

2016 Grandparents Day Project "Billy Carts"

The 'big kid' test driver tried out the prototype billy-cart on both grass and concrete surfaces this under the watchful eye of the Penrith Council Organisers. The cart performed most satisfactorily but the test driver may have been a bit shaken up by the speed obtained on the concrete path.



Anyway, the production now ramps-up to full ahead with the kits being further prepared so that although the children will be asked to assist with the assembly, it will just be putting the major parts together. Teams visited all nine centres and each centre received two carts. The children will now decorate or paint their cart in preparation for the big day.

David Ongley and I went to the Tandara "Out Of School Hours" centre this arvo and were surrounded by several eager little 'beavers'.

We gave each child the job of pulling the driver/drill trigger to wind the screws in. A great thrill for them, especially the older girls.

There was a bit of difficulty in threading/tightening the nut onto the steering pivot bolt, but patience won out. These little ones hadn't been this close to a spanner before!

The whole exercise took about 35mins, including a chat with the centre 'manager'.

Story & photos by Les.



Billycart racing provides a grand spectacle

Isabell Petrinic

COME enjoy the thrills – and the occasional scraped knees from spills – when billycart racing hits Jamison Park on Sunday, October 30.

Billycarts were used as early as the 1880s and often drawn by a billygoat.

To mark NSW Grandparents Day in Penrith, the inaugural "Great Grandparents Day Billy Kart Race" will see grandparents push kids of all ages along a gentle

slope in the popular park. "I used to make billy carts as a kid," said Alan Beard, of Emu Heights – one of the Nepean Men's Shed members helping make 18 billycarts for use on the day.

"We did have a crash into a building once, and 'broke in' by accident."

On a more serious note, he said billycart racing is a "great outdoor physical activity".

"Get them off those screens," added the Men's

Shed public officer, Bob Maynard of Blaxland.

Shed members are teaching children in nine childcare centres across Penrith City how to build the carts for the races, for which they will also act as marshals.

They will also put on a barbecue for the participants.

Kids at the childcare centres will paint and decorate the carts.

Their helpers on Monday were from Gumbirra Out of School Hours, in St Clair:

Cain Lubarsky, 6; Phoenix Halovic, 6; Tayla Claxton, 10; Kaitlin Mercer, 10; and Mikaela Elliott, 10.

"They're fun, and a bit hard to steer," said Tayla, of St Clair.

Cain of St Clair agreed, "it looks like a lot of fun".

The Great Grandparents Day Billy Kart Race is on from 10am-1pm, on Sunday, October 30.

It is free to enter and for further details visit grandparentsday.nsw.gov.au.



Alan Beard, Tayla Claxton, 10, Kaitlin Mercer, 10, Phoenix Halovic, 6, Mikaela Elliott, 10, Bob Maynard and Cain Lubarsky, 6.