

Edition 26, April – June 2012

CEO's Message

July 2012

Hi everyone and welcome to the wintery edition of our Newsletter! I'm writing this huddled up to the oil heater trying to warm up after a chilly -4 degree start this morning! We had a very successful intake and matching with new mentors and mentees in May. Congratulations to Garry as it was his first time managing the whole show. Thanks also to Cass, Harbs, Graeme, Phil, Ralph and Yarra for their support in welcoming new mentors to our community.

Over the past few months, we've also had a few staff changes, with Ben Triglone joining us as mentoring Coordinator and Fiona Brammall joining us as office manager. Welcome both – I'm sure you'll make a huge contribution to Menslink (and have done already!). I'd like to welcome Harbs back into the fold as well, after an absence of a few years. Harbs is helping out on all our Linkups and mentor training weekends. My thanks must also go to Cass and Graham H who helped Garry out on a short term basis until we got Ben up to speed. Your input was very gratefully received by Garry, myself and our broader community. Thank you again.

Sadly Ed our counsellor has left us earlier this month and we're just finalising our recruitment of his replacement now. I hope to be able to introduce the new counsellor to you all in the next edition and we wish Ed all the best in his future endeavours.

We decided to improve our mentoring activities this year by including two camps each year instead of just one: a winter bush camp and our traditional summer surfing camp. This winter we're all going to Birrigai where we'll be going on some high ropes courses and bushwalking. We've also been lucky to secure former Wallaby and Brumby great, Clyde Rathbone who will come out to dinner and talk to the guys around the fire about his experiences on and off the field. And thankfully we're "camping" in one of the Birrigai dormitories so it won't be too cold.

This year Menslink turns ten years' old! To help us celebrate, both former CEOs – Richard Shanahan and Glenn Cullen – will be coming along to the mentor's retreat in August to sit around the campfire and talk about old times. I look forward to seeing both old and new mentors and supporters there and no doubt Richard and Glenn will too. Just a reminder the retreat is on Friday the 10th August.

I just wanted to finish off by thanking a few generous individuals and organisations who have supported Menslink over the past month or so. These include Rotary Sunrise, Hayden from St Eddies, Grill'd Manuka and Ricoh. Thanks to all!

Martin

Introducing...

Ben Triglone



For those of you I haven't yet had the pleasure of meeting, my name is Ben Triglone and I'll be helping Garry run the Mentoring Young Men program.

I'm joining Menslink having come from an interesting mix of working backgrounds covering such things as government research, alcohol and drug rehabilitation and more recently odds-compilation for a sports-wagering company.

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I've long had an interest in psychology and personal development since completing my social science studies at ANU some time back.

When away from the office I can often be spotted hacking a golf ball around or getting my hands greasy trying to fix old cars.

I feel really fortunate to be part of the great community that makes up Menslink, and I'd like to extend a big thanks to all of the volunteers who make the MYM program so successful and so much fun!

And speaking of fun, I'm looking forward to getting to know you all at the winter camp which is less than a month away now. See you at Birrigai!

Fiona Brammall



Hi, I'm Fiona Brammall and I joined Menslink a few weeks ago as Office Manager. I'll be doing a whole range of things around the office, basically trying to make myself as useful as possible so that the other guys can concentrate on doing what they do best.

Martin snapped me up just as I was finishing a CIT course called Learning Options for Women, which I had been doing for two days a week through the first half of this year. The course is designed for women like me, who may have been out of the workforce for quite some time, caring for children and so on, and/or who are looking to head in a new direction in their career. I gained a lot of new skills and, most importantly, confidence, through the course and I feel very lucky to have found such a great job so quickly.

The guys here made me feel welcome straight away and I know I am going to get a lot of satisfaction from being part of such a wonderful organisation. As a mother of a nearly nine year old boy (and a nearly 12 year old girl), I have a deep personal interest in what we do here and I look forward to meeting you around the place.

April Link Up

Car Rally Turned Cuppa

We decided to have the April Link Up on a Sunday, just to try something different. And it was different, but not in a good way. We had a very low turnout – 3 mentors and 1 mentee. So we decided not to run the Car Rally, but to go down to Manuka and share a cuppa instead.

It was a beautiful day and Manuka was buzzing, so it was a nice way to spend a relaxed hour or two. But it would have been better rallying our way around the beautiful ACT.

Anyway, I sincerely hope we can get a better turn out to the next Link Up.

May

Intake of Champions

In May just gone we had an intake of new Mentor/Mentee matches. And what a fine bunch of dudes they were, are and continue to be. We first met up here at Link Central on Wednesday evening 9th May for the first of our 2 training nights.

Everyone greeted each other and pretty quickly got into the swing of things. We played the customary tennis ball name game as an ice breaker and moved on from there. I gotta say it was pretty obvious straight away that this bunch of dudes was gonna be a pleasure to do training with.

After our training nights we proceeded on to the weekend training, where we go out to Camp Innabaanya and eat up a storm. Our cooking crew met us out there, assembled a kitchen full of food and started cooking up said storm.

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The new Mentors really got into the swing of it and seemed to have a lot of fun.

Then the serious business began – dinner consumption of G2's amazing roast beef, which was as GREAT as it was filling, and then a dessert of impossible pie - absolutely beautiful and a credit to the whole cooking crew.

Of course, the only way to follow a magnificent meal like that was to head out to the fire pit and warm ourselves against the cold Canberra night. Harbs and Cass had been delegated the fire stoker role, and boy, did they stoke up a beauty of a fire. I reckon it was the best fire we've had at training, no doubt about it. There was no feeling the cold around that fire and boy we appreciated it.

The weekend prepared the fellas for the real IMPORTANT stuff where the Mentors are matched up with Mentees. We do the matching over two nights and it is always a lot of fun. We got together on the first of the nights and played a couple of getting to know you games. This went very smoothly in the extreme.

Everyone came back for the second of the Matching nights and this is where the young guys get to choose their actual Mentor. Again, this all went pretty smoothly and by the end of the night, five young dudes

were matched up with five Mentors. Bloody great news, if you ask me. So, CHEERS to you new matches. You are the guys that Menslink exists for. Without your good natured participation, Menslink wouldn't be here. So a big thanks goes out to all of you, and everyone here at the Link hopes to get to know you a bit better and share in your wisdom and good vibes.

June Link Up

Dickson Community Centre Welcoming new matches

Dickson Community Centre was the location for Menslink's June Link Up. It was fantastic to see so many mentors & mentees coming along to the event. The staff at Menslink would like to thank you all for making it such an enjoyable night!

We were also lucky enough to have all of our new matches in attendance on the night: Alex & Rob, Angus & Nathan, Jason & Ben, George & Kamil as well as Andrew & Shane. We'd like to take this opportunity to formally welcome all of you to the Menslink family and we hope you enjoyed the link-up as much as we did. We look forward to spending more time with you all at future events.

Proceedings kicked off at 6pm with 15 tasty Dominos pizzas being devoured in quick time. Following this we commenced the games portion of the night by splitting into two teams for a game of "tennis ball DONKEY". Team Awesome lived up to their name, edging Team Propeller-head in a spirited match. It was hard not to be impressed by the sharp reflexes and silky skills on display as everyone tried valiantly in what was a constant battle against the unrelenting powers of gravity.

We then engaged in a contest that asked: just how well do mentors & mentees know each other? Seemingly the answer to this question was a resounding "very well indeed". Overall mentors & mentees had little trouble in identifying their match from such questions as "star sign", "favourite sound" and "dream job" ('no job' was the popular answer amongst mentees!). Points were awarded for those who were the quickest to identify their match.

But then things got decidedly more physical as matches embarked on a race through the "minefield of life"; a tricky exercise where absolute faith is placed on the navigation skills of their partner. It was interesting to see the various approaches and routes the respective guides chose to take. It's fair to say that there were varying degrees of success, but eventual winners Shane & Andrew showed



considerable speed and agility en route to the narrowest of victories, crossing the line as Trent & Trev breathed down their neck. Special mention must be made of George, who took a novel approach to the minefield, effortlessly lifting his mentor Kamil off the ground in a bear hug. If going *around* the mines isn't working for you, why not just go *over* them?!

The final game was most entertaining and once again involved a tennis ball versus gravity. Players had to recite names whilst

simultaneously throwing FOUR tennis balls around a circle. Naturally chaos ensued but it was a great way to get to learn everyone's names.

With so much going on Garry somehow managed to calculate the overall points tallies as we went. The pairing of Trent & Trev proved to be the top all-rounders on the night, scoring a whopping 86 points and with it \$35 JB Hi-fi vouchers. Hot on their trail were Andrew & Shane with 80 points and \$30 vouchers, with Ethan & Audi rounding off the

placings with a very respectable 68 points (\$25 vouchers).

This capped off a great night which, along with some entertaining games included some quality get-to-know-you time for all. We hope to see as many of you as possible at our next event - the Menslink winter camp at Birrigai to be held over the weekend of July 28-29. With so many awesome activities planned, as well as a guest appearance from Wallaby Clyde Rathbone, it promises to be memorable.



Menslink provides free mentoring and counselling services to young men in the Canberra region.

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 particularly young men and boys, by providing appropriate and professional services with outreach activities

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