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What's happening ...



What happened at the **biennial policy conference** you might ask? Tony Dickson and I flew the flag for MLR-KI as per our report below.

Don't miss out on our **AGM**. Enjoy **Russell Jeavon's famous pizzas once again at Willunga on Thurs 26th November from 6.30pm**; free for members and \$25/hd for non members. RSVP to John Campbell on 8556 2916.

It doesn't matter if you are just motivated by this 'culinary opportunity too good to refuse' or you appreciate the need to show the sort of support your branch's committee needs to organize on-going events and this newsletter just be there.

In autumn we plan on having **a day focusing on fire on Sunday March 7th** — with expert speakers on fire prevention and research in conjunction with a couple of property inspections on the Fleurieu. Tony Dickson will be coordinating this event.

Sorry about the location of these two events for northern members; all we need to do to have a 'northern' event is to get suggestions from that quarter.

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Report from 2009 4th AFG Policy Forum

The policy forum is conducted in off years when there is no conference. In preparation for the forum, branches are invited to submit amendments to the policy document developed at the previous forum. These are circulated prior to the forum and then debated, amended and voted on to become the new policy. This year time was allowed for delegated from each state to 'caucus' on issues raised in the submitted amendments, prior to the session.

There was also a demonstration of the newly released *Marketree* web site which has been under development for quite a while, having been officially launched at the Albury conference. The site is designed to link markets for wood products with producers and production resources. Access to the site is via the AFG membership card and is free initially at least. Other users will need to pay a subscription to access the site.

Representatives from DAFF and various state governments also attended and were present while issues most pertinent to government attitudes and policies were debated although most issues seem to have at least some overarching significance.

As could be expected, the most discussed issues were climate change, carbon trading, bio-energy, fire and water. Withdrawal of extension services by the states, R&D, OH&S, land use planning and market access also featured.

A final version of the amended policy document will be subject to an editorial committee charged with firming up any obscure meanings or clunky expression. A concerted effort to avoid tedious debate over minutiae significantly improved the poignancy and operation of the forum this year.

I also came across some sites that may be of interest to growers:

Friday Offcuts: www.fridayoffcuts.com/ (a round up of topical industry issues); *Leading Edge*: www.forestleadership.com/; *Marketree* on the AFG website www.afg.asn.au as per recent correspondence; and *Treedudes*: www.treedudes.com.au (a site for encouraging school children to consider careers in timber).

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