

# Festival pulls 25,000

## Living Smart more popular than ever

By **CHRISTAL BRAND**

THIS year was a record breaker for Lake Macquarie's Living Smart Festival, with about 25,000 people in attendance.

Three hundred and twenty festival-goers caught a free ferry from Belmont, Toronto and Valentine courtesy of Bill and Sue Gibson from Belmont Christian College, who run the school's ferry service.

Mrs Gibson said that in their four years operating during the festival this year was the most busy.

"We even had to leave people behind because the boat was too full," she said.

As a part of this year's food theme, many stallholders pledged to improve their environmental footprints and avoid food waste, with festival attendees doing the same at the Selfie Booth.

There was something for anyone with stalls ranging from growing your own organic food to solar power and weed control.

Plant lovers were able to pick up two free native plants with 3506 given away by Lake Macquarie City Council.

With an active Play Zone kids were able to meet the Jolly Pirates, get their face painted and even meet the reptiles from Wetlands on Wheels.

Lake Macquarie Farmers Market



**CLEVER:** Children meet Community First Credit Union's mascot at the Living Smart Festival which featured organic food, solar power, weed control and much more.

joined the festival again this year showcasing a wide array of products.

First-time stallholder Tony Lewis, of Murrays Beach, said the festival was a great opportunity to debut his products.

Mr Lewis sold more than 100 of his Mozzie Munchers mosquito coil

holders.

There are 10 animal-shaped designs available ranging from a turtle to his newest design, an owl.

"Hopefully I'll be back next year. I'd love to get involved with other markets too."

# City's transport plans welcomed

By **MARK CONNORS**

EVEN the greenest councillors in Newcastle's council chambers couldn't help but chuckle when they voted to seek community feedback on a new draft transport strategy.

Although councillors voted in favour of the plans, the ambitious strategy includes:

- Increasing trips by bike to 5 per cent by 2016
- Doubling the amount of cyclists who ride to work by 2016
- Increase public transport usage for those travelling into the CBD during peak hours to 20 per cent by 2016
- Increasing walking trips to 25 per cent by 2016
- Increasing public

transport use by 400 per cent.

Speaking in favour of the strategy, Cr Tim Crakanthorp said increasing public transport usage by 400 per cent would be extremely difficult unless the heavy rail line in Newcastle's CBD was kept open.

The NSW Transport Department predicts the number of people using public transport near the existing rail corridor will drop off when the rail is truncated on Boxing Day, with only 77 per cent of users expected to jump on a bus or light rail.

The draft strategy also recommends reducing speed limits to 40km/h in residential areas, making it safer for cyclists and pedestrians.

■ A REPORT on parking management in the city centre is expected to be presented "in the near future". The draft transport strategy highlights that the council is lacking in reliable data on parking demand and the duration of their stay. The council is also looking to expand parking metres into new areas and consider a "parking cap" on parking spaces in the city.

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