

Eight-year-old to the rescue after dad's heart attack

A young Noosaville boy who helped save his dad's life, is a great example of why all parents should teach their children what to do in case of an emergency.

In late March, Robert Lemon collapsed and suffered a heart attack at his home.

With his wife away for the night, his eight-year-old son RJ came to the rescue and dialled the emergency number and followed instructions until the ambulance arrived.

Robert was then taken to hospital with RJ by his side.

"The nurses told me he wouldn't leave me and he sat in a chair by my bed all night watching the heart monitor until he couldn't keep his eyes open any longer," Mr Lemon said.

RJ was already something of a local celebrity, having made local headlines when he won a gold medal at the Quicksilver Surfing Carnival in Malaysia last year, but Robert said his son's response in this situation made him even prouder.

"He's a very special boy and I'm just the proudest dad in the world, and I am just so thankful to him and the paramedics and everyone who looked after me."

Paramedic Greg Deuble was one of the first on the scene and said RJ undoubtedly



Robert Lemon with son RJ who recently saved his life.

helped save his dad's life.

"He was excellent, he was fully aware of what to do in an emergency and for a child his age that is remarkable," Mr Deuble said.

"RJ even locked up the house as we were

leaving for the hospital and was giving us directions on how to get out of the street.

"This case is a perfect example of why every child should be taught what to do in an emergency."

Townsville paramedics sweating on your support

Townsville paramedics Greg Clark and Tom Orme want your money, and they're prepared to sweat long and hard and endure aching muscles to get it.

The two have gone into training on some of the steepest hills around Townsville for the Kokoda Challenge, a cross-country team event to be held in July, which requires them to cover 96km of rugged terrain at the back of the Gold Coast, in 39 hours.

The event is a fundraiser to support the Gold Coast-based Kokoda Challenge Youth Program – an early intervention activity that helps young people develop life skills such as discipline, tolerance, endurance and mateship.

Tom and Greg decided to take part after a chance meeting with an organiser of the Kokoda Challenge Association while trekking in Tasmania last year.

Both men have military backgrounds and

have walked the actual Kokoda track and raised money for the Kokoda Hospital in Papua New Guinea.

Greg said they were motivated to take part in the Gold Coast event because they considered the Kokoda Youth Program to be an important program in helping young people gain direction for their lives, as well as being an excellent way to keep fit.

"We are also looking forward to meeting some of the young people from the

program who will be taking part in the Challenge.

"We are aiming to raise at least \$5,000 in sponsorship for our participation and this money will help to ensure more young people can take part in the program," he said.

Tax deductible donations to help the Townsville paramedics achieve their target can be made to:

www.kokodachallenge.com



Townsville paramedics Tom Orme (left) and Greg Clark in training to prepare for the Kokoda Challenge to raise funds for an early intervention youth program.

A chance to say 'thanks'...

Katrina Koia doesn't remember the accident which nearly claimed her life but she knows just how lucky she is to be alive.

The first she knew of the accident was when she woke in hospital several days later and was told of the quick actions of the two paramedics who saved her life.

On Saturday February 16 Katrina lost control of her car on Wembley Road, south of Brisbane, as she was driving home.

The car caught fire and Katrina was pinned in her seat, unconscious and suffering from internal bleeding.

Advanced Care Paramedics Victor Ronque from Woodridge and Andrew McKillop from Springwood, along with student paramedic Debra Cain, were quickly on the scene and put their lives on the line to free Katrina from the burning wreckage.

Mr Ronque said they knew when they arrived they had only seconds to get her out.

"The car was on fire and she was trapped so I used a nail punch to smash the



Andrew McKillop, Debra Cain and Victor Ronque are reunited with Katrina Koia. Photo courtesy of the Gold Coast Bulletin.

window and dragged her out of the passenger side just before the car was completely engulfed," he said.

Mr McKillop received minor burns to his hands during the rescue and was admitted to hospital for treatment for smoke inhalation.

When Katrina was being discharged from hospital she was able to meet the paramedics who saved her.

"Basically the doctors thought I was going to die but I recovered and I just wanted to say thank you to the paramedics because if it wasn't for them I'd be dead," she said.

Mt Morgan SES: Kevin's passion

For many, fate and kismet are only for the superstitious, but for Kevin Porter both played a major role in one of his greatest passions – the Mount Morgan SES.

And it all began with many years spent fooling around on a CB radio.

"In 1978 I was one of those 'yuppy CBer's' driving around in my car (which looked like a porcupine with all the antennas) and dare I say, annoying people whose TVs were affected by our radio transmissions.

"About that time the then controller of the Mt Morgan SES Rob Butler came to one of our meetings and suggested we should 'put our toys to a better use' and help the people of Mount Morgan by joining the SES," said Kevin.

Kevin took up the challenge and within two months was involved in the retrieval of a body from the Mount Morgan Range.

"It was during this operation that I really

got a feel for what the SES was about and I was motivated to train harder so that I could become the Rescue Team Leader."

Kevin achieved his goal less than two years after he joined and subsequently rose through the ranks to Deputy Local Controller and in 1986, after completing a course at Mount Macedon in Victoria, he became Local Controller.

After 15 years in that role Kevin has now resigned to make way for younger members with new ideas.

However, he believes he has achieved his aims of making the Mount Morgan unit a respected unit in Central Queensland and of encouraging more young people to join the SES – which has occurred with the help of the Cadet Unit.

"There is now an immense amount of talent within the SES unit and it's time to allow this talent to take over the reins," he said.

However, Kevin will certainly be keeping

busy since he will remain a member of the unit, as well as continuing as a QAS paramedic and volunteer firefighter.



Thirty-year Mt Morgan SES veteran Kevin Porter with his hair coloured for last year's 'Shave for a Cure' charity event.

New Salary Packaging Item – Electricity Accounts



Get advice on super contributions and for an extra \$55 we'll show you how to get up to \$619 by paying your electricity bills differently!*

Did you know you could save tax just by changing the way you pay your electricity account?

Queensland Police, Emergency Services and most Government employees can now take advantage of a new initiative which lets you pay your electricity bill using before tax dollars.

The scheme, now in its first year of operation, allows a large number of public sector employees to salary package a portion of their income every fortnight and 'bank' it, ready to pay each electricity bill as it arrives. This means the bill is paid

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in pre-tax dollars which reduces your taxable income and increases your take-home pay.

Up to \$1,333.33 can be claimed each Fringe Benefits tax (FBT) year, which runs from 1 April until 31 March. When the bill arrives you pay it as usual but then send your receipt to RemServ, the government's salary packaging administrator, who then reimburse your bank account. You are usually reimbursed within five working days.

If you have more money banked than you need to cover the bill, it simply rolls over to the next quarter. At the end of the FBT year (31 March) any surplus can either roll over to the next year or can be used as a pre-tax super contribution, or used towards a laptop computer. Of course, it can also be refunded to you, but it will form part of your taxable income.

Queensland Police and Emergency Services staff and most Government Employees qualify for this new

initiative and can start saving tax by salary packaging this expense.

Q Invest has specific advice services which can help you with the calculations and provide advice (with form completion). This lets you optimise your superannuation contributions and electricity packaging benefits each year.

For Salary Packaging - Electricity enquiries call Q Invest on 1800 643 893 to make an appointment with one of our professional advisers.

For all other salary packaging enquiries such as a car, laptop or FBT exempt benefits contact QPCU on 131 468 or visit www.qpcu.com.au

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131 468





New Brisbane region flood boat operators

Brisbane region has 23 new SES flood boat operators following their demanding assessment held on the Logan River at Carbrook, Cleveland recently.

SES Acting Local Controller for Redland, Tom Short who has conducted flood boat operator training courses for more than 18 years, said the trainee operators had to

deal with a range of scenarios including a simulated flood situation under the road bridge on Logan River.

“A major factor in the training is to ensure participants learn to work as a team which is vital in emergency situations.

“Crews were also assessed on their ability to navigate the delegated area.” Tom said eight flood boats were involved

in the training and each crew included an instructor, navigator and flood boat operator. The new SES flood boat operators come from all over the South East region including: Moggill, Arana Hills, Western Brisbane, Bribie Island, Caboolture, Brisbane and Redlands. The new group of flood boat operators bring the total across the state to 1007.

‘Scream and shout for fire safety’

by Chantelle Rule

‘Don’t hide, scream and shout’ is the lesson being taught to Grade One students across the state as part of the relaunched QFRS Fire Ed program.

While the Fire Ed program has existed in schools for more than 12 years, the revamped version includes some added features for teachers and students.

From a teachers’ perspective, one of the biggest attractions will be that the program is now part of the curriculum. Prism Education helped QFRS to develop the package which will help teachers to achieve key learning outcomes by complying with the criteria set by Education Queensland.

Program Coordinator Phil Bowden said it is hoped the 45,000 students that participate in the program each year will now retain even more of the information presented to them.

“Children have always loved this program and have been eager to learn fire safety life skills, and the new program will help

them get the most out of the lessons.

“The new features for students include a ‘big book’ detailing important safety messages, a cool little booklet full of useful information to take home for the family to discuss and a certificate of completion of the program.”

Messages like ‘get down low and go, go, go’, ‘get out and stay out’ and ‘stop, drop and roll’ will continue to be taught to the students. An important new message ‘don’t hide, scream and shout’ has been added to the repertoire of important catch phrases.

“We found that children in house fires often hide from firefighters who may look scary when they walk through a smoke filled room.

“Teaching kids to scream and shout if there is a fire will give firefighters a much better chance of finding the child when conducting their searches.”

Firefighters have reported that the new program has been well received among students since it was introduced to classrooms throughout Queensland in April.

Minister’s Awards for Excellence – closing soon

The Minister’s Awards for Excellence recognise outstanding achievements by DES teams, units and volunteer groups across eight categories. These are: Leadership Excellence; Innovation and Creativity; Engaging and Serving Communities; Queensland’s Regions; Sustainable Environment; Growing Queensland’s Economy; Partnerships and Reconciliation; ZEROharm Excellence in Safety Leadership (Focussing on our People).

Nominations for the awards, which are sponsored by the Queensland Police Credit Union, close on Friday 30 May.

Further information is available on the DES Portal or by contacting the Awards Coordinator Joanne Mitchell on 07 3109 7232 or by email to: jmitchell@emergency.qld.gov.au.

Your chance to contribute...

Among the objectives of 'Emergency' magazine is to reflect the achievements, activities and interests of staff and volunteers across the Queensland emergency services sector, and to ensure it remains interesting and relevant to its readers.

In order to achieve these objectives and to provide balanced coverage of the three services and represent activities in all regions, contributions and suggestions from staff and volunteers are encouraged.

These can include operational matters where there has been a resourceful approach to dealing with a difficult or unusual incident, events where staff members have performed beyond the call of duty, amusing or quirky incidents and recognition of long or outstanding service.

Contributors can test their journalistic style or send an outline encompassing the 'who, what, when, where, why and how' of the event, together with their contact details. Creative, high resolution photographs are also welcome.

However, it should be noted that in order to achieve balanced coverage and because of space limitations and the timeliness of material submitted, it may not be possible to use all items submitted, or it may be necessary to edit some material.

Deadlines for suggestions for future editions are: 10 June, 5 August and 7 October.

Material should be sent to editor@emergency.qld.gov.au

NRMA funding for SES groups

The 2007/08 storm season has been one of the busiest on record and this has placed increased demands on SES volunteers and their equipment.

NRMA Insurance, as major partner of the Queensland SES, has therefore launched an SES Storm and Flood Equipment Initiative to help SES units in Queensland buy new equipment to be used specifically in their storm response and recovery activities.

Application for funding should itemise the equipment required and include written

quotes. These will be considered by a panel of representatives from NRMA Insurance and the SES.

Applications close on 30 May, 2008 and successful applicants will be notified in writing by 9 June, 2008.

Application forms and further information can be obtained from Leeann Farmer in the SES Unit at the Department of Emergency Services on 3247 8707.



in BRIEF

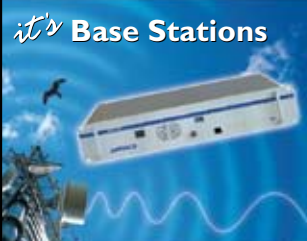
Floodboat for Mackay SES

Mackay residents know only too well the need for their local SES to have the best equipment available.

The city's SES volunteers were therefore delighted when officially handed the keys to a new Jabiru Savage model floodboat recently.

The ceremony was also a chance to

recognise the valuable contribution of long-term SES volunteer Allan Thompson and paramedics Joy Cooper and Gavin Brown. Mr Thompson received his 15 Year Meritorious Service Medal while Ms Cooper was presented with her 10 Year Long Service Medal and Mr Brown a National Medal.



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Local controller proud as punch



Former Kilcoy SES local controller Ian Swadling with Ron Field and Brisbane Regional Director Jason Cameron.

“Proud” doesn’t adequately sum up the way former Kilcoy SES local controller Ian Swadling feels about the volunteers he’s led for the last 14 years.

Mr Swadling, who will continue on as a member of the unit, said his team had attend many demanding occurrences including many road crashes and land searches.

A major search about three years ago involved a missing nine-year-old boy that saw more than 450 volunteers including SES, rural fire and the general public take part.

“The boy was found safe and well about two-and-a-half days after he went missing,” Mr Swadling said.

“The pride I had in my own team’s performance and the actions of everyone involved on that day was enormous.”

Mr Swadling recently celebrated his retirement from the local controller position at Archer Falls Winery.

Yowah couple recognised for SES service

For more than 30 years a Yowah husband and wife team have been on hand whenever their community needed help.

Errol and Irene Baxter joined the SES on the same day in October 1976 and were recently recognised for their long service by being presented with Meritorious Service Medals.

Mrs Baxter said she and her husband joined the Yowah SES Group after experiencing the disastrous 1974 floods in Brisbane shortly before they moved to Yowah.

“When a civil defence unit (which preceded the SES) began here in 1976 we said ‘yes’ straight away,” Mrs Baxter said.

The couple, who are opal miners, have been involved in countless storm and flood activations, land searches and would regularly light the airstrip at night for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS).

Mr and Mrs Baxter intend to continue their involvement with the SES for many years to come.



Errol and Irene Baxter received their medals from Minister for Emergency Services Neil Roberts.

Volunteers committed for the long haul

Volunteers clocking up to 25 years service were among 18 Meritorious Medal recipients who recently celebrated their longevity with the SES in south east Queensland.

SES volunteers from Brisbane, Redcliffe, Caboolture, Redlands and Beaudesert units were recognised by their peers and Minister for Emergency Services, Neil Roberts, during a medal ceremony at Kedron.

Awards included Meritorious Medals presented for 10 and 15 years service, clasps for 15, 20 and 25 years service and the National Medal for 10 and 15 years commitment.

The evening also recognised Pine Rivers Unit volunteer Susan Fyfe for her outstanding dedication, motivation and enthusiastic approach to SES activities.

Ms Fyfe was presented with an Outstanding Service Certificate.



SES volunteers from Brisbane, Redcliffe, Caboolture, Redlands and Beaudesert units were recognised by their peers at a medal ceremony recently.

Letters to Iraq...

“Hopefully, it will give them a better sense of the way people like themselves go through school and take on roles in society that make a difference.”

One Australian soldier serving in Iraq would have had a bigger bundle of letters than normal on Anzac Day.

Trooper Shane O'Mara, son of QAS Northern Region Acting Executive Officer Noel O'Mara, has been 'adopted' as a pen pal by Year 3 students at the Sunshine Coast Grammar School.

The pen pal relationship was prompted by Shane's sister, 23 year-old Cailin who knew how much he enjoyed receiving letters from home, and the idea was supported by teacher Mr Chris Smith who taught Shane when he attended the school.

To further encourage the plan, Noel O'Mara then went to the school to speak to the students to tell them something of Shane's life as a soldier, first in a posting to the Solomon Islands and then to Iraq.

As a result, 25 students have written to Shane telling him a little about themselves, their interests and what's happening on the Sunshine Coast.

Noel said he was delighted that the students had responded so positively to the idea.

Teacher Mr Smith said he regarded it as an important exercise for the young people.

“Hopefully, it will give them a better sense of the way people like themselves go through school and take on roles in society that make a difference.”



And the students' initiative has had a flow-on. As a result of the publicity, the Maroochy RSL sub-branch is planning to 'adopt' Shane's unit – the Second 14th Light Horse – and to send the soldiers 'comfort packs' of items that will help to make life more comfortable for them during their posting.

Top: 'Adopted' as a pen pal – Shane O'Mara on active service somewhere in Iraq.

Above: Noel O'Mara with Year 3 students of Sunshine Coast Grammar School.

Mini tornado causes havoc



Photo: courtesy of Beaudesert SES.

Memories of last year's destructive storm in Munruben came flooding back for SES volunteers after a violent storm left a Rathdowney home roofless recently.

Beaudesert SES Local Controller Brendan Guy said the storm had left a trail of destruction within about a 5km stretch and the house had been caught in its path.

"It was similar to the Munruben event because it only hit one little pocket before petering out, causing a lot of damage in a short time," he said.

Owner Fred Robinson, a local volunteer firefighter, said it had sounded like bombs were going off when high winds ripped the roof off his old Queenslander.

Footy match a real heart stopper for diehard fan

When 53-year-old Gold Coast resident Ken Coughran went to a Titan vs. Sharks footy match at Skilled Park in late March, he didn't expect to leave in an ambulance.

But Mr Coughran, who was with his 24-year-old son Joshua, began to feel sick and then blacked out.

QAS paramedics operating from the stadium's brand new ambulance facility were able to respond quickly and revive him before sending him to hospital for further treatment.

Operations Supervisor Grant Gamble was the first on scene.

"This was the first major case at the new venue and proved how well the medical response system worked with co-operation between QAS, the Titans and Skilled Park."

"We had 19,000 people there that night which is the equivalent of dealing with the population of a small town in a very enclosed space, but it all went very smoothly," said Grant.

While Mr Coughran was disappointed at having missed the game, he has a tangible memento of the occasion.

A week later when he was reunited with the paramedics who helped save him, he was also presented with a signed jersey by the Titans co-captain Scott Prince.



Titan's fan Ken Coughran meets NRL player Scott Prince and the paramedics who came to his aid.