

Deaths a shock to town

THE deaths of four people in a car crash has devastated the small southern Queensland community of Tara, the town's mayor says.

Two men, aged 26 and 39, and two women, aged 43 and 44, died when their car hit a tree on Bennetts School Road, north of Tara, on Saturday.

A passing motorist alerted authorities when he came across the wreckage just after 8pm.

A 48-year-old man was also critically injured in the crash and has been flown by helicopter to a hospital in Brisbane.

Western Downs Mayor Ray Brown says the area is still recovering from the devastating floods that ripped through the district earlier this year.

"The community, we've had some ordeals over the past year, and we certainly didn't need this," he told AAP.

"When you lose four people from the district, it certainly is going to put an impact on the family themselves, but also on the very close-knit community."

- AAP



FIRST TIMERS: Amber and Paul McHugh welcome their gorgeous baby boy Max.

PHOTO: WARREN LYNAM

Max proves a labour of love for McHughs

HE took more than 24 hours of painful labour to enter the world.

But the moment Paul and Amber McHugh looked at Max Hayden, they knew they had fallen in love again.

Amber Werchon - well known for winning a string of real estate awards and then opening Amber Werchon Property - married Thompson McNichol law firm partner Paul McHugh at Sunshine Beach about two years ago.

The youngest member of the McHugh family arrived at 12.54pm on Friday, weighing 3.91kg (8lbs 10ozs).

Paul described the labour to welcome their son as a marathon following minor contractions early Thursday morning.

He said they became serious by lunch time but bub did not arrive until 24 hours later on Friday.

"It's hard work watching your wife go through that," he said.

"But he is perfect, gorgeous and he's just getting better by the hour."

"You could stare at him all day."

"We were both expecting a girl so it was a real surprise."

Neither believed they could love another human so much.

"Everyone says that when you talk to mothers but I don't think you truly appreciate it until you're in the moment," Amber said.

"He's an awesome little man, so cute, chubby and a good size."

"It's hard to believe he fitted in my stomach."

Max went three days overdue and was in a posterior position, meaning his spine was against his mother's spine.

"My plan and aim the whole time was to have a natural, drug-free labour," Amber said.

"But we got to the point where it just wasn't going to happen that way."

"The pain in my back was so excruciating and we had tried everything," she said.

"The next step was an epidural which was a hard to decision to make and then that didn't work either."

"So we had a caesarean in the end."

But the pain of delivery is quickly fading and the couple is already talking about the possibility of a brother or sister for Max.

The new family expects to return to their Alexandra Headland home on Wednesday.

- RAE WILSON

Katter's call not answer

By RAE WILSON

A CALL to name and shame pedophiles has been met with caution from child protection advocates, including Bruce Morcombe.

Federal North Queensland politician Bob Katter's Australian Party wants to adopt a new policy enabling it to tell parents where child sex offenders live.

Bruce Morcombe, who is in Palm Cove after a whirlwind trip to North Queensland for Child Protection Week, said he would rather see lengthier sentences for repeat offenders to deter them.

Bob Katter's party wants to name and shame pedophiles but child protection advocates are urging caution

"Naming and shaming may be helpful but it won't be the answer," he said.

"If the high profile pedophiles are named and shamed, people will think they are now safe, but unfortunately there are thousands of pedophiles running around that have never been caught before."

"They may be living down the street from you. The underbelly we don't know about, that are flying

under the radar, are more concerning than the ones we do."

Bravehearts counselling manager Leza Muza said the child protection organisation would prefer a comprehensive approach to offender management.

"That includes offender rehabilitation programs, GPS tracking, tighter sentencing, legislation for repeat offenders and personal safety education for children and the

community," she said.

"I think we would be reluctant to support the identification of all offenders. If you introduced a policy like that could result in the public taking the law into their own hands."

Lawyer Peter Boyce - who got a disturbing and unique insight into the world of child sex offending during the inquest into Daniel Morcombe's disappearance - said there

would need to be specific criteria if a naming policy was introduced.

He said repeat offending and the severity of offending should determine whether pedophiles kept their anonymity.

"Depending on the level of the conduct, the degree of severity, I think there are some details that should be disclosed so you know who's living in your area," he said.

"They shouldn't be afforded that protection we all have because it's a terrible crime."

"But if they're on the lesser end of the scale, you probably shouldn't brand them straight up."

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