



Cartoon: Anneka Argent and Cameron Kop-Conrow

## Solutions for our stressed out lives

### EDITORIAL

By **EIRA JEANNOT** and **EMILIE BARNES**

THERE is no argument that we are today living in a busy world – a life filled with work, family and numerous activities. People are increasingly stressed with the fact that they are time poor and there are not enough hours in the day.

This stress can lead to both physical and mental issues, even to loss of productivity in the work place, so people are looking for ways to manage their busy lives more efficiently and so help relieve some of this burden.

Often problems for time poor pet owners are how to responsibly exercise and keep their beloved pet happy while at work, and ensure that destruction doesn't await them on their arrival home.

Australia has joined the growing trend with doggie daycare as an alternative to letting a dog whine and be lonely at home. These centres are just like childcare where they socialise, are given the necessary attention, and even taught manners. Doggie daycares are always found in convenient places, with easy access to city centres or transport

hubs. Though this may be a pricey dogsitting business at a general range of \$25 to \$50 per day, owners are comfortable knowing their pet is in safe hands, happy too and they can relax at the end of the day content that their dog's need have been well cared for.

Another way people are turning to relieve stress is one that deals with the mind. Many forward thinking companies are seeing the benefits of adult colouring therapy to soothe frazzled employees and therefore increase productivity. After a long day of traffic and commuting, the soothing hand movements and trails of a pencil creating a detailed, coloured image, relaxes the mind and body to unwind from the stress of the day. Therapy colouring books for adults can be purchased at most bookshops or freely downloaded by those in need of a placid activity. What a great way for a quiet family moment, as everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, curls up together with pencils in hand for a 45-minute relaxation with some soothing music in the background.

While lives are not likely to become less busy and people are looking for cheap, convenient and effective ways to help manage their time, it's good to know there are answers out there.

# Meeting the demand for a doggy daycare

By **MEGAN BLAIR, XANTHIA McALPINE, SKYE REGAN** and **JESSICA BATARSEH**

AS people are working longer hours and commute further and further for work it creates a problem as to what to do with the beloved pet left at home for long stretches of time. This 'abandonment' often leads to animals becoming bored, anxious and even disruptive.

Seeing the large need for a dog-sitting service on the Coast, retired policeman, Chris Stevenson believes he has the perfect solution. He has opened a doggie daycare centre – Dogsbody and Friends – in West Gosford for commuters to drop off their dogs on the way to work and then pick up on their way home.

Although half of his clients are commuters, others work locally or even drop off their pet for a short while while they enjoy a bit of shopping. Others use the service as a way to engage in basic training, exercise the energetic or even socialise a timid or anxious dog that may be fretting at their owner's absence.

On visiting Dogsbody and Friends it's obvious that the dogs love their home away from home. With tails wagging, tongues hanging out, a little bit of pampering, exercise, a snooze and expectant looks for a ball to be thrown, they are in doggy heaven.

The goal is to have the owners collect their pet at the end of the day after hours of fun, ready for a good



Bernie in doggy heaven with Chris Stevenson. Picture: Skye Regan

night's sleep.

Just like a regular daycare centre that caters for different personalities and ages, the building has been adapted with numerous toys and equipment, including an electric walking machine for those hounds who may have over-indulged in the past. The service will even send owners photos or short videos of their pampered pooches during the day

just to reassure them that are safe and having the time of their lives playing with other doggy friends.

Chris loves his work and chose to work with dogs because they are loyal and believes if you treat them well they'll treat you well.

While many of us often have busy and stressful lives, it's good to know there is a solution to keep man's best friend happy.

## A makeover for Gosford's Imperial Centre

By **ENYA HE** and **EIRA JEANNOT**

GOSFORD City is beginning its plan for a revitalised future with the \$18 million refurbishment of the Gosford Imperial Centre which has already breathed new life into the city.

These renovations have been welcomed by all as the centre has not had a major upgrade since 1972. Centre manager, Ms Warwick, claims the centre will soon be home to 65 shops after its completion.

As one of the major

shopping centres on the Central Coast, the refurbishment will provide a better retail experience for shoppers.

Not only has this refurbishment created many new job opportunities both before and after the project is completed, but Ms Warwick believes that it will attract more tourists and customers, bringing welcome business to the city centre and add value to existing local properties.

A feature of the construction is an inspirational chalkboard wall



Students enjoy the revitalised Gosford Imperial Centre.

Picture: Eira Jeannot

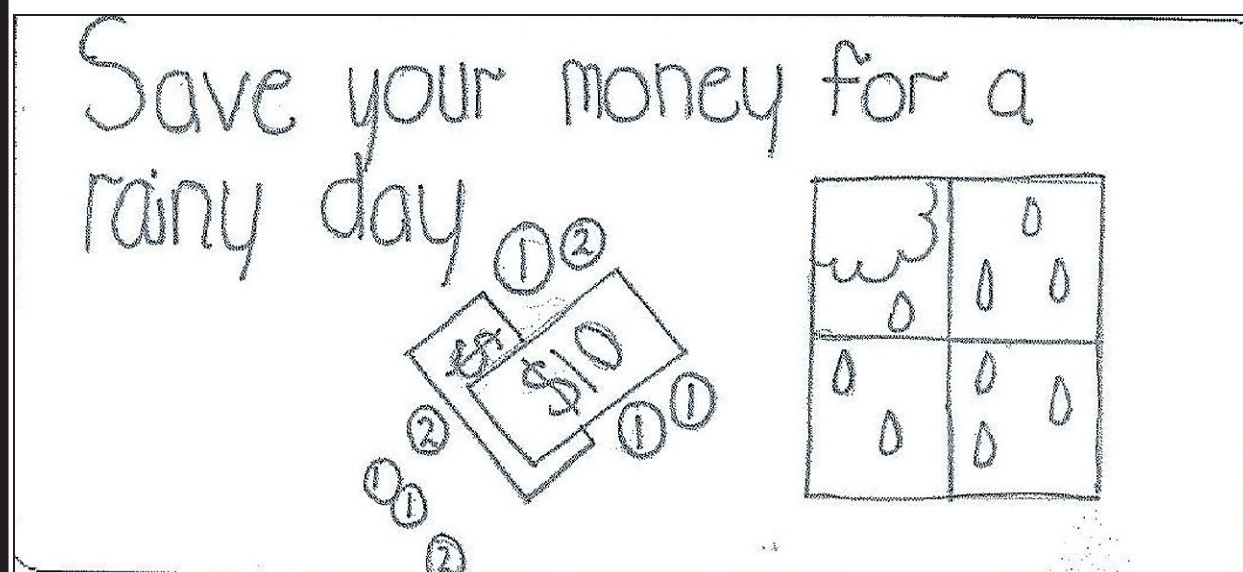
that has been erected by artist Glen Hambleton. The temporary board gives shoppers the opportunity to fill it with positive

and thankful thoughts. This idea has been so successful that the wall needs to be cleaned every two days.

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