

Quick news

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**CHARITY SCAM:** Gold Coasters are being warned not to be fooled by a diabetes fundraising scam. People posing as Diabetes Queensland charity workers have been knocking on doors requesting

donations. Diabetes Queensland chief operations officer Taryn Black said doorknocking was not part of the organisation's fundraising approach. Call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.



**KISSING COUSINS:** A California-based Catholic priest who runs a television ministry has taken a leave of absence after admitting to a sexual relationship with his second cousin. Michael Manning, 70,

said he had stepped down from his position to reflect on the relationship with Nancy Kotowski, a 59-year-old school superintendent in Monterey County. Catholic priests take a vow of celibacy.

## Navy vet's life ban on driving

**COURT**  
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A GOLD Coast man has been banned from driving for life after he became distracted behind the wheel and slammed into a pedestrian.

Andrew William Rudduck, 43, pleaded guilty in the Southport District Court yesterday and was sentenced to 18 months in jail for the 2009 crash in Surfers Paradise.

His 19-year-old victim, Te-Vea-Ali Teanotoga, had crossed the southbound lane of Ferny Ave and was waiting on a centre median strip for the lights to change when Rudduck's Toyota Rav 4 veered out of traffic and crashed into him.

The force of the impact threw Mr Teanotoga into the front mudguard of a nearby silver Holden and snapped a traffic light pole, which also hit the Holden.

The collision was captured on the Gold Coast City Council's safety camera network.

Mr Teanotoga was rushed to intensive care and spent six days in hospital suffering bleeding on the brain, lung damage and ongoing brain damage.

The court was told Rudduck, a naval veteran on a disability pension, was momentarily distracted by another vehicle, but he admitted he should not have been driving anyway as he was on a cocktail of heavy medication for chronic health problems including spinal issues.

He co-operated with police and pleaded guilty to one charge of dangerous operation of a vehicle causing grievous bodily harm.

Judge Katherine McGinness took Rudduck's disabled state into account and wholly suspended his jail sentence for an operation period of 18 months.

A conviction was recorded and Judge McGinness said he was absolutely disqualified from holding a licence.

# Caffeine-crazed kids running wild



### How they rate

- 500ml can of V energy drink contains 355mg of caffeine – equal to about five cups of standard coffee
- 375ml can of Coca-Cola contains 35mg of caffeine – equal to about half a cup of standard coffee
- 375ml bottle of ice tea contains 10mg of caffeine – equal to one-sixth of a cup of standard coffee.

**A Benowa State School student fuels up with an energy drink outside the school yesterday morning**

**EDUCATION**  
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TEENAGERS on the Gold Coast are consuming an equivalent of up to 20 cups of coffee as they drink three to four energy drinks each day before school.

It is a worrying notion, and Benowa State High School executive principal Mark Rickard believes parents do not know it is happening.

He said this year he had noticed an increase in the consumption of energy drinks – purchased from nearby stores – by his students.

Coolangatta advanced nutritionist Amanda Clark said the over-consumption of energy drinks such as V, Mother and Red Bull could have side-effects on teens that ranged from poor sleep and concen-

tration to extreme anxiety levels.

She said a 500ml can of V was equivalent to drinking about five cups of coffee.

A 375ml can of coke is only equivalent to half a cup of coffee.

It is generally recommended not to have more than one energy drink each day.

While the sale of these drinks is not recommended under state schools' Smart Choices policy, some schools still sell the drinks in smaller sizes in their tuckshops.

But Mr Rickard said it was the consumption before school that was an issue and prompted him to address it in this month's newsletter.

He said if this did not help he would look at taking further action.

An article written by school-based nurse Sue Stevenson said many students who drank energy drinks

before school found it hard to stay still and pay attention in class because the sugar and caffeine levels caused them to become hyperactive.

"This can lead to disruptive behaviour in class, suspensions and poorer academic achievement," she said.

Mr Rickard said energy drinks had become the new teen craze.

"One week it was wearing coloured wristbands, now it's energy drinks," he said. "There is always a new fad."

"We believe students have enough energy to last through the day without unnecessary support."

Bond University marketing associate professor Stephen Holden said the drinks were "cool" because they were different and branded with bright, attractive graphics.

"Coke is boring now, that's what mum and dad drink," he said.

"These drinks are extremely popular with university students using them to help keep them awake, and teens have always copied the other youths."

A 16-year-old student yesterday said she knew the energy drinks were not healthy but she "did not care" as they tasted good and gave her more energy during the day.

Ms Clark, of Great Ideas in Nutrition, said the best option for those seeking increased energy levels was not energy drinks but something like Sanitarium Up & Go, a smoothie, or milk and yoghurt in the morning.

**Should children be allowed to consume energy drinks? Vote at goldcoast.com.au**

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