



IT'S JUST GOOD CLEAN FUN

LEWIS Kelso was not afraid to get muddy to learn how to be prepared. He was among the hundreds who signed up for ScoutFest at Rowallan Park over the weekend.

For three action-packed days, children and their leaders climbed, abseiled, got dirty and gathered around a camp fire.

The weekend event, which drew families from as far south as Rockhampton, was designed to bring children together in the outdoors.

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ACTION-PACKED WEEKEND: Lewis Kelso was happy to cover himself in mud during ScoutFest.

DADS SHARE FATHERING VIEWS

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RESCUE TRAINED AS PTSD DOG

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FUN RUN ACTION

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MUDDYING THE WATER

Crabbers fight for survival over tough new quotas

PETER MICHAEL

QUEENSLAND mud crab – the “hero” of our food tourism trade – is under the crunch as tensions boil over in the state’s \$300 million seafood industry. Some of the state’s 2000 commercial fishermen plan to

launch a legal injunction against the State Government over tough new limits, the *Daily Mercury* can exclusively reveal.

Mackay Fish Market owner David Caracciolo said if the reform goes through it would cause massive unemployment, especially in regional areas

where the fishing industry was more prominent.

“We have no option. This is our last chance,” Mr Caracciolo said.

“We’re certainly exploring our options because the government has not listened.”

Tourism identity and restaurateur Kevin “Mr Mud Crab”

Collins, of Fish D’Vine at Airlie Beach, said the state’s global reputation for seafood was in jeopardy.

“We are all gung-ho in China telling them to come and taste our fresh caught local mud crab,” the Whitsundays chef said.

“It is our food tourism hero.

“But what happens when there is no guarantee of supply and it costs \$150 for a crab? It’ll be off the menu and we’ll be off the China tourist radar.”

Professional mud crabber Lionel Riesenweber said, “This is our last stand.”

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Australia, now you can

Have it all



INSPIRED: Venturer Scout Matthew Vella has been involved with the group since he was about 13.

Photo: Ashley Pillhofer

Scouts inspires young man to step out of comfort zone

MATTHEW Vella spent his weekend at Mackay's ultimate scouting event ScoutFest.

Groups of children and their leaders gathered at Rowallan Park where they climbed, camped, abseiled, covered themselves in mud and made rope during the weekend event designed to bring children together outdoors.

Venturer Scout Matthew, 17, was inspired to join Scouts after he watched the movie *UP*, signing up in 2013.

During his six years with the group, he has risen through the ranks and taken on a leadership role which gives him more responsibility for younger members and monitoring their

adventure activities.

He said he wasn't always an outgoing leader, attributing his leadership skills to the Scouts program.

"When I first started Scouts I couldn't stay on a camp," he said. "I was shy and timid and now I am out here all the time doing something,

it has just really helped my character," Matthew said.

"I love everything about Scouts. It is about being inclusive and a wide variety of activities you can do.

"The activities, the experience and being able to help the younger ones - the whole of scouting is amazing," he said.

Briefs

Business break-ins

POLICE are investigating a string of burglaries at South Mackay businesses.

Starcut Flowers Fourways and 3 Cheese Pizza were broken into late on Saturday night.

Star Cut Flowers owner Shawna Starrett said a laptop and the cash register which contained a significant amount of money were taken.

Ms Starrett said the thieves were brazen and had smashed their way into both businesses.

The night before, a thief smashed their way into Stellarossa, at Parkside Plaza. A QPS representative said the alleged offender smashed glass doors or windows to gain entry. Anyone with information is urged to contact police

Beer and BBQ festival

MACKAY'S second annual BBQ and Beer Festival will take place on August 17 at Harrup Park Country Club.

The 18+ only event will feature entertainment by Adrian Eagle as attendees dig into more than 50 different beer and ciders.

There will be competitions for Mackay's Best Sausage, BBQ Meat Smoking and Chilli Eating, with all-day food vendors and live music.

Pre-sale tickets are available for \$15.

Grants supersized

MACKAY'S not-for-profit groups, clubs and organisations are about to get a \$560,000

injection from a supersized Community Grants program. Funding is now available for small equipment up to \$1500, community initiatives, programs, events and upgrades up to \$7500 and minor infrastructure and assets up to \$30,000 after Mackay Regional Council added extra categories to the program. Round 1, which is now open until midnight October 4, offers up to \$130,000 for small equipment and community grants and \$150,000 for minor infrastructure/assets grants.

Council in the community

THE next Mackay Regional Council's Council in the Community event will be hosted in Midge Point on August 7. Join councillors at the Point Tavern at 1.45pm to 2.30pm.

Crabbers tackle clause

FROM PAGE 1

His family company is one of the state's biggest licence holders and among more than 130 trawl, line and crab fishermen, with investments totalling more than \$100 million, to join group actions against new reforms by fisheries.

"We are fighting for our survival. This is not a rehearsal. It shows how disgruntled so many of us are," the 42-year-old said.

"They've set quotas at the lowest of our low years. We es-

timate this will wipe out between 30 per cent and 50 per cent of family-run fishing operations across the board."

Queensland, unlike the Northern Territory and New South Wales, does not allow the take of female crabs, and has a no-take rule on under-size crabs below 15cm, which fishermen suggest, means they only take 25 per cent of the biomass.

Fishos also point to brag boards like "Mudzilla" on Facebook where amateurs post pictures of the "pillage and

“ WE ARE FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL. THIS IS NOT A REHEARSAL

CRABBER LIONEL RIESENWEBER

"plunder" of fish and crabs stocks.

Mud crabs are sold wholesale by commercial operators for about \$45 a kilogram and up to \$85 in the off season from October, making for a lucrative blackmarket trade.

Ex-Fisheries biologist turned Cape York mud crab-

ber Mat Vickers has already exited the industry because his quota went from 7 tonnes to 380kg.

"Last year I turned over half a million dollars and employed two Aboriginal families at Mapoon, this year it'll be zero," he said.

"It's broken my heart and done my head in.

"It's like telling a farmer who has 40 acres of tomatoes, he's only allowed to grow 300kg when he can easily grow 4 tonne."

Veteran crabber Mark

Grunske, of Karumba, supports the new mud crab quotas because "It'd cut the industry from 400 to 140 licences".

"It'll bring stability to our industry, and will let the rest of us make a good living, the price might go up, but to say there'll be less crab is not true," he said.

In a letter to the Fisheries Department, lawyers for a group action of fishers reveal a top barrister has been briefed to mount a legal challenge to the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy.



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Ailsa Paterson, Tristan Archibald and Chelsea Cahill.



Jacey and Jake Vigar made popcorn on the campfire at the ScoutFest open day.



Fergus Kelso and Liam Boardman played in the sun at ScoutFest.

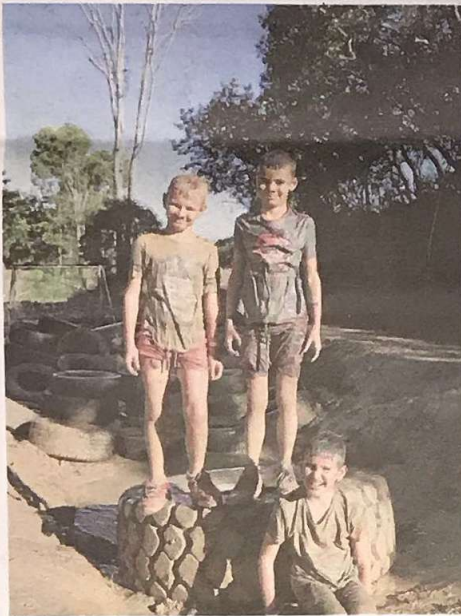
ScoutFest goes wild

IMAGINE school camp. Now imagine it bigger, better and with much, much more mud - that is ScoutFest. The jam-packed biennial event draws hundreds of children and families from across the region to gather around the camp-fire at Rowallan park. Banksia Scout Group leader in charge Katrina Hoare said this year's event attracted

Scouts from as far away as Rockhampton. Over three action-packed days, Scouts from various different groups came together to participate in activities. These included abseiling, low ropes, crate stacking, rope making, damper cooking and archery. If you are interested in finding out more about Scouts visit scoutsqld.com.au.



Charlette Vigar and Tyson Guest-Kimmerley are not members of the group but attended the ScoutFest community open day. Photos: Ashley Pillhofer



Tain Boardman, Isaak Sellers and Lewis Kelso slipped, slid and splashed in the mud.



Charlotte and Michael McGrath enjoyed the activities at ScoutFest.



Venturer Scout Matthew Vella has been involved with the group since he was about 13.

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