

News

Farewell Phil

Our good mate Phil Gouldson is leaving the country. He's taking up an opportunity too good to be true in Singapore. So, unfortunately Menslink will have to get by without his calming influence – we consider him our Senior Mentor you know.

We wish him all the best, and when he eventually returns to Australia he is very welcome to stick his head in to the Menslink office and say hello. I know we'll be keen to hear all about foreign lands.

Menslink Projecting Itself to the World

A little while ago we applied for some money from the Government under the Volunteer Small Equipment Grant. We figured that with all these surpluses, they should throw a bit of it at us.

Well, I'm pleased to say that we received the moolah. There is a wad of cash coming our way to purchase a data projector that will allow us to have film nights and other such staggering events.

Hopefully all the volunteers with Menslink will get to benefit from this projector.

Link Up – July



Rally of Canberra

Our July Link Up was the Menslink Rally of Canberra. Nine dudes turned up for the event, which was a little disappointing as twice that number had indicated they were keen to participate. But those who did make it pushed on and enjoyed the day.

We met at Menslink and were given the Rally instructions, clues and maps that Graham Hannaford had so brilliantly devised. Groups of two headed off on a jaunt around Canberra, trying to locate each landmark, jot it down and proceed to the next one.

Fortunately the clues were clear enough for everyone – as they led us to our lunchtime BBQ location. Once there, the teams had to assemble their jottings into a detective story that started in a very familiar way. Dan Nattrass and Tim Snedden wrote the best story and a transcript is revealed below.



Murder at the Church

Authors: Tim Snedden & Daniel Nattrass

It was a dark and stormy night down by Lake Burley Griffin in July 2007, where the access to the Black Mountain Rowing Club was closed. The rain was torrential, the skies were alight. Six ropes lay across the road leading to a roof that blew off the Church.

All one hundred and seven people were killed by the three bolts of lightning. It was established the people were all walking on the church roof at the time.....

CEO's Message



Mentoring is a marvellous thing; it can be simple to explain why we *want* and *need* mentors, however, explaining *why* or *how* mentoring works can be more complex. Essentially it doesn't really matter *how* or *why* as long as it works! So, when I was invited to speak to a lecture at the University of Canberra this past week I went looking through some of my text books and notes from my own Uni studies to explain *why we do what we do* at Menslink, and *why we do it the way we do*. Anyone confused yet? Good, me too.

In short I spoke a little about Albert Bandura's *social learning theory*, which essentially says that we all learn a lot from those people around us and in many different situations; family, friends, school teachers, neighbours, work colleagues, coaches etc. Some of us may have or have had mentors in these different areas of our lives, and some of us might be just discovering that there are people who are interested in us and want to be there for us and pass on some of their life experiences.

The next question might be; *so how do we know if mentoring works?* Well, this week provided a pretty good example of this right here at Menslink. Graeme Alvarez (a past MYM mentoree) joined the Menslink team to co-facilitate a session along with Bryan Duke at a MYM training/matching night.

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MYM Mentor Retreat

The annual Menslink MYM Mentor Retreat at Caloola Farm was held on August 17th & 18th and by far it was the best one so far. As Gaz and I headed out to Caloola early on the 17th to get things prepped we could sense this was going to be a great retreat. All set up and ready by 3:45pm we sat down to take in the landscape of green rolling hills. With just a little time for a breather the peace was broken by the arrival of assistant cook Martin who rocked up with the food. As the unloading of the food was coming to a close Graham arrived shortly followed by first time head cook Big Ed.

The stage was being set as the Farm House was divided into snoring grades, from A to D. A graders...the top snorers...the cream of the crop, only two of these class act snorers were to own up. Then of course B graders, who were few as well... to the C graders...the fence sitters (or snorers as it were)...and then the guys who are really kidding themselves, the D graders. For they believe they snore not.

By dinner time all had arrived...the Queanbeyan boys (Trev, Neil, Gabe & Tim) followed by the POSM Cartel

(Glenn C. & Nick) and finally our perennial fashionably late comer, Glen T. The kitchen bubbled with exuberance as the boys were producing a masterpiece in the form of spaghetti bolognese. With minutes away from completion came a CLICK!!! Suddenly the entire house and area were plunged into utter darkness. A minor power outage in the area provided us with an enjoyably romantic (ironically so as we're just a bunch of blokes) distraction. Mirth and merriment kicked into high gear...the adventure had truly begun. Torches were brought out and even a few keeners had head mounted torches... I'll let you guess who they were. Dinner went off with a hitch (the pasta being cooked over the fire)...good food ...great desert, wonderful conversation and extraordinary company.

It was then off to our Everest as it were...the camp fire...only the keepers of the fire (Tim & Nick) ended up lighting our fire in front of some sort of a women's convention...not the correct spot as it turned out. Having no fear the fire guys transferred hot coals to our usual location and we all burned bright for the rest of the evening. Captain Leg Buckler made his appearance and a fun-filled relaxing time was had by all.

As the morning came...we were all a little more relaxed than usual; very much like jelly fish floating in a rip-tide...just having to flow along. There was a great crew to help out for breakfast although I wasn't one of them as I and a few others were working on our beauty sleep. Early morning on the retreat is akin to letting the cosmic ballet unfold before one's eyes...but not engaging too heavily until after a few litres of water and a couple cups of strong coffee. With breakfast and our morning ablutions taken care of...we embarked on the "Round Table".

This is our 'structured' portion of the retreat; where mentors and staff get to share one and other's journey from the previous year...victories, challenges, struggles and good times. Everyone's story is told and heard, a wonderful forum for us blokes to engage in with support and shared wisdom being the order of the day. Micheal O. dropped in for the morning round table session and was a very lively contributor indeed, having not spent the night around the fire.

Barbequed burgers for lunch, a clean-up of the site and we were all on the road after having our group picture taken. (We all grumbled and whinged about having to walk down into the horse paddock just for a picture...but as one can see Michael was bang on as usual... thanks Michael) A special thanks to Big Ed for is invaluable culinary input and Martin who was invaluable.

All in all I would like to thank all who came for we were all responsible for making it what is was...a grand time with grand guys. Everyone took to their duties and the positive way in which each task was taken on was a real indication as to why the mentoring program is so successful. Here's to looking forward to next year with you guys.

Bryan

Menslink joins Club Red

Menslink have joined The Australian Red Cross Blood Service (ARCBS) Corporate Donor Program, Club Red. Club Red is a national corporate blood donation program designed for private, public and not-for-profit sector organisations. By joining Club Red, Menslink has made a commitment to saving lives by giving blood.

Several of our Menslink staff have planned to make their second donation on October 10. If you are a regular donor or would like to become a donor, give the Red Cross Blood Service a call on 13 14 95 to make an appointment, then remember to register your donation for Menslink on the Club Red 'score board'.



Contributions

If anyone has any contributions for the Menslink Newsletter they are very welcome. If you have pictures they are very, very welcome. Your contribution can be about interesting things you've done; an interview with your mentor or mentoree; impressions of the Menslink experience etc. The address to send 'em to is: newsletter@menslink.org.au

Happy Birthday

If our records are correct there are a few of the guys with birthdays coming up in September–October. If you happen to see any of these fine blokes wish them all the best

Sam Blackman
Mike Shanahan
Paul Tys
Onko Kingma
Bryan Duke

All the best from Menslink – I hope you all get some handy pressies.

POSM



St George Foundation

Menslink and the St George Bank Foundation have partnered up to expand the POSM programme. The 'St George Cluster' will comprise two ACT schools and one on the NSW South Coast.

Mogo Primary School have agreed to become our fourth school on the South Coast and will begin running POSM in fourth term.

Menslink have the honour of being the first ACT based community organisation to receiving funding through the St. George Foundation. Since 1990, the St. George Foundation has distributed over \$10 million to hundreds of charities throughout Australia to help thousands of kids be the best they can be.



CEO's Message continued

What a great story of travelling the full circle from being a mentoree and now coming to take on the responsibility of welcoming new mentoree's and helping them feel comfortable at Menslink. Thank you and congratulations Graeme.

Until next time, take care and enjoy the spring time.



Menslink Calendar – Important Dates to stick on your fridge...

Date	Day	Start	End	Where	Food	What
27/9/07	Thursday	6pm	8:30pm	Zone 3	Pizza	Link Up Laser Video
25/10/07	Thursday	6pm	8:30pm	Manuka Church Hall	Pizza	Link up Welcome New Guys
17 & 18/11	Sat & Sun	TBA	TBA	Wee Jasper	BBQ	Menslink Camp – Abseil & Caving
1/12/07	Sat	3pm	6pm	Cotter R.	BBQ	Menslink Chrissy BBQ



Programs that Menslink run include:
MYM (Mentoring Young Men),
YMSN (Young Mens Support Network)
 and **POSM** (Project Oriented School Mentoring)

About Menslink

Incorporated in 2002, Menslink is a dynamic, non-profit community association that promotes the value, well-being and social participation of men, in particular young men and boys, by providing appropriate and professional services with outreach activities.

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