EXCLUSIVE

Kim Macdonald

Bunbury could become the “movie capital of Australia” through a five-storey studio and training facility on the back of $100 million in film deals.

Bunbury production company Vue Group will today sign a joint venture agreement for the studio with Shanghai Hippo Animation. Hippo chief executive Kerr Xu was a “high profile” drug dealer and was found in possession of about 100g of the drug, which is part of a crime blitz in the North West.

Several charges were laid and 591 charges as part of the effort, which was held and resulted in the school’s closure today. Students and staff were evacuated from the building today because of the damage from the blaze.

The Vue-Hippo joint venture intends aggressively pursuing this genre, responsible for blockbuster movies such as Avatar.

“I believe that if we work together, Bunbury can become a film capital for the next generation, not just for Australia,” Mr Xu said.

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Natalie Brown

Police will allege the man was a “high profile” drug courier and was found in possession of a “trafficable quantity” of about 100g of the drug.

The man was charged with a string of offenses during the police operation between September 22 and October 19.

A suspected electrical fire has caused extensive damage to Newman Senior High School, resulting in the school’s closure today.

Students and staff were evacuated from the building in the mining town of Newman in the Pilbara after the alarm was raised about 1.20pm yesterday. A Department of Fire and Emergency Services spokes-

person said that 10 firefighters worked into the evening to battle the blaze and try to protect neighbouring buildings from damage.

No one was injured in the fire, which destroyed up to eight classrooms in the west wing of the two-storey school.

The Department of Education has advised parents that the school would be closed today because of the damage from the blaze.

Fire closes school

Drug suspect held

Ben Leahy and Natalie Brown

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Eskimo Joe guitarist Joel Quartermain feared the worst when he woke to screaming tyres yesterday. Quartermain ran from his Melville home to find a Hyundai Excel in flames just metres from his front door.

There was a skidding sound and then a loud bang,” Quartermain said.

“When I ran outside I thought ‘this is not going to be good’. You fear the worst.”

Relieved to see both drivers safe, Quartermain went to take a photo with his mobile phone when the Hyundai erupted into a “fireball”.

“IT had been burning slowly and then went up in big time,” Quartermain said.

“There were a couple of explosions.”

Firefighters were called to extinguish the fire. The driver of the Hyundai, a 20-year-old man, was taken to Fremantle Hospital with minor injuries. The driver of the Toyota was not injured. Police are investigating.

The damage to Hyundai was estimated at $300 million. Conceded the Vue-Hippo joint venture plan came from years of hard work.

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