

# Auction raises funds for awareness within indigenous community

## Spotlight on suicides

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SATURDAY night's Grapevine auction was not only about the mountain of sporting memorabilia up for grabs, but also about raising funds and, more importantly, raising awareness about suicide, particularly within the indigenous community.

Organiser and indigenous psychologist Leda Barnett said it was great to see people who attended asking questions about the issues surrounding suicide in the indigenous community.

"Although people were mingling and talking and having a great time on Saturday, the general message was there and I think it got across."

Because of the closeness of the indigenous community, suicide affects many people, not just the immediate family and friends.

Ms Barnett said she spoke on the night to someone whose partner could not attend because the partner found it too difficult to talk about suicide.

"It is such an emotionally charged issue, some people just can't deal with it," she said.

Ms Barnett mentioned a report she prepared for the Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Pre-



**HELPING OUT:** At the Grapevine sports auction are (from left) Leda Barnett, Katrina Robertson and Aaron Barba.

PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED

vention, titled, The Life Promotion Project: An Indigenous Community Response to Suicides in Mackay. The report goes into detail of what the Mackay community needs to do to assist those affected by suicide.

Some of the recommendations in the report included:

- The development and delivery of services that

provide education and skill development for family relationships, emotional wellbeing and dealing with hardship.

- Indigenous mental health services that facilitate holistic wellbeing, an important aspect of which would be access to indigenous health professionals.
- An indigenous suicide prevention strategy formu-

lated and coordinated with the input of each sector of the community including individuals, community members, government and community organisations, and many more groundbreaking ideas.

"That's what the money from the auction night will go to, getting some of these things in place," Ms Barnett said.



**A GOOD CAUSE:** Rebecca Kenny and Lyann Morris at Saturday's auction.



**SMILES:** Supporting the event (from left) are Mandy Doull, Adam Doull, Brendan Bishop, Julie Bishop and Camron Bird.



**DIGGING DEEP:** Blanche and Greg Sutherland with their piece of memorabilia at Saturday night's auction.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

## Stadium action all about an auction

THE Virgin Australia Mackay Stadium was pumping on Saturday night, but it wasn't for a football match.

The Grapevine Charity Auction went off without a hitch and thousands were raised for local suicide prevention and awareness.

At the end of the night, every piece of sporting memorabilia available had been snapped up, with several

people heading home with some real bargains.

"The night was great, I would estimate we had about 150 people there, it was very impressive," organiser Leda Barnett said.

"The venue was great, Clinton Begg from Stadium Mackay, he is worth his weight in gold that man."

Ms Barnett said every piece of memorabilia on offer

was auctioned off.

"Everything was sold and I tell you there were some absolute bargains there. There were some items that went for way under what they are worth."

Stadium Mackay committee chairman Greg Sutherland dug deep and paid almost \$1000 to buy some Queensland State of Origin Originals memorabilia.

And he says it's going straight back to charity to raise more money for local organisations.

The item which pulled the most money was a 2010 Wallabies jersey, which sold for \$1200.

"It is hard to tell what we raised at this point but I estimate it would be about \$10,000," Ms Barnett said yesterday.