

Ram raid suspects found

Teenagers face court over cross-border pursuit

BY NIGEL McNAY

TWO teenagers fronted court yesterday over a series of police pursuits in Albury and Griffith and a ram raid in Wodonga.

They were arrested after crashing a car they are accused of stealing from an West Albury house on Thursday evening.

Wodonga police will also seek to speak to them.

A 19-year-old man, the alleged driver of the vehicle, faced 17 charges when he appeared before Griffith Court yesterday, while a 17-year-old faced four offences during a video hearing in Parramatta Children's Court.

They will face court again at a later date.

An Albury boy, 17, was charged on Friday with

burglary, theft and criminal damage over the incidents.

NSW police said the 2005 Ford Falcon sedan that crashed in Griffith was allegedly stolen from a house in O'Brien Court, West Albury, on Thursday between 5.15pm and 7.50pm.

A police spokesman said over the following 31 hours it was alleged the car was used in:

- Two incidents of failing to pay for fuel in Lavington and Griffith;

- The aggravated break, enter and steal at a service station in Wodonga; and,

- Four separate police pursuits in Wodonga, Albury and Griffith.

The pair who appeared in court yesterday were

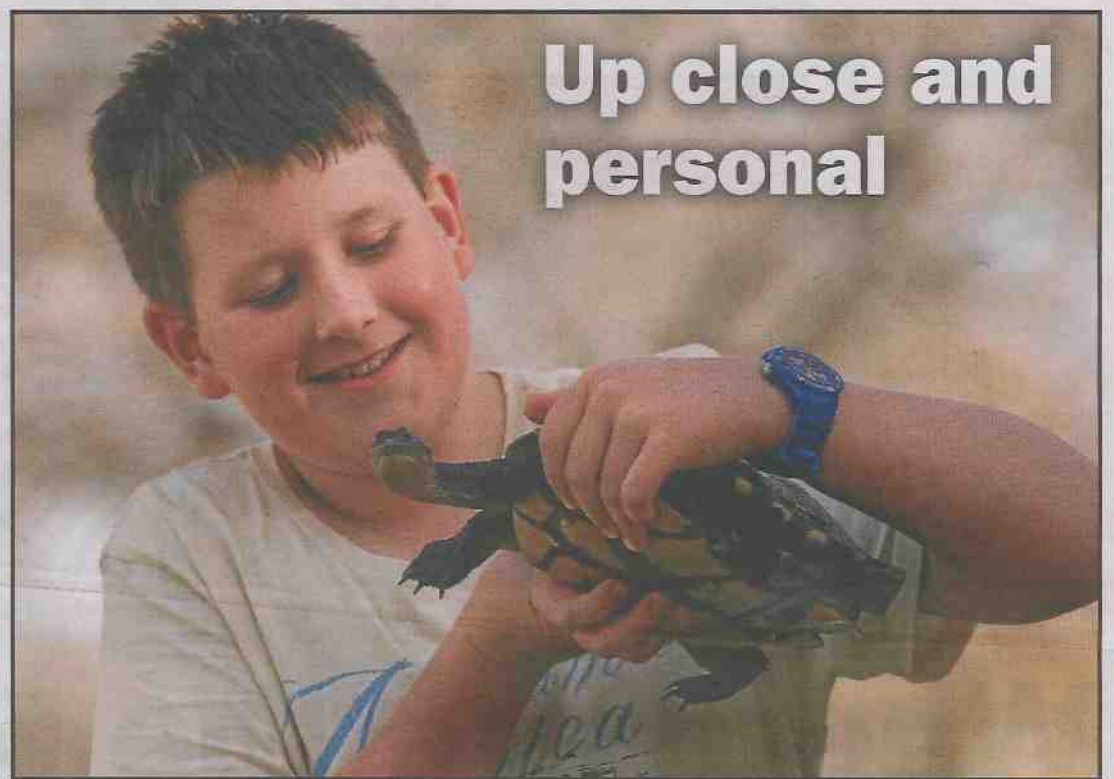
arrested on Saturday at 3.50am after they drove the car into a rail corridor next to Cutler Avenue, Griffith, and crashed into a stormwater drain.

"During a search of the car, police located items they will allege were stolen during the Wodonga incident," the spokesman said.

"Officers also seized drug paraphernalia."

It is alleged the Ford reversed into the glass front door of the Caltex service station on Thomas Mitchell Drive in Wodonga on Friday at 2.30am.

Three men wearing dark clothing and hooded jumpers allegedly spent a few minutes ransacking the store of property valued at several hundreds of dollars before leaving.



Up close and personal

● Bailey Simonis gets acquainted with a turtle in Wangaratta yesterday afternoon. Picture: BEN EYLES

BY ANTHONY BUNN

A TEAM of turtles were turning heads in Wangaratta yesterday.

The shelled reptiles attracted 50 curious folks to Batchelors Green, including Milawa Primary School grade 5 student Bailey Simonis.

He was surprised to learn turtles used nests and have a 12-month gestation period.

"I thought it would be fun," Bailey, 11, said.

Organiser Diane Farmer was thrilled with the roll-up for the day, which was supported by Turtles Australia and the

North East Catchment Management Authority and arranged by the Wangaratta Sustainability Network Restoring our Waterways Group.

The catchment authority gave the waterways group mesh to be used to protect turtle nests from predators.

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Party turns explosive

BY NIGEL McNAY

FIREWORKS have injured two men at a Bonegilla farm in an incident police warned could have easily turned fatal.

The men suffered minor injuries after a firework fuse was lit and exploded at a bonfire night on the Mahers Road property on Saturday night.

"Initially it was thought it was life-threatening, but it appears to have been of a more minor nature in the end," Wodonga police's Sgt David Arnold said.

The dramatic end to the bonfire night follows an incident at Thurgoona

in late April when several teenagers were burnt.

One of them, Trinity College student Molly Dowling, 17, suffered burns to 30 per cent of her body after an aerosol can thrown onto a bonfire exploded.

Sgt Arnold said fireworks were being set off at the Bonegilla bonfire night when the men were injured at 9.45pm.

Both victims — a Table Top man, 42, and an Osbornes Flat man, 39 — were taken by ambulance to Albury hospital with minor facial injuries.

Sgt Arnold said there was a large group of people at the property.

"I could give you lots of examples of people who have been hurt by fireworks," he said.

"They are considered explosives and they are illegal for a reason.

"Unless you're a proper pyrotechnic or a powdermonkey (who works with explosives) you really shouldn't be handling something like this."

Sgt Arnold said a lot of the fireworks people got hold of were made in China, "and the quantity and quality of them can be a little suspect".

"You just don't know how they're going to react, and they can react rather poorly," he said.

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