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i *...will take you there!*

Welcome

Welcome to the fortnightly Edition of the AVIC E News

Issue 112 - 13th May, 2008

Aurora continues to promote the AVIC Network and make contact with you throughout the year. We welcome your suggestions, comments and requests. Remember, if there is anything you would like published in the AVIC Newsletter or sent out to the Network in a bulk email, please send the information to lesley@auroraresearch.com.au

***Enjoy reading this Edition ... from the Team -
Lyn, Lesley, John, Gordon & Maryanne***

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i *...will take you there!*

AVIC/Industry News

New AVICs

We take pleasure in welcoming two new AVICs to the Network - they are:

- Illawarra Regional Airport Visitors Centre - Level 3
- Shellharbour Workers Club Visitors Centre - Level 2

Congratulations on being accepted into the AVIC Network and good luck with your new enterprise.

The current figures for numbers in the Network are:

- Level 1 - 61
- Level 2 - 50
- Level 3 - 64

Totalling 175 Accredited Visitor Information Centres across New South Wales.

Travel Safely in Australia

Tourism NSW, through ASCOT's National Visitor Safety Working Group, is involved in initiatives to improve visitor safety. To help visitors learn more about travel safety in Australia, two tools have been developed.

Travel Safely in Australia Brochure

For the consumer, this brochure summarises the major safety considerations when travelling in Australia. The brochure contains messages in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese and Korean.

New South Wales has successfully negotiated airside distribution rights for the safety brochure. Consequently, Tourism NSW is able to distribute over 2000 of these brochures weekly from Sydney International Airport.

National Visitor Safety Handbook

To ensure that safety messages are consistent, accessible and complete, a handbook has been produced containing all travel safety messages relevant to Australia. The handbook is designed as a reference tool for producers of tourism publications and website editors, to assist them to inform consumers about safe travel. For details go to the TNSW Corporate website www.corporate.tourism.nsw.gov.au and click on Business Resources.

Source: TNSW Corporate Website

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Your AVIC Brand

AVIC Network Slogan

This is the Slogan associated with Accredited Visitor Information Centres (AVICs) across New South Wales. You will see and recognise it in a wide range of tourism, travel and general interest advertisement and promotional materials. The Slogan was developed by Aurora Practical Solutions Pty Ltd (Aurora) to increase the significance and recall of the accredited "i" Brand.



AVIC Network Brand

Accredited Visitor Information Centres are part of a Brand. The Brand fulfils a need and has a particular set of values and qualities, which makes it unique. The accredited 'i' sign is the symbol for the Brand (trademarked to Tourism Victoria). The Brand is the consumer's key promise of the provision of quality information about a destination or

tourism product or service. The accredited 'i' is a National Brand across Australia and is utilised by more than 350 Accredited Visitor Information Centres, as well as print media, Internet and road signs.

With over 170 AVICs in New South Wales and many new enquiries to join the Network, there is the further opportunity to develop new relationships with consumers, increasing the AVIC Network contribution and benefit to local economies across New South Wales. The accredited 'i' sign has a prominent place across the landscape of New South Wales and is delivering a purposeful message. The 'i' allows for various offers, whether they be destination, information or value-added services. The 'i' will take the consumer where they want to go.

Just a reminder of what the AVIC Brand is and its value to your town and region. Please feel free to use this wording and the logos on your promotional products, etc.

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Volunteers

Factors to Consider in Retaining Volunteers

Satisfying motivation

- Matching availability and commitment with area of interest
- Offering relevant support / training
- Checking outcome of work matches expectation
- Monitoring development and changes in volunteer motivation
- Providing challenge to appropriate volunteer

Sense of belonging

- Sharing the news
- Sense of equality
- Part of a team
- Placement in organisation
- Opportunities for self development
- Confidence and belief in what they are doing
- Social interaction / groups
- Involvement in decision-making
- Personal invitations to events
- Response to concerns
- Outcome of training
- Mention in your Annual Report

Keeping down the negatives

- Providing good tools for the job
- Providing ongoing training
- Develop career paths
- Providing flexibility
- Providing support and debriefing
- Reimbursement of costs
- Badges, uniforms
- Involvement in committees
- Direct communication about news

- Follow up those who have left
- Grievance procedures
- Good working conditions
- Two way communication

Source: School of Volunteer Management

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OHS

Workplace Bullying

Bullying is a largely hidden problem in the workplace, often taking place behind closed doors and without witnesses. The effects of bullying can be devastating to the health and well-being of those exposed to it and the cost to organisations in terms of lost productivity and staff turnover can be substantial.

A bully is defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary as "a person who uses strength or power to coerce others by fear" and that to bully is to "oppress, persecute, physically or morally by (threat of) superior force."

Examples of bullying behaviour include unfair and excessive criticism, publicly insulting victims, ignoring their point of view, constantly changing or setting unrealistic work targets and undervaluing their efforts at work.

Dealing with the problem

It is vital to act promptly to eliminate bullying in the workplace. Ongoing bullying can be costly in terms of increased sick leave, absenteeism and turnover. By creating a work environment which does not tolerate bullying, you can substantially improve staff commitment and productivity.

Eliminate bullying at work

There are a number of steps that you can take to eliminate bullying in your workplace:

1. Establish and circulate a policy making bullying clearly unacceptable
2. Identify unacceptable behaviour and explain why it is unacceptable
3. Nominate a staff member who is trained in counselling and encourage anyone who feels they have been bullied to talk to them
4. Actively encourage employees who are being bullied to lodge a complaint
5. Guarantee confidentiality of any complaints and investigate them promptly
6. Ensure a fair hearing to the person being bullied and provide support
7. Monitor the work environment to ensure that it is bully-free, especially where there has been restructuring or a change in personnel
8. Provide ongoing training for all staff to cover bullying awareness, harassment and discrimination, assertiveness, interpersonal skills and confidence building.

Source: NSW Department of Commerce

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PR Plan for Media Relations

Much of the success of your media relations activities will be the result of careful planning. If you want to send out a story every month, make a list now, and check them off as the year goes by. The following activities are just two ideas of many you could consider in your annual calendar of media events.

Non-agenda Press Morning

1. Not a Press Conference, but an open day for the Press
2. Familiarise them with your services, products and staff
3. Give them an information pack and a branded gift
4. Establish your AVIC as a relevant source of information
5. Invite the social pages photographer from your local paper to record the occasion
6. Enclose an open invitation in the information pack, to come back any time
7. If you hear of a new journalist joining a publication or television program relevant to your AVIC, invite them in for a private tour

Visitor/s of the Month

1. Propose to your local social writer that they carry a photograph of an interesting visitor/s to the Centre once a month
2. Ask visitors if they would mind being photographed
3. If a photographer from the paper is not available, consider investing in a digital camera for quick, hassle-free recording (don't forget to get their names, where they have come from, where they are going and what they think of your town) for your photo caption

You have something fundamentally in common with the media. You are both in the business of disseminating information. Accordingly, you have something to offer each other. Your AVIC is like a specialist resource library for travel and tourism in your local town and/or region, even Statewide. At your fingertips is a broad contact base for the travel and tourism industry, and thus an excellent source for related news, business and general interest stories.

As travel and tourism is your specialty area and a subject you think about every day, it is up to you to remind your media what's new in your industry, locally and regionally and, of course, about your AVIC and its products and services.

On a broader scale, whatever publicity you generate in your area compliments similar activities being carried out by your AVIC colleagues in other towns. Share your ideas together. Do joint venture publicity activities. Tell each other what has worked or not worked for you. Cooperating together to build your public profile through the media will reinforce AVIC Branding and strengthen the public perception of services and products available throughout the State.

As a Network of 172 AVICs, your publicity opportunities across New South Wales have enormous potential and reach. By working simultaneously to build Brand awareness locally, you are supporting each other on a larger scale and the results speak for themselves with increased traffic and sales.

Source: AVIC Media Relations Guide

We thought it timely to give AVICs some information on media relations as many Centres experience a down turn in visitor numbers during the cooler weather and additional media coverage may help to generate more visitors to your town/region.

South Coast Tourism Awards

Last year, Illawarra Tourism merged with South Coast creating a mega regional tourism body to market the destination. With this came the amalgamation of the Regional Tourism Awards which will now be known as the South Coast Tourism Awards and covering the entire South Coast, from Wollongong to Eden, increasing competition and the desire to win even greater.

This year, the Awards will mirror the New South Wales State Awards in their entirety, ie. the South Coast Awards will have the same categories, same criteria and the same judging process as the State Awards. This will give winners of the South Coast Tourism Awards automatic entry into the State Awards as a finalist. Entries close on Friday, 30th May. Entries for the Awards are now open and criteria and information can be found on the South Coast website www.tourismwollongong.com or contact Vera Cvetkoski or Kate Chapman on Tel: 02 4227 5545 for further information.

Source: Tourism Wollongong Newsletter

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What's On / Events

7 - 18 May - Lismore - GemFest

Since its inception in 1990, the GemFest has become the largest gem, crystal, jewellery and fossil show in Regional Australia. This is an all day event on Saturday and Sunday at the Lismore Showground. Wonderful hand-crafted jewellery, rare fossils and meteorites, stalls and displays undercover, free on-site parking, demonstrations of lapidary crafts, children's activities and food stalls. For further information, phone 02 66888280 or email bcopper@bluemaxx.com.au.

27 May -3 June - Casino - Beef Week

The biggest event in Casino's social calendar is 'back with a bang' this year. Some Festival events include a fashion parade, Beef Week Queen, family and gala night, Beef Industry breakfast, rodeo, art and craft exhibitions, led steer competition and auction, bush poets, stud beef cattle competition, wood chopping and whip cracking competitions and a cow pat competition. Two time Golden Guitar Award winners, the McClymonts, will perform on opening night. For further information phone, 02 6662 8181 or visit www.casinobeefweek.com.au.

5 - 9 June - Port Stephens - Blue Water Country Music Festival

Enjoy a feast of country music with bush balladeers, poets, boot-scootin dances and guitar pickers that makes the most of the spectacular locations available in this blue-water paradise. For further information, log onto www.bluewatercountrymusic.com.au.

6 - 7 June - Merriwa - "Festival of the Fleeces"

Commemorating Merriwa's involvement within the Australian Wool Industry. Events range from the street parade, bush poetry, yard dog trials, whip cracking, the Billy Cart Derby, exhibitions and much more.

Join visitors from all over the State to watch shearers at work, watch the workings of the sheep dogs and their trainers demand respect from the flocks of sheep. For further information, phone Merriwa AVIC on Tel: 02 65482607.

7 - 9 June - Griffith - "unWINED"

Take a journey through the wineries and gourmet food producers of Griffith with tutored tastings, lazy lunches and a myriad of musical performances. For further information, log onto www.unwined-riverina.com.

7 - 9 June - Gulgong - "Henry Lawson Heritage Festival"

Celebrating the literary, music and performance events of the life and times of Henry Lawson. Features include a grand parade, literary awards, live performances of Lawson's work, heritage games and much much more. For further information, phone Gulgong AVIC on Tel: 02 6374 1202.

24 - 28 September - Canberra - "Floride Nightfest"

A night time extravaganza. Five nights of live entertainment set against a breathtaking landscape of lanterns, fairy lights and flood lit flower beds. For further information, visit www.visitcanberra.com.au.

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[AVIC Network Profiles](#)

AVIC Network Staff Profile

This Issue we feature Izabella Lane from Mittagong AVIC.

AVIC Staff Profile Questionnaire

- 1. My current position is:** Tourism Coordinator and that involves the day to day operations of the Mittagong Visitor Information Centre.
- 2. The best thing about my position is:** Working with professional colleagues, who also like to have a bit of fun. I also love meeting the visitors who come through the Centre, as they are on holidays and out to enjoy themselves.
- 3. I have been working here since:** April 2003.
- 4. My previous position was:** Secretary to the Director Corporate Services for Wingecarribee Shire Council, which is how the opportunity to work at the Visitor Information Centre came about, by being involved with the Tourism Committee, which lead to a work opportunity, which lead to undertaking further study and completing my Diploma of Tourism (Operations Management).
- 5. My favourite sport / leisure activity is:** Going to the gym and I love to go out to dinner (I don't like cooking much).
- 6. My favourite holiday destination is:** I don't particularly have one place that I could call my favourite as I just love to travel when I can.
- 7. People tell me I'm good at:** Shopping (I love to shop!!!). I am also good at organising.

8. My favourite colour is: Red or black.

9. My favourite singer/music is: Pete Murray, Michael Buble and John Mayer.

10. If I could live my life over again: I would not change a thing. I am very happy with my family, my job and all my wonderful work colleagues.



Many thanks Izabella for sharing yourself with the Network and helping us to put a face to the name.

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[Special Feature - Our Backyard](#)

Our Backyard - From Belinda McKenzie of Scone AVIC

Scone, the "Horse Capital of Australia" and home to some of the most beautiful thoroughbred horse studs in the world.

Scone is also recognised for its beautiful National Parks and Recreation Areas such as Towarri National Park and Wash Pools, Burning Mountain Nature Reserve and Lake Glenbawn State Park. You will also find Scone's salute to all thing Equine in Elizabeth Park, home to the lifesize Mare and Foal Statue, a beautiful spot to have a picnic or BBQ with swings and plenty of room for the kids to explore.

Scone has five hotels and motels, three caravan parks and plenty of B&Bs to meet all of your travel needs. It also has restaurants, cafes, takeaways, clubs and pubs to satisfy any hunger pains.

There are two museums located in Scone, the Australian Stock Horse Society, open Monday to Friday, and Scone Historical Society Museum.

Major events include the Scone and Upper Hunter Horse Festival which runs throughout May and attracts thousands of people with varied interests. This is also the time that the Scone Cup is held and is reputed to be the richest day of racing in country New South Wales.



What a beautiful serene image - good luck with the Scone Horse Festival running from 2 - 25 May.

Our Backyard - From Christine Bimson of Bermagui AVIC



Bermagui is located on the magnificent Sapphire Coast of New South Wales. Pristine beaches and lakes provide water activities from surfing to swimming, snorkelling, boating and canoeing. Book a fishing charter or throw in a line from the beach, rocks or the river. There's tennis, bowls, golf, an international standard mountain bike track, bush walking, guided walks and bird watching in the surrounding National Parks and State Forests. Tour Montreal Goldfield, visit Umbarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Leander Open Garden. Follow the Art Trail along the Tathra-Bermagui Road, stroll through the National Trust Village of Central Tilba and Tilba Tilba at the base of breathtaking Gulaga Mountain.

Plan a day out and drive to the scenic towns of Tathra, Merimbula and Eden, returning via historic Bega and driving on through peaceful rural lands to Quaama and the working village of Cobargo.

The Bermagui Seaside Fair, a free fun filled day of entertainment for all the family, is held on the second Saturday of March each year. The Tilba Easter Festival is held each Easter Saturday. The Four Winds Music

Festival, featuring international artists, will be held over the Easter long weekend in 2010.

There is a range of accommodation in Bermagui including B&Bs, motels, tourist/caravan parks, self-contained holiday units and houses and camping grounds in the National Parks. Several restaurants, casual cafes and the Country Club offer fine food and beverages.

Thanks Christine. We can certainly appreciate "why you live where you live" - what a great backyard!

Lithgow Targeting Local Residents From Jodie Rayner of Lithgow AVIC

In recent issues we have highlighted various activities carried out by AVICs to encourage local residents to visit the AVIC and local attractions with their family, friends and visitors.

Lithgow Visitor Information Centre has successfully conducted the Lithgow Open Day, "**What's In My Backyard**", for the last 5 years. The Open Day encourages local tourism attraction operators to provide free entry to locals with the aim of giving local residents an insight into the local tourism industry, ensuring that the visiting friends and relatives market is targeted, as local residents become aware of the tourist product in their area.

Tourism Manager, Jodie Rayner said, "The "What's In My Backyard" campaign is a highly successful marketing strategy geared towards to VFR Market. By encouraging locals to have a thorough understanding of tourism product in the local region, we have successfully guaranteed word of mouth referral from local residents to local attractions."

The "What's In My Backyard" campaign will, once again, take place in Lithgow in June 2008 in consultation with the local attractions.



Pictured above: "Thomas the Tank Engine" - part of the promotion by the Zig Zag Railway.

Many thanks Jodie for sharing the success of Lithgow AVIC's "What's In My Backyard" campaign.

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Deadline

Deadline

Please email lesley@auroraresearch.com.au with any articles you wish to be included in the upcoming AVIC News, prior to 27th May, 2008.

We appreciate your contributions and input into the AVIC Network Program.

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