

Prison dogs fight drug menace

By Ryan Groube

LOTUS Glen Correctional Centre dog handler's Terry Payne and Lee Shore constantly see prisoners whose lives have been torn apart by drug abuse.

On Thursday, the pair gave a presentation to Mareeba State High School seniors hoping they speak to the students before drug dealers do.

Graphic stories about the physical effects of prolonged drug use, the filth of clandestine drug labs and the desperation of addiction were all talked about using real-life examples.

Mr Shore said he made no apologies about telling the students about the harsh realities of the consequences of drug use.

"If we don't educate them now, they can be exposed and vulnerable," Mr Shore said.

"Once they are hooked they are hooked.

"I am sick and tired of having to see the end result and these kids need to understand the very real dangers taking drugs exposes them to."

Mr Payne said students who thought doing a little bit of dope or popping a few ecstasy pills was harmless are gravely mistaken.

"I've seen a man, a local Mareeba man, who was given some bad pills and it took him three days to come down from it," he said.

"In other cases normal, every day people have come through the system because they had one hit and then became addicted for life.

"It is scary stuff and you [students] need to understand there is no such thing as a harmless drug."

At the end of the presentation students were introduced to Prince, a four-month-old German Shepherd, which is being trained as a correctional dog.

Prince charmed the students with his ability to sniff out a towel with a drug scent on it from a line up of people.

After the presentation, waiting patiently in the car was Mr Payne's fully trained partner, German Shepherd, Bandit.

Bandit and Mr Shore, as part of the dog squad at Lotus Glen, have made the prison one of the most drug-free correctional facilities in the state.

Figures released by the Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) showed that from May 1, 2010, to April 30, 2011, there have been two offenders charged with drug offences and no visitors charged with drug offences.

A spokesperson from QCS said the dog squad was an essential part of their tough on drugs response to illicit drug use by prisoners.

"With their ability to identify minute amounts of particular drugs, drug protection dogs play a frontline role in preventing illicit substances from entering prisons," the spokesperson said.

"The role and function of the dog squad is to provide security and drug detection services to correctional facilities throughout the state.



Dog handler Terry Payne and his general purpose German Shepherd, Bandit

"Drug detection services include vehicle and visitor services, prisoner searches and searches of internal accommodation and industry areas."

Handlers and dogs from Lotus Glen also regularly assist in operations with the Queensland Police Service.

On April 29, Mr Shore with dog Mason and colleague Dan Ramscar and his Passive Alert Drug Detection dog Bella, supported police in executing a drug warrant at several properties at Dimbulah.

The officers, with the help of their dogs, uncovered small amounts of cannabis and drug paraphernalia at three properties in town before being directed to a property just outside of the town centre.

In a shed on the property Mr Ramscar and Bella discovered a black bag with 31 gram of amphetamines, syringes and a digital scale.

In the house itself the pair found 92 grams of cannabis, a plastic tube and a quantity of cannabis seeds.

Police arrested a 39-year-old man in connection with the drugs and implements found at the property.

Mareeba District Crime and Prevention Co-ordinator Andrew Osborne said the support correctional officers gave police during drug raids was invaluable.

Mr Osborne also warned students about the dangers of hosting parties where friends come over and do drugs.

"If police attend and there are people doing drugs at your property it can

lead to a charge, and quite a serious charge at that," he said.

"The charge is to permit use of place and it is up to you to prove that you didn't know it was happening."

Mr Shore said he knew there were drugs throughout the education system but if students did begin to use they would eventually be caught.

"We know the drugs are in schools and we know that some kids are experimenting," he said. "The end result of drug use is winding up in jail, it keeps me in the job but it robs a lot of people of their lives.

"We don't come here and tell you these things because we get a kick out of it. We do it because we have seen the other side."

Multimillion-dollar boost for Herberton

By Andrew Molloy
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HERBERTON is about to get a multimillion-dollar investment boom with the announcement that resources company Kagara has given the go ahead to develop a mine at the Baal Gammon copper deposit.

The mine development will begin

immediately with ore processing targeted for October 2011. Monto and Kagara will form "a strategic alliance to investigate tin extraction and processing options at Mt Garnet for the Baal Gammon ore and Monto's Herberton Tin Project".

Monto and Kagara will also form joint venture for the exploration of base metals (excluding tin) across

Monto's entire 532 square kilometre Herberton tenement holding.

Monto Minerals executive director James Allchurch said: "It should prove to be a pretty big boon for Herberton.

"Monto will be focusing primarily on drilling the tin and we will be under way late next month - we've sold this copper asset to focus on the tin,

which is what we wanted to do.

"I think it is a fantastic result for Herberton and for Monto Minerals and it means that we are able to monetise the Baal Gammon copper deposit.

"There will be a lot of knock-on effects in terms of multiplier economic effects on the local community as the workers come in to start all of the

Continued on page 4

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Multimillion-dollar boost for Herberton

Continued from page 3

surveying, prestrip, environmental reporting and all of the stuff that is required to get this mine up and running."

Kagara chief executive and managing director Geoff Day said: "The

broader strategic alliance [with Monto] is also what excites us because it gives us opportunity to explore and develop further the tenements which Monto holds."

"I think it is a good deal for both of us. We have got aligned interests, not competing interests, which I think is important.

"They want to develop themselves as a tin company and we are not particularly interested in tin we are going to stick to our knitting, which is base metals copper, lead, zinc in particular."

Monto's statement to the ASX said: "The Baal Gammon transaction with Kagara is a significant step forward as not only does it represent an upfront injection of capital for the company, it also provides the opportunity for Monto to participate in the potential increase in spot-metal prices and mining upside (increased grade and tonnage) through an ongoing NSR (Net Smelter Royalty).

"It's good in two respects. You've got a new player that wants to develop and that's Monto and I think the community can feel fairly confident that they are bone fide, they are not fly-by-nighters, they want to develop a sound business and for Kagara it is a part of our overall growth strategy for north Queensland.

"The deal is important in as far as

it gives us access to an additional 540-odd square kilometres of highly prospective tenements in our back yard, operating with a group who we feel very comfortable with and who have the bone fides and the same sort of mindset as we do in terms of how a company interacts with local community," Mr Dayn said.

Tablelands Regional Council Mayor Tom Gilmore said he was "absolutely delighted" with the decision.

"Baal Gammon is one of the signature mines in the Herberton District and I seriously look forward to it coming online.

"It has the potential to be an employment creator and to stimulate significant economic activity within the region."

Monto Minerals informed the Australian Securities Exchange on May 11 that it had signed an agreement with Kagara for the rights to mine Baal Gammon for \$6 million as an initial capital payment payable in Kagara shares, 2.5 per cent net smelter royalty (NSR) payable on all metals for the first 550,000 tonnes of ore processed and 2 per cent NSR payable on all metals over 550,000 tonnes of ore processed.

Monto told the ASX: "The strategic tin alliance formed with Kagara potentially provides Monto with ore processing options for their flagship Herberton Tin Project, where drilling is to get underway in the coming months, and may also result in the increased profitability of Baal Gammon through the sale of tin in the production concentrate."

Radio star Alan Jones in Mareeba broadcasts

THE two-day visit to Mareeba by controversial radio personality Alan Jones to broadcast his radio program live from the RSL on May 19-20 has just got bigger.

The program will be broadcast on Sydney station 2GB, with 4AM doing live crosses to the show and it will be heard by more than 890,000 people on 29 regional radio stations across Australia.

Macquarie Radio network manager Matthew Summerill said Mr Jones takes a strong interest in issues affecting people living outside of Australia's capital cities.

"He has a very close affinity with all things rural Australia. He is very passionate about making sure that rural and regional Australia gets a fair go.

"Everybody is invited to come along and view and listen to Alan while he is broadcasting," he said.

The visit is being sponsored by IGA Distribution and the company's senior leadership will be in town for the programs. IGA will host a free breakfast at the RSL on each day of the broadcast from 5.30am to 9am.

Cornetts IGA Mareeba store manager Anita Lewis, said: "We are working in conjunction with the Cairns Leukaemia Foundation. They are going to come up and do the cooking for us and they will have their tins out for donations.

"He (Mr Jones) is interested in how everyone is coping after Cyclone Yasi and all the natural disasters we've had this year and it should be a really good event.

"It is really good publicity for us and it helps get the region back on the map and let everyone know that we are up and running for business up here and I think it is going to be good for everyone, not just my store."

Mr Jones will also be a guest speaker at a lunch hosted by the Mareeba Chamber of Commerce on May 20.

"It's good to get guys of this calibre up here to town. Even if you disagree with his viewpoints or don't like the guy, he does draw a crowd and it's good for the township and puts us on the map," Mareeba Chamber of Commerce president Sheldon Mulla said.

"Anything that we can do to give to people such as Max

Walker and Alan Jones some information to take back with them can only benefit the town in general.

"We certainly encourage everyone to come along."

Mrs Lewis said: "I think it is going to be good for north Queensland. We have a lot of good support from our local suppliers, Stockman Eggs have come to the party, as has Mungalli Creek Dairy."

Mr Summerill said Mr Jones is in regular correspondence with the local people about various issues and will be travelling around the region and investigating for himself.

"He is going to be covering some pretty important issues in the local region that also play out in other regional communities Australia-wide."

Mr Jones is also visiting the region at the invitation of Liberal National Party Barron River candidate Michael Trout who is delighted that he is coming.

Barron River MP Steve Wettenhall has also welcomed the visit and looks forward to appearing on the show.

Mareeba
Chamber of Commerce

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