



## PIAA MEMBER OF THE MONTH – FEBRUARY 2012

PIAA member Russell Wucherpfennig has been running a family business – Boolarra Fish Farm – in Victoria for more than 25 years. The business started by his German-born grandfather in 1952 and passed on to Russell's father. Today it's Australia's largest and most successful gold fish farm.



Russell grew up on the farm and did a motor mechanic apprenticeship after leaving school. He then spent a year travelling around Europe and returned to Australia to work at the fish farm. "I was always going to go back to the farm," he says.

Russell's wife, Myriam, handles the accounting and administration side of the business and also works part-time as a Kinesiologist. They have two daughters – Tonisha, age 13, and Rhyannon, age 17, who is studying Fine Arts at RMIT in Melbourne this year.

The family have a West Highland Shih Tzu cross named Tilly, two cats named Theodore and Sage, and mice that belong to Tonisha – plus 4 million gold fish!

As a family, the Wucherpfennigs enjoy taking time out from the busy gold fish farming schedule with annual holidays, including regular trips to the mountains just a few hours away. "We love to go skiing and snowboarding. Tonisha and I go snowboarding, while Myriam and Rhiannon go skiing," says Russell.

### **What do you do for fun?**

Windsurfing and road motorcycle during the summer. I've been going windsurfing for 20 years; I have my own surf board. The beach is about 45 minutes away. We also have a house in Inverloch (on the coast) where I go. In the wintertime, I have a dirt bike for trails and together with a few friends we go riding in the bush around Boolarra. I've also taken up snowboarding.

### **Tell something that people don't know about you.**

I can't function without breakfast. I never head out to work before I eat.

### **If you could meet anyone in the world dead or alive, who would it be and what would say to them?**

Jason Polakow (Australian windsurfer, one of the world's best). Teach me!

### **What are 3 things you can't live without?**

Chocolate, my big boys toys and beer (Cascade) in the summer time. (Fortunately, Myriam returns from visiting family in Switzerland with half a suitcase of Swiss chocolate! Delicious!)

### **Is there anything you wish to do at some point in the future?**

Two years ago, I tried to cross the Simpson Desert with a motorcycle. It didn't work out. I'd like to do that someday. Also, get my pilot's license. I completed a few flying lessons in the past. I'd like to pursue that if I had time.

*PIAA Member of the Month* articles are researched by Caroline Zambrano. Caroline is a PIAA member and award-winning pet journalist. She creates specialist pet content and editing for magazines, newspapers, media releases, websites, e-newsletters and brochures. Visit [www.petjournalist.com.au](http://www.petjournalist.com.au)