



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 12 June 2009

YPRL Helps Bushfire-Affected Communities Rebuild Book Collections

Yarra Plenty Regional Library is helping rebuild communities by giving new free book collections as part of a Victoria-wide library mission to look after the literary health of both young and old booklovers who lost their books in the bushfires.

Thousands of boxes of new and second-hand books are being donated, sorted and distributed to bereft booklovers throughout Victoria over the next six months.

The mission emerged when Victorian public library managers met to discuss how they could support bushfire-affected communities after Black Saturday. The Public Libraries Victoria Network Inc (PLVN) appointed YPRL Manager of Outreach Jane Grace to act as Disaster Recovery Project Manager because of her experience working at the Diamond Creek Relief Centre in the aftermath of the fires, and a team of YPRL employees and volunteers has been working on providing books to people who have lost their collections.

As part of the project, YPRL has created a special website for bushfire-affected communities. The website can be accessed at <http://bacwiki.wikidot.com> and is intended to provide detailed information, support and links to the communities, as well as the opportunity for people to build their book collections. People who have lost books in the fires can use a form on the site to stipulate general subjects of books they would like to replace.

The first stage of building people's book collections has been providing second-hand books. More than a thousand boxes of books have been donated from all over Australia and are being sorted by YPRL Seniors and Volunteers coordinator Carolyn Jury and a team of volunteers. They organise for people to pick up their batch of books from their nearest public library or send the books out to them.

The second stage of the project will be the new books, which will be sent out over the next six months. Public libraries across Victoria, the Australian Booksellers Association, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), booksellers and publishers are weighing in to provide new books. And libraries, friends of libraries, and school libraries are raising funds to support the mission. The goal is to provide 10 new books to 2,000 people, as

well as a book voucher to help replace special titles.

“Let’s hope in the next six months we can get 20,000 new books to some 2,000 people affected by the bushfires throughout Victoria and make people’s lives full with literature again,” ALIA acting Disaster Recovery Project Manager and YPRL Manager of Outreach Jane Grace says. “We believe reading is a key part of wellbeing, so it’s a way public libraries can help contribute to rebuilding their literary health.”

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:

Please contact me on 9401 0755 to organise an appropriate time for photography.

- Photo of a person who has lost books in the fires receiving a box of new books.
- Photo of YPRL Seniors and Volunteers Coordinator Carolyn Jury with lots of boxes of donated new and second-hand books.

For further information:

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