

Irwin Snr reptile festival star attraction

WILDLIFE lover Bob Irwin will be a star attraction at the inaugural Scales & Tails Australia Reptile Festival in Ipswich on October 17.

Ipswich snake breeders and publishers of the Scales & Tails magazine, Troy and Denver Kuligowski, have assembled a host of reptile enthusiasts and experts for the festival at the Ipswich Showgrounds.

Troy Kuligowski said he and his brother started collecting snakes about 14 years ago.

"We were looking for a new pet," he said.

"Two and a half years later we bred them. We became addicted.

"They're such an easy pet to care for - very low-maintenance.

"Snake-breeding has become a really popular hobby really quickly."

The festival will run from midday to midnight.

A highlight will be the world-first appearance of a live conjoined python and a two-headed turtle.

Profits from the day will go to The Royal Flying Doctor Service and AFTCRA (Australian Freshwater Turtles Conservation and Research Association).



SNAKES ALIVE: Troy Kuligowski and Buddy the black head python will be at the first reptile festival to be held on October 17.

Photo: Sarah Harvey OC0209HL

IN BRIEF

Driver still over after drinking night before

AN IPSWICH man was caught drink-driving after over-indulging the night before.

Ipswich Magistrates Court was told Niall Andrew Roger was breathalysed on August 23, recording 0.063.

Defence lawyer Justin Thomas said the 30-year-old was celebrating at the Raceview Tavern until midnight.

Mr Thomas said Roger was due to meet friends that morning but delayed the meeting to make sure he was under the limit.

"He thought he would've been alright to drive, but obviously he wasn't," he said.

Roger pleaded guilty to drink-driving and was fined \$100 and disqualified for a month.

Kate cooking up a storm for Idol

AUSTRALIAN Idol contestant Kate Cook has a chance to redeem herself after an ordinary performance last week when she hits the stage tomorrow night for a Pink-themed night.

Ms Cook told her Facebook fan page she would be taking on a song by a popular American singer but with a country twist.

But before she performs she will have to survive the public vote from last week at the start of the Network 10 show at 7.30pm.

To vote for the Lowood sensation, SMS "Kate" to 19 10 10 until 3am the following Monday.

Tsunami victims to be honoured at service

THE Samoan tsunami victims will be remembered today at the National Drowning Prevention, Awareness and Memorial Service in Sacred Heart Church, Booval.

Hannah's Foundation has dedicated part of the service to the Samoan community with a special candle ceremony and prayers as part of the National Memorial Day's service.

Hannah's Foundation chief executive Andrew Plint said the foundation was supporting the Premier's appeal and donations should be directed to 1800 021 884 or www.qld.gov.au.

He said people could also donate to the Red Cross at www.redcross.org.au

- AAP

Killer researched stab techniques on the net

A MAN used the internet to research stabbing techniques before murdering his ex-girlfriend, a court has been told.

Aaron Thomas William Gardner, 31, also drew a diagram of a woman with arrows showing where he would inflict the blows, the Supreme Court in Brisbane was told.

Gardner was jailed for life yesterday after pleading guilty to stabbing to death 20-year-old Lauren Taylor at her Gatton home in July, 2006.

Prosecutor Sal Vasta told the court the pair had been seeing each other for just eight weeks when Ms Taylor decided to end it

because Gardner had become possessive.

Gardner then became depressed and started plotting her death, he said.

The court was told Gardner called in sick from his job as a research officer at University of Queensland's Gatton campus, and drove to Toowoomba.

Mr Vasta said Gardner purchased a hunting knife from an army disposal store, and visited prostitutes, who he told of his plans.

The court was told he then broke into Ms Taylor's Gatton home and lay in wait for her to return from the university.

When Ms Taylor walked into her bedroom, Gardner stabbed her 12 times with the knife.

She died almost instantly.

Gardner then fled from her home, and was pursued by police before crashing his car and being taken to hospital.

The court was told he made full admissions about stabbing Ms Taylor.

Mr Vasta said police searched Gardner's Gatton home, where they found a diagram indicating where he had intended to stab his former girlfriend.

The court was told he had a history of jealousy and violence towards his girlfriends.

Mr Vasta said Gardner had threatened a former girlfriend with a sawn-off shotgun and held a knife to her throat until she told him she loved him and would not leave him.

Gardner pleaded guilty on Friday to one count each of murder, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle and burglary by breaking with violence while armed.

He also pleaded guilty to assaulting a work superior while he fled from police.

Gardner has already spent more than three years in pre-sentence custody.

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