

COMMENT

Send in the vaccine, says Deputy Premier

If anyone had told me two years ago that this state would suffer through its worst drought in history, the worst bushfires in history, floods and a one-in-100-year pandemic I am not sure I would believe them.

But yet here we are and over the past two years I have seen the very best of people that often brought me to tears.

As our communities battled drought, bushfires and the global pandemic it was our city cousins who did everything in their power to make sure our communities kept their heads above water. What I remember most was the way city kids rolled up their sleeves and did whatever they could to help kids like them in the bush.

Campaigns to raise money,

By **JOHN BARILARO,**
NSW DEPUTY PREMIER



school communities in Sydney fundraising to give country kids a holiday, a campaign that saw city kids write Christmas cards to those in the bush to try and lift their spirits.

Take 12-year-old Jack Berne from the Northern Beaches who established the charity "Fiver for a Farmer" that has gone on to raise more than \$1.8 million for regional communities.

The black summer bushfires that devastated our communities across the length and breadth of this state

still haunt me.

It was people from the city who donated millions of dollars, who booked their holidays to ensure businesses survived and it was the people from the city who stepped up and helped in any way they could.

NSW has managed the last 18 months of the COVID-19 pandemic relatively unscathed, but with the onset of the delta variant and a largely unvaccinated population the pandemic has taken its grip.

Some tough decisions have been made over the last five weeks - but none tougher than being faced with nearly 20,000 year 12 students being denied the very basic right of sitting their HSC.

The diversion of some of those Pfizer vaccines earmarked for the regions is short term and we will continue to see more and more vaccines become available over the next few weeks and regional NSW will be the first to see those top ups.

But let's be clear - Sydney is burning now. It would be like in the middle of the black summer bushfires and the South Coast was burning and the Hornsby RFS decided not to help - there would have been outrage.

Or it would be like denying those year 12 students during the bushfires the chance to get their HSC.

How is this any different?

If I'm honest, I have seen some of the worst of people over the last few days - a race to the bottom as to who

is more worthy of a vaccine.

We have successfully kept COVID as far away from the bush as possible but the biggest threat to that is the growing spread of the virus in South West and Western Sydney.

And we need to do everything to keep it at bay and well away from regional NSW.

When there is a drought, we pray for rain, when the fires rage, we send in the fireys, and when a community is crippled by a virus, we send in the vaccine. After natural disasters everyone is quick to say that regional NSW is tough and resilient. On the other side of this pandemic, how does regional NSW want to be remembered, when we had the opportunity to return the favour to our city cousins?

Exposure sites, restrictions at Tamworth

Five locations in Tamworth have been listed as COVID-19 exposure sites and the entire local government area will be subject to stay-at-home restrictions for a week.

It comes after positive detections of the virus in Armidale as well as the Hunter and subsequent stay-at-home orders for those areas.

Following Monday morning's pandemic update, NSW Health advised that a case had been notified overnight in a young woman who had been exposed in Newcastle and travelled to Tamworth while infectious.

As a precaution, NSW Health advises anyone in the Tamworth area should immediately isolate and have a COVID-19 test if they have even the mildest of symptoms.

Stay-at-home restrictions will be in place until 12.01am on Tuesday, August 16. The order applies to all people who live in the Tamworth area or have been there on or after August 5.

"We are asking people not to seek exceptions to the rules, but to ensure they comply with them so we do not see further cases of COVID-19 in the community," A NSW Health spokesperson said.

"The rules for this area will be the same as those already in place across Greater Sydney, including the Central Coast, Armidale, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Port Stephens, Singleton, Dungog, Muswellbrook and Cessnock. It remains vital that anyone who has any symptoms or is a close or casual contact of a person with COVID-19, isolates and is tested immediately. When testing clinics are busy, please ensure you stay in line,

identify yourself to staff and tell them that you have symptoms or are a contact of a case."

Peel Street businesses the Inland Cafe and the Tudor Hotel have been listed as close contact venues.

Anyone who visited the cafe on Thursday, August 5 from 9.15am to 10am is a close contact and must get tested and isolate for 14 days since they were there, regardless of the result.

NSW Health sends a text message to people who have checked in at close contact venues with further information. NSW Health also makes a follow-up call to close contacts to discuss the isolation and testing requirements.

If people have visited the sites at the times listed and have not received a text message, please call 1800 943 553.

Three other Tamworth locations are being deemed as casual contact venues.

The businesses include Gloria Jeans Coffee on Peel Street, the Super Vape Store on Peel Street and the Ampol Roadhouse on Goonoo Goonoo Road at Hillvue. The exposure date for these locations is also Thursday, August 5.

The times for each venue are 9.15am to 9.20am for the cafe, 10.55am to 11.05am for the vape store and 12.25pm to 12.30pm for the petrol station.

Anyone who attended the three venues at the times listed is a casual contact who must immediately get tested and isolate until a negative result is received. NSW Health asks people to please get tested even if they have had a test in recent days.

WWHS welcomes new friendly face

It was a love of history and an inspirational teacher that drove Wee Waa High School's new human society and its environment (HSIE) teacher, Adelle Roscoe to pursue a teaching career.

Ms Roscoe said, "It was when I was around 16 that I knew I wanted to be a teacher.

"I had a history teacher who was absolutely dynamic.

"She was truly one-of-a-kind.

"She was so passionate about history and bringing it to life for her students.

"We would design and take part in Aztec battles with other classes, make models of things like terracotta warriors, shields and armour.

"Making history so relatable was a great talent of hers.

"She could transport you back in time and you could almost see yourself as a part of what was happening. It was so exciting and she really cultivated my love of history and how to be a great teacher," said Ms Roscoe.

"I grew up in Newcastle, straight after high school I went to the University of Newcastle and trained in history and drama, but I knew I wanted to be a history teacher."

After graduating in 2016, Ms Roscoe quickly secured a permanent position at Hay War Memorial High School as a history teacher.

"The school is literally like a museum that houses all of Hay's war memorabilia," said Ms Roscoe.

"War history plays a prominent part in the Hay community as the first seven soldiers drafted from that region were from Hay.

"It's a part of their history that the town doesn't forget.

"The town itself is steeped in history and the community pays great respect to the sacrifice and contribution of their forebears."

It was this first experience of living regionally that had Ms Roscoe hooked.

"I loved Hay. It is such a beautiful area and I just loved the people I worked with and the students.

"It's a similar size to WWHS.

"After four years in Hay, I was thinking about finding another school in rural NSW to get another



Wee Waa High School's new human society and its environment (HSIE) teacher Adelle Roscoe with her running companion Blossom, a spirited two-year-old border collie.

rural teaching and living perspective.

"So when I met one of your science teachers, Ms Taylor through a mutual friend and she mentioned how great WWHS was and that they looking for a HSIE teacher, I was in.

"Ms Taylor spoke of WWHS' great culture and how resilient the staff and students are.

"She said there was a real sense of team, and that is just what I like.

"I came for a visit late last term and fell in love with the community.

"I drove back to Hay knowing that I wanted Wee Waa High to be the next chapter in my life and career.

"At WWHS I teach history, geography, commerce and English.

"I really like the mix."

Ms Roscoe has brought her much loved pets to Wee Waa, a 17-year-old cat 'Cinnamon' and running partner 'Blossom', a spirited two-year-old border collie.

Ms Roscoe added, "Where I go, these two go too".

A regular runner and cyclist, Ms Roscoe reflected on having been a keen cross country runner since high school.

Having begun to find her feet, Ms Roscoe said she is "enjoying getting to know each of my students, what they are wanting from their education and what their interests are.

"Once I know this, I can tailor my classes to inspire and fuel their love of learning".

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