

WAB 2018 State Conference Report

This year's State Conference was held on the 31st August at Murray Bridge RSL clubrooms, organized by the Management Committee. Thanks goes to Coonalpyn Branch for supplying the morning and afternoon tea. A total of 54 people were present at roll call, including 3 associate members and 13 visitors. The AGM was held first before the conference.

Murray Bridge Mayor, Brenton Lewis was our first conference speaker, sharing some of his agri-business background and a little about the Regional City of Murray Bridge before welcoming us to the area and declaring the conference open.

Second speaker was Belinda Cay of Ag Communications who shared her family's story about losing their homes on the Pinery Bushfires and how they have had to be resilient to rebuild. Belinda also gave birth to twins since the fires and spent 150 days in hospital with them. Her motto "Always Look for the Good" should inspire us all.

Belinda then gave a very informative talk about her Ag Communications business which has the aim to attract school students to pursue an agricultural pathway after leaving school. She spoke about the paddock to plate virtual reality stand they had at the Adelaide Show. Even though 'Food and Fibre' are part of the national curriculum, agricultural pursuits are not seen as relevant to city schools or students. Ag Communications puts people in the classrooms to work with students. They are dependent on grants for funding.

Next we welcomed Tracy Piltz from Bank SA, our major sponsor. Tracy spoke about some of the lesser known services they offer, like POA and Estate Management and about staff volunteering and sponsorship in local areas.

After an excellent lunch provided by the RSL, we heard from Sandra Richards with a very thought-provoking talk and slide show on recycling and the damage done by plastics in our environment. She showed us some excellent alternative products available on the market and we then folded a paper bin liner with Sandra Young.

Jo Waldon from Safe Ag Systems then spoke on Ag Compliance according to the Work Health Safety Act. We heard about the amount of on farm and agricultural accidents and the age demographic of farm workers (39% over 55). Safe Ag Systems together with farmers have developed an online app which workers can log into while at work to enable the ongoing safety of workers especially if working in isolation, as they can be tracked and contacted via their phones. www.safeagsystems.com

Our final topic was a Sleep Trivia Talk from Kevin and Amanda Booker. They spoke about the cycle of sleep and how bad sleep patterns and snoring etc will affect our health and lives. We need good sleep to recover and repair our bodies each day.

Jan Boord then gave a short report from ACWW thanking branches for their Coins For Friendship donations, which enable the board to meet, facilitate programs and circulate magazines. She recommended that branches participate in Women Walk the World in April to raise funds for ACWW projects.

Thanks to all who helped in any way to make the day a success