

Wheatbelt life reflected in photos

COURTNEY GARNHAM

THE old saying that a picture can tell a thousand words has been embraced by many locals within the community as they complete a series of film and photography workshops.

As part of a Community Arts Network WA project, Wheatbelt residents had the opportunity to work alongside professional photographer, Bo Wong, to capture moments which told their story.

More than 100 images have been compiled into a publication titled *Voices of the Wheatbelt: Our Place, Our Stories*.

CANWA managing director Pilar Kasat said the workshops allowed people to tell their own story.

"It is to enable cultural transmission," she said.

"By using new mediums they created a stunning collection of images of people who live, love and play in the southern Wheatbelt."

A DVD of three shortfilms made in Narrogin, Brookton and Wagin will also be included in the publication.

This project worked with indus-



Carina Whittington's photo of farm life features in the book.



Pat O'Brien's photo capturing the sun.

try professionals from the Film and Television Institute to teach film aspects while capturing memories.

The purpose of each film was to

capture, celebrate and share Noongar stories and to promote a sense of belonging within the community.

FTI project manager Tiffany

Ellis said local elders had a number of memories and wanted to share them with younger generations.

"It was important they could

show them a piece of history in Narrogin," she said.

The DVD and book will be launched tomorrow night at the John Higgins Centre at 5pm.

Funding for men's health program

A POPULAR program for men's health in the Wheatbelt has secured funding to continue for the next three years.

The program, Wheatbelt Men's Health, is a three-tiered program offering education, support and assistance to men in regional areas.

It aims to raise awareness of men's health issues including prevention of physical and mental health matters with a focus on prostate cancer, heart attack and suicide.

The preventative program, which focuses on wellness rather than illness, has been operating on temporary and emergency funding after its previous funding had lapsed.

It recently received \$2.78 million through the Royalties for Regions program to keep it running.

Wheatbelt Men's Health community educator Owen Catto said the program had reached more than 8000 men last year and the funding would allow it to be extended to other regional areas in the State.

"No matter where we go, it never ceases to amaze me," he said.

"Blokes are blokes and we talk in their lingo and they love it."

Mr Catto said the program only visited communities if it was invited but hoped to see as many men as possible.

"You only get one chance to have a win with them, and if you don't get that chance something silly could happen to them," he said.

Regional Development Minister Brendon Grylls said men would be encouraged to take responsibility for their health.

"It provides the opportunity for personal circumstances to be discussed, allowing men to get help if required or simply to be supported by others in similar situations," he said.

"Suicide rates among male farm owners and managers are around twice the rate of the national average and this is heartbreaking."

Sheep thefts on the increase

GREAT Southern farmers have reported the theft of more than 5000 sheep in the past 10 months as sheep and lamb prices continue to soar.

Special investigations have been undertaken by Narrogin police in an attempt to combat the problem.

Acting Senior Sergeant Mick Williams said he wanted people within the farming industry to be vigilant at this time of year and pay special attention to any suspicious activity.

"Most farmers are on the seeders from dawn until dusk and if they see anything they need to let us know," he said.

Rural police have been working together and regularly pulling over livestock trucks to check the ownership of animals in an effort to retrieve the stolen stock.

Albany Police Senior Sergeant David McAlpine said stock theft was widespread within the district.

He said reported stolen animal numbers varied from 10 to 1400 and most areas had been affected.

He said the 5256 stolen sheep were worth about \$470,000 as the price of lamb and sheep reached more than \$100 per head.

"There are a significant number of livestock thefts being reported," he said.

Sen. Sgt McAlpine said the thieves were often experienced in livestock movement.

Police on patrol were expected to stop and check the waybill compliance of any sheep being transported.



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