



WATER SAFE: Henry Webb and Kate Bennett keep a watch over Bulcock Beach, Caloundra.

PHOTO: WARREN LYNAM

## Big cash splash in dunny contest

THE new toilet block in Kenilworth's Isaac Moore park will not be bog standard.

Sunshine Coast Council will soon launch a worldwide competition for the toilet's design, with a \$10,000 first prize to sweeten the deal.

The Designer Dunny working group is hard at work preparing for the competition launch, which is only weeks away.

The project, spearheaded by Division 10 councillor Greg Rogerson, seeks to create a functional toilet block that is also a work of public art.

The competition will be judged by a panel of high-profile artists and architects but the Kenilworth community will also be able to have its say on the final design.

Kenilworth Arts Council president Mary-Jane Weld said she hoped the whole community would come on board.

"We want to build community awareness and engagement for the project," she said. "It will be quite striking and it will be a tourist attraction."

Because the park is prone to occasional flooding, the design will need to be 4.5m above ground level.

"It's certainly going to be eye-catching," Ms Weld said.

Local artist Regina Wamner said no plumbing knowledge was needed to enter the competition.

"World famous artists are designing dunnies," she said.

"Any creative person can enter. Even though there may be technical issues to be resolved, we really want local artists to be involved."

The council is expected to announce the competition launch before the end of the month.

# Grog, water a lethal mix

### Rivers claimed 285 lives with 33% deaths alcohol-related



**ROXANNE MCCARTY-O'KANE**  
roxmccokane@scnews.com.au

EXCESSIVE alcohol consumption is not only plaguing road users for those who choose to drink and drive, it is also causing death on our waterways.

New research released by Royal Life Saving Society Australia shows Queensland rivers have claimed the lives of 285 people since July 1, 2002.

Rivers accounted for a third of all drowning deaths in the state in that time and 33% of them were alcohol-related.

Ithaca Caloundra City Life Saving Club captain Lynda Barry said it was a staggering statistic but one that she wasn't surprised by.

"Of the 38 deaths that were known to have a positive reading from the report, 83% of them had a blood alcohol reading higher than the legal limit and 28% were higher than four times the legal limit," she said.

"When people go binge drinking and then head out on the water, it's a recipe for disaster."

Royal Life Saving and the Federal Government launched Respect the River, a national drowning prevention and public awareness campaign, yesterday in a bid to address these tragic statistics.

The Brisbane River, the nation's second highest river drowning black spot, has claimed the lives of 40 victims since July 1, 2002.

Royal Life Saving Queensland executive director Michael Darben said although none of the Sunshine Coast waterways had made it on to the top 10 most dangerous rivers, residents needed to remain vigilant.

"The reality with the Sunshine Coast is you've got your beaches but also your inland waterways that reach those beaches such as the Maroochy River, Noosa River and Pumicestone Passage and there are a lot of people doing recreational activities on those areas," he said.

"Be it paddle boarding, jet skiing, recreational swimming and boating, when you combine all those things, you are increasing the risks purely from the number of users there."

"I've been at Cotton Tree where there have been many watercraft and swimmers in one area in the absence of lifesavers and lifeguards."

Mr Darben said rivers could harbour snags like tree branches, ice cold water and strong currents, which could be lethal.

"We are asking people to follow four simple steps to reduce their drowning risk in rivers: wear a lifejacket, avoid alcohol around water, never swim alone and learn how to save a life. It's simple. Respect the River," he said.

Last season the Ithaca club, the smallest on the Coast, performed 93 rescues and undertook 739 preventative actions.

Ms Barry said this demonstrated how correct the figures in the report are.

"Inland waterways are something that need attention," she said.

"When you go out on the water, you are dealing with an actual environment and nature can turn on us at any time."

Ms Barry said they had seen many a person fall out of kayaks on the passage.

"One of the most common things is people not knowing their swimming ability and showing off to their friends and we need to help them get back to shore because they get caught in that really strong current at Bulcock Beach," she said.

"We do see accidents and possible spinal injuries with people on jet skis and we don't know the outcome of those."

Ithaca club secretary Patricia Barry said there was a big spike from last year's drowning report in the 35-54-year age group which went with an increase in baby boomers and empty-nesters with more disposable income choosing to buy watercraft to enjoy their leisure time.

"They might not have done much boating before and think they can get in a spot of fishing, but really it comes back to better education on using watercraft, better education on water safety and water skills," she said.

"The trouble is as we get older, we still feel the same as what we did when we were 30 years old, but unfortunately our bodies don't quite keep up."

The surf club offers Grey Medallion courses for over 368, CPR courses and full first aid courses for those looking to brush up on their skills.

For more information about the courses, visit [www.caoundra.city.asn.au](http://www.caoundra.city.asn.au).

### For your information

#### Rail grinding maintenance program

During November, rail grinding will take place between 8pm and 4am as part of Queensland Rail's vital track maintenance program.

Residents living close to the rail corridor may be exposed to periods of loud noise as the grinding machine works on particular sections of the track, for up to 20 minutes at a time.

Affected areas will be:

- Caboolture – Nambour: 2 - 6 November
- Nambour – Theebine: 5 - 10 November

Queensland Rail apologises for any inconvenience caused by noise made by the rail grinding machine operating in any of these locations during this period.

\*Times, dates and locations are subject to change without notice in accordance with operational requirements.

Visit [queenslandrail.com.au](http://queenslandrail.com.au) or call 13 16 17 for more information

