

# Sunshine Coast Sunday

sunshinecoastdaily.com.au

JANUARY 1, 2012 PRICE \$1.40

**THE COAST CELEBRATES** – OUT AND ABOUT ON NYE: PAGES 4, 5, 7, 8

**NOOSA HITS THE SPOT FOR ANA** – STORY PAGE 3



# KOALA SAVIOURS ROBBED, ABUSED

By PATRICK WILLIAMS  
patrick.williams@scnews.com.au

THE twin brothers behind the Coast's only 24-hour koala rescue service say they are fed up with being abused verbally, threatened and even robbed.

After a string of recent incidents, Sunshine Coast Koala Wildlife Rescue Service founders Ray and Murray Chambers are disappointed with the treatment they have been receiving.

Two weeks ago, \$370 worth of money and equipment was stolen from the men's rescue vehicle.

Then, on Friday night, Murray was abused verbally and threatened while attending to a koala hit by a car at Kurwongbah, in Brisbane's north.

"We are here doing a free service to save an Australian icon and I'm disappointed at the treatment we receive from some people. We're not a happy society in general," Ray Chambers said.

"People of today should understand what we're doing, but they don't care."

In Friday night's incident, Murray had obtained permission to go on to a block of land where the injured koala was located, but the owner's son-in-law became agitated,



'KICK IN THE GUTS': Ray, front, and Murray Chambers are angry after the theft of valuable items from their koala rescue vehicle. PHOTO: WARREN LYNAM

## What's your New Year's resolution?

NISSAN SUZUKI SUBARU VOLVO JEEP KIA HOLDEN FORD CHRYSLER GARRY CRICK



**GOOD RESULT:** Murray Chambers releases Leslie.

# Koalas' rescuers robbed, abused

## FROM FRONT PAGE

threatening to assault Murray and telling him to leave the koala to die.

The marsupial, named Mr T, eventually made it to Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital and placed in intensive care.

Dr Amber Gillett said he had suffered injuries consistent with trauma but no broken limbs.

"Without treatment, Mr T would have been in a lot of pain and if left untreated his condition could likely have deteriorated," she said.

Murray has yet to report the incident to police.

Ray said the rescue vehicle break-in was another kick in the guts.

Thieves made off with \$100 in donated fuel cards, \$50 in cash and a week-old global positioning system worth \$220.

"If they steal from us they're stealing from sick koalas," Ray said.

"If I can't save a koala because there is no fuel in the truck, that's a result of them."

Ray said two weeks prior, Schoolies revellers also attacked the rescue truck, kicking at the doors.

"The problem is today there is no discipline and no respect. I think it starts at school."

Vegan Warriors founder Jaylene Musgrave, the service's media manager, said she was disgusted by the theft and treatment of the men.

"What this says of the state of the human race we don't know," she said.

"What we do know is that now they have to start asking for donations to keep them saving our precious native animals into the new year at the very least."

In November, Ray copped more than \$500 in speeding fines while rushing koalas to the hospital. He recently received a public donation of \$460 to help pay the tickets.

Two of the koalas he was rescuing when he broke the speed limit died soon after.

The other, a five-year-old male named Chuckie, also died at the wildlife hospital last week.

The Chambers and Ms Musgrave hope to meet state shadow environment minister and Glasshouse MP Andrew Powell to discuss how they can gain the same emergency classification on the roads as paramedics, police and firefighters.