

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

When we took this on, we had little idea of what was truly involved. We thought we would turn up for dinner like everyone else, with perhaps a phone call or two to arrange things. Not quite as it turned out. Through trial, error, hard work, and just as we are ending our term, I believe we managed to get it right and have contributed to making TBWN the foremost body representing women in business on the Tablelands.

Our main goals for the year were to increase membership, obtain sponsorship, expand our public profile and create an opportunity for members to promote themselves.

I am happy to announce that we have achieved three out of four goals. Membership is increasing due to inspiring guest speakers and successful events; we have raised public awareness of TBWN by attending relevant community meetings, hosting International Women's Day and advertising; and we introduced "Time to Shine" that encourages members to share their stories with us. May I say that I am amazed at the wealth of experience and talent our members have. Last September I said it was time for us to beat our own drum and I hope we will continue to do so. We all have something to offer and we should be proud of our achievements. In relation to sponsorship, the Prospectus was completed mid year, not allowing sufficient time to implement any strategies. However, it will now be instrumental in obtaining future financial sponsorship.

Resignations saw some committee roles change and merge while others became more defined. Positions not replaced were Events Coordinator and Publicity Officer, these tasks filled by any one who had time. The treasurer took over membership, corporate sponsorship went on a back burner awaiting the prospectus and this is now divided into two positions – raffles and sponsorship. We believe we have streamlined our processes to provide an easier, more professional approach and one that is not too demanding on committee members. It should be remembered that positions are voluntary, and as busy people, we all know how little time there is left over.

A reduced committee also meant there was no one to seek out monthly venues. This resulted in the selection of the Atherton International Club as an ongoing venue. But members spoke and in response to feedback, we just had to find the extra time to locate alternative restaurants. Somehow we did and I believe we have found some great places that may be utilized in the future.

We managed to increase our financial base thanks to International Women's Day. Whilst the content may not have been all we expected, it was a financial success allowing us to subsidise Christmas in July which was an unqualified success. This success of this event also allowed us to donate \$2000 to the Atherton Hospital to purchase a lactic acid monitor, amongst other equipment, to benefit mothers and children during childbirth.

However, not one dinner or event could have taken place without our dedicated Committee and I would now like to thank them individually:

Leslie Ring – Vice President: Leslie has had a busy year with her business and has been unable to be with us. However, we thank her for her input via email. Leslie is currently on holiday overseas.

Alison Sheppard – Secretary: It was a challenge for Alison at the beginning to take the minutes but she went from confusion when we were all talking at once to competently deciphering our ramblings and putting them in order. Alison has a calming influence, a kind word for all and provided some great nibbles for our meetings.

Lesley Gilbride – Treasurer: Lesley had the task of trying to understand a new system without the benefit of membership details. We have now combined these two roles making the task easier for the next Treasurer. Lesley has had complete enthusiasm for her role and kept us in line when it came to spending. She has a positive attitude and we could not have asked for a better person to administer our finances.

Don Sheppard - Guest Speaker Coordinator: Despite his busy schedule, Don has managed to provide us with some awesome guest speakers as well as “Time to Shine” speakers. He also obtains guest speakers’ bios and photos for the monthly email Invite and has the job of entertaining them at dinner. When Don attends a committee meeting, it tends to go a little more quickly than usual.

Sarah-Kaye Page – Sponsorship Coordinator: Who despite getting married last December, and having a belated honeymoon, still managed to fulfill her obligations. She has provided some innovative raffle prizes. It’s not easy cold canvassing for donations but Sarah-Kaye’s personality and enthusiasm have always won through. Sarah-Kaye’s contributions to event planning have been appreciated. Nothing is too much trouble for Sarah-Kaye.

Lorraine Petersen – Meet & Greet Officer: Who at first was adamant about not doing anything in the public eye, preferring to remain behind the scenes. It has been a delight to watch Lorraine gently move forward. Her tasks have been to greet you all at each dinner meeting and conduct the raffles when Sarah-Kaye has been unable to. Thanks Lorraine for your sensitivity and kindness. Your input at committee meetings has been much welcomed.

Maria Pesavento – Web Manager extraordinaire: Maria is big on deadlines keeping us on our toes for the submission of material for the Invites and enewsletter, and has been a constant support to the committee. Our website has received favourable comments from other professionals, a testament to her expertise. Maria has also attended every dinner taking the photos to preserve our special moments. Thank you Maria.

Sandy Hayes – enewsletter editor: Sandy has worked quietly behind the scene to provide us with our monthly enewsletter. She, too, is a busy lady but has always delivered a professional and information-packed publication. Your efforts are much appreciated by the many readers.

Other committee members to thank include Bronwyn Cant who remained as Membership Coordinator until that role was combined with that of Treasurer; Jacqui Grimshaw, Kerry Rockemer and Rachel Grandcourt who resigned throughout the year due to unforeseen circumstances. We acknowledge and thank them for their contribution.

This committee deserves much more than I can say. Working with a group of people always has ups and downs but it has been a privilege and a pleasure to work alongside this group. They have been supportive, energetic, creative and their ideas, invaluable. Other adjectives that come to mind are diplomatic, efficient, reliable and professional. We started as individuals with different thoughts and ended up as a cohesive force. More than that, we became friends. My sincere thanks to each and every one.

A final word of thanks must go to you, our members. It is your support that keeps this club going. TBWN is a marvellous group that I would like to see go from strength to strength. It is our ability to share, laugh and care about each other that makes us special.

I would now like to congratulate and welcome the new Executive. Change is a good thing and I have no doubt you will carry the club on to bigger and better things. You have our best wishes and support for your term in office.

I have enjoyed my term as President immensely. It has had some challenging moments but I can look back and smile. I will miss the role but am looking forward to attending future functions and being able to actually have a peaceful dinner. Ladies & Gentlemen: a toast to TBWN – continued success! Thank you.

Leslie Tye-Parsons
President
Tablelands Business Women's Network
23/09/09