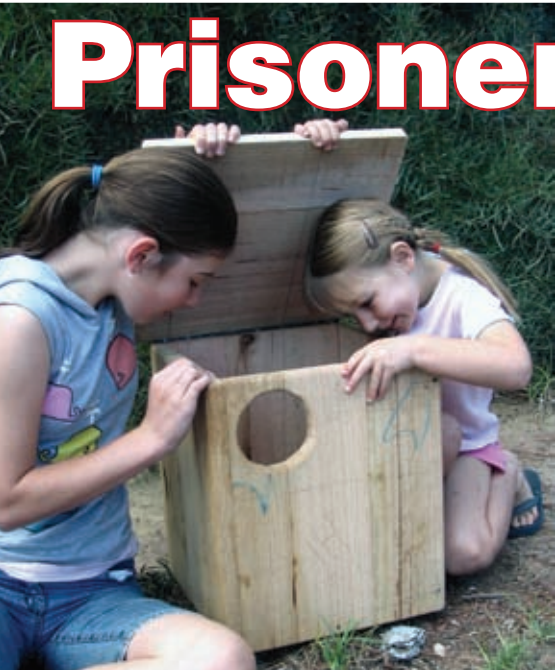


# Prisoners to the Rescue



Ian Riley Nest Boxes Aug 09 Industry Manager Ian Riley with nest box with girls.



Participants, sisters Olivia & Laura Szabo checking out the nest box.



Nest boxes in trees. Nest boxes installed in trees on a local property.

**Written by Regina Mildenhall** - What started out as a project between the local Landcare Australia network – to help farmers improve conditions for wildlife by planting shrubs and grasses and installing nest boxes – has now grown into a much bigger project which is of benefit to many.

Three organisations are now involved in the venture to build up the breeding numbers of native wildlife in the local area. Natural hollows in trees can take more than 100 years to develop and unless there are sufficient numbers, many types of wildlife cannot breed. This is where the nest boxes, which are being manufactured by prisoners at Fulham Correctional Centre, have come to the rescue. To date more than 1,500 nest boxes have been built in 21 different types which range in size from a tiny bat box to a giant owl nesting box.

The project now includes workshops being held where participants, a large number of them children, are educated about the native animals they're helping to protect. During these sessions the nest boxes are disassembled and then reassembled by the participants. During the process they learn about the particular type of wildlife which the nest box has been specifically designed for.

The nest boxes have also been made available to the public at a very small cost in a flat pack which can easily be reassembled and put up on their farm or public reserve to create a home for native animals; thereby, helping nature along the way.

This project is of benefit not only to the wildlife, but to the community and the prisoners as well according to Fulham's industry manager Ian Riley. "The prisoners are learning new work skills which contribute to their rehabilitation. Their personal development and self esteem also benefits, knowing that they are giving something back to the community."

## A Helping Hand

**Written by Regina Mildenhall** - Fulham Correctional Centre's community work crews have provided "hands on" assistance with fencing restoration work following the bush fires in the region earlier this year. However, a recent donation will make life just that little bit easier for many of the affected residents.

A tool audit at the Centre resulted in 150 surplus assorted hand tools being donated to the Traralgon South Community Tool Library which was set up by a local branch of the Lions Club. A shipping container houses the varied array of items which have been donated over the last

few months and include power tools, chainsaws, hand tools, digging tools, safety equipment and much more.

Lions Club volunteers operate the tool library and lend out the equipment free of charge to registered community members to help them in their efforts to reconstruct their homes and gardens following the devastating fires.

Fulham Correctional Centre was pleased to be able to help the bush-fire affected residents in another small, but practical way.

L - R: Volunteers Monica Chisolm, John Simpson, Fulham Correctional Centre CO Jason Fulford and Kath Simpson.



## Junee Sets Pace on Environmental Sustainability

**Written by Maria Buckley** - Junee Correctional Centre has become the first prison in Australia – and one of the first in the world – to be globally recognised for its commitment to the environment.

Arthur Gorrie and Fulham Correctional Centres are moving to achieve the same recognition.

The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) has awarded Junee with an International Certification of Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001) for its commitment to reducing its carbon footprint.

Driven by staff and inmates Junee has implemented a number of measures to protect the environment including establishing an Environmental Awareness Program to educate everyone at the centre - and the local community - about reducing their use of electricity, water and gas.

Major achievements include a cardboard recycling program, which can save up to 1,768 trees every year; installation of 16 new hot water heaters, which has reduced the centres' annual gas consumption by five percent; and installation of rainwater tanks, to offset water usage. The centre has also planted drought resistant vegetation.

To ensure the sustainability initiatives are promoted throughout the centre, Junee has

produced colourful posters that set specific targets and encourage staff and inmates to become "supporters of the environment."

The ISO has praised the centre for these initiatives and it will monitor Junee's efforts every six months to ensure it meets and continues to improve on these standards.

The managing director of The GEO Group Australia, Pieter Bezuidenhout, said it was the staff and inmates who provided the impetus for the environmental improvements by together – and with the support of management – setting targets and ensuring there was plenty of action to reach them. "The inmates were particularly supportive and working for the benefit of the local community and on a broader scale the planet in general. The program has become an essential part of their rehabilitation and preparing them to re-enter society," he said.

"We used the NSW Department of Corrective Services' Environmental Management Plan as a guide to research, develop and implement systems and processes for the environmental initiatives we have undertaken," he added.

At Fulham, apart from an extensive campaign to collect and store waste water, the off cuts from the inmate manufactured timber furniture are now being turned into ornate cutting boards.



Inmates planting native trees as part of National Tree Day and as part of Junee's internationally recognised ISO certification for world's best practice in environmental management.

This simple action has reduced the amount of timber waste being collected from the centre each month.

One of the programs with which Arthur Gorrie is involved includes an extensive planting of native trees as part of a campaign to save endangered local koalas.

"Running correctional centres means we are managing public assets and it's essential from a sustainability perspective that we use the resources at these centres as effectively as possible," Mr. Bezuidenhout said.

## Goodna PADD Visit

**Written by Scott Hamlett & Katie Sorensen** - On Tuesday, 15 September 2009, Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre's Passive Alert Drug Detection (PADD) dogs, Cindy and Cilla visited the students at Goodna Special School. Accompanied by their handlers, Dog Squad Coordinator, Geordie Megson (Cindy) and Kristen Boojers (Cilla), the dogs received much attention from the students who enjoyed the opportunity to interact and spend time with Cindy, a labrador cross and Cilla, a border collie.

With reference to the PADD dogs Mr. Megson said, "They are highly trained and are retrained regularly. Coming out here is a good break for them."

During the visit, General Manager, Mr. Greg Howden presented a prototype trolley to the school that was designed and manufactured by Industries staff and prisoners at AGCC. The prototype is one of five trolleys that are being custom built for the school to assist in the transportation of learning materials. Mr. Howden also presented a \$1,300 cheque to Principal, Mr. Michael Brett to assist with the cost of repairing

the school's bike shed which has been damaged from repeated break-ins.

The continuing support and partnership formed between Arthur Gorrie and the Goodna Special School is proving beneficial for both the school and prisoners alike.

"You can tell by looking at the students that they absolutely love them (the dogs) visiting – it really does get everybody excited," Mr. Brett said.

"I'm gratified that the Prisoner Advisory Committee (PAC) committees and prisoners generally, are so willing to support the initiative which involves children with significant issues in their lives," said Mr. Howden. He also said, "This is a fantastic initiative that allows the prisoners to give something back to the community, keeps prisoners engaged in meaningful activities and gives them new skills."

Photos: Top to bottom: Principal Mr. Michael Brett and Mr. Greg Howden, General Manager, AGCC; Dog Squad Coordinator, Geordie Megson with Cindy; Dog Squad Officer Kristen Boojers with Cilla.

