

Biodiversity expert honoured

Farmer-scientist wins GSDC Medal for Excellence in NRM

Research scientist and farmer Geoff Woodall is the ninth winner of the Great Southern's most prestigious natural resource management award.

Dr Woodall was named winner of the Great Southern Development Commission Medal for Excellence in NRM at a dinner at Carlyles on Thursday 26 August.

Agriculture and Food Minister Terry Redman presented Dr Woodall with the sterling silver medal, which comes with an award of \$10,000 to further NRM work in the region.

Dr Woodall conducts research and development through the Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management (CENRM) but also works as a native plant consultant and runs his own family property, focusing on biodiversity, native plant industries and native food cultivation.

Runners-up regional ecologist Sarah Comer and indigenous landholder leader Kelvin Flügge each received \$1000 to further their efforts in NRM.

The award was judged by Alex Campbell, Naomi Arrowsmith, Ross Williams, Wendy Bradshaw, John Blake and Barbara Cook. Mr Blake introduced Dr Woodall and noted that his research had made a huge contribution to the understanding that the region's native plants included many species with commercial potential.

Dr Woodall's work includes new approaches to sandalwood cultivation and production, investigating the potential of native tubers as root vegetable crops and advancing practices in revegetation, crop protection and restoration ecology.

His family farm at Beaufort River is hailed as a showpiece for biodiversity in commercial



Dr Geoff Woodall (left) is congratulated on his win by Agriculture and Food Minister Terry Redman.

agriculture. He is highly regarded as an adviser on commercial biodiversity.

GSDC Chairman Peter Rundle said the Medal for Excellence in NRM encouraged regional leaders to continue to build their expertise and share their knowledge.

"NRM is about the sustainable use of all of our natural assets across the landscape, coasts and oceans," Mr Rundle said. "It is these assets which support our growth industries, nature-based tourism as well as traditional agriculture sectors.

"We are fortunate to have a diverse group of enthusiastic people working in both the public and private sectors who continue to demonstrate innovation, passion, commitment and leadership in developing ways to achieve the sustainable use of our natural resources," Mr Rundle said.

GSDC Chief Executive Officer Bruce Manning said Dr Woodall's win encapsulated the intent of the Medal for Excellence.

"Dr Woodall is a practising rural producer with strong research credentials and he is

highly respected as a mentor in the field of restoration," Mr Manning said.

"Over the years the GSDC Medal for Excellence has been awarded to innovative farmers, dedicated scientists and committed community leaders.

"Dr Woodall is respected in each of those fields and we congratulate him on his achievement," Mr Manning said.

The award was established in 2002 and past winners include malleefowl protector Susanne Dennings, landscape drainage pioneer Russel Thomson, leading lucerne grower Geoff Bee and Denmark sustainable communities leader Louise Duxbury.

Contact: Jessica van der Waag ph. 9821 3211

inside this issue:

GSDC Medal celebration	2
Theatre seats await.....	3
Sciences building plan approved	3
Prize pics.....	4
High profile landscape	5
A world of experience.....	5
Movies on offer.....	6
Regional delicacies	6
Sowing the seeds	7
Sport fans' haven.....	7
Agencies work together	8

NRM guests celebrate medal

Dinner draws farmers, scientists, community leaders



Left: GSDC Board Chairman Peter Rundle with his wife Andrea (left) and Board member Kerry Stone.



Right: Nathan McQuoid, of South Coast NRM, with medal finalist Sarah Comer.



Tahlia Thomas, Jennifer Dalby and Grytsje Doust enjoy the evening.



Left: GSDC Medal winner 2007 Geoff Bee catches up with 2010 judge John Blake.



Right: Abigail Workman, Bella Bamford and Linsey McFarlane celebrated the award.

Praise for worthy contestants

Judge urges subsequent attempts

GSDC Medal for Excellence in NRM judge Alex Campbell praised the standard of the finalists in contention for the 2010 award.

Mr Campbell said the judging panel urged unsuccessful nominees for past rounds of the medal to consider accepting nomination in future rounds, because many worthy recipients remained in the field of natural resource management.

Sarah Comer, a finalist in this year's award, works for the Department of Environment and Conservation. She researches and lectures on conservation biology and



Kelvin Flugge



Sarah Comer

ecological restoration, and has contributed to conservation of the region's rare birds, along with research on invertebrates.

The other 2010 finalist, Kelvin Flugge,

is the first Indigenous finalist for the GSDC Medal. Mr Flugge is the Southern Agricultural Indigenous Landholder Service project manager and works with the Department of Agriculture to support sustainable economic, environmental and social opportunities on Indigenous-held farming properties.

Both runners-up received a certificate and an award of \$1000 to further their NRM work.

Contact Jessica van der Waag
Ph. 9821 3211

Theatre seats await patrons

GSDC Board views entertainment centre progress

Concert and theatre patrons in the Great Southern will soon end their long wait for a seat at the spectacular Albany Entertainment Centre.

After almost two years of construction activity at the waterfront site, the building is now in the final stages.

The GSDC managed the project budget during construction and is a member of the Project Control Group.

GSDC Board members toured the building recently to view progress at the site.

Plenty of work was still going on, but the Board checked out the view from the theatre seats, all still wrapped in protective plastic, and also ventured out onto the stage.

Landscaping, painting and final fit-out are still under way but the building will be handed over soon.

After the handover, extensive work will remain to be done before the centre will be opened to the public.

The centre operators will have to bring in furnishings, specialist theatre equipment, signs, computers, office equipment and consumable supplies before the centre will be ready to host events.

Contact: Bruce Manning ph. 9842 4888



GSDC Board members, from left, Kevin Forbes, Len Smith, Rob Lucas, Doug Forrest and Kerry Stone, along with guest Mike Trevenen, former GSDC Chairman John Simpson, CEO Bruce Manning and site supervisor Steve Duncan tour the Albany Entertainment Centre.



Plastic-wrapped theatre seats await patrons in the Albany Entertainment Centre.

Approval brings sciences building closer

Albany on track for better tertiary education facilities

A key project backed by the GSDC is set to go ahead to provide better tertiary education services in the Great Southern.

Albany City Council recently approved a planning application by the University of Western Australia to construct a new sciences building next to the UWA Albany Centre in Stirling Terrace.

The proposal gained major project status in the first round of the Great Southern Regional Grants Scheme, drawing

\$500,000 in funding with a commitment to a further two rounds of similar support.

The \$1.5 million in GSDC-administered Royalties for Regions funding is in addition to \$1.5 million in other State Government funding in a project valued at \$6 million.

The sciences building will be constructed next to the Old Post Office on a steep site that allows four storeys on the Lower Stirling Terrace side, but it will be only one storey high as viewed from Stirling Terrace.

Within the 1000 sq m building, the university will establish a science and medical library, teaching and laboratory space, additional classrooms and 12 academic offices.

The building will house the Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management and the Rural Clinical School, both of which now lease premises in nearby locations.

Contact: Jenni Flottmann ph. 9842 0888

Top shots bag cash prizes

Photo competition draws quality images

Tambellup farmer Debbie Cristinelli won the Great Southern Development Commission's recent digital photo competition with a lively picture of her two sons running through a canola crop.

Ms Cristinelli was one of nine photographers who shared more than \$1000 in prizes in the competition, on the theme Great Southern People on the Go.

Images entered in the competition will be used in various applications by the Commission to promote economic and social development in the Great Southern and the photographers will be credited where possible.

The GSDC provided the \$1000 prize money and co-sponsor Albany Gateway provided two \$50 prizes for popular vote winners. Albany Camera House also took part, offering optional prizes of photo prints on canvas for the popular vote winners.

Ms Cristinelli also won three of the ten encouragement awards for photos depicting her children and farming life.

Julie Holland won second prize of \$200 for a well-timed photo of a motocross bike splashing through a muddy puddle.



Debbie Cristinelli's winning photograph of her sons Devon (left) and Flynn running through a canola crop at Tambellup.

Ms Holland also won an encouragement award.

Kelly Belfield took third prize of \$100, along with one of the popular vote prizes, for a photo of a parasail at Shelley Beach.

GSDC Chief Executive Bruce Manning said many entries in the competition were of a high standard and the judges faced a difficult task picking winners.

"It was good to see photos entered from all over the region," Mr Manning said. "I congratulate the winners and thank all the participants for their efforts."

The winning photos are displayed on the Albany Gateway website in the Great Southern People on the Go gallery.

The other winner in the popular vote category, along with Ms Belfield, was Melissa Clayton for her photo Waychinicup Wonders.

The other winners of encouragement awards are David Belfield, Adrienne Yzerman, Kell Patterson, Christine Howard and Olivia Letter.

Contact: Steve Pontin ph. 9842 4888



Above: Flying High, Kelly Belfield (third prize).

Right: Photo Snatcher, David Belfield.



Above left: Motocross, Julie Holland (Second prize).

Above right: Never Look Back, Christine Howard.

Left: Middleton Beach SLSC, Adrienne Yzerman.



Local landscape, national profile

Promotion in the pipeline for South Coast brand

A new level of national recognition is opening up for the landscape of the South Coast.

The GSDC, Tourism WA and regional stakeholders are working towards securing the South Coast's registration as a National Landscape. The National Landscapes Program (NLP) is a tourism and conservation partnership between Tourism Australia and Parks Australia to identify and promote the country's iconic regions to domestic and international 'experience seeker' tourists.

Ten destinations are currently identified as National Landscapes: Australian Alps, Coastal Wilderness (New South Wales and Victoria), Green Cauldron (Byron Bay to Gold Coast), Red Centre, Flinders Ranges, Great Ocean Road, Greater Blue Mountains, Kakadu, Kangaroo Island and the Kimberley.

The GSDC and neighbouring Development Commissions in the South West and Goldfields-Esperance regions became involved because NLP registration can expand marketing at a national level and encourage regional partnerships.

An application was submitted in February



Danish tourist Annette Jorgensen takes in the wonders of the South Coast near Albany's wind farm. (Photo courtesy City of Albany)

and Tourism Australia recently conducted a series of branding workshops from Esperance to Margaret River, taking in Albany, Denmark and Walpole.

Input from the workshops will help develop a brand identity for the region, a key step towards National Landscape registration.

The local National Landscape will then be included in Tourism Australia's marketing initiatives and a framework will be developed to guide future tourism infrastructure and product planning in the region.

Contact Linsey McFarlane ph. 9842 4888

Grytsje's world of experience

New staffer with international background

New GSDC staff member Grytsje Doust brings international experience to her job as Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer Bruce Manning.

Grytsje was born in Holland and grew up speaking five languages.

She has lived in Israel, travelled extensively and worked for a Perth company organising state and international events before moving to the South Coast.



Grytsje Doust

"In Holland I was the headmistress of a pre-school centre," Grytsje said.

"In the late 1970s I worked and lived in Israel. Holland had a close association with Israel because of the war and the holocaust, and many young Dutch people worked there as volunteers.

"It was a fascinating time for me. Back then there were many concentration camp survivors among the Israelis," she said.

Grytsje met her husband Jon at a kibbutz, and returned with him to Western Australia, where she worked for Telecom and financial institutions until she took up events work in 1998.

It was demanding work with long hours, organising conferences in Perth and overseas. Most were on medical themes and some attracted attendances of up to 2000 delegates.

In 2008, Grytsje and Jon moved to Albany. For a time she continued to work remotely for the events firm but this year took up the Executive Assistant position.

Movie time at PCYC

Royalties for Regions funding expands youth activity options

Young people in Albany have new entertainment options thanks to Royalties for Regions funding through the Great Southern Development Commission.

Movie screenings are now part of the program for a new youth drop-in service on Friday nights at the Police and Community Youth Centre (PCYC) in Sanford Road. The GSDC provided \$7000 through the Small Grants Program in the second round of the Regional Grants Scheme (RGS) to help equip the new service with a DVD player, projector and sound system.

PCYC assistant manager Tanya Crabtree said the program, officially launched in July, was part of helping young people to find constructive activities and to build community connections.

Movies will screen in conjunction with a youth program running on alternate Friday nights, supervised by staff along with YMCA workers and student volunteers from the Great Southern Institute of Technology.

Ms Crabtree said the YMCA bus came to the centre on the drop-in nights, bringing more options including sumo suits and Wii games.

GSDC Regional Manager Community and Corporate Christine Grogan said the service would help to build social cohesion for young people in Albany.



Checking out the PCYC's new digital projector and sound system, from left, PCYC representatives Joanne Rose, Meagan Diver and Tammy Flett and Youth Advisory Council members Tessa Carramia and James Bovell.

"Youth in Albany will benefit from this particular program but it is pleasing to note that in the last round of the RGS, the GSDC was able to fund a range of youth projects that will enhance the lives of young people throughout the Great Southern," Ms Grogan said.

Other youth-related projects to gain funding in the second round of the RGS

included activities and information through the YMCA youth mobile bus service for Kojonup, Jerramungup, Gnowangerup and Cranbrook, skate facilities in Mt Barker and Kendenup, improvements at Denmark's youth precinct and an early intervention program for at-risk youth in Albany and surrounds.

Contact Steve Pontin ph. 9842 4888

Plaudits for Great Southern produce

Food fans praise region's delights

Great Southern produce is tempting palates and impressing tastebuds in Perth and overseas.

Regional food products and the Great Southern Distilling Company's Limeburners whisky recently picked up fulsome praise in quite different contexts.

The *West Australian* newspaper reported in August that Albany rock oysters, Porongurup pork and Torbay asparagus were among the top ten 'best WA products' in a select list compiled by the paper's

Good Food Guide editor and food critic Rob Broadfield.

Along with truffles from Manjimup and produce from Margaret River, Yallingup and New Norcia, the Great Southern delicacies were lauded as leading a State surge towards world-class fresh produce.

The article quoted a Perth restaurateur and a food industry leader endorsing the premium quality produce.

Half a world away in London, judges at

the 2010 International Wine and Spirit Competition were impressed by the Great Southern Distilling Company's single malt whisky when they tasted the worldwide whisky category.

The judges award a bronze medal to the Great Southern tippel. The distillery has already tasted success at international events but the latest award offers yet more proof that Great Southern produce is up there with the best.

Contact: Liz Reed ph. 9842 4888

Grower sows seeds of sales to China

Kikuyu grass market assessment

Grass seed from a Great Southern producer could one day help to reclaim arid land in China.

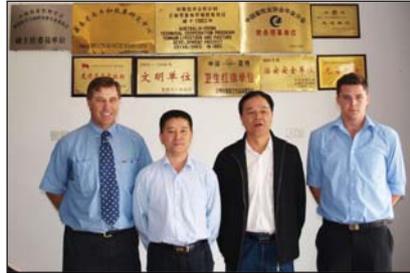
Morgan Sounness, of Kim Sounness and Co, visited China recently with his son Lloyd on a fact-finding tour to investigate the potential for exports of kikuyu grass seed.

Mr Sounness has grown kikuyu grass at his Gnowellen property for the past 10 years and started producing seed commercially four years ago.

Great Southern Development Commission-based TradeStart officer Elizabeth Reed enlisted the assistance of Austrade to set up a series of meetings for Mr Sounness in Kunming and Beijing.

Mr Sounness said the meetings included field researchers, academics and senior government officials in the Chinese agriculture department.

Austrade arranged briefings before the meetings, and interpreters to accompany Mr Sounness and his son.



Kikuyu grower Morgan Sounness (left) at the Academy of Grassland and Animal Science in Kunming with academy director Huang Bixhi, deputy director Yuan Hi Ping and Mr Sounness's son Lloyd.

"We were more than happy with the reception we got in Kunming at the Academy of Grasslands and Animal Science, and we learned a lot," Mr Sounness said.

He said he discovered the market for grass seed was restricted by farming practices and government regulations.

"There is still the prospect of selling to the government for grassland rehabilitation or to companies wanting carbon credits, but

that could be a couple of years away," Mr Sounness said.

Kunming is the capital of the south-west China province of Yunnan, which is the country's biggest seed market.

More than 700 varieties of grasses grow in Yunnan but the pasture is nutritionally deficient and is regressing seriously: the regressed area of grassland accounts for 84 per cent of the total area (330,960 square kilometres).

Mr Sounness said his self-funded trip helped him to understand the difficulties and opportunities in the Chinese market.

"We would have to meet a high standard of purity for seed imports and that would mean finding new machinery that could refine the purity of our seed harvest," he said. "It was very rewarding to go to China and find the facts out for myself."

Contact Liz Reed ph. 9842 4888

Haven for sport fans

New shelter for hockey, cricket spectators

Katanning hockey and cricket spectators have a better venue for watching their favourite sports.

A new shelter at the town's hockey and cricket ground was opened recently by Sport and Recreation Minister Terry Waldron.

The \$245,000 shelter project gained \$50,000 in Royalties for Regions funding through the Great Southern Regional Grants Scheme, administered by the GSDC. The project was also supported by the Department of Sport and Recreation, Katanning Shire Council, the Katanning Hockey Club and Australs Cricket Club.

Spectators can watch the games from a roofed and paved area that incorporates a kitchen servery, providing the sports clubs with a fundraising opportunity selling light refreshments.

The building has two storage rooms, one for hockey, soccer and rugby, and the other for cricket and athletics.

Contact: Jessica van der Waag ph. 9821 3211



Sport and Recreation Minister Terry Waldron (left) with Katanning Shire Councillor Robert Godfrey and Katanning Deputy Chief Executive Officer Carl Beck at the opening of the town's new sport shelter.

Agencies pledge cooperation

State and Federal bodies in joint declaration

Regional development in the Great Southern will be better coordinated following the development of a memorandum of understanding between state and federal agencies.

The Great Southern Development Commission and its federal counterpart, Regional Development Australia – Great Southern (RDA-GS), signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Tuesday 29 June committing both agencies to working together for the benefit of the region.

GSDC Board Chair Peter Rundle said the agencies shared many common goals.

“The GSDC coordinates and promotes regional development opportunities from a State Government perspective and the RDA-GS represents Federal interests in the development of the region,” Mr Rundle said.

“The memorandum commits our agencies to cooperate in the pursuit of sustainable regional development.

“We will work together on joint projects



GSDC Chair Peter Rundle and RDA-GS committee chair Milton Evans commit the agencies to work together for the benefit of the Great Southern.

where we can achieve strategic outcomes for the region and we will acknowledge and respect each other’s contributions and intellectual property rights,” Mr Rundle said.

Quarterly meetings will be held for the agencies to update each other on their plans and activities.

RDA-GS committee chairman Milton Evans said he was pleased to formally recognise the role that each organisation had in contributing to strategic planning for the region.

“I look forward to engaging with stakeholders in the region on joint projects as they are initiated,” Mr Evans said.

The agencies are working together on a regional planning process to be undertaken over the next three to four months.

Regional Development Australia is funded by the Commonwealth Government through the Dept of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

Contact: Bruce Manning ph. 9842 4888

Albany: Pyrmont House, 110 Serpentine Road, Albany WA 6330

Phone: (08) 9842 4888 Fax: (08) 9842 4828 Email: gfdc@gfdc.wa.gov.au

Katanning: 10 Dore Street, PO Box 729, Katanning WA 6317

Phone: (08) 9821 3211 Fax: (08) 9821 3334 Email: jessica.vanderwaag@gfdc.wa.gov.au

Web: www.gfdc.wa.gov.au



Postage Paid
Albany WA
6330