

Boy's croc river dare goes bad

A TEENAGER who is lucky to still have his arm after being mauled by a crocodile in far north Queensland, was dared to jump into the predator infested river.

Lee de Paauw was attacked in the Johnstone River just before 2.30am yesterday after leaping from the esplanade wharf in the heart of Innisfail.

It was initially reported the 18-year-old had lost his arm to the crocodile but Queensland paramedic Neil Noble said it

was still attached but very badly mauled.

"Hopefully surgeons can help him and restore full use of his arm," he said.

Mr Noble said it was believed Mr de Paauw jumped in the river in response to a dare and had to be rescued by friends.

"Reports from the scene are he was dared to jump into the water, which he did and unfortunately that area is well known for its crocodile population," he said.

"We're just very grateful that he's survived this incident because it could have turned out to be quite fatal.

"Certainly to get out the water was absolutely vital in case that crocodile was able to get a good grip on him and do the death roll and then drown him."

Saltwater crocodiles are one of Australia's most dangerous land animals and have been responsible for eight confirmed fatal attacks in Queensland since 1985.

Driver's fine mess a staggering \$305K

A RESIDENT in the suburb of Kensington has become Victoria's worst serial fine evader, racking up 1009 infringements worth \$305,325.

The person's dubious fine history was revealed by the Victorian Sherriff's office and comes as the State Government prepares to write off a whopping \$722.45 million in fines which have remained

unpaid for five years.

Another serious fine evader was located in Broadmeadows with 888 fines worth \$283,348 while a Springvale resident clocked 946 fines worth \$282,079.

Sheriff Brendan Facey warned people hoping to dodge fines that new technologies, such as numberplate recognition, were being deployed. He

urged people to pay up now.

"While the majority of people do the right thing, unfortunately there is always a small percentage who choose to flout the law," he said.

Taxi drivers were the among the worst industry offenders with \$36 million in unpaid speeding, toll and red light camera tickets in Victoria with 112,450 fines.

ALEX WHITE



29 LAWTON AVE, GEELONG WEST. \$1.1M



11 BEACH PDE, DRUMCONDRA. \$1.096M



5-7 CHURCH ST, BELMONT. \$1.105M



116 PROSPECT RD, NEWTOWN. \$1.375M

TOP DOLLAR: Auctioneer Dale Whitford had to handle about 130 bids at the auction of 116 Prospect Rd, in Newtown, on the weekend.

Picture: JAY TOWN

MILLION SALES BOOM

TESSA HAYWARD

One property sells almost \$600k above reserve

THE booming Geelong property market just got even better with four properties selling above \$1 million at auction, including one for nearly \$600,000 over reserve.

The sky-high results spread across four suburbs and it is believed to be the first time this many properties have sold for over \$1 million at auction in Geelong in the same day.

Whitford, Newtown, agent Dale Whitford said the market was "pretty dam strong" at the moment.

"Five to six years ago it was a big deal, a million dollar sale,

now it is very much every other day," Mr Whitford said.

"It is nice when you go to the market for your client and you are getting figures that are in excess of their expectations.

"When they are exceeded it is showing great strength in the market place."

Mr Whitford said the four \$1 million-plus sales showed how much Geelong was growing. "We are on the map, nationally and internationally we are being looked at," he said.

It was the case of the worst house in the best street selling nearly \$600,000 over reserve

in Newtown. A huge crowd watched on as several parties entered the bidding for 116 Prospect Rd, Newtown after the opening vendor bid of \$750,000.

Bidding passed the reserve price of \$800,000 after six bids and then several parties went back and forth until two determined parties bid it out in the end with the property selling for the extraordinary price of \$1.375 million after about 130 bids.

The vendor must be counting their lucky stars too after thinking about accepting a pre-

auction offer in the low \$800,000s.

"They are local buyers and I imagine they will renovate it, it has heritage listing so you can't knock it over," Mr Whitford said.

Meanwhile, in Geelong West a Victorian house has set a street record with a sale price of \$1.1 million. Situated at 29 Lawton Ave, three parties bid for the property at auction after a vendor bid of \$950,000 started the bidding.

Whitford, Newtown, agent Peter Fort said the property was then passed in at \$1.03 mil-

lion, negotiations continued and it sold for \$1.1 million, which was what the vendors were hoping for.

"Local buyers bought it, they are looking to renovate the home and eventually live in it," Mr Fort said.

The previous street record in Lawton Ave was \$989,000 at 40 Lawton Ave, according to CoreLogic.

In Belmont a massive allotment of land sold for \$1.105 million, well in excess of the reserve according to Stockdale & Leggo, Belmont, agent Laura Berry. It is the first time in 20

years the 1140sq m block at 5-7 Church St has been available to buy.

"We had three strong bidders, one dropped out and then two people didn't want to let it go," Ms Berry said.

Bidding started at \$700,000 and 38 bids later the hammer came down. Ms Berry said the buyer plans on building townhouses on the site.

The fourth \$1 million-plus sale was in Drumcondra.

The period home was snapped up for \$1.096 million after bidding from several parties.

Situated at 11 Beach Parade, the Whitford, Newtown, listed property has one of the best facades in the street.