

Storybook ending to a storage problem

The generosity of a Lane Cove business will help children in remote New South Wales learn to read.

The Storage King business says it will sponsor the non-profit Bus of Books group which aims to provide new and used books to thousands of children living in remote, isolated communities this year.

As part of the sponsorship, Storage King's warehouse at 27 Mars Road, Lane Cove will serve as a drop-off point for any TWT reader who wants to donate books. "Supporting families in our local communities is a fundamental belief of our business," Storage King spokesman David Watson said. "Storage King is a brand that loves to reach out to its

customers through this kind of community involvement and that is why we are very proud to be supporting Bus of Books."

Bus of Books founder and Meadowbank resident Colin Lee said he was delighted that Storage King had come on board to endorse the cause of raising literacy levels in Australia.

"This deal not only provides us with much needed storage area but also streamlines the donation process for all of our wonderful Bus of Books community members, volunteers and schools involved," Mr Lee said. "Our aim is to provide young people in rural and disadvantaged com-

munities within Australia with resources and programs to read and succeed.

"Eighty per cent, or around 160,000 young people, in remote and disadvantaged communities are unable to read above minimum standard.

"This lack of basic literacy skills creates deep social disadvantages and limits opportunities later in life."

Mr Lee acknowledged recent Federal Government statistics which highlighted low literacy rates among indigenous communities and townships with high unemployment rates.

For more information visit the website www.busofbooks.com



Bus for books founder and Meadowbank resident Colin Lee (left) has urged readers to donate books to help improve child literacy in remote NSW. He is pictured with Bus for Books supporters Fai Wong, Storage King Facilities Manager David Watson and Tim Osborn.

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MP says Council 'scaremongering' over fire station

Strathfield MP Charles Casuscelli has accused Ashfield Council of 'scaremongering' in response to council criticism of partial closure of Ashfield Fire Station.

The station is one of several fire stations serving the Strathfield and Drumoyne electorates.

Ashfield councillors voted unanimously to express "grave concern" that the station would not be fully operational 24 hours a day as part of NSW budget cuts.

"Ashfield Council is especially concerned that the increased response times, resulting from fire apparatus having to travel from other suburbs, pose an unacceptable safety risk for our residents," the council said in a statement.

"It is imperative that such a dense urban area, with many boarding houses, halfway houses, high-care nursing homes, retirement villages, highly developed streets, schools and hospital facilities, has a permanently operational fire station."

The union representing fire brigade officers has welcomed Ashfield Council's opposition to the partial closure and lays the blame on Premier Barry O'Farrell.

However, Mr Casuscelli has described the criticism as scaremongering.

"Ashfield councillors have little understanding of emergency services operations," he said.

"Given the effort required

to maintain coverage, response times and the maintenance of safe working conditions into a single measure, and having a fire station remaining open for 24 hours, is demonstrably absurd.

"It also does a disservice to all those officers who assign firefighting resources on a daily basis to ensure our community is protected."

Mr Casuscelli also blasted union claims his government was closing fire stations to save money.

"Fire stations have been taken off line and then restored to on-line status for any number of operational or logistic reasons for a long time before our government came to power in 2011.

"The practice of taking fire stations off line is not new and on any one day up to 20 Sydney fire stations may be taken off line for a range of activities.

"Under our policy a fire station may now be taken offline when personnel numbers is below safe minimum crewing levels."

Mr Casuscelli stressed that any emergency incidents could often be responded to more quickly by fire brigade units outside the local area, but within a close proximity.

Rotary Car Safari

Rotary Club of Hunters Hill invites you to experience seven days of discovering the Victorian high country and southern NSW from Saturday September 28 to Saturday October 5.

The Club has again organised its annual Car Safari available to all people, at a fraction of the cost, and you don't need a four wheel drive as the Safari will be staying on sealed roads for 99% of the trip.

The 1800km event starts in Sydney and finishes in Canberra.

Safari operates during the NSW school holidays so this short trip can be an experience for the whole family, although it is a great opportunity for

seniors as well.

Highlights of the car safari includes travelling the Snowy Valleys Way from Gundagai to Beechworth and the drive from Bright to Bruthen, via Omeo, through the Alpine National Park.

A donation of \$250 per car (tax-deductable) is required to confirm your car's participation.

In addition, payment of \$200 per adult and \$100 per child (under 14) will cover six group dinners - to be collected on day one of the car safari.

Further details can be obtained from Charles Amos at Rotary Club of Hunters Hill, phone 0414 918 976 or email: Charles@basil.org.au