

Primary entry # 35: Blackalls Park Public School



Blackalls Buzz



SHARING: Linda McGuigan talks with students about fire safety.
Picture: Brianna Carrall

Life-saving changes can start at home

By **CLAUDIA HOWARD** and **CONNOR NELSON**

FIRES can be deadly and everyone needs to be prepared with plans and smoke alarms.

Linda McGuigan and her husband, Robert, of Argenton, know this only too well.

The couple were alerted to a fire when they were woken by smoke alarms in February this year.

Despite the alarms, Mr McGuigan still received extensive burns to his body that required specialist treatment in the burns unit of Royal North Shore Hospital.

The blaze destroyed the couple's home, all its contents and their car. "Changing and testing the batteries in your smoke alarm is super important and should be done annually," Mrs McGuigan stressed recently when speaking to students at Blackalls Park Public School.

She also urged people to "put smoke alarms in your garage because that is where there is a lot of fuel that can cause or add to fires."

A spokesman from Fire and Rescue NSW said many of the household fires that affected NSW residents could be prevented.

The key to reducing the danger of a fire in your home is to understand the risks.

Ensure cooking appliances are turned off, install a fire extinguisher and fire blanket in the kitchen and have at least one working smoke alarm on each level of the home.

By **GEORGIA DRISCOLL** and **ELYSSA WHITTAKER**

AN interesting new social enterprise is filtering into schools and encouraging schoolchildren to become business people.

Since 2011, the program called Kidpreneur has been fostering entrepreneurial behaviour in school pupils in order to enhance their initiative, responsibility and ability to learn from mistakes.

The program teaches children how to start businesses and develop skills in marketing, pricing, product development, sales and service.

One of the most interesting aspects of Kidpreneur is that it encourages students to give their profits to charity.

The idea is the brainchild of Australian entrepreneur and philanthropist Creel Price. Mr Price had launched eight businesses by the time he left school.

At age 25, he co-founded Blueprint Management Group with just \$5000 in capital and sold it a decade later for more than \$100 million.

Melinda Simmons, of Blackalls Park, has two sons involved in the project. Her children received a Kidpreneur backpack containing craft materials and a workbook.

"I'm pleased that my children are involved, because I have always



CHARITY CHAMPIONS: Claudia Howard, Claudia Hamilton Griffiths, Blake Simmons, Dylan Roskell and Jorja Morris with the Kidpreneur packs.
Picture: Paigan Cappeller

been one to help people in need and it is good that my two sons, Tyson and Blake, would like to do the same," Mrs Simmons said.

The Simmons family have helped raise money for Relay for Life, which funds cancer research, in the past and Blake, 10, and Tyson, 11, will again raise money for the

charity through their Kidpreneur project.

"Relay for Life is especially important to our family, because Mum had cancer eight years ago and my Ma died of pancreatic cancer two years ago," Blake said.

"We hope the money we raise helps find a cure for cancer and

saves other families from heartache," Tyson said.

Stage three students from Blackalls Park Public School have plans to make and sell craft items at the Lion's Club of Toronto markets and at school on election day, September 7.

Their profits will go to charity.



PAW-FECT COMPANION: Jeremy Cashin, Jill Kelly, Anika Weimer and Destiny Forbes with Flash at the Toronto library.
Picture: Zali Weimer

Lending a helping paw to readers

By **ZALI WEIMER**

RELUCTANT readers are being encouraged to read in a novel program run by Lake Macquarie City Library.

In the free eight-week program, school children practise reading aloud to a trained therapy dog from the Delta Society.

At the Lake Macquarie City Council library branch at Toronto, Jill Kelly has

been involved in the BaRK program for four years with her eight-year-old Australian labradoodle, Flash.

"Flash enjoys the program – he wags his tail and runs into the library," she said.

Jill also said it is lovely to have the opportunity to help children with their literacy.

Kimberley Forbes of Rathmines has her nine-year-old daughter, Destiny, enrolled in the program.

"BaRK is a fantastic opportunity to help children improve their confidence in reading without being judged," Mrs Forbes said.

"For 15 minutes a week, Destiny has the full attention of a lovely lady and her special dog, who loves being read to."

Lake Macquarie City Council said that the BaRK program is available at several of their branches.



Need funding for a Community Project?

Each year, Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation provides approximately \$1.5 million in grants to eligible not-for-profit organisations in the regional areas in which we serve. To help community organisations gain an understanding of the easy application process, how funding applications are assessed and the types of community projects funded to date, the Foundation is holding a **free two hour workshop**. If you are a representative of a not-for-profit organisation, please register to attend our free workshop.

Venue: **Raymond Terrace Bowling Club, 2 Jacaranda Ave**
Time and date: **10am, Tuesday 17 September**
RSVP: **By Monday 9 September to Sue Jones (02) 4927 4435**
or sue.jones@newcastlepermanent.com.au

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