

# Chaplain milestone

## Guardians of street a year old

MICHAEL SERENC

THE men and women behind a service committed to making the streets safer for revellers in the CBD has celebrated 12 months on the job.

The Cairns Street Chaplains have reflected on the year that was, having helped more than 500 partygoers safely get home since their inception in November last year.

"We love what we do," Cairns Street Chaplains program director Carol Christopher said.

"We get a lot of satisfaction out of helping people.

"What's more satisfying is that in a few weeks or months down the track, we run into these people again and they're in totally different circumstances.

"They've learnt their lesson and they're no longer indulging in alcohol. It's just a huge change in their life."

The all-volunteer group patrols the CBD every Friday and



RESCUERS: Cairns Street Chaplains program director Carol Christopher with Mella Beaumont and Marsha Sparke. Picture: VERONICA SAGREDO

Saturday night between 11pm and 5am.

"We're often asked if it gets dangerous on the street and I say, 'Only if we get hugged to death'," Ms Christopher quipped. "People are so appreciative of what we do.

"They just love having us

out there." Ms Christopher said she wanted to double the current number of chaplains from 18 to 36 and was counting on state government funding to establish a Rest and Recovery centre in the CBD.

"The idea will be that people can be brought to the cen-

tre and then they won't necessarily get in trouble on the streets," she said.

"We can deal with them from there and get them home."

Ms Christopher said the group had been well supported by all licensed venues around

the Cairns CBD. "We work very closely with venue licensees, police, security companies, paramedics and other services," she said.

"It takes a team to do it."

To donate or volunteer, visit [www.facebook.com/CairnsStreetChaplains](http://www.facebook.com/CairnsStreetChaplains).

## Rewarded on Watch

A FAR North co-ordinator who has helped transform his group into a crime prevention hub has been named the state's best Neighbourhood Watch member.

Mark Ellwood, who heads the Palm Cove group, claimed the prize at the annual state-wide awards ceremony in Brisbane on the weekend.

His group has been active since 2012 and has 336 members. He also helped form the Clifton Beach group.

Mr Ellwood paid tribute to the support of businesses, police and local politicians.

## Tuning up on careers

MUSICIAN Neil Murray will conduct songwriting workshops and perform in Kuranda tomorrow as part of celebrations for K-Town Kreation.

K-Town Kreation was developed to provide Kuranda jobseekers with skills to establish their own businesses.

The 12 participants developed K-Town Kreation through access to equipment, networking and shows. Murray will conduct workshops from 5.30pm to 6.30pm then perform alongside other musicians from 7.30pm to 10.45pm at Kuranda Amphitheatre.

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