

Mum's poverty plea

By TRUDY BROWN

A SINGLE mother who said she could not afford to register and insure her car has appeared in the Charters Towers Magistrates Court.

Kristi Lee Scott, 24, pleaded guilty to driving an uninsured and unregistered vehicle before Magistrate Stephanie Tonkin last week.

The court heard police pulled over Scott driving a Mitsubishi sedan on Boundary Street at 10am on August 1.

Police checks showed the number plate on the vehicle belonged to an unregistered Holden and that the Mitsubishi's registration was cancelled in November 2007.

Scott told police the Mitsubishi was the only car she had.

Defence solicitor Peter Coombe said Scott had been given the vehicle by her mother.

"She needed to get food and had driven it to get food for her children," Mr Coombe said.

He said Scott had no money spare after paying her electricity, rent and food to pay for the registration of the vehicle.

Magistrate Tonkin told Scott she would have to give up the vehicle until it was registered.

She said the fine she would receive would easily be enough to pay for the registration and insurance.

"I appreciate that you might not be able to afford the registration and insurance, but this is going to cost you a lot more than that," Ms Tonkin said.

Scott was fined \$240 for driving an unregistered vehicle and \$300 for driving an uninsured vehicle.

"Have a big think before you get in an unregistered vehicle again," Ms Tonkin told Scott.

Give us beds: Katter

By MIKE GRIFFIN



CAMPAIGN ... Bob Katter wants unused beds at Eventide made available.

A GROWING crisis in aged care in regional Queensland could affect Federal Government funding coming to Queensland.

That claim has been made by Member for Kennedy Bob Katter who wants to see unused parts of Eventide recommissioned to help meet the current shortfall.

"You have 13 beds empty on the Pandamus ward and the Raintree section closed all together," Mr Katter said.

He said he was in the process of making representation to Federal Minister for Ageing Justine Elliot to

draw her attention to shortfalls in State Government administration of aged care in the Kennedy electorate.

Mr Katter rejected a suggestion that aged care was a State issue.

"Aged care is funded by the Federal Government but is administered by each State," he said.

Mr Katter claimed the State Government was slowly closing Eventide down.

"They did the same thing with Mosman Hall, they did it by stealth, but they won't get away with it again.

"When Mosman Hall was closed, they then went and built it elsewhere, that's gross irresponsibility."

Mr Katter said he was serving

notice on the State Government on the aged care issue.

"I'm coming out with guns blazing, I want those beds (at Eventide) filled.

"This is disgraceful behaviour, they are wasteful and extravagant."

Mr Katter said he understood that there were staff at Eventide who were under-utilised.

"This is part of the plan to close Eventide down, it's a \$100 million facility and that's what it will cost to replace it elsewhere.

"Local people should be able to live in Charters Towers, even if they need high care, this is where they have lived all their lives."

Long ride is all about helping kids

By SIMON CRASE

THERE was a rumble in the Charters Towers air on Wednesday afternoon. It wasn't a gathering storm but bikers gathering support for spina bifida and hydrocephalus research.

Over 300 bikes on the Southern Cross Association's annual Poker Run thundered into town for the first time since 2002 and turned the showgrounds into a camping ground after a 450km ride from Capella.

Ride organiser Tank Stowers said the riders stopped at the Kilcummin State School on their way to town and received a rousing reception.

"The kids today at the school put on a play for us. Mate, I just about wanted to cry," Tank said.

"We always go to remote schools because the kids have never seen so many bikes. They just keep queuing up to hop on."

The association takes a different route each run — this year starting in Marra,

going as far north as Innisfail and ending in Ingham tonight, where a massive party will be held.

"This ride will be the furthest north in the 11 runs we've been on," Tank said.

The Poker Run takes place every year during Spina Bifida Week.

Treasurer Felix Mickdvoracsek said the event raised almost \$50,000 in 2007 and hoped to get close to that mark this year.

"We give \$10 from every ticket sold, so there's nearly four grand straight up," he said.

"Money's raised from auctions, merchandise, card games and donations from the public.

"People along the way have been fantastic. Whenever we stop everyone asks us what we're doing and when we tell them, then they go straight into the pocket."

Former Southern Cross Association president Bugga Teys said he would do anything to help the great cause.



BIG HEARTED BIKER ... former SCA president Beven "Bugga" Teys loves nothing better than riding on the annual Poker Run.

"The reason I come on the ride is to do things for the little kids in Queensland, especially those who are battling disabilities," he said.

Bugga is the first biker to strap on a helmet and start his Oztrike when it's time for the kid's bike rides.

"There was a girl today who is in a wheelchair and she got to go on the back of my bike. I just love being able to do what I can."

Spina Bifida Week aims to educate people about spina bifida and hydrocephalus.

Research has indicated

folate is important in a woman's diet before conception and during the first three months of pregnancy, and as a result can drastically lessen the occurrence of spina bifida and other neural tube defects.

Unwelcome drive-by ends in court

By TRUDY BROWN

HOONING past his ex-girlfriend's house repeatedly has landed a Charters Towers man in court.

Joshua Craig Scott, 20, pleaded guilty to wilfully making excessive noise with a motor vehicle and breaching a domestic violence order in the Charters Towers Magistrates Court.

The court heard Scott drove to his ex-girlfriend's house in the early hours of July 21 and made so much noise squealing the tyres that she woke up.

The woman saw a large amount of

smoke and Scott in control of the car, causing the wheels to spin.

She told police Scott was doing "donuts" for 30-45 seconds before taking off down the street.

The woman said it appeared he almost lost control of the vehicle as he sped off.

At 7.30am that same day Scott returned to the address again and after seeing the aggrieved woman, lifted his middle finger to her as he drove past.

Police prosecutor Helen Armitage said at 8.30am Scott drove past again, this time raising his middle finger to the aggrieved and yelling out "sl..." to her.

Throughout the day Scott made a number of calls to his ex-girlfriend's phone.

The next day she called the police and made a formal statement regarding the harassment.

That evening police spoke with Scott, who admitted driving the vehicle and doing the donuts.

"He said he was being a d... head," Ms Armitage said.

Defence solicitor Peter Coombe said since Scott received the domestic violence order on July 1 his ex-girlfriend had caused lots of problems.

"He was angry with that. He was out of order," Mr Coombe said.

Magistrate Stephanie Tonkin told Scott he was "going out of his way to lose his licence".

"It's about the most valuable thing you have to get a job.

"It's good fortune rather than good management that you didn't end up collecting a power pole or something."

For the charge of making unnecessary noise using a motor vehicle, Scott was fined \$240 and two points taken from his licence.

For breaching the domestic violence order he was fined \$400 and no conviction was recorded.

"Show yourself a bit more self respect," Ms Tonkin told Scott.

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