

Murrindindi Climate Network News January 2011

Welcome to the first edition of the MCN Newsletter for 2011. Everyone at MCN wishes you all the best for the New Year and sends our condolences to those who are impacted by the Queensland floods.

MCN 2011 MEMBERSHIP

Why not start the new year by joining or renewing a membership to MCN? Still only \$15 for an individual and \$30 for a family or corporate. A membership form is available on our website at:

www.murrindindiclimatenetwork.org.au

NEW BOARD ELECTED FOR 2011

Elections were ably facilitated once again by Doug Walter at the AGM held 16 October at Moleworth. MCN welcomes newly elected board members Nicola Woolford and Elaine Furniss and returning members Rita Seethaler (President), Duncan Hall (Vice-President), Bill Jeffries (Treasurer), Lee Coller (Secretary), Moira Jeffries, Charlie Bisset, Henry Andrews, Sue McNair, Sacha Jellinek, and Mary Hall. MCN thanks outgoing members Julian Browne and Dawn Hartog for their valuable input.



The new board having some holiday cheer!

FAIRTRADE PRESENTATION

At the AGM we were treated to an enlightening presentation on Fairtrade by Ilan Goldberg, Oxfam Australia. Ilan explained how Fairtrade practices benefit both individuals and communities in developing countries by enabling economic independence and empowerment while improving their standards of living. Beyond being paid a fair price for their produce, Fairtrade Premiums enable producers to better their communities by providing:

- * Improved access to low or no-interest loans
- * Technical assistance for building infrastructure to improve production
- * Communications systems, and collectively-owned transport and processing equipment
- * Better health care and education
- * Technical training and skill diversification for cooperative members and their families



TREE FARMING WORKSHOP

On 15 January 2011 from 5pm – 8pm, the 160 ha property "Kanumbra" at Hodsons Lane, near Yarck will host a workshop on tree farming and how it can assist habitat friendly land management. Situated in steep hill country, a tree farm was established on half of the former grazing land in 2008, including a variety of native trees for timber production and bioenergy. The other half of the land is set aside for revegetation and habitat conservation. Organised by MCN, this workshop will include four presentations starting with Kate Stothers (DSE) discussing new relationships with the land and how you can make biodiversity work for you as a landowner.



"Kanumbra" Tree Farm

Second, Philippa Noble (DPI) will explain ways in which plantations can assist some of our threatened species. Under the title "Replanting: What landholders think but beetles and lizards show", Sacha Jellinek, PhD candidate at Melbourne University will report on the findings of his research in the Goulburn Broken catchment area and provide practical tips of how to improve habitat quality. Finally, Cathy Olive (DPI) will take us for a short walk to look at management issues and solutions in hill country using "Kanumbra" as a case study. This FREE event is sponsored by RDV & MSC and will end with drinks and nibbles. For catering purposes, RSVP to Rita: 57747617 or rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au. All welcome!

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VASILI'S VISIT TO GARDENS OF MARYSVILLE

On 29 September MCN was pleased to host Vasili, host of the TV show 'Vasili's Garden' on a visit to some of the gardens of Marysville to see how things are progressing since the fire. The recently opened Bruno's Sculpture Garden was the first stop followed by several other local gardens.



It's a bike, which when you ride it generates enough power to operate an amp and speaker playing music! It comes from the company Future Spark whose vision is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by using more renewable energy, and increase awareness of the use of inefficient powered devices. Their bikes and pedal power generated all the power for the Earth Hour Concert during the year!

SUSTAINABILITY EXPO AT ALEX SHOW

A mini Sustainability Expo was on display at the MCN marquee at the Alexandra Show on the 13th November. There was a table full of resources all about the environment, living sustainably and actions to help reduce climate change; demonstrations of hydrogen fuel cells and making biodiesel; lots of hands on gadgets including a push bike generating power; and of course lots of laughs!

MCN board member and local Murrindindi Shire environmental officer Sue McNair was very popular with plenty of information and all the answers to your weed questions.

There was a treasure hunt for kids (and adults too!) with a few questions and the opportunity to win a raffle prize, and a terrific display of primary school pictures, poems and essays for the 'Sustainability - Saving our Planet' competition. Both this event and Vasili's visit were supported by funding from Regional Development Victoria.

ALEXANDRA COMMUNITY GARDEN

Up and running, the new community garden had a working bee on 8 January at St John's Church to assemble garden beds, go over some governing guidelines and share morning tea together. It is a combined initiative of Berry St, MSC, MCN, Rotary, Alex Hospital, St John's Parish Church, and although located on St John's church grounds, it is a non-denominational project. If you are interested in getting involved please contact Sue McNair: 0417867632

Local Alexandra High School teacher, Cathy Zerbe demonstrating how to make your own biodiesel - a handy tip for local farmers!



COMMUNITY HARVEST SWAP'N'MEET

Bring along excess homegrown produce to swap with other food gardeners on 5 February 10am - 12pm and then the first Saturday of each month at the Old Court House Downey St Alexandra. Bring: Veggies, herbs, fruit, seeds, seedlings, cuttings - anything edible from your garden! If you can't bring edibles, you may like to contribute recipes, compost or worm juice. BYO bags. Why: To cultivate food gardening friendships; to share organic gardening tips and seasonal recipes; and to energise a fun, creative and resilient culture of food growing and sharing in our region. For more information contact Janet Marion 0438 054 773 or 5772 1423 or janetmarion@hotmail.com