sexual assault prevention and protection strategies; advocating for understanding and promoting increased education and research.

From humble beginnings – with a morning tea at Port Macquarie Panthers attended by 35 people, where several hundred dollars were raised – the event has grown.

In 2012, the second WBD event attracted more community and media attention with a Community Celebration at East Port Veterinary Hospital, a local practice owned by Gary Turnbull, who subsequently became Chair of the inaugural Mid-North Coast Bravehearts Committee.

Over 250 people attended the fun-filled day, which included kids' activities (face painting, cake decorating, a petting zoo) a martial arts display, presentations about child safety and protection and, importantly 'The Ditto Show', a leading interactive educational program.

In 2013, a Bravehearts Breakfast was held, attracting more than 300 community and business people and raising \$15 000. Hetty Johnston, founder of

Bravehearts Inc, was the keynote speaker. Pix also organised a Bravehearts function at NSW Parliament House.

Later that year she joined the committee for the Luminosity Youth Summit Inc – a three-day event with inspiring speakers and master classes to guide and mentor 15–30 year olds to success. One of her achievements was to organise the MC, Andrew Morello, winner of *The Apprentice*.

With the motto 'Inspire, Challenge and Excel', over 250 people developed their own 'dangerous ideas' to follow up with. Many future leaders who attended have expressed their desire to be at 2014 Luminosity Youth Summit.

Pix says she looks forward to continuing her work and supporting young people through mentoring and special youth initiatives.

More information

Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers
www.conservationvolunteers.com.au

Bravehearts and White Balloon Day
www.bravehearts.org.au

Luminosity Youth Summit Inc
www.luminosityyouthsummit.com.au
or www.facebook.com/LYFmnc





Are astronauts sexier than agriculture?

Bessie Blore
2013 Young Farming Champion

Everything these people do, they do for the health, wealth, and happiness of all Australians.

They believe in celebrating diversity, sustainability, creativity and progress. They believe in supplying the world with trustworthy products, that consumers can be confident in.

They do this by bringing consumers and producers together, by visiting city schools and raising awareness, and by telling their stories on social media.

These people are young, and champions of their industries.

Most of them are female.

They just happen to be farmers.

A few months ago a story about celebrating the achievements of four female American astronauts was doing the rounds of Australian social media. It was shared more than 55 000 times. Following its success, I thought convincing the same audiences of the awesomeness of young farmers would be a cinch. Surely we're easier to relate to than American astronauts? We're Australian for starters. We're enthusiastic

and vibrant, some of us are just out of school, some of us have degrees and PhDs, and we're just as interested in the environment, and what we feed our families, animal welfare, and chocolate, as you are.

Yet my recent experience shows audiences who are often all too happy to jump on the 'Farmer Wants a Wife' bandwagon still shy away from talking about the other two 'f' words that make a farmer a farmer – food and fibre. In fact, uttering those words in the wrong environment can leave me feeling as if I've tried to hand out propaganda paraphernalia for a cult.

I'm left asking the question: Why are astronauts more interesting than agriculture?

Wait, don't answer that. Because I've got a story about young people – and yes, most of them are women – that needs to be celebrated! Because it is awesome that these mums, daughters, sisters and wives believe in leaving a lasting, positive legacy on an industry that affects and supports every single Australian, every single day of their lives.

Let me introduce you to the 2013 Young Farming Champions of the Art4Agriculture program.

Now, I am biased, because I am one of them.

So I'm already convinced of the benefit and importance of putting my time, energy and effort into being involved with Art4Agriculture. But this story isn't about me. It's about the dreams and beliefs of this program and every young person who has put their hand up to be involved, and the thousands of other Australians immersed in their industries.

You won't see our faces on billboards or bus windows. (Though, let it be known, I am selflessly willing to take one for the team if it comes to that.)

You will find us in the paddocks of our farms, the lecture halls of our universities, the labs of our local research facilities or the factories of our food and fibre processors. And when we're not there, we'll be visiting schools in Sydney, Brisbane and Canberra

(and maybe one day Australia-wide), talking to primary and secondary students through our roles as Young Farming Champions. We'll be opening their eyes to the diverse, exciting and innovative career opportunities obtainable through agriculture.



Of the 16 people selected to represent the 2013 Art4Agriculture team, 12 of us are women. Jasmine Nixon, Hannah Barber, Danille Fox, Naomi Hobson and Kylie Schuller represent the beef industry; Kirsty McCormack and Liz Lobsley are on team cotton; Cassie MacDonald is a dairy representative; and Cassie Baile, Jo Newton, Adele Offley and I are flying the flag for wool.

Some of us are fifth-generation farmers, and others couldn't tell a sheep from a goat when they were thrown into the industry by happy coincidence (OK, that second one was me!) And given the average Australian farmer is a 52-year-old male, we're kicking the stereotype of a weathered, middle-aged farmer, leaning against an old, wooden fencepost with his Akubra dipped to the sunset.



These days the face of farming is just as often female.

Although I've focussed on the achievements of women in a typically male industry, the young men involved are no less notable, stepping out of their comfort zone and into city classrooms to share their passions and dreams. This year alone there is Martin Murray, who flies planes, and writes blogs from his tractor cab; Ben Egan, who grows enough cotton each year to produce more than 1 million pairs of jeans; Billy Browning, who grows almost everything you'd find in a box of fibre packed cereal; and Andrew Darcy, whose dairy farm is partly staffed by robots. ROBOTS! I'm serious.

How is this not amazing enough, interesting enough, sexy enough for after dinner conversation as we feed

our souls with chocolate mousse/rice pudding/frozen yoghurt, quite possibly produced by Andrew's cows?

We don't want to be thanked. We don't want you to think of us every time you eat a meal or get dressed, or praise the genius who invented naturally sustainable eco-friendly housing insulation on a negative degree morning.

We just want you to believe that what we're doing is as cool as being an architect, or lawyer, or teacher, or doctor, or astronaut...

We think it's cool, because agriculture is not about farmers. It's about people. People who believe in the health, wealth, and happiness of all Australians. People who believe in celebrating diversity, sustainability, creativity and progress. People who believe in supplying the world with trustworthy products that consumers can be confident in. Some of them just happen to be farmers.

For more about Art4Agriculture or get your school involved see www.art4agriculture.com.au or www.facebook.com/Art4Agriculture

Find out about the new batch of 2014 YFCs at: www.art4agriculture.com.au/yfc/yfc2014.html

Family Stories

Are you looking for a dynamic Workshop Facilitator / Performer for your next conference or special event?

Christine Middleton is an Award Winning Playright, Author and passionate Recorder/Performer of Family Stories.

T: 0419 526 550

E: Christine.mi@bigpond.com

www.christinemiddleton.com.au



Photo: Scones, Lamingtons & Chocolate Roll – The Story of Sheila, Outback NSW Restaurateur and Farmer

ADVERTISEMENT

Real men knit! War & Peace - the men's knitting project

Men, young and old, are encouraged to take part in the making of a knitted art installation of small knitted samplers on the theme of war and peace which will be sewn together to form a large wall hanging and displayed at The Goulburn Regional Art Gallery in April, 2015 as part of the Anzac Centenary.

This 'men only' knitting project commemorates the soldiers who served in World War 1 and it also assists returned veterans who have been wounded, physically or psychologically, in the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts. Men who register for the project are asked to make a direct small discretionary donation to 'Soldier On'.

Studies have shown that knitting both concentrates and relaxes the mind, releasing serotonin and endorphins, thus creating a meditative state of mind. It was used widely as 'occupational therapy' for servicemen after the first and second world wars.

This project seeks to engage men in a therapeutic and creative knitting project, whether they are high school boys who would like to learn to knit or young and older men dealing with various life issues of loneliness, depression, stress, isolation or chronic pain – or men who just want to develop their creativity.

Men can read much more about the project and the benefits of therapeutic knitting by going to the website where they can also register, print out the knitting instructions and watch short videos on learning how to

knit. Knitting is an easy-to-learn skill and one that was developed by men centuries ago when they were master knitters.

More information: See www.mensknittingproject.com.au or contact Kaye Healey at kayehealey@gmail.com or 0408 675 536.



Widyunggalu-ndhu wi-gi? How are you going to live?

Gariya yaambul yala dhulubul ya-la.
Do not tell lies. Speak the truth.

Ya-l-mambi-ya mayiny-galang.
Marunbunmi-la-ya. Teach the people. Love each other.

Marraga-la-dha. Walan-ma-ya mayinygalang. Hold together and empower the people.

Marun-bunmi-ya mayiny-guwal-bang-gu.
Be kind and gracious to strangers.

Winhanga-gi-gila-dha. Ngu-ng-gi-la-dha.
Care for each other. Share with each other.

Yindyama-la Mayiny-galang-gu. Give honour and respect to all people.

Gulbala-dha murraya-la marrum-banggu. Speak up for justice and peace without fighting.

Nga-nga-dha garray-gu bila galang-gu.
Look after the land and the rivers.

Yandhu garray-bu bila-galang-bu nganga-girri nginyalgir. Then the land and the rivers will look after you.

Diane McNaboe
on behalf of the Wiradjuri Elders



Women in Dairy: a new generation

Women in Dairy is a new not-for-profit group that has been developed by local women Ali Duckworth and Nicole Nicholls. They represent a dynamic group of women who are committed to supporting and networking dairy farming families across Australia. They aim to provide the facilities to bring people together, educate and generally provide assistance to dairy families who need a helping hand.

We spoke to Ali about her journey so far... her involvement with the dairy industry and setting up the new Women in Dairy group.

Tell us about your childhood? How has this shaped your passions?

I grew up on the banks of the Clarence River in Grafton. One of my earliest memories is learning to 'ride' our beautiful Friesian house cow, Sookie. I was fortunate to be surrounded by animals and always had a passion to care for them. My grandparents were dairy farmers and, though they had stopped before I was born, visiting their old dairy was one of my favourite pastimes.

As a child what did you want to be when you grew up? What things/people have influenced this path?

I wanted to be a vet but eventually realised I wouldn't be able to handle the heartache that comes with that occupation. I love people and I love animals so ideally I wanted something that would combine the two. I come from a line of strong, working women so not pursuing a career was never an option!

What are you working on at the moment?

From living in country Grafton, to working in the corporate environment in cities in other countries, then back to country

Grafton, I have gone full circle and I am once again surrounded by animals. I'm a dairy farmer and currently working on 'Women in Dairy – The New Generation' together with Nicole Nicholls. This is a project I've wanted to begin since marrying into the dairy industry seven years ago.

What inspired you to follow your dream?

Dairying women are incredible. In the course of a single day they can be mothers, wives, career people, workers, vets, nurses, accountants, chefs, housekeepers, taxi drivers and many more. They need support and have so much knowledge to share with us all. I'm motivated by the desire to link all these women together and find inspiration to continue in each and every one of them.

What steps have you taken to get to this point?

Initially the idea was born from my need (I felt pretty isolated when I first started dairying) but as time progressed I've discovered that isolation and lack of support is common among dairy farming families. I needed an extra shove though and a fairly random conversation with Nicole got the idea off the ground. My corporate career/training has been very useful in establishing the media needed to get our message across.

Have you faced any hurdles along the way? How have you addressed them?

Absolutely – and we've only been going a few months! The only thing to remember with hurdles is that they only make the journey harder (or more interesting) – they don't change the destination. We stay focused on what we want to achieve and will do whatever it takes to achieve it.

Who has been the most influential woman (women) in your life and why?

As with many daughters, my mother is the most influential person in my life. She has faced a lot of setbacks and opposition and yet has soldiered on with determination. She has always taught me I can do anything and has led by example. Her mother was also an incredible inspiration to me. What she achieved she did so at a cost so this has taught me to be balanced. Finally, my sister – being 11 years older than me she naturally fell into the 'heroine' category. She has achieved so much in such a short period of time and has remained the most giving, caring and kind person I know.

What is the greatest piece of advice you have learnt from these women?

You can achieve anything you set your mind to.

What advice you would pass on to other young women?

Don't let other people's negativity and lack of vision affect your positivity. Remember, it's not what happens that matters – it's how you react. Stay focused and don't lose sight of your goal.

What is your favourite inspirational quote?

'In life there are always good things and bad things. The good things may not take away the bad things but the bad things don't take away the good things either.'

As a young woman working and living in rural NSW you are playing a very important role in helping to build a thriving, sustainable agriculture for tomorrow's communities. Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time? What is your vision for rural Australia?

I hope that as more and more people recognise the role and importance of rural Australia, small family farms like ours will start to increase rather than decline. I hope that the industry is still strong enough for my family to continue dairying. Of equal importance though, I hope that WIDA has done its job and has given the support, education and networking needed to keep our dairy farming women strong.

For more about Women in Dairy Australia see: www.wida.info You can also connect with them via Facebook @WIDA Women in Dairy Australia

Being an Australian woman is a privilege

Family & Community Services
Women NSW

Being an Australian woman is a privilege – the work I do to empower women and girls in a culture that often does not afford similar support and freedoms has opened my eyes to the opportunities that are available to women in NSW.

Jennifer Star from Goulburn is a young and enthusiastic teacher, who has always excelled academically and in sport. Despite having many options for a bright future in a comfortable, safe environment Jennifer has chosen to dedicate her life to women and children who don't have access to the education and resources that most of us take for granted. It was this passion that saw her included as a finalist in the 2014 Harvey Norman's Young Woman of the Year Award.

Conscious of her privileged upbringing in Australia, in 2009, Jennifer followed her passion to help others and went to New Delhi, India to work with women and children. With a Masters in International Education from Oxford University, she decided to use her education to help empower women and children and founded an Education not-for-profit organisation called Tara.Ed (www.taraed.org).

**Out on the patio we'd sit,
And the humidity we'd breathe,
We'd watch the lightning crack over canefields,
Laugh and think that this is Australia**

Sounds of Then (This is Australia), GANGgajang, written by M. Callaghan, released 1985

Jennifer remains the driving force in Tara.Ed, committed to achieving her vision of providing quality education for 20 000 children in India and Bangladesh by the year 2020. She is well and truly on her way to achieving that goal with her organisation already impacting on 21 schools, 250 teachers and over 8 000 underprivileged children in rural and remote areas of India and Bangladesh.

Tara.Ed has developed a specific focus on empowering young women and in 2013 provided over 50 scholarships to 'at risk' girls aged between 11 and 16, to encourage them to complete a full course of education.

Although India was named the most dangerous country to be born a woman by the United Nations in 2012, Jennifer remains committed to her cause and continues to travel most of the year between India and Bangladesh.

Her work is not limited to India and Bangladesh. Jennifer has also engaged over 2 000 NSW public school children in rural areas such as Bowral and Goulburn to work with schools in India through the Tara.Ed School Connect program. The program helps the younger generation understand social and cultural issues that other children face around the world.

Jennifer's drive and can-do attitude has seen her compete in a number of elite sporting championships. She was Australia's first medallist in Judo at the Youth Olympics in 2005 and a top-ten finisher in the 2009 and 2011 World University Championships. In her spare time she uses her judo skills to teach self defence to underprivileged girls in New Delhi's slums.

Jennifer's achievements were recognised when she was named the NSW Young Australian of the Year in 2012. She has also been acknowledged by Oxford University receiving the Vice Chancellor's Civic Award in 2012.

Commitment and dedication have seen Jennifer take the opportunity to challenge herself and make a difference in a place where help is needed most. Her courage and passion to change the lives of women and children through education is inspirational.

More information

To read more about the 2014 Women of the Year winners and finalists visit the Women NSW website at www.women.nsw.gov.au



Parenting: choose your mindset

Source: ReachOut <http://au.reachout.com/what-is-a-mindset#How>

When you're confronted with a challenging task do you: a) give it your best shot; or b) have a nap? Your answer to this question is probably determined by the kind of mindset you have.

What's a mindset?

You know how many people like to define themselves as being either a *glass half-full* or *glass half-empty* kind of person? What they're talking about is their mindset. Simply put, a mindset is a set of ideas and attitudes that shape the way someone thinks about themselves and the world. Someone's mindset will determine the way they behave, their outlook on life and their attitude towards everything that's going on around them.

For example, getting back to the glass analogy, if you're a glass half-full kind of person, you tend to have a positive mindset which means you approach everything that you do in an optimistic way. If you're a glass half-empty kind of person, you might approach or think about many of the things you do in a more negative or cynical way.

The kind of mindset you have can really shift the way you approach your everyday life. And the good news is, your mindset is not set in stone; there are things that you can do shift your mindset so that you're getting the most out of it.

The different kinds of mindsets

There are two different kinds of mindsets: **growth mindsets** and **fixed mindsets**.

Someone with a growth mindset is likely to:

- » be keen to learn from people around them,
- » understand that in order to get what they want, they've got to put the hard yards in,
- » recognise that failure is an opportunity to learn,
- » be aware of their weaknesses and focus on improving them,
- » welcome challenges,
- » be open to new things and new ways of learning.

The flip side of that is a fixed mindset.

Someone with a fixed mindset is likely to:

- » avoid challenges where they think they might stuff up,
- » not deal very well with setbacks,
- » try to hide their mistakes,
- » be convinced that their abilities are limited to one area. For example, believing that they're a 'creative' type or an 'athletic' type etc,
- » practise negative self-talk by saying things like *I can't do it*.

How to get a growth mindset?

So, it's clear that growth mindsets are really important for learning new things, embracing new challenges and dealing with setbacks. Check out some handy tips for turning a fixed mindset into a growth mindset:

- » **I can't do it... yet.** The way we talk to ourselves in our mind (our self-talk) has a really big impact on what we actually achieve. If you tell yourself that you can do it, chances are that you will; even if it doesn't happen straight away.

- » **Challenge accepted.** Next time someone throws an unfamiliar or tricky task your way, don't throw it back at them – embrace it. Even if you stuff up along the way, you can be sure that next time you'll do better.
- » **Do some hard yakka.** You're unlikely to reach your goals if you're not putting in the effort to match. Put the hard work in and you'll be able to enjoy the rewards.
- » **Ain't no such thing as perfect – there is always room for improvement.** Always put as much effort as you can into the learning process. Practise your skills and make an effort to learn new ones. Last time we checked, the guitar isn't going to learn itself.
- » **Celebrate the big successes, and the small ones.**
- » **Be open to new ways of doing things.** You can never be sure of how something is going to pan out if you've never tried it before. Before you make the assumption that something will never work, ask yourself, *How can I make it work?*
- » **Don't let setbacks get you down.** When you come across setbacks, think about things that have helped in that situation before, and things that haven't. Take feedback on board, and make changes accordingly. Setbacks don't mean you've failed; just that you need to try a different approach.

Troubled by your mindset?

If you're having issues getting your mindset to a place you're happy with, have a chat to someone you trust about it, like a friend or someone you trust. Otherwise, have a chat with a counsellor; they'll work with you to help you understand what's going on and figure out how to improve things.

What can you do now?

1. Check out how to challenge negative thinking <http://au.reachout.com/Challenging-negative-thinking>
2. Next time you do something awesome – big or small – celebrate it.
3. Everyone makes mistakes – learn from them and move on: <http://au.reachout.com/everyone-makes-mistakes>



Building emotional resilience

Source: GRDC Farmer Health Fact Sheet, November 2013 (www.grdc.com.au)

Emotional resilience is the willingness and capacity to accept that there will be good and bad times ahead, and to understand your reactions to these experiences and have strategies to manage them.

Resilience is a process, not a trait of an individual or an event. It takes preparation, and even practice, to develop and maintain emotional resilience.

Being resilient does not exclude you from experiencing difficulty or stress. However, it means you will have a tendency to cope as a result of processes, behaviours, thoughts and actions that **'bounce you forward'** to a more normal state of functioning in the midst of adversity.

Emotional resilience is your ability to:

- » recognise and accept challenging times in life,
- » recognise your own reactions and symptoms to challenging situations, and
- » have strategies to enjoy life's ups and downs so you stay well, in control and feel energised.

Seasons will be volatile; good things and unfortunate things will happen; change and challenges will occur. It is not whether these things will happen or to what extent, it is just a matter of when.

If you lack resilience or strategies to respond appropriately, you may display flight, fight or freeze behaviours.

- » **Flight.** Avoidance behaviours where individuals do not talk about the situation, deny the nature of it and even lie about its seriousness.
- » **Fight.** Individuals get annoyed or angry and often 'shoot the messenger' rather than addressing the message.
- » **Freeze.** Individuals feel overwhelmed and don't know what to do.

The way individuals react, and what they need to do to manage their reaction in a positive way, will vary from person to person.

Key points

- » Accept where you are in life and what life is throwing your way.
- » Listen to your inner voice and, if negative, change your 'self-talk'.

- » Look for ways to be connected within the community.
- » Learn to get comfortable with feelings and be able to express them openly.
- » Surround yourself with positive people.
- » Look after your health.
- » Resilience can be planned for, developed and practised.

The facts up front

- » One in five Australians will experience a mental illness.
- » 13 per cent of Australians will experience some form of anxiety disorder.
- » 20 per cent of Australians will experience depression at some time.
- » Stress-related illnesses are estimated to cost Australian businesses around \$30 billion per year.
- » Suicide and attempted suicide rates in Australia are the highest in the world.
- » An estimated 31.1 million prescriptions for anti-depressive drugs were issued in Australia in 2009–10.

Five key strategies to build resilience

1. Positive self-talk and listening to your inner voice

Your self-talk reflects how you feel and think about yourself. When challenged, what is your self-talk? What do you hear yourself saying when you are facing a tough situation? If you have a negative self-talk, does it influence your actions and how other people interact with you?

Work at changing your self-talk so it is positive. Try and describe the situation in another way. Simply reframing your self-talk won't make the problem or challenge go away, but a change in self-talk may move you away from the flight-fight-freeze responses and into problem-solving behaviour.

During difficult times it can be hard to remember all the skills it takes to run a farm business. Rather than focusing on the negatives, consider the vast array of attributes and skills you have that contribute to your business and family life. They might include advanced negotiation, practical problem-solving, high work ethic, technology skills and so on.

2. Focus on the things you can control

Sometimes it can be difficult to know the difference between things that can and can't be controlled.

Become adept at knowing what you can control, as opposed to wasting energy on the things you can't. Be realistic and ask yourself, 'What can be done about this, or at least part of this?' It might be overwhelming but consider if there are parts that can be addressed to get some positive return.

3. Planning

It is important to plan and have mechanisms in place to apply in difficult times.

Begin by understanding what 'pushes your buttons' and might threaten your resilience. Knowing what reaction you have when your 'buttons are pushed' enables you to make a plan to counter any adverse reactions and adopt a different strategy or reaction.

Find out what works for you, create a plan and build on it continually.

Time management is also important to help create a stable and certain environment so you can better handle any surprises. Having a plan, even a simple to-do list, will remind you of the steps you are taking and the progress being made.

4. Look after yourself

By looking after yourself you increase your capacity to handle the challenges around you.

- » **Physical health.** Exercise, a balanced diet and rest are crucial. Make it a priority to see a doctor and dentist. This may be difficult in some rural areas, but schedule them at least twice a year, every year.
- » **Mental health.** De-stress and maintain quality of sleep. Think about whether you get a good night's sleep, are able to wind down and de-stress. If not, consider why.
- » **Connectivity and social networks.** Stay connected with your friends, family and your community through local groups, clubs and online social networks
- » **Spirituality.** We each have a spiritual dimension. Try to connect with it by spending time in nature, meditating appreciating music or art, or prayer.

continued over page ...

... continued from p21

Feeling good doesn't just happen. Living a balanced life requires taking the time to renew yourself and improve your personal wellbeing. Remember: every day provides a new opportunity to recharge and look after yourself.

Give yourself a break. Taking time away from the farm can be a source of stress and potential conflict among family members. Even during busy times, consider taking a break of up to four days to recharge and increase your effectiveness when back at work. During 'down time' you should take a break for at least four days.

Tip: If you can't look after yourself, you can't look after your family, your mates or the business.

5. Connecting with community

It is essential to stay involved with family, work and the community for many positive reasons, including being able to contribute, being valued and to maintain perspective. The more people you interact with, the greater the likelihood that you will meet people who have experienced, survived and grown through similar experiences.

Look for ways to connect with the community through work, volunteering, sporting clubs or charity clubs, and get your friends involved in the activities as well. There is scope for positive engagement through the virtual community. Social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, is a valuable tool to stay connected and engaged both locally and further afield.

Make the choice to be positive. Positive people attract positive people and all the benefits that come with that. Negative people attract negative people and everything that goes with that. Surround yourself with positive people and reap the benefits.

What is depression?

Depression is a mood disorder that is characterised by an unusually persistent sad mood that does not go away, a loss of enjoyment and interest in once pleasurable activities and a lack of energy and tiredness.

It is helpful for people to understand what depression is and what it isn't.

It is not something to be ashamed of or to feel guilty about. It is not a character flaw or a sign of weakness, or a lack of discipline or personal strength. It is not just a mood that someone can 'snap out of'. More importantly, depression is not permanent and the chances for recovery are very good.

Some risk factors for depression include:

- » loneliness,
- » lack of social support,
- » recent stressful life experiences,
- » family history of depression,
- » marital or relationship problems,
- » financial strain,
- » early childhood trauma or abuse,
- » alcohol or drug abuse,
- » unemployment or underemployment, and
- » health problems or chronic pain.

Why are farmers more vulnerable?

- » intense periods of work,
- » lack of sleep,
- » isolation,
- » lower exercise levels,
- » services not readily available,
- » self-sufficiency and independent attitude,
- » 'just get on with it' attitude, and
- » the stigma around mental illness and a general reluctance to seek help.

Spotting the early warning signs

Mental health is a state of wellbeing. It refers to our emotional, psychological and spiritual health, and how we feel about ourselves and the world around us.
Dennis Hoiberg, Lessons Learnt Consulting.

Emotions and feelings can get out of balance. If they remain so for an extended period of time they can cause significant impairment, affecting your ability to function, and can become a clinical condition.

It is important to be able to recognise the signs and symptoms that indicate your resilience is slipping. They can be different for each individual.

Some signs resilience may be slipping include:

- » declined productivity, quality of work,
- » increased tardiness, lateness,
- » missed deadlines, incomplete tasks,
- » carelessness, mistakes,
- » lack of cooperation,
- » withdrawal from activities,
- » increased irritability and frustration with minor events,
- » increased sensitivity to criticism,
- » increased alcohol consumption or abuse,
- » complaints of aches and pains,

- » constant lethargy, and
- » individuals appearing ill at ease and not themselves.

Tip: As a guide, if someone experiences these symptoms for more than two consecutive weeks with no explanation and it is affecting their ability to function, they should seek professional help.

How to build a resilient lifestyle

Maintaining resilience is an ongoing exercise. Having a plan and looking at it once is not enough, it needs to be part of your life.

- » **Get comfortable with feelings.** Have the courage to ask the question, 'How are you going?' and follow up with 'I am concerned for you,' and 'I am here for you if you need.'
- » **Care for your mates, colleagues and families.** Keep connected in the community and talk yourself, and your mates, up.
- » **Give yourself a break,** take some time out and get away. Get good quality sleep.
- » Don't suffer from the 'I wish I had a ...' syndrome.

Remember, a resilient mindset and dealing with everyday life issues in a calm and balanced manner consists of:

- » accepting yourself for who you are and accept responsibility for looking after yourself,
- » listening to your inner voice and having positive self-talk,
- » understanding what 'pushes your buttons', how you respond and what you can do to change your response – it's our reactions that cause the stress,
- » empathy and viewing life through the eyes of others,
- » communicating effectively,
- » robust decision-making mechanisms,
- » dealing with mistakes,
- » dealing well with success and knowing what you're good at,
- » being reinforced in the environment that you are in, and
- » following through in order to maintain a resilient life.

Watch the kids

Children hear and interpret far more than most of us realise. In times of adversity or stress, communicate clearly with your children and reassure them. Be conscious of the conversations you have with your spouse, business partners or others when your children are around.

Useful resources

Beyondblue (depression and anxiety)
1300 224 636 www.beyondblue.org.au

Black dog Institute
www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

Centre for Rural and Remote Mental
Health www.crrmh.com.au

Clinical Research unit for Anxiety and
depression (CRufAd) 02 8382 1408
www.crufad.com

Lifeline (crisis support and suicide
prevention) 13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au

National Centre for Farmer Health
www.farmerhealth.org.au

Frequently asked questions

We know how important it is to look after ourselves, but why aren't we doing more about it?

Sometimes it is difficult to know where to start because there are so many messages out there. Small and regular changes to habits can have a positive impact over time. You don't need to go overboard, but remember to be patient and allow time to look after yourself.

Looking after yourself first doesn't mean you are less focused on your business. In fact, being healthy and looking after your wellbeing will mean you are more effective with your time and energy so you actually get more done in less time or achieve the goals you set out to.

Am I going to be perceived as weak if I work on building my emotional resilience?

No. You are more likely to be admired for focusing on this skill and with experience and over time you are likely to attract others who are managing adversity.

The power to make a difference

By Emma Regan, Rural Women's Network

'Celebrate the power of volunteering' was the theme for the 25th anniversary year of National Volunteer Week (12–18 May), a theme which portrays the strength of volunteers and volunteering in Australia.

Part of this strength is the many rural women and young girls who play an important role in ensuring the survival of our community groups and charities – without their valuable contributions some of these groups could simply not carry on.

As a way of acknowledging and celebrating the work of rural women volunteers who give so much of their time and energy to help others, in 2010 NSW Department of Primary Industries' Rural Women's Network partnered with the NSW Centre for Volunteering to establish the NSW Hidden Treasures Honour Roll.

Amy Hart and Georgia Westcott, two inspiring young women from Peak Hill, are among the amazing volunteers included in the 2013 Honour Roll.

As student leaders at Peak Hill Central School, Amy and Georgia regularly volunteer at their local school and in the community. Both compassionate and caring individuals, they are wonderful role models for their peers and younger students.

Keen to improve opportunities for young people, the girls say that it is only through inclusive community engagement that the community can become a more harmonious and healthy one.

Having identified a need for active after-school activities for young K–6 students, the girls set about making it happen. They engaged their peers and supportive adults as well as sponsors and local sporting and fitness groups to make it a reality.

Not only is the program helping to reduce social divisions by building community harmony, it is also promoting health and wellbeing through physical activity.

The program runs two afternoons a week and is open to all children, regularly attracting 70 per cent of the town's young people. It includes a healthy afternoon tea and has recently expanded to provide other leadership opportunities for older students who are involved in the organisation, ensuring there is a succession process to secure the program's longevity. The programs include age appropriate activities with educational or skills development outcomes.

Along the way, Amy and Georgia have gained support in governance and event/program management. They have raised funds to buy new equipment and have secured donations to build a storage shed.

Mark Horton from Sport & Recreation at Dubbo says, 'It is testament to Amy and Georgia's leadership skills, tenacity and drive for improvement in their communities that has ensured the program has gone from strength to strength.'

To nominate someone for the 2014 Honour Roll go to www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn to complete your nomination online and share with us a few paragraphs about why your nominee is worthy. All women nominated will be included in the 2014 Roll to be launched at the NSW Rural Women's Gathering in Coolamon on 12–14 September 2014.



Embrace the simple things

Linda Tillman is the Director of Tilma Group and has built the business from its humble beginnings operating from her home office to the dynamic and growing agency it is today, employing four staff. She is a Director for the Australia Regional Tourism Network and last year was awarded Gold at the NSW Tourism Awards in the 'Young Achiever in Tourism' category.

Originally from the North Coast region of NSW, Linda is passionate about promoting regional NSW and Victoria as exciting and thriving destinations. She now lives in Marrar with her husband, two children and a menagerie of animals and is heavily involved in her community as voluntary secretary and treasurer of the Marrar Polocrosse Club and a board member of the local sports ground trust.

We spoke to Linda about how she came to start her own business and her recent win at the NSW Tourism Awards.



Tell us about your childhood? How has this shaped your passions?

I've always been a country girl with my first 12 years spent in Dubbo, followed by a move to Alstonville on the NSW North Coast where I finished my schooling and university studies. My family worked hard and were by no means wealthy, which I believe fuelled my desire to be successful. I learnt from a young age that success and happiness is not always

about the money, but more the quality of the experience. This simple upbringing has given me an appreciation for many things, including the beauty and appeal of regional and rural communities, people and destinations. I now enjoy promoting and assisting rural and regional communities to embrace the simple things and share them with visitors.

As a child what did you want to be when you grew up? What things/people have influenced your path?

As a child I dreamed of being a vet but then in my teenage years, surrounded by a positive and motivated group of close friends who influenced me to do my best and follow my dreams, I had a desire to manage the Sheraton Mirage in Port Douglas. I followed this dream to university and completed a Bachelor of Business in Tourism. In my second year I studied Rural Tourism as an elective and this is where it 'clicked' – the power of tourism to rural communities. I completed a major assessment based on a case study of Nundle and it was this exact point that influenced my career.

What are you working on at the moment?

As the Managing Director of Tilma Group I work with regional and rural communities to assist them to grow and leverage the tourism industry (or visitor economy). Based in the Coolamon region (home of the 2014 NSW Rural Women's Gathering) my team has worked on the management of the National Rural Women's Conference 2012, destination marketing for rural councils such as Coolamon Shire and Junee Shire, managing regional festivals such as Griffith La Festa and the International Millinery Forum in Wagga Wagga... and more. The work I do is diverse but the essence is the same – assist rural communities to grow and thrive.

What steps have you taken to get to this point in your career?

Hard work and dedication! At the end of my degree I travelled Australia for three years, spending time in regional and rural communities. This provided me with an amazing insight and appreciation for what this great country has to offer.

I have surrounded myself with positive and influential people, which includes other successful small business owners, networking groups and family and friends. I always attend seminars, conferences and training programs

to ensure I stay at the cutting edge. The best thing of all is that I have to travel and enjoy regional destinations to ensure I am always aware of their needs and opportunities!

Have you faced any hurdles along the way? How have you addressed them?

I always keep things simple and stay true to my beliefs and values, which seem to keep me away from difficulties.

Who has been the most influential woman (women) in your life and why?

My Mum has been very influential in terms of my beliefs and values but it was my high school friends that have been the most influential in my career, and they still are. We are all hard workers and drive each other on an ongoing basis. I feel very blessed to have a great network of friends to support me.

What is the best piece of advice you have received?

Always challenge yourself. Never settle for second best and think that you cannot achieve something – you CAN!

What advice you would pass on to other young women?

Experience as much as you can while you can. I attribute a large amount of my skill and knowledge to my travel and life experiences – the people you meet each day will have different influences on your life.

What is your favourite inspirational quote?

Believe you can and you're halfway there. Theodore Roosevelt

As a young woman working and living in rural NSW you are playing an important role in helping to build a thriving, sustainable agriculture for tomorrow's communities. Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

My vision is that rural Australia is a vibrant and must-visit place on everyone's bucket list. I would love to see growth in rural tourism and the visitor economy, with more domestic and international visitors making the journey to enjoy and experience the people and places of rural Australia (the real Australia!). I want to be part of this, which is where I will be 10 years from now!

More information

NSW Tourism Awards
www.ticnsw.com.au/nsw-tourism-awards

Communities in focus: now we're talking!

Saul Nightingale

Trainer and Project Manager at the Centre for Community Welfare Training

It's fair to say that most of us do not enjoy having difficult conversations. We either avoid them entirely – resulting in us feeling unacknowledged and frustrated, or we go charging in like a bull in a china shop – resulting in increased tension and conflict. While both of these approaches are common, neither response is likely to result in successful outcomes. So how can we have successful difficult conversations that are honest, respectful and productive?

Start with yourself

Prior to having your difficult conversation consider the following questions:

- » What do I want for myself? (What are my needs? What outcomes would I like?)
- » What do I want for the other person?
- » What do I want for the relationship between us?

By clearly defining your responses to these questions you are creating the equivalent of a roadmap for the conversation that outlines where you want to go and how to get back on track if you should get lost.

Make it safe

A key part of having successful difficult conversations lies in our ability to make it emotionally safe for the other person to engage in the conversation. Failure to do this is likely to result in them feeling threatened, which will lead them to respond

defensively, which increases tension and inhibits honest free flowing discussion. Creating safety begins with our opening sentence and involves us signalling our intentions early, inviting the other person's perspective and expressing our desire to work collaboratively. Examples of safety-creating opening statements include:

I'd like to see if we might reach a better understanding about... I really want to hear your feelings about this and share my perspective as well.

I'd like to talk about... with you, but first I'd like to get your point of view.

I think we have different perceptions about... I'd like to hear your thinking on this and to discuss my thoughts too.

Notice how the above statements avoid blame, are respectful and encourage collaboration. It's important to be attentive to safety throughout the entire conversation and to avoid those things that are toxic to safety. These include: blaming, attacking, being judgemental, seeking revenge, one-upmanship, arrogance, sarcasm, disrespect, wanting to 'win' and defensiveness.

Communicate your perspective

Here we are aiming to honestly and respectfully communicate our point-of-view. When doing this it can be helpful to start

by sharing your facts and observations before explaining the conclusions you are beginning to draw from these. For example:

I'm a little confused, on the one hand you have regularly asked for my ideas on... and yet I've noticed that none of my suggestions have ever been acknowledged, or implemented. This is leading me to suspect that my ideas are not valued.

Notice how this example communicates clearly without resorting to aggressive, judgemental or blaming language.

Really listen

It's vital that we demonstrate our commitment to genuinely understanding the other person's perspective. Conflict tends to escalate when people don't feel heard, and our accurate understanding of the person's perspective is likely to broaden our own point-of-view, as well as encourage them to want to better understand us. A simple way to demonstrate our understanding of the person is by implementing reflective listening. This involves repeating our understanding of the person's message/perspective using our own words.

Finish clearly

Finally we want to make any actions agreed upon crystal clear. Also, depending on the situation, you may need to collaboratively set time frames, schedule a follow up date and document the outcomes of your discussion.



Taking action and inspiring YOU to ACT!

When young people come together they achieve great things, and we're stronger through our diversity.

One of Australia's largest youth-run organisations, The Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) grew from a handful of students back in 2006 to now boasting more than 115,000 members and 100 active grassroots groups around the country. With a mission to create a generation-wide movement to solve the climate crisis, the organisation has helped thousands of young Australians take action in their schools, universities, and communities on climate change.

AYCC has been able to achieve a lot with little due to the commitment and innovativeness of their members.

In recognition of this work AYCC National Co-Directors Lucy Manne and Kirsty Albion were last year recognised for their work with the organisation when they were named joint recipients of the Prime Minister's Young Environmentalist of the Year Award for 2013. We spoke to Lucy and Kirsty about their journey so far and their work on climate change at a national and international level.

Lucy Manne

AYCC's National Co-Director, Lucy began volunteering for the group in 2009. She has been part of the Australian Youth Delegation to the United Nations climate conferences in Copenhagen and Cancun. After several years volunteering at AYCC, Lucy worked for the Bureau of Meteorology's Pacific Climate Change Science Project, and then moved to New Hampshire in the United States in 2012 to work as New Media Director on a successful Democratic campaign for Congress.



Tell us about your childhood? How has this shaped your passions?

I grew up in Cottles Bridge, which is about an hour's drive from Melbourne, near Kinglake. It's a green wedge area, and a lot of my childhood was spent in the bush behind our house. I remember the drought that seemed to get worse and worse every year, until eventually our dam dried up completely and we had to pay to truck in water for our horses. These experiences definitely shaped my relationship with the environment, and are a big part of why I do what I do.

As a child what did you want to be when you grew up? What things/people have influenced this path?

When I was a kid I wanted to be an artist – unfortunately I soon discovered I didn't have any artistic talent. As I got older, my parents and many great teachers helped me realise the importance of working to make the world a more just place, where the opportunities I have had in my life are not only for the lucky few.

What are you working on at the moment?

After many years volunteering, I'm now the Co-Director of the AYCC empowering young people to take action on one of the biggest issues of our generation – climate change.

What inspired you to follow your dream?

The AYCC was founded and led by some of the most passionate, inspiring and committed young women I've ever met – learning from them, and many women who have generously mentored and supported me over the years, has given me the self-belief to take on my current role.

What steps have you taken to get to this point?

Through the AYCC I've had great access to mentors and training programs in everything from management to campaign strategy. It's given me an incredibly strong support network of like-minded young people, without whom I wouldn't be here today. I've also sought out opportunities to learn from other organisations and leaders, including working on the election campaign in the United States in 2012.

Have you faced any hurdles along the way? How have you addressed them?

Climate change is already happening, and it's having a devastating impact on Australia and the world's most vulnerable people – so the hardest thing is to retain a positive outlook. I do this by focusing on the incredible stories of those who are working towards a more sustainable future.

Who has been the most influential woman (women) in your life and why?

There have been too many influential women in my life to mention, but the most influential has definitely been my Mum, who has taught me by example to do work that I am passionate about, and in that work to be ambitious, honest, and generous to others.

What advice would you pass on to other young women?

If you're not sure if you're qualified enough, or skilled enough, or experienced enough for an opportunity – go for it. You'll learn the most by throwing yourself in the deep end.

What is your favourite inspirational quote?

It always seems impossible until it's done. – Nelson Mandela

Kirsty Albion

AYCC's National Co-Director Kirsty and has been part of the team for over five years. She has led many major campaigns including Meet Your Member where young people met 215 of our Federal politicians, 2010 grassroots election campaign and a 328 km Walk for Solar thermal in Port Augusta.



Kirsty is passionate about empowering young people on the issue of climate change and has run training days for thousands of young people. In 2010 she was awarded Young Tasmanian of the Year.

Tell us about your childhood? How has this shaped your passions?

I grew up in Tasmania, right near the beach and would spend my weekends clambering over rocks and peering into the pools full of molluscs and crustaceans. I was lucky because my mum worked for Parks & Wildlife, so we were always piling into the car and spending weeks in the most beautiful rainforests, climbing to the top of mountains and exploring wild coastlines. This is definitely what gave me my passion for protecting our environment for the future.

As a child what did you want to be when you grew up? What things/people have influenced this path?

When I was younger I wanted to be a wildlife vet. When I was studying vet science at university, I spent a summer volunteering in an orangutan shelter in Borneo. It was a dream come true, but when I was there I was confronted by the impacts of deforestation and extensive fire damage. As I learned more, I found out that climate change is making Borneo hotter and drier

– similar to much of Australia – meaning more intense fires. This has made me passionate about reversing climate change.

What are you working on at the moment?

I'm fortunate to be one of the National Co-Directors of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition. This means I get to work with thousands of young people across the country who are passionate about securing a safe climate for our future. Our vision is to reduce our pollution by moving towards renewable energy.

What inspired you to follow your dream?

I am always inspired by the young people I meet who are using their creativity and passion to make a difference on climate change. They include young people who have got their school to put solar panels on their roof to those who are running campaigns to keep coal seam gas out of their community.

What steps have you taken to get to this point?

Most of the jobs I've had started by volunteering with a project I loved, learning as I went along, and opportunities always seem to open up eventually. Having said that, AYCC has provided me with some incredible training and mentors who have made it possible for me get to where I am today.

Have you faced any hurdles along the way? How have you addressed them?

It's hard to witness the impacts of climate change on the people and places I love around the world. Here in Australia we just had our hottest year on record, and we're seeing the impacts of more intense floods, droughts and bushfires on our land. I focus on the stories of people who are speaking out about climate change and making their communities more sustainable to inspire me.

Who has been the most influential woman (women) in your life and why?

The AYCC was founded by two incredibly inspiring young women – Amanda McKenzie and Anna Rose – and their vision and support has been really influential.

What advice would you pass on to other young women?

Find out what you like doing and what you're passionate about, and then seek out opportunities and people who will help you get there.

More information

aycc.org.au
info@youthclimatecoalition.org

AYCC NSW is the perfect place to meet new people, build your skills, and most importantly be a part of solving climate change. There are action groups across both Sydney and regional areas, from the North Shore to New England, and Western Sydney to Wollongong. Volunteers care about a wide range of issues, from human rights, to environmental conservation, to political engagement. They come together regularly to make plans, take action, and have their voices heard, and they are always happy to see new faces. Whether they are holding a strategy meeting or climate communications training, there's always a chance to have fun with other volunteers and to create long term friendships or build your network.

AYCC NSW want to hear from new volunteers who want to get involved – if you want to find out more get in touch via ella.weisbrot@aycc.org.au or amelia.anthony@aycc.org.au and check out the Facebook page www.facebook.com/ayccnsw

The ACT branch hold monthly meetings at the food co-op in Kingsley Street. Email moira.cully@aycc.org.au or see their Facebook page www.facebook.com/AYCC.ACT



Women's health: Am I worried or is this anxiety?

Everyone worries and has anxious feelings at some time in their life. How do you know what is worry or anxiety, and when it is a problem? And how do you learn how to manage anxieties in order to prevent them from affecting your day to day life?

A new website **Anxiety: think, learn, do** developed by leading women's health organisation, Jean Hailes for Women's Health, is an innovative resource aimed at preventing common mental health problems in women. The website encourages women to *learn* about anxiety, *think* about the things that worry them and make them anxious, and offers practical ways to manage and live with anxiety.

It includes self-assessment and self-management tools, videos with experts, as well as personal podcast stories. The website covers stages of life including young, midlife and older age, as well as particular conditions such as fertility, pregnancy and beyond and chronic illness. Using simple questions, the tool guides women through the stages of anxiety to help them work out if what they are feeling is worry, anxiety or an anxiety disorder.

When you are worried you usually feel troubled or concerned about something. Worry generally doesn't last too long and it doesn't cause fear.

When you are anxious you usually experience nervousness or fear that something bad is about to happen. You experience physical symptoms such as faster breathing, sweaty palms or racing heart but you can usually get on with doing daily tasks and the symptoms calm down.

Anxiety that causes constant physical symptoms, intense fear, distress and affects your day-to-day living, is more likely to be an anxiety disorder. One in three women and one in five men will experience an anxiety disorder over their life-time.

What are the signs and symptoms of an anxiety disorder?

- » Excessive worry that is difficult to control,
- » Increased heart beat,
- » Rapid breathing,
- » Feeling irritable, restless,

- » Fatigue, difficulty concentrating,
- » Muscle tension,
- » Difficulty sleeping,
- » A specific fear of something, e.g. spiders,
- » Avoidance,
- » Feeling like you are losing control or need to escape.

Causes of worry and anxiety and how you can help

Since time began, to ensure our survival, humans were programmed to feel anxiety to fight against threats (the fight response) or to run away from them (the flight response). This is why you get a racing heart and the blood moves to your muscles to prepare for action. The trouble is, the causes of anxiety are now not necessarily real threats to our life.

Understanding what causes you worry and anxiety and then working out ways to help yourself is a great first step.

Causes of worry and anxiety How you can help

Unhelpful thinking

Anxious feelings are often connected to the thought 'What if... something bad happens?' What if:

- » I make a fool of myself,
- » I hurt myself,
- » I stuff it up.

Understand how your thinking influences your anxiety and come up with challenges to these.

Lack of confidence

Being confident in yourself and your abilities helps to protect you when things don't go right or you are under stress.

Lack of coping skills

Finding ways to cope when things get tough or tricky can help with anxiety. This might be going for a walk, writing your thoughts down, talking to a friend. It is a good idea to have a few coping skills to call on in times of distress.

Stress

Reducing stress helps give you space to cope with your anxious thoughts and feelings.

Lack of support

Having someone to turn to can make anxieties seem less overwhelming and helps put them into perspective.

This might be a trusted friend, family member, doctor and/or psychologist.

Unclear roles and lack of a sense of purpose

Having roles you feel good about and a sense of purpose can give meaning to your life. This can help to make you feel more confident in yourself and your ability to handle your anxieties.

Unhealthy eating and not enough exercise

Having a healthy lifestyle including a nutritious diet and getting some physical activity into your day helps you to cope better with the physical feelings and thoughts that come with anxiety.

Something you are taking or drinking

Some medications such as asthma medication can make you more prone to anxiety. Discuss with your doctor if anxiety is a side effect of any medication you are taking.

- » Think about the amount of alcohol, coffee or caffeinated drinks you are having. Once you go over a certain limit you can start to feel more on edge.

Remember...

The most important thing is to face the very things that are causing you to be distressed and know that a certain level of anxiety is part of life. Avoiding situations in case something bad might happen makes you feel better in the short term, but makes anxiety worse in the long term.

If you are in need of urgent psychological help and need to talk to someone straight away please call, Lifeline – 13 11 14 (24 hours a day 7 days a week).

For more information on anxiety across the whole of women's lives visit anxiety.jeanhailes.org.au

More information

1800 JEAN HAILES (532 642)



Margaret's signature-red

Maya Zahran, PR & Communications, Cancer Patients Foundation Ltd
& Look Good... Feel Better

When Tamworth local Margaret Rock joined the Look Good... Feel Better (LGFB) program 13 years ago, little did she know how much of an impact she would have.

As part of a team of 1500 volunteers across the country, Margaret donned the signature-red LGFB apron in a bid to fulfil the charity's mission to help Australians face cancer with confidence.

The free community service program helps to improve the wellbeing and confidence of people undergoing treatment for any sort of cancer. Thanks to the support of volunteers from the cosmetic and hair industries, LGFB hosts free workshops for women, men and teens to help manage the appearance-related side-effects caused by cancer treatment.

The workshops include sessions on skin care, makeup, wigs and head coverings. Each participant receives a Confidence Kit, full of products donated by the Australian cosmetic industry, and has access to advice and assistance from trained volunteers.

Margaret initially joined the program as a workshop volunteer through her role at the North West Regional Wig Library. As a wig specialist she helped address participants' concerns about hair loss.

Margaret then stepped up as the program's facilitator and spent a great deal of time doing the rounds in the oncology ward promoting the program and encouraging a greater uptake by those who could benefit within the local community.

It was her commitment, leadership and passion for the program that gained her the title of LGFB National Volunteer of the Year in 2012. Margaret says: *I am very passionate about the program and I enjoy helping people. Look Good... Feel Better helps people when they are going through a very hard time and I feel by promoting and doing the workshop I can help people cope with their treatment better. I love the program because I can see the difference it has on the participants. By the end of the workshop they not only look great but are talking with more confidence and their self-esteem is already returning.*

Former LGFB workshop participant Heather agrees with Margaret, *I almost didn't attend the workshop because I was feeling quite down and emotional the day before, but I'm so glad I went. After a few hours of pampering and care from the LGFB team, trying out a gorgeous take-home pack of cosmetics and tips, and making new friends, I left the workshop feeling like a new person. Battling cancer can be hard work, physically and emotionally, and the workshop truly helped heal my spirit. I'm very grateful for that.*

The program is offered at more than 180 locations across the country for patients undergoing treatment for any sort of cancer. Members of the community wishing to volunteer are encouraged by Margaret to, *just do it as it is one of the most rewarding things you can do!*

For more information about a workshop or volunteering call 1800 650 960 or see www.lgfb.org.au

To see what a difference a workshop can make watch

www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6tMEcFUogA

Heart Foundation Walking

Take the first step to fun and fitness today!

Heart Foundation Walking is a network of free community-based walking groups with volunteer Walk Organisers who lead groups in your local area.

The Heart Foundation is taking steps to support Australians to lead active, healthy lives by encouraging them to join or start Heart Foundation Walking groups which are fun and a great way to meet new people.

Walking for at least 30 minutes a day provides a range of heart health benefits including maintaining healthy weight, increased fitness and strength, improved self-esteem and mental health.

Members receive some great benefits including special offers, regular newsletters, incentives and prizes to help keep walkers motivated.

To find out where your nearest group is, or how you can start a new group as a volunteer Walk Organiser visit www.heartfoundation.org.au/walking or call 1300 362 787.



Horsin' Around in Scone at the 2013 NSW Rural Women's Gathering

Catherine Porter, Yamba

It was a delightful honour to be invited to the 2013 NSW Rural Women's Gathering at Scone last October as a member of RWN's Rural Women Connect initiative. I met many inspiring women from all walks of life who are achieving and pursuing their own dreams and aspirations.

My husband accompanied me for the weekend and as we hadn't been up through that part of the country for about 12 months we were looking forward to seeing how it was holding up under the dry conditions. We were rather surprised as to how dry it was and the bushfires around Maitland were very evident from the smoke haze not too far in the distance. On arriving in Scone and attending the sign-on, it was evident that this was going to be a well-run weekend – from the happy smiling faces to the words of welcome, it immediately raised my expectations.

The first event was held at the beautiful Scone racecourse – it was superb – from the architecture, amenities and racetrack, to the complimentary drinks and fabulous food. There were local stalls selling crafts and gifts as well as an art exhibition. There were equestrian demonstrations which elicited many hold your breath moments, followed by Fashions on the Field with fabulous prizes awarded to both men and women, which resulted

in a great amount of laughter especially when the men had to strut their stuff. It was a wonderfully entertaining evening.

Saturday morning begun with a Heartmoves morning walk, followed by the Official opening and launch of the 2013 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll by Lucinda Corrigan (Chair of the Primary Industries Ministerial Advisory Council) who attended on behalf of the Minister for Primary Industries.

Robyn Pulman, author of *Design your destiny through creating winning habits*, inspired us with her ideas for creating winning habits. Her bio states that 'winning is a habit' and that we often surmise that 'success is way beyond our reach'; however, she says that we can look at it in another light and that is – 'yard by yard it is hard; inch by inch it's a cinch'.

There were various workshops before and after lunch covering a multitude of interests. I chose one on how to make your own healing products using herbs and weeds from the garden. I found this excellent and we produced several creams and lotions. I followed this with a tour of the historic Geraldton property and then 'Blairgowrie', home to successful local artist Sarah Bishop. This was country hospitality at its best – a delicious afternoon tea and a visit to Sarah's studio.

The Gathering Dinner on Saturday evening was the highlight for me. At the dinner Dr Kaye Cussen spoke about her work with

Médecins Sans Frontières and this was followed by entertainment from Susan Davis, the Scone Singers and Bush Poet Greg Scott. Susan Davis and the Scone Singers are truly talented and Greg Scott had everyone enthralled and enjoying his jokes. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the dinner itself – it was magnificent.

On Sunday the Rotary and Westpac Helicopter Rescue Committee hosted morning breakfast at the Scone High School, with an abundance of wonderful food and fantastic service.

A Heartmoves session and a moving ecumenical service was followed by more workshops. This time I chose to do an Indian cooking class. I enjoy cooking curries and we made samosas, pakhora and curry puffs – it was a fun workshop with all the women discussing cooking and eating. There was a lot of food so we shared it with other participants at morning tea, not that there was any lack of other food available.

The weekend was drawing to a close and so it was time for the 'Women of Influence' session. First to speak was Kelly Foran of the Friendly Faces, Helping Hands Foundation. Kelly was inspirational and her personal story brought many a tear to each one's eyes. She and her family's hardships and how they coped and responded to these challenges was indeed an enthralling story – quite remarkable!

Su



Trisha Thomas followed and spoke about empowering women through education. We were thrilled to have Robyn Pulman speak again at the closing ceremony. She is funny and entertaining, with a wonderful assortment of stories relating to her arrival 'in the bush' and how she learnt to fit in and become part of rural Australia.

It was then time for the handover to the 2014 Coolamon Women's Gathering Committee and the closing ceremony led by Susan Davis showcasing Singing in Harmony.

It is at this point that I must make reference to and give the most heartfelt thank you to firstly; the men and women of Scone and district who provided each and everyone with the kind of generosity and welcome that is synonymous with country hospitality. They cooked and prepared food for breakfast, morning and afternoon teas and lunch that was unbelievably delicious, in quantities that belied belief.

To the Scone High School and their beautifully turned out students who were our hosts and helpers a big thank you. You helped make it the success it was.

To the women who hosted the various workshops and helped to inspire and teach others, thank you.

Finally to the organisers of the Partners Program, my husband Glen is still talking about the fantastic day he had with the other partners, their tourist hosts, bus driver and owners of the various studs and other historical venues they visited. Lastly, to the organisers of the Scone Women's Gathering Committee, you did yourself proud.

Last but not least to the RWN, thank you for the opportunity to attend and to meet such a diverse and interesting group of women, I will remember it for a very long time.

Join us for the 2014 Gathering at Coolamon on 12-14 September. Find out more and register at <http://nswruralwomensgathering.org>



Men's Matters: mind your mind

Mind your Mind® is Alzheimer's Australia's dementia reduction program. The program provides you with advice about reducing the risk of developing dementia and promotes a brain healthy lifestyle.

Dementia cannot yet be prevented and there is no cure, so it is important for you to be aware of what you can do to reduce the risk of developing dementia. There is now scientific evidence that adopting a brain-healthy lifestyle may reduce your risk of developing dementia, and the Mind your Mind® program points the way to how.

There are no guarantees, but the evidence shows that people who stay active and look after their vascular health are on average less likely to develop dementia, and if they do get dementia the onset may be delayed so they have more years of healthy life.

The seven Mind your Mind® signposts

Mind your Brain: Challenge your brain with new activities by learning a language, doing puzzles or crosswords, reading or enrolling in a course.

Mind your Diet: Eat fruit and vegetables, legumes, wholegrain breads and cereals, fish, lean meats, reduced-fat dairy products and unsaturated oils such as olive, sunflower, canola and flaxseed.

Mind your Body: Be physically active in ways you enjoy such as walking, playing sport, going to the gym, dancing, doing yoga, pilates, tai chi or gardening.

Mind your Health Checks: See your doctor to make sure your blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar and weight are healthy for you.

Mind your Social Life: Catch up with family and friends, join a club or group, volunteer or go to events.

Mind your Habits: Drink alcohol in moderation and do not smoke.

Mind your Head: Take care not to fall, be careful as a pedestrian, wear a seatbelt and wear a helmet when riding or for certain sports.

For more information go to www.alzheimers.org.au or www.mindyourmind.org.au or call the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500.



Creating winning habits... habits are not just for nuns

Robynisms

You'll never move forward whilst looking in the rear-vision mirror.

Under promise and over deliver.

Winning is a habit, unfortunately, so is losing.

Act as though it is impossible to fail.

Tell your partner you love them before someone else does.

If you want to be enthusiastic, act enthusiastic.

The truth will set you free.

Small minded people talk about people.
Medium minded people talk about events.
Big minded people talk about ideas.

Don't make decisions when you're mad.

You can predict your future by creating it.

The real measure of your wealth is what you'd be worth if you lost all your money.

www.robbyn.com.au

Women Leaders: Georgie Aley, Sydney

A finalist in the Women in Australian Agribusiness (WIAA) 100* and aged just 29, Georgie Aley has achieved significant success at executive management level within the agricultural sector in Australia and internationally. She is currently the Managing Director of the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council Ltd and before that worked with Grain Growers Limited as the General Manager of Grower Interest.

Georgie is currently Chair of the Future Farmers Network (the only national agricultural youth network in Australia) and has been a Director since 2008. She is also a Non-Executive Director of Pulse Australia Ltd and Director of Workforce Consulting Pty Ltd. Georgie was elected to the inaugural Global Youth Ag Summit Board of Directors, an international conference established to get youth under 25 to find solutions to address the global challenge of food security.

Georgie has a strong passion for the sustainable future of Australian food and agribusiness industries and was last year recognised for her outstanding leadership in Australia and New Zealand's food and agribusiness industries as the inaugural recipient of the Rabobank Emerging Agribusiness Leader Award.

What motivated you to become involved?

I initially became involved in industry committees and boards as I felt I could offer a broad spectrum of

opportunities to these organisations based on my exposure to networks and information gained through my professional role. With my primary focus at the time on young farmers and their engagement and ongoing education, I felt I was in a position to drive results and outcomes on their behalf. My motivation has been sustained over the years having witnessed the impact on people through key activities I have been involved with. Some of this was through feedback from young farmers telling me how my efforts have directly assisted them to not just survive but thrive in what they are doing – that is motivating and rewarding enough!

What do you get out of being in these roles?

I get to see industry at a range of cross-sections. I'm able to bring perspectives gained from cross-industry exposure to my roles and with that, add value to the organisations I'm involved with. For me this provides a sense of satisfaction that I can give back to an industry that has provided me with a rewarding career. It allows me to effect change and improve aspects of the industry that will ensure we have a sustainable and profitable food and agricultural sector in Australia.

Have you experienced any obstacles?

The only real obstacles were the ones I placed on myself. I think there is a difference between being arrogant or cocky from confident. As a young woman from a city background, I have at times questioned my ability and knowledge and lacked confidence in my capabilities. I believe that is part of any ongoing self-learning and from this I've not only been able to ask questions but also to identify the unique skills and capabilities I bring to a table. I'm now more comfortable as I know the contribution I am able to provide.

Where do you get your support?

I am a firm believer in mentors but they need to be the 'right' one. I've been fortunate to have two great mentors – each providing me

with different challenges on a personal and professional level. This has helped to develop my thinking and build my resilience. The right mentor, the one who you can develop friendship and mutual trust with, is invaluable when you are operating at an industry/board level. I also have immense family support that provides me with an outlet free from judgement – very handy at times!

What is your final message to other women wanting to be more involved in decision-making?

Start now! Work out what your area of interest is and where you would like to contribute. Start getting involved in industry updates, events and other significant meetings. Meet the people involved in making the decisions and ask them questions about your area of interest. Volunteer to assist with an upcoming project or committee – you will be surprised how easy it is to get involved. Make sure you know what you bring to the 'table' and be realistic about the workload you can carry – I always believe it's better to under commit and over deliver!

* In November 2013, Emerald Grain and Fairfax Agricultural Media partnered to launch the 100 Women in Australian Agribusiness project to celebrate and promote the success of women in the field.

Women play a vital role as decision makers in the Agribusiness industry. The sector is dominated by family farming enterprises where women play a large role in business management and in organisations that support rural communities. Women also fill many of the senior ranks in top companies across industries such as grain, dairy, horticulture and livestock. The WIAA 100 aims to provide a platform to help share the stories of women throughout the Agribusiness industry. For more information www.emeraldgrain.com/women

More information

Future Farmers Network:
www.futurefarmers.com.au

Rabobank Emerging Agribusiness
Leader Award
<http://rabobankleadershipaward.com>



Leading from across the sea

Sonia Muir
NSW Department of Primary Industries

Maletina Hilate is an extraordinary 29-year-old female leader with whom I had the pleasure of working during my recent year of volunteering in Tonga. She is the Deputy Principal at 'Ahopanilolo Technical Institute* – a small training campus preparing students for careers in the hospitality and tourism industries.

Maletina spent her childhood in the northern island group of Vava'u. Her mother returned to the family village with eight children after Maletina's father tragically drowned in a car accident.

I had seven siblings and we lived in a compound with my grandparents, an uncle, two aunts and their eight children.

The families were spread across three houses. One house had an Aunt with all the girls, the second had another Aunt with her husband and their children and the third house was where Maletina's Mum and the rest of the family lived. There was also a little hut where an unmarried Uncle lived.

Every Saturday all the boys went to the bush to get root crops or headed to the sea for fish. Each house had its own kitchen and every Sunday after church we had one big traditional 'umu' feast together. This usually included ota ika (marinated fish salad), yams, taro and always lu (taro leaf parcels) filled with beef, fish or seafood. All the food was brought to the biggest family house and set out in a long line on the floor.

Mum remarried when I was nine and later she and my step father adopted my cousin as his parents were struggling.

This inter family adoption happens a lot in Tonga and because her older siblings were away studying on the main island Maletina had a lot of responsibility for younger siblings.

We all had daily chores to complete and my role was to make sure they were done.

Maletina's mother worked long hours as a cook and housekeeper leaving the house at 6am having prepared breakfast of 'keke' (fried banana cakes) left in a basket hanging from the roof. She often did not return until zam.

My family has always shared stories as well as things and we all learned to respect each other from an early age.

Growing up I always wanted to be a nun but then I discovered boys and my dreams changed. Funnily, my husband Tevita's dream was to be a priest... and now I am expecting our sixth child!

After completing high school Maletina worked at Channel Catholic College in Vava'u as an unqualified teacher until moving to the Tongan capital – Nuku'alofa to gain a Diploma of Education while living with relatives.

During my first year of studies I fell pregnant to Tevita. We parted ways and I returned to Vava'u to have my baby and live the life of a single mother. It wasn't easy and I had to deal with criticism especially from an Aunt who was Deputy of Channel College. Despite the hurdles I was determined to complete my studies and be independent.

After a year I moved south again and resumed my studies working as a waitress to get some income. Tevita's parents were keen to see their grandchild and looked after Kapeli during the week while I was at college... but I provided milk and nappies as I did not want to be beholden to anyone. After a long time of no contact, Tevita and I got back together and we are now happily married.

After graduation I stayed in Nuku'alofa and worked at Apifo'ou Catholic College until 2011 when I became Deputy Principal of 'Ahopanilolo Technical Institute at the age of 26. This certainly surprised my Aunt and I am very proud of all my achievements.

Since we were married, Tevita has worked overseas as a seasonal worker on short-term contracts lasting between two to seven months. Two of my babies were born when he was working away. Luckily I am a very organised person so coped by establishing routines when he was not around.

Tevita is now the stay at home 'house husband' and looks after the laundry and shopping. Maletina still supervises homework and does a lot of the cooking.

We share our workload as I wanted to continue in my educational career which I love so much and Tevita agreed.

Juggling a busy family and full time employment takes discipline.

When I walk in the ATI gate I leave any family issues there and pick them up on my way out. By putting strict boundaries around these roles I find I am able to give both work and family the energy they need.

Maletina has also had to learn to accept the things she cannot change such as living with her in-laws.

Tevita and I talk and work through any major issues. If I have a problem with him, I talk to Mum or trusted colleagues. My Mum is the person I most admire and she raised me to be the woman I am. Peace and forgiveness is something I work on as they are important in keeping our lives in a harmonious balance. I do dream of the day soon when we shall be living on our own.

By June 2015 we will have paid off our bank loan and should be in our new house a few streets away from my current home. After the house my next goal is to start an educational fund for each of my children: Kapeli (9), Alfred (7), Luseane (6), Kalo (3), Kilifi (2) and baby Sotoni due in July. I want them all to learn important values like respecting themselves as well each other.

*My husband Gordon and I spent the past year volunteering at 'Ahopanilolo (www.atitonga.com) as part of an Australian Government Foreign Aid program.



Rural Women Connect

Nerida Cullen
Chair – Rural Women Connect

A woman's voice is one of strength, empathy and vision. She knows she is the centre of her community and family and that she and the women who have gone before her, the women who are her companions, and the women to come, hold the secret to sustainable communities. Her power may not lay in physical strength but resides in her commitment to others and the belief that all have the potential to create a fair and equitable world.

It is a voice that needs to be continually raised over the noise of competing opinions and viewpoints. It is a voice that can quietly yet boldly change the world for the better.

The Rural Women Connect (RWConnect) initiative gives a voice to rural, regional and remote women living and working in NSW. Members of our newly formed Steering Committee are determined to represent your needs and to raise the issues that affect you, your families and your communities. We also want to hear your ideas for change and tap into the wisdom of rural women. To do these things we are keen to create a dialogue with you and those who determine policies that affect the way you wish to live.

It's now more than a year since RWConnect was established. The women involved are committed to their community and to rural NSW and each one brings valuable experiences and viewpoints that represent the wide needs of rural women.

In March we had the opportunity to meet face-to-face and to get to know each other rather than just as an image or voice on the end of a telephone or computer screen. This meeting allowed us the opportunity to network with public servants, farmer bodies and agribusiness. We emerged from the meeting a stronger and more committed group, motivated by our responsibilities to rural women and communities.

We also had the pleasure of meeting a number of resilient and entrepreneurial rural women including our 2014 RIRDC NSW Rural Women's Award finalists, Pip Job and

Edwina Beveridge. Both impressed us and both are worthy winners although it is Pip who will progress to the National selection.

Robbie Sefton, Director of Sefton & Associates, urged us to be clear about our purpose and goals.

Nicole Lucas, Chair of the Rural Women's Gathering 2014 Coolamon Committee briefed us on their progress as they organise a motivating and memorable event.

Finally we were briefed about the activities of the RAAC (Regional Assistance Advisory Committee), the Rural Support Program, and the work Women NSW is doing to combat Domestic Violence.

RWConnect is proud of our achievements some of which included: providing two reports to the Primary Industries Ministerial Advisory Committee (PIMAC) and the Regional Assistance Advisory Committee (RAAC); four of our members attended the National Rural Women's Summit in February 2013; critiquing the Summit report, One Size does not fit all, and Women in NSW Report 2013: Overview of the annual report on Women's Progress toward equality in NSW; three members attended the fantastic Rural Women's Gathering at Scone; and we have been contributing to the debate on domestic violence and used the Scone Gathering to enrich our understanding of this issue so thank you to those who shared their insights and experiences.

RWConnect will continue to raise issues of importance. You may identify with some: loss of services in rural towns; mental health and general health needs; the welfare cycle, isolation and loneliness; women and leadership roles; families wanting to leave the farm; the impact of natural disasters; changing demographics and the needs of the elderly; and safety on farms.

To make us even more effective, we need to hear from you and gather your ideas. Together we are a force for change and improvement. So raise your voices and BE HEARD. RWConnect can be a voice for us all and together we can facilitate change.

Contact Rural Women Connect at rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au



5 strategies to raise your positivity footprint

Smile often. Try to end each conversation with your most heartfelt smile. The other person is likely to return the favour, and you'll both be walking away with a smile on your face.

We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do. Mother Teresa

Compliment people. It's amazing how a few simple words have the power to make a person's day. Whenever someone gives you good service, says something smart, wears something you like, or cooks you a good meal, give a genuine compliment. Watch what happens next. Seeing their face light up in appreciation is guaranteed to uplift you too.

Be hearty in your approbation and lavish in your praise. Napoleon Hill

Be funny, silly, and playful. Whenever you get a chance, try to lighten up the conversation with something funny or silly. Even if you don't think you're a humorous person, you can do it. Humor is just like anything – the more we use it, the better we get at it.

Humor is the great thing, the saving thing. The minute it crops up, all our irritation and resentments slip away, and a sunny spirit takes their place. Mark Twain

Give hugs. They've been proven to increase our levels of oxytocin, the love hormone, and to create deeper connections between humans.

Hugging is the ideal gift. Great for any occasion, fun to give and receive, shows you care, comes with its own wrapping, and, of course, is fully returnable. Unknown

Ask questions and listen intently. Do you know someone who asks you really good questions and listens to your answers with the utmost attention? Always try to ask people about themselves, their ideas, their dreams, and listen as though they're the only person in the world in that instant. It'll make them feel like a million bucks, and you're bound to learn some amazing things about them.

When someone receives us with open-hearted, non-judging, intensely interested listening, our spirits expand. Sue Patton Thoele

Source: www.positivelypositive.com

John Winter-Irving Memorial Bursary

Jennie Coldham
New England North West Landcare

Jody McNally is a driving force in the Balala-Brushgrove Landcare group. Her leadership has seen the group grow, attain new members and undertake a range of activities to suit varied interests. (The group were State Winners in 2011 and National Finalists in 2012 in the Landcare Community Group award.)

Jody is the inaugural winner of the John Winter-Irving Memorial Bursary* which she received for her leadership and commitment to the Balala-Brushgrove Landcare Group. Using her bursary Jody undertook a Permaculture Design Course at Milkwood Permaculture, Mudgee during 2013.

The course was 14 days of living and breathing sustainability. It was fantastic! There were 30 students and most of us camped out on the banks of Campbells Creek.

Permaculture in its essence is about caring about the planet and being mindful about everything you do and your effect on all living things.

Permaculture design is a way of designing or organising your backyard, your farm, community or life to maximise sustainability and minimise waste. It's a framework to design or redesign systems to be resilient and regenerative.

The Permaculture Design Course covered a range of topics, including climate and landform, water movement and capture, animal systems, food forest designs, aqua-ponics, soils, vegetable gardening, nutrient cycling, natural building and the list goes on!

The course helped me to understand how to pull together the different elements of our garden and farm in a really integrated way. It also inspired me to really walk the talk. I owe a huge thank you to Ona Winter-Irving

and family and Southern New England Landcare for this amazing opportunity. It was life changing and I hope that I will be able to help inspire other people to start looking at their lives this way.

*The John Winter-Irving Memorial Bursary was established following the tragic and sudden death of Southern New England Landcare Chairman, John Winter-Irving. The bequest is to be used as a study grant in the field of sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, rural or regional development, or leadership. The Board of Southern New England Landcare is honoured that the Winter-Irving family has made available a bequest, to allow John's unflinching commitment to Landcare to be continued. In recognition of his quiet unassuming manner the bequest is not openly advertised, but instead is merit-based – a case of where actions really do speak louder than words.

More information

Southern New England North West Landcare <http://snelcc.org.au>



No takers for thousands of dollars in scholarships

Sarah Taylor

Country Education Foundation of Australia

Tens of thousands of dollars worth of grants and scholarships for university and college courses in Australia go begging every year because no-one applies for them, according to the Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEF).

In an effort to help rural and regional students tap into much needed financial assistance the CEF has released a guide to hundreds of scholarships worth over \$100 000.

The rural not-for-profit's CEO, Sarah Taylor, said the 2014 CEF Scholarship Listing included hundreds of scholarships (some worth up to \$50 000 pa) – many of which failed to attract applications. CEFA will publish their 2015 scholarship guide in August.

There are some great opportunities out there but students often don't know about them and in many cases they simply don't have the confidence to apply for them because they don't think they'll be successful, Sarah said.

Last year, one NSW college offered three scholarships worth \$120 000 and they didn't get a single application, she said, And this is not an isolated case.

It disappointing because every year there are thousands of disadvantaged rural and regional kids who miss out on higher education because of distance and cost.

We're determined not to let that happen again so we've pulled together the 2014 Scholarship Guide to everything on offer from our uni and college partners.

Our message to every rural and regional student is to check out what's on offer and apply, apply, apply!

CEF has over 20 university and college partners across Australia which they work with to provide assistance to disadvantage rural and regional students.

Together, these universities and colleges offer hundreds of scholarships worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Rural and regional students face costs up to \$20 000 per year (on top of HECS) for travel and living expenses

when they leave their communities to pursue tertiary education. There are over 40 local CEFs across Australia, each raising funds to help their local school leavers to overcome the disadvantages of distance which prevent them from pursuing education and career goals.

Since 1993 the Country Education Foundation has helped over 2500 rural and regional students pursue study and job opportunities. Read their stories at: <https://cef.org.au>



The future of contraception - what are your options?

Dr Deborah Bateson

Director Clinical Services and Medical Director, Family Planning NSW

For women, as well as their partners and families, the ability to control fertility is wonderfully empowering. The possibility of choosing if and when to have children, how many children to have as well as the timing of their births allows us to determine the shape of our lives in ways that our forefathers could never have imagined.

But women in Australia may not be making the most of all the latest contraception options. Last month, Family Planning NSW released a comprehensive data report on the reproductive and sexual health of Australians. The report showed that Australian women are falling behind the rest

of the world when it comes to our uptake of what we call Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC). LARCs offer women the ability to control their fertility for greater stretches of time than the shorter acting methods such as the contraceptive pill or condoms. Depending on which method is chosen, these 'set and forget' methods can prevent unintended pregnancy from between three months to as long as ten years. LARCs are both highly effective as well as cost-effective and unlike permanent methods they can be reversed anytime.

Women in Europe and North America have taken to LARCs in great numbers, yet Australian women are still much more likely to stick to the contraceptive pill with only a small percentage using a LARC. While the pill is an effective method of

contraception, there is a higher chance of failure than with a LARC because of needing to remember to 'do something' every day!

There are a variety of LARC options to suit the individual needs of women of all reproductive ages from the small rod implant which is placed just under the skin of the upper inner arm, to the Intrauterine Device (IUD) which is fitted into the uterus, and injectables which can be administered quickly and easily. Your GP or family planning clinician can help you decide which option is best for you; it's as simple as asking for information.

To learn more about LARC options, visit Family Planning NSW at www.fpnsw.org.au or call our confidential Talkline on 1300 658 886.

Eat Cake:
An inspiring workshop for women

Are you...

- » Ready for more passion, excitement and freedom in your life?
- » At a crossroads in your life, seeking a career or life transition?
- » Tired of always waiting for 'some day' to begin living your life to the full?

Would you like to...

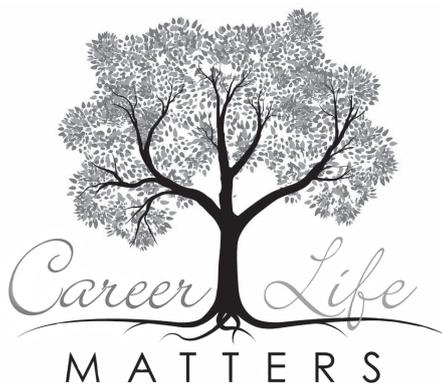
- » Gain confidence to stretch beyond your comfort zone?
- » Wake each day looking forward to new possibilities?
- » Discover what would make your life full, fun and fulfilling?
- » Design your 'best fit' career and life?
- » Challenge the 'what if's' that may be holding you back?

Ready to take the first step?

Check out

www.eatcakeandhaveitto.com.au

to find out more or to register for one of our workshops.



ADVERTISEMENT



Rural journalism award

Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

Charlotte King's journalistic flair along with her understanding of rural issues has earned her the prestigious 2014 JB Fairfax Award for Rural Journalism.

The award, now in its sixth year, is given to a journalism student who has a passion and desire to report on issues affecting rural and regional communities. It includes a \$10 000 scholarship as well as practical work experience at Rural Press and the Sydney Royal Easter Show's daily newspaper – *The Bush Telegraph*. Charlotte was presented with her award at a ceremony on Excellence in Ag Day at the Sydney Royal Easter Show in April.

Originally from Forbes, Charlotte caught the judges' eyes with her feature article, *A man's shed is more than his castle*, focusing on males in rural areas who lack support in regards to health issues.

A fifth-year journalism/law student, Charlotte said that receiving the award was a great honour and will go a long way to supporting her journalistic pursuits.

Going to uni and living in Canberra has given me some great life experiences, but it has always been my intention to return to and report on issues affecting rural NSW. This is where I believe I can have the most impact with my work, Charlotte said.

Established to encourage quality coverage of rural and regional affairs by Australian journalists, The JB Fairfax Award for Rural Journalism was created through a private donation by John B Fairfax AO and is managed by the RAS Foundation. The scholarship has a tradition of supporting up-and-coming journalists who show a passion for rural and regional reporting.

Every year I am impressed by the standard of entries, the breadth of topics chosen and the passion these students convey in their writing. Charlotte now joins an impressive list of scholarship recipients who have since gone on to work in the industry and successfully report on rural issues, Mr Fairfax AO said.

What impressed me most about Charlotte's feature article was its human touch of an issue which has played a significant part in the lives of men in country towns over the last few years.

The impact of the Men's Shed movement has had a profound and important effect on men's lives to the extent that the movement has spread overseas. Charlotte's article demonstrated the beneficial effects of the movement with journalistic flair and insight.

RAS Foundation Executive Officer, Jocellin Jansson said the Foundation is proud of the scholarship's contribution to the future of rural and regional news making.

The submissions we received show exciting evidence of an emerging set of young rural journalists, and we're thrilled that we can work with Mr Fairfax in encouraging promising young reporters like Charlotte, Jocellin said.

The RASF is a philanthropic foundation which seeks to encourage educational excellence and foster vibrant and sustainable rural and regional communities by supporting quality youth and community programs. For more on the RASF visit www.rasf.org.au



What's on, What's new

Find a farmer near you

Do you want to buy fresher food, reduce your environmental footprint and support your local farming industry? The 'Find a farmer' website helps consumers across central western NSW to connect directly with food producers in your area. It was developed to help build connections between consumers and their local producers with consumers increasingly looking to cut out the middleman, reduce their 'food miles' and buy fresh and healthy produce, according to Regional Landcare Facilitator, Danielle Littlewood.

Our goal is to help consumers deal directly with the people who grow the things they eat, drink and wear, said Danielle.

We all want to live more sustainably and eat more healthily – one of the simplest ways to do this is to buy food that is produced in your local area.

Local produce often hasn't been held in extended storage and is still rich in vitamins and flavour. It's the next best thing to growing it yourself.

Buying local produce also supports our local economy. Often you can deal directly with the person who grew your food which is nice.

The main concept behind the website is the 100-mile diet, which encourages people to source their food locally.

The idea is reduce transport costs and environmental impacts by sourcing food within 100 miles (160 km), says Danielle.

A fun way people can start is to local source one meal a week locally and to increase this over time.

The find a farmer concept was first raised during the Central West CMA and Landcare's work to promote the 2012 Year of the Farmer.

Landholders on our reference group were keen to see more ongoing work done to educate the wider community about their food and build local connections.

To look up local producers across central west NSW and reduce your food miles, go to www.findafarmer.com.au

We are also encouraging local producers to visit the site and list their businesses – it's free and simple.

Henty Natural Fibre Fashion Awards

Celebrating natural fibres from the paddock to final use in fashion, the Henty Natural Fibre Fashion Award is open to amateurs and professionals recognising the use of natural fibres – wool, cotton, angora, mohair, cashmere, linen, silk or combinations thereof, in creative but wearable garments. Prize money of \$2000 is offered for the best garment in natural fibre with \$500 each for the best knitted or crocheted garment, accessory and millinery. The judging emphasis is on the creative and innovative use of the fibres – not necessarily the quality of the garment construction. Winners will be announced on the final day of the Henty Machinery Field Days 23-25 September. Entries will be modelled on each day of the field days with parades at 1pm in the Country Lifestyle pavilion. To enter contact Lyn Jacobsen on 0428 690 222 or at naturalfibre@hmfd.com.au

NSW Embroiderers' Guild 2014 Embroidery Exhibition

This bi-annual event is being held at the Woolpack Function Centre, Dubbo Showground on 11-12 October. A \$10 admission is payable at the gate and includes Devonshire Tea. Wheelchair access and plenty of parking is available. Contact Patricia Smith at patriciasmith46@gmail.com or call 0439 846 400 for more information.

Mudgee Readers' Festival 9 – 10 August

There's something for everyone at this year's festival with a wide range of authors and literature styles. The program will feature a children's author, a bit of history, something to challenge festival goers and make them think, as well as simply great stories. There will be presentations in a conversation-type format, panel sessions, literary lunches and dinners and so much more. For details go to www.mudgeereadersfestival.com.au

Chill your winter bill

Want to avoid the stress of bill shock this winter? EWON has compiled this simple online resource to help you do just that. You'll find tips, information and referrals laid out in simple steps that you can take now to help avoid unexpectedly high bills, debt and disconnection down the track. You can find the guide on the EWON website at www.ewon.com.au

Tomorrowgirl?

A short story competition for Indigenous high school girls in or from remote communities, Tomorrowgirl was a big success in 2013, and in 2014 it asks girls to tell stories on the theme of 'Big Dreams'. The stories can be true or imagined, and the winner will receive a writer's support package with a laptop, book vouchers and membership to a writer's association. The stories may be shared with other remote communities, and across Australia. To find out more at www.tomorrowgirl.com.au

Teens and technology: research shatters stereotype

Typical Australian teenagers are more likely to be found helping around the house after school than using Facebook or playing computer games, according to a University of Canberra report. Teenagers were asked about their typical after-school activities, with computer games only just scraping into the top 10 in 10th place and Facebook ranked ninth. Family time topped the list, with sport, homework, hobbies and odd jobs also in the top 10, compiled as part of research commissioned by the Australian Computer Society (ACS). Read more at www.canberra.edu.au/monitor/2013/june/11-acs

Resources

First Aid app

A free and comprehensive pocket guide to first aid, this app provides access to the most up to date first aid information anytime, anywhere. The app supports the important life-saving skills acquired through Red Cross First Aid training with quick and easy to use instructions, interactive quizzes to test your knowledge and helpful videos and images. Available for Apple and Android tablets and phones. Download from iTunes or Google Play.

ON TRACK with The Right Mix

Developed by The Department of Veterans' Affairs this app lets you keep track of the number and types of drinks you consume; the amount of money it's costing you; and lets you know about the impact the alcohol has on your wellbeing and fitness – it can even track how much exercise is required to burn off the alcohol kilojoules consumed. Download from iTunes or Google Play or at www.at-ease.dva.gov.au

ReachOut.com Professionals

This site provides resources and tools for teachers and youth support workers to promote youth mental health. It is designed to be Australia's one-stop portal for mental health resources and contains guides to using its partner service **ReachOut.com**, content and tools in health promotion and early intervention, reviews of apps and online tools that help with anxiety and mood disorders, and practical lesson ideas and activities for teachers. More details at <http://au.professionals.reachout.com>

Take control of your health with eHealth

Each time you visit the doctor or health care professionals/providers information about your health is created and stored at that location. This can make it difficult to access and share this information with the people involved in your care. An eHealth record can make getting the right treatment better, faster and easier as it contains a summary of your health information and you can allow healthcare professionals to view and add new information relating to your treatment and care. Your information is secure and you will be given a login and password to access your record and control who else can view your information. For more information or to register for an eHealth record call 1800 723 471 or visit www.ehealth.gov.au

Auslan information about Legal Aid NSW

Legal Aid NSW provides legal services to disadvantaged clients across NSW in most areas of criminal, family and civil law. People with disability are an important client group for Legal Aid NSW. Information about 'How Legal Aid NSW can help you' is now available in Auslan on the Legal Aid NSW website www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au. The Auslan video highlights some of the legal problems that Legal Aid NSW can assist with and the services that they provide. It also explains how deaf or hard of hearing people can contact LawAccess NSW for more information using a TTY or the National Relay Service.

Information and support pack for those bereaved by suicide or other sudden death

Losing someone you care about to a sudden or unexpected death can cause significant grief for you, your family, friends and the local community. Some of the topics covered include what to do on first being notified, telling people, helping children and teenagers with grief, support services, what friends can do, and more. Available to download from Living is for Everyone at <http://livingisforeveryone.com.au>

Weather the Storm free tool kit

A new resource developed to support women to prepare for disasters and emergencies, this kit is set out so it can be delivered for community groups and includes tools, templates and resources. The step-by-step guide to planning and delivering the program can be adapted to fit different communities and varying natural disaster types e.g. cyclones, floods, bushfires etc. It follows a 'think and discover, plan, design, deliver and evaluate' format. Available to download from www.nrwc.com.au/Projects/WeatherTheStorm

FFHF – linking rural people and communities to health facilities and resource

The www.friendlyfaces.info website helps reduce feelings of isolation that rural people suffering health problems and chronic illness can feel and allows them to navigate the available facilities in preparation for their treatment away from home and their speedy return to their homes and communities. You'll find links to major

hospitals, health facilities and resources. If you don't have access to a computer you can call the 24/7 Hotline on 0457 175 888.

Sam the Lamb

This is a great website for the kids with beautiful, bright and fun illustrations! Kids will learn what the wool on a sheep's back is used for and why fleece is so precious. You can then join Sam as he follows the fleece from his back on a whirlwind tour of wool-producing factories. There's a great colouring book to download and other interesting facts. There's also a Sam the Lamb app for iPad and iPhone <http://samthelamb.com>

Uni Survival Guide

The Country Education Foundation is helping rural and regional students to make the transition to university with a new online guide. The guide has great tips, advice and links to help find: campus accommodation, bulk billing doctors, part-time jobs, low-fee bank accounts, cheap text books, support and counselling services... and lots more. There's even a great app you can download to help first years find their way around any Australian university – as we know getting lost on campus is a huge problem for most students. It's available at <https://cef.org.au/survival-tips-rural-students>

Girls Without Limits: Helping Girls Achieve Healthy Relationships, Academic Success, and Interpersonal Strength

A girl's relationships, social skills, academic abilities, career choice, self-concept, and confidence are all impacted and influenced by her experiences in adolescence. Her sense of self can influence the choices she will make related to academics, career, and social and dating relationships. Educators who work with and care about girls must recognise that the barriers to girls' success occur on individual and systemic levels. Our society places clear value on certain types of behaviours for girls and boys, and many students feel pressured to adhere to these expectations. In many cases, these expectations hold girls back academically, in careers, and in relationships. Available from the Family Planning NSW Bookshop: www.fpnsw.org/vendors/family-planning-nsw-bookshop for \$47.95 (ISBN 9781452241210).

NSW-ACT RIRDC Rural Women's Award 2015

a life-changing experience!

The RIRDC Rural Women's Award encourages women's contribution to primary industries and rural Australia by providing skills and resources to build leadership and decision-making capacity.

What's in it for you?

\$10 000 to implement your idea or project; skills and resources to build your leadership; enrolment in the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course; implementation of a 12-month leadership plan; networking; media and PR opportunities; and membership to the Rural Women's Award Alumni.

Applications close 31 October 2014.
Contact RWN for an application package and access to mentors.



Pip Job, a natural resource management leader from Cumnock in Central West NSW, is the winner of the 2014 Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) NSW-ACT Rural Women's Award.

The Country Web is produced by NSW Department of Primary Industries. If you live in NSW and would like *The Country Web* sent free to your home please PRINT your details and return to: RWN, Locked Bag 21 Orange NSW 2800. *The Country Web* is available on the RWN website. If you have internet access please help lower our production costs by cancelling your hardcopy subscription. To receive an email alert notifying you when the latest edition is available go to:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn/country-web

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.

NAME:	
ADDRESS:	
	PCODE:
PHONE:	
EMAIL:	

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background Culturally and linguistically diverse background

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



Rural Women's Network website www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn

connecting regional & remote NSW