



Royal Agricultural Society of NSW



MEDIA RELEASE

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THE BIG RED BUS ROLLS INTO WAUCHOPE

A 1960's double-decker bus jam packed with sporting equipment, a climbing wall, the latest computer games and a café will roll into the Wauchope Showground this Sunday, promising a fun afternoon for local youth.

The bright idea of former Wauchope Showgirl Emily Burt, the Big Red Bus youth centre was brought to life after she won the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) Foundation's inaugural \$25,000 Question prize in 2009.

The mobile youth centre, which will service outlying communities around Port Macquarie including Beechwood and Wauchope, opens its door this Sunday at 1pm.

RASF Executive Officer Antonia Ruffell said she's excited to be visiting Wauchope on Sunday to see Emily's project come alive.

"Young people are the future of rural communities and Emily's project will have an impact beyond her immediate local community and create a positive, lasting legacy for the region," said Ms Ruffell.

Emily developed the project to help tackle what she saw as a lack of fun activities for young people in her area.

"I'm concerned about the high suicide rates amongst youth in our country areas, as well as the increasing risk-taking behaviour which are often the result of limited recreational opportunities for young people," Ms Burt said.

"The Big Red Bus provides a fun, safe environment where young people can hang out together, play team sports, hear guest speakers and have access to computers and an on-board café," said Ms Burt.

Big Red Bus Launch

Date: Sunday, 4 July 2010

Time: 1:00pm – 5:00pm

Where: Wauchope Showground

The bus will be staffed by volunteers from the Alive Youth Group; an organisation based in Port Macquarie for young people aged 15 to 25. The group has a history of hands-on community projects including after school programs, sporting activities and fundraising for a variety of charities.

Applicants are required to identify an issue or need in their rural community and an existing community organisation they would partner with to implement their idea. Submissions are judged on several criteria including innovation, impact and implementation. Further information: www.rasf.org.au

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