

Winter Christmas Banquet

WHEN: **July 25th, 7pm**

WHERE: **Boolarra Memorial Hall**

COST: **\$5 per ticket**

Come and enjoy a great night of celebration in our beautiful town!

Featuring a live band, decadent Christmas foods, raffles, door prizes and Santa!

- We will be raffling holidays, jewellery, massages and other items with ticket proceeds to go to the CFA
- Decadent Christmas foods including: Mulled wine, Gourmet savouries, Mince pies, Chocolate Fondue, Christmas deserts and other delicious treats. BYO alcohol
- There will also be door prizes for those in Fancy dress or Christmas costume
- Dancing, games & prizes, and a visit from Santa. Also performing will be our
- Community Choir – Bool Aria!
- Open to all members of the Boolarra Community Age 15 and over, bookings essential
- The Winter Christmas Banquet is organized by the Boolarra Community Development Group.

To reserve your ticket ph: Jenny Dentoom 51165125, Emma Cooke 56648248 or call in at the Top Shop or Boolarra Post Office

“A Community Recovery Activity supported and coordinated by Latrobe City Council, funded by the generosity of the citizens of Australia”

New Recovery Centre Hours at Traralgon South

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday: **2pm to 4:30pm**

Thursday and Sunday: **CLOSED**

Community Hub Contact: **5195 5011**

Community Website Information

Callignee - www.callignee.vic.au

Boolarra - www.boolarralink.com.au

Rural Women's Network: Beyond the Bushfires - Call for stories

The start of 2009 will go down in memory as one of the most tragic in the history of Victoria as bushfires swept across the state, leaving devastation in their wake. Now, we would like to capture the stories emerging of the extraordinary contributions that women are making to the rebuilding of these communities ... leading the way beyond the bushfires.

In its 75th edition the *Network* newsletter, published by the Rural Women's Network, will focus on what women – wherever they live in Victoria – are doing to help rebuild lives of those directly affected by the 2009 bushfires.

Who we would like to hear from

We want to hear from women living and working in all fire-affected areas of Victoria. We are also interested in hearing from other rural and metropolitan women who are involved in bushfire recovery activities.

Story ideas

We are looking for inspiring, empowering and informative articles that tell the story of beyond the bushfires from a woman's perspective. A variety of themes will be covered: art, tourism, volunteering (fire, community organisations, hospitals, veterinary), shelter, conservation, how to keep history alive, fundraising efforts, the work of government and non-government, local government, schools, children, young people, partnerships formed with other Victorian women As this is truly a women's community publication, writers with all levels of skills and experience are encouraged to send their submissions.

What you need to do

- Submissions should be made by email or post and include your address and phone number.
- Your stories and letters must be written in the first person.
- Length: Maximum of 500 words – however, 250 – 300 words are preferred for articles; 100 words for letters.
- Photographs are welcome, (minimum 350dpi, jpg) in colour or black and white, as well as other artwork- along with captions / short descriptions of the idea behind the photograph / artwork.

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday 15 July 2009.

Mail: Rural Women's Network, GPO Box 2392, Melbourne 3001

Email: ruralwomen@dpcd.vic.gov.au Phone (03) 9208 3650.

Please note: We will acknowledge the receipt of all submissions.

We do our very best at Network to include as many articles as we can, however there is no guarantee that your article will be published. There is no payment for articles.

Community Recovery: An Evening with Dr Rob Gordon

Where: Mirboo North Shire Hall, 30 Ridgway, Mirboo North 3871
(Car parking entry via Burchell Lane)

When: Wednesday 5th August 2009

Time: 6.30 - 9.00 p.m. (includes light supper at 6.30 pm)

Cost: Gold coin donation to cover cost of hall hire

RSVP: Monday 3rd August 2009 (for catering purposes)

Liz Craig on 0437 958 713 or 5674 0900

Lindsay Oates on 5668 1621 or 0408 343 531

Dr Rob Gordon is a clinical psychologist who specialises in the management of people's emotional response to disasters. He has worked in disasters since Ash Wednesday in 1983 and has been a consultant to the Victorian emergency management plan for 20 years, consulting also on natural disasters in states across Australia and New Zealand.

He is a regular lecturer at the Australian Emergency Management Institute. Rob understands well the challenges and complexities facing people who have been through a difficult event such as the Victorian 2009 bushfires. He will explain how such an event impacts on people and reflect on the rebuilding of the community.

Community Recovery Committee (CRC) Update

A major component of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (VBRRA) process into managing the reconstruction process is for the development of plans by affected communities of what they need to facilitate and speed the recovery.

Latrobe City has been instrumental in establishing recovery committees in the affected areas of Latrobe City and developing recovery action plans. Cath Peterson has recently been appointed as the VBRRA liaison officer for the Gippsland area. Part of her role will be to attend many CRC meetings to assist in answering any queries and also providing updates from VBRRA.

This is excellent news for our communities. Cath holds a very warm place in Ray Stewart and my hearts; the first time we met her was six weeks before the very first Folk Festival, and lack of funds to cover public liability threatened the staging of the festival, until Cath Peterson rode up like a knight in shining armour to meet us at the Pub, and said "the show must go on!". I think she would be very happy with the results of her decision.

The first meeting was held at the BFC Social Rooms on 8th April. It was very well attended, with reps from LCC, Relationships Australia, DPI, St Vincent de Paul and other organizations and around 40-50 people from the Boolarra and Yinnar communities.

The facilitator, Vivien McWater was very good and generated a lot of discussion and input amongst the group. Issues and priorities were identified and discussed, recorded by LCC and distributed.

At the end of meeting around 20 people agreed to attend another meeting to develop a Recovery Action Plan.

The follow up meeting to develop a recovery action plan was disappointing as confusion over the starting time put a cloud over the meeting and caused continuity problems and alienation. However there were a number of positive achievements from the meeting.

- A draft Community Recovery Committee (CRC) structure document, or Terms of Reference, outlining a proposed Purpose, Role, Membership, Structure and relationship with the LCC was discussed and accepted with modifications.
- It was agreed the CRC would work under the aegis of the BCDG, and in conjunction with the YCTA
The general principle of having working parties dealing with matters of interest to them, and reporting to the CRC was accepted.
- There was some preliminary discussion on a Recovery Action Plan

At subsequent meetings a Recovery Action Plan (RAP) has been distributed and discussed. The RAP basically outlines, under a range of key areas, actions identified by the group as being important in the recovery of Boolarra and Yinnar, socially, environmentally and in terms of infrastructure, to make our communities even stronger than before the fires. Around 30 action items have been identified, and some, such as the Open Plants day and the Pamper Day have already taken place. Others are ongoing, such as the liaison between Case Managers and fire affected people, and the distribution of newsletters to keep people informed on progress and issues.

It is probably fair to note the due to a combination of bad luck, poor communications and administration that the running of the CRC committee has not been a smooth as we would like, and some members have felt isolated. A special meeting has been held to resolve these issues, and hopefully the problems will be a thing of the past. Notwithstanding these problems I believe we have developed a Recovery Action Plan that has the potential to provide great ongoing benefits to the communities of Boolarra and Yinnar.

Development and implementation of the RAP is the basic purpose of the CRC. The RAP is a live document, subject to change, with additional items being added, and existing items being modified.

Because it is an action plan, each item is relevant only if champions can be found to follow up on the implementation of the action. This process will involve many people in the community not directly involved in the CRC. The document is available for perusal on the Boolarra Link website, and we welcome feedback on the items in the plan, or additional items that should be included (as long as the proponent is willing to assist in implementation).

Colin Brick

Chairman, Community Recovery Committee (BCDG)

Boolarra Pamper Day Review

The Boolarra / Delburn Complex Pamper Day was great. It was a beautifully sunny day. Approximately 400 – 500 people came along to enjoy the music, free food, drinks, cakes and give-aways. Lots of smiles and chances for people to relax and catch up with friends

The Old Pub in Boolarra was set up as the Pamper / Healing area. The open fire added to the warm and cosy atmosphere. We had 18 people in the healing area doing Massage, Reiki, Kinesiology and Tarot Readings. We pampered around 70 people on the day. The Memorial Hall Kitchen was the place to get home made cakes supplied and served by the Valley CWA. They could also receive hand massage, manicures, nails and make-overs provided by the Mary K representatives, Rotary Members, local and Melbourne practitioners.

Hazelwood Rotary members provided the BBQ. They cooked the sausages & hamburgers to perfection and served them with a range of salads.

The stage was set in a Massaro Motors Marquee. Strezlecki Stringbusters started the entertainment with their talented crew. Next group was BoolARIA, the local choir headed by Heather James. Rose La Vie lead a local warm up and song. The next singer was Jamie whose songs included one he had written after he was impacted by the fires at Callignee. The last band of the day was Feedback Dancer who are based in Melbourne. Their strong sounds carried across the park.

The children had plenty of things to entertain them throughout the day. The Boolarra CFA have recently been trained in using the Smoke House and they helped many children experience the wisdom of “stay down low and go, go, go”. Many children were transformed by the face painting and hair braiding. Coco the Clown brought a smile to the faces of young and old with his balloon creations and funny antics.

The best part of the day for many was the chance to sit and relax, to catch up with friends and enjoy the sun shine in the Beautiful Town of Boolarra.

The Case workers from Latrobe City were present to take new referrals and answer questions. They had resources and information to give away as well as freebies such as stress balls and water bottles. There were Free Quilts and Knitted Goods for those affected by the fires and free trees.

We have many things to be thankful for.

The organizing committee thanks the generous donations which made this a truly great day for so many people.

Major sponsors were; Latrobe City Council, Relationships Australia, Rotary Club of Hazelwood, Bakers Delight, Central West Gippsland Division of General Practice, VicRelief Foodbank, Boolarra Community Development Group, Gippsland Water (water fountain), Aygee Gippsland (drinks), Latrobe CWA (coffee & cakes), Websters Butcher Yinnar, Kilmany (donation), and Masarro Motors (marquees) – Great day had by all.

Samantha Brick
