

## News

### Mentors Advisory Group

The Mentors Advisory Group (MAG) consists of a committee of Mentors who meet monthly to decide what activities the MYM program should pursue. It is a very friendly group with a serious purpose.

The first meeting of MAG for 2009 will be 6:30pm, Wednesday February 11 here at Menslink. All Mentors are very welcome to attend.

Any Mentor who is willing to be part of MAG is particularly encouraged to attend, as this is the meeting where committee positions will be decided.

### Newsletter Submissions

Anyone out there who would like to contribute an article to this Newsletter is encouraged to do so.

The email address to submit articles to is [newsletter@menslink.org.au](mailto:newsletter@menslink.org.au)

So if you do anything of interest, like have an exceptional outing with your Mentor/Mentoree; want to interview your Mentor/Mentoree or offer insights into the Mentor/Mentoree relationship – just drop us a line.

## Link Up Activities

### Zone 3 Laser Action

The September Link Up was held at Zone 3 Laser Games out at Belconnen. We met up at 6pm and went inside to be shown how to strap on a laser pack and laser the opposition to kingdom come.

We had two games of mad scramble shoot em up. In game 1 we formed 3 teams and ran around like madmen. In game 2 we formed 2 teams and probably went harder than the first game.

It was good fun zapping and being zapped without any real worry about being hurt. Young Aidan proved himself a real talent with laser in hand, and certainly tagged me plenty of times.

It's also not a bad little workout and you end up very hot afterwards. This is why it was a good move for us to finish off with an ice cream down at Rubees after all the shenanigans were over.

We all stuffed our faces and had a very pleasant chat about laser games, who was the best, who was better than the best and life in general.

All in all I think it was a fine way to spend a Thursday evening.

### Church Hall Link Up

The October Link Up was our chance to welcome the new Mentor/Mentoree matches to the Menslink community.

We gathered at the Church Hall for an evening of pizza, drink and healthy competition to see who would be the champion match for the night.

So after we ate our fill we divvied ourselves up into matches and engaged in a number of competitive but fun games. Points were awarded as each game was played and at the end of it all Reece and Phil turned out to be the Grand Winners of the night. They both picked up gift vouchers at JB Hi Fi for their efforts.

I gotta say the night was a whole lotta fun. There is a real sense of community and camaraderie between the guys. Cheers to everyone who made the night such a success.

### January 22, 2009 Link Up – Movie Night

We have a Link Up planned for January 2009. It will be a movie here at the Menslink Office, with pizza and popcorn.

It is scheduled for a 6pm kick off on Thursday evening 22/1/09.

So mark it in your diaries and come along for a Menslink Movie Experience.



# CEO's Message



As we seemingly try and fit two months of social activities into the last two weeks before Christmas, life can appear pretty hectic. So I am glad you have at least taken five minutes to sit down and read the last edition of The Link for 2008. It has been a great year and 2009 looks as equally as enthralling with some great projects to look forward to, including Filmlink, the film making workshop to be run mid year.

Unfortunately our funding for the POSM program has come to an end which means it won't be running next year. Thank you to everyone that has been involved with POSM over the past three or four years—it is a terrific program that a lot of people have put a tremendous amount of effort into and we hope we can be back in schools working with boys again soon.

Thanks to the staff and volunteers at Menslink for all your time and effort throughout 2008. This year has provided us with many challenges which we have learnt and grown from. I hope everyone enjoys a well earned break and returns in 2009 ready for another exciting year.

No doubt we will all be spending time with family, friends and acquaintances over the next few weeks, so why not tell them about Menslink and the great opportunities it provides—maybe they might like to get involved.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## MYM – A Year in Retrospect

As 2008 draws to a close I am keenly aware of the full and vibrant year the Mentoring Young Men program has delivered. Starting off in January, (and the first time we've run a January Link-Up) our first Link-Up of the year was a movie night in Manuka—No Country for Old Men. Mark and Gaz then had the guys back at Menslink for pizza and robust discussion on the film the mentors and mentorees saw together. February was then upon us with the first MAG (Mentor Advisory Group) meeting of the year, a new leadership group was voted in and the MYM year was then officially kicked-off. Kayaking to Spring Bank Island on Lake Burley Griffin (an annual favourite) in February, bike riding around Lake Burley Griffin in March and then indoor wall climbing in Erindale early May rounded out the first quarter of 2008.

The first mentor intake of the year was in May with a strong group being matched and very supportive group of mentors helping us out over the Residential Weekend where for the first time it was held at Camp Cottermouth, the new Scouts facility on the Cotter Road. Late May had the community bowling 10 pin in Tuggeranong for Link-Up and June welcomed the new matches at the Kingston Baptist Church Hall—a new venue for the program, which we have been very happy with.

June also saw two new special programs run by the MYM program. Financial Fitness—a program that was tailored and geared for our young guys—was run at the June and July Link-Ups. Thanks to Michael Shanahan for coordinating this highly informative program. Safe-TALK was a program run for mentors and staff that dealt with positive talk around suicide. Thanks to Glenn Cullen who coordinated this program for MYM.

July had what has become our annual Car Rally, originally designed by Graham Hannaford and this year



co-designed with Michael Shanahan. Thanks guys for your enthusiastically creative input.

The highlight of the year for many is the Annual Mentor Retreat which again was held in August. Another fun-filled time was had by all. Movie Night at Menslink followed in August—The Outsiders being shown in our little intimate theatre.

September saw the second intake of mentors and mentorees being matched, supported by yet another strong team and Zone 3, the laser gaming centre was where September's Link-Up was held. Another "Special Intake" occurred in October followed by the welcoming of the new matches later in the month, where we had a huge turn-out of participants.

This year the camp was held down the coast at Depot Beach in November and Glenn, Ryan and the guys went kayaking, bushwalking and attended a surf school in Broulee. Late November our MYM program dinner was attended by all those that have helped throughout the 3 mentor/mentoree intakes of the year, for we as staff could not deliver the quality of the intakes without all the support we receive from our volunteers.

As the program wound down for the year the Annual Xmas BBQ was held in early December, a great event for the family and friends of the MYM program. We also take time out to acknowledge the achievements and contributions of those that participate in our community.

What follows is the list of those who were acknowledged at the Xmas BBQ:

**MYM – Friends of Menslink for 2008:**

Trevor Fuller and Alex Duffy  
Michael O'Shea and David Witcombe  
Tim Snedden and Shayne Henderson  
Dan Sharp and Dan Natrass

**MYM – Mentor of the Year:**

Erik Wolfhagen

**MYM – Volunteer of the Year:**

Ralph Ogden

**MYM – Mentoree of the Year:**

Aidan Tennant

**The Menslink Above & Beyond  
the Call Award:**

Tim Snedden, Gabriela Alvarez and  
Graham Hannaford

**MYM Camp RAMP Awards:**

Overall Participation Award:  
Nicholas Ryan  
Mentoree Challenge Award:  
Reece Borchers

In closing I would like to thank Garry Starling, Mark Harbottle, Glen Cullen, Ryan Harris, Neil Rogers, Greg Brazel, Tim Snedden, Ralph Ogden, Ron Constance, Graham Hannaford, Graeme Chyla, Michael O'Shea, Gabriela Alvarez, Graham Alvarez, Leeann Tennant and all those that have contributed to make 2008 another memorable year for the MYM Program.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year  
from Gaz, Harbs and me

Bryan



**Christmas BBQ**

Our Chrissy BBQ was held at the usual place on Saturday 6th December. And what a beautiful place it is—out at the Cotter.

The weather on the day was great, which was a fine improvement on last years storms, hail, snow and whatever else shouldn't happen for a Barbie.

We all met up at 3 O'clock on the dot and started burning a heck of a lot of sausages and onion. Some people got straight into eating, others went for a swim but everyone enjoyed themselves.

The Chrissy BBQ is a great time to acknowledge some of the fine people that help out around Menslink, so we awarded a few prizes. The recipients are mentioned in Bryan's article on the year in MYM.

Congratulations to everyone who received awards. It really is a great thing to come to work and know there are a bunch of fantastic people who give up their time and effort for Menslink. Without all of our volunteers it just wouldn't work. Thanks go to everyone (wives, husbands and partners as well) who gives of themselves and make Menslink such a great place to work.

**Movember Shenanigans**

Glenn, our beloved CEO took part in this years Movember antics.

It is a fun event with a very serious message. It is an effort to raise awareness and money for male depression and prostate cancer.

The idea is in the month of MOVEMBER you grow a moustache (or Mohawk if you're really keen). Hopefully the mo' you gro' is visible and one that can be laughed at.

Anyway, at the end of the month you have a BBQ and try to get a few laughs and raise a bit of moolah. Check out the photos of some of the outstanding mo's that came to our Movember Barbie. They look like they belong in a police mug shot.



## 2008 MYM Camp

As we set out on a sunny Friday afternoon the enthusiastic group of campers had one thing in mind, destination Depot Beach. OK, maybe one other thing in mind, "what's for dinner?" As we headed up the Clyde Mountain a familiar low cloud wrapped itself around the mountain, this was the only thing standing between a dozen keen campers and a great weekend at 'the coast'.

We arrived at Depot Beach in complete darkness and began to setup our tents under the glare of the bus headlights. It was a good thing that everyone 'pitched in' and made sure all tents/swags were safe and sound, for the storm that was about to descend upon us was going to test out the waterproof-ness of our sleeping arrangements. Morning came and everyone had survived without getting wet, although Nick Spence did have the extra cover of a kangaroo sitting on his swag to shield him from the storm.

Our first activity of the weekend was the kayaking trip on Lake Durras. We were greeted by a friendly guide Phil, a very still lake and some light mist and fog. Before long everyone was getting the hang of the kayaking and thoroughly enjoyed being out on the water exploring the lake and its foreshore. Plenty of laughter was coming from the kayak of Norman and Nick as they meandered around Lake Durras. By time we returned to shore Reece had mastered the whole kayaking caper and we more 'senior' paddlers were still dry so we were happy!



After lunch some of us headed for the beach for a spot of fishing and beach cricket and others went exploring the coastline. In just a few hours many great achievements were accomplished; Reece put on a fishing demonstration to rival that of Rex Hunt, catching two 'whopping' flatheads from the beach while Steven put on a cricket clinic that would put the Aussie team to shame as Nick and Norman braved the 'fresh' waters of the ocean.

As darkness descended upon the camp so did the local wildlife. Kangaroos, possums and other creepy crawlies all made their presence known. The lads collected some wood and we stoked up the fire and settled in for the evening. As the night unfolded we all shared some great stories and got to know each other just a little bit more.

Soon after brekkie on Sunday we set out for Broulee and our 'date' with the surf. Some of us were more familiar with surf boards than others, but after donning

the wetsuit I was already feeling like an accomplished surfer ready for the world tour ... bring on Hawaii. After an hour in the surf this surfing initiate was well and truly puffed! Norman showed some flare, Nick and Reece both surfed manfully as Steven took on beach patrol duties from the shore.

We headed back to Depot Beach for lunch, but before departing a couple of awards were announced; the Overall Participation award went to Nick Ryan for his willingness to have a go and to help out around the camp. Reece Borchers was awarded for being the Mentoree that stretched or challenged himself the most. A big thanks to Ryan Harris for his assistance, particularly dealing with leeches, Graham Hannaford for his assistance dealing with ticks and to all the lads for their general enthusiasm for the weekend.



**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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