

## Cane cutters to raze hell at Dalbeg

THE cane knives are out in preparation for this year's Australian Hand Cane Cutting Championships.

After last year's hiatus, the world's only exhibition of traditional cane harvesting will return to the Burdekin this weekend.

Event co-ordinator Shirley Donnelly said the championships saw the best cane cutters from around Australia vie for the George Eathorn memorial trophy.

"There are several categories ranging from under-35s to the open championship," she said.

"It's always highly competitive in each category and we expect the same this year."

Mrs Donnelly said competitors cut three rows, or drills, of cane and lay a fourth on top of the 'bunch'.

While speed was important, Mrs Donnelly said the cutter needed to keep the cane neat.

"The finalists can cut the drills within 12 minutes - but it's no good being quick if the bunch is all tangled up," she said.

The championships run from 10am-4pm, Sunday, July 20, at the Donnelly's farm in Dalbeg, and will also include entertainment, jumping castle, barbecue and tug-of-war competition.

— ANDREW STRUTTON

## Burdekin to hold march against crime

THE Ayr community have gone a step further in their fight against crime by appointing an action group and starting preparations for a peaceful march.

Weekly public meetings have been held in Ayr over the past six weeks due to concern over the level of violence and theft in the community.

President of the Burdekin Community Action Group Against Crime Kel Bunyan said the demonstration aimed to encourage residents to speak out about unreported crime.

"The march is to make people aware of the crimes committed in the community and to bring attention to the laws that need to be changed to stop these lawless people reoffending," he said.

"This group of lawless people seem to still be intimidating the community and we've had reports of incidents in shopping centres and down the street."

Mr Bunyan said he believed the meetings were widely supported.

"There are people too scared to put their hand up and say they are being intimidated and we want to change that," he said.

The demonstration will be held at 4.30pm next Friday from Anzac Park along Queen St.

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MEDICINAL . . . camp director Tim Marchinton, Dylan Morris, 12, from Cairns and regional support officer Filiz Mortimer at the Cystic Fibrosis Camp held at The Station

## Siblings find laughter best medicine

LAUGHTER was the best medicine for a group of North Queensland kids living with Cystic Fibrosis.

The camp was not for the kids who actually suffer from the disease but for their brothers and sisters who often get left out due to their sibling's illness.

Twelve-year-old Dylan Morris was at the camp to have fun with kids like him.

"I've got a sister, Megan, she's 14, and she's got (Cystic Fibrosis)," Dylan said. "Mum and Dad have to spend time with her and she usually goes into hospital often."

Dylan said the camp was fun but also helped him learn more about cystic fibrosis.

"At camp we play games, do activities, there's campfire and talks," he said.

"But we find out a little bit more about cystic fibrosis."

"There's (a speaker) coming in on the last day to talk about how people get CF."

Ten kids aged from six to 12 camped at The Station at the weekend.

Purple Soup, which runs camps for Cystic Fibrosis Queensland (CFQ), organised the camp. It was the first regional camp for CFQ.

"Often families are caught up in the day-to-day regime of Cystic Fibrosis, which sometimes means siblings feel they miss out on things," Purple Soup director Tim Marchinton said.

"Mum and Dad have to look after all those things, including hospitalisations and medications."

CFQ regional support officer Filiz Mortimer said it gave the brothers and sisters some respite.

"Cystic Fibrosis is a chronic disease, babies are born with it," Ms Mortimer said.

"The major affect is on the lungs, but other organs in the body too. The approximate age of survival at the moment is about 38."

# Residents fight new powerline

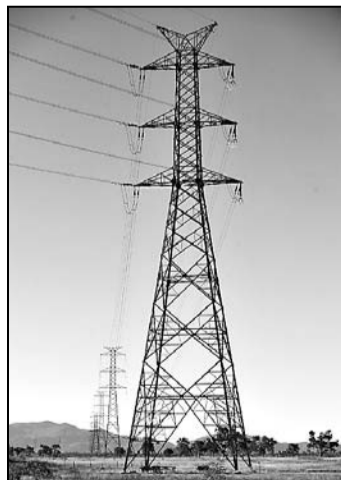
By ANDREW STRUTTON

DEBATE has continued to rage over the proposed construction of Powerlink Queensland's replacement high-voltage powerline between Townsville and Ingham.

On July 11 the project's environmental consultants, Natural Solutions, received 34 submissions about the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) from landowners, stakeholders and community members.

Balgol Beach resident Norm Turton said he lodged a submission and was hopeful the Rollingstone community had done enough lobbying to convince Powerlink to adopt another route.

Mr Turton said Powerlink had altered the powerline's course to bypass Bluewater by going inland, but claimed costs had deterred them from doing



the same around Rollingstone.

"They've gone around Bluewater and that's great for the people there, but what about us?" he said.

"There are alternative routes they could take to avoid Rollingstone but they aren't considered cost-effective."

Mr Turton said health issues and lost acreage were high on his list of concerns, because about one third of his land would be taken up by the proposed route.

"Radiation from the towers is a worry for us whether there is scientific evidence or not," he said.

"It makes you wonder when they won't they put them (towers) next to a sports field or a community hall but are happy to put one beside someone's house."

"Add to that I lose 5½ hectares and all I gain is a free power pole."

Mr Turton said he understood the project needed to go ahead to secure North and Far North Queensland's electricity supply, but did not want to be disadvantaged because of fiscal reasons.

"Nobody's complaining about the upgrade. It's progress," he said.

"We just don't want to be disadvantaged because an alternative route will cost more for Powerlink."

Powerlink Queensland's chief operating officer Simon Bartlett said all submissions would be considered and no final decision would be made about the precise location of the replacement line until the Environmental Impact Assessment had been completed.

Mr Bartlett said Powerlink paid compensation for new easements in accordance with the Acquisition of Land Act 1967, and that all landowners were encouraged to seek independent valuation and legal advice during compensation negotiations.

Construction of the replacement transmission line is expected to begin in late 2008. For further information about the project visit [www.powerlink.com.au](http://www.powerlink.com.au) or call 1800 635 369.

## Gem lovers to rock out

TOWNSVILLE'S gem and mineral enthusiasts are out to rock your world at this year's annual gem show on the weekend.

More than 1000 people are expected to visit the show at the Townsville Gem and Mineral Club on Mooney St, Gulliver, where those who treasure everything rocks will show off precious gems, stones, jewellery and rock art.

Show convenor Elethia Brady said rock lovers of all ages would have the opportunity to learn the art of cutting and polishing rocks, dig for treasure or buy a stunning sapphire from North Queensland's gem fields, topaz from O'Brien's Ck and agate from Agate Hill.

"We are encouraging people who are actively interested in lapidary (stones), wire wrapping, silversmithing or faceting, to come along especially to watch demonstrations programmed throughout the two days," Mrs Brady said.

The show goes from 9am to 4pm on Saturday and from 9am to 1pm Sunday.

