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Stabbed

Help police find attackers

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Drug bust

Banana-shaped pills seized

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Towns remain focussed

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Court call on meth drivers

■ Jon Solmundson

A Geraldton magistrate has expressed alarm over the number of people caught driving under the influence of methamphetamines.

"I'm quite frankly fed up, and I'm sure the community is as well," Magistrate Donna Webb said yesterday. "There really needs to be a clear message sent that the court will not tolerate people taking am-

phetamines and putting other road users at risk."

Ms Webb made the comments when sentencing Sebastian Malcolm Brogden, 32, who had broken his bail conditions by testing positive for cannabis and methamphetamines.

He had also provided false urine samples for drug testing.

Ms Webb said Brogden was only given bail because she was greatly

moved by support from his family. "You mess up and that's it, I wouldn't bat an eye about sending you to jail," she said.

Brogden was faced with fines or community service, and elected to take fines to the sum of \$3500.

His driver's licence was also suspended for three months.

Mid West Gascoyne police Senior Sergeant Brad Bird played down the magistrate's comments,

and said people were getting a bit too "wound up" about meth.

"Whether it's cannabis, MDMA, speed or whatever, they're all bad," he said.

"What people need to realise is that drugs are drugs, and they all impair driving."

Sgt Bird said two-thirds of all drivers they tested on suspicion of using drugs came up positive, and of those 27 per cent were under the

influence of drugs at the time they were driving.

"So far in this financial year we've caught 160 people driving under the influence of drugs," he said.

In 2014 "driving with prescribed illicit drug in oral fluid or blood" charges resulted in 810 convictions in WA. That was up more than 50 per cent from 2013, which saw 539 convictions for drug driving.

Convenient truth behind Brickstory partnership

■ Jon Solmundson

City of Greater Geraldton mayor Shane van Styn wasn't afraid to get his hands dirty when construction of new toilet blocks began at Gleninning Park and Back Beach.

The project was revealed in January as part of the joint "Brickstory" initiative between WA Country Builders and the City of Greater Geraldton.

Brickstory took community input to decide which project WA Country Builders would build, with the new toilet blocks coming in as the most popular option, ahead of "Welcome to Geraldton" signs, shelters and seating at the Marina, and upgrades to the Community Nursery.

Construction of the toilet blocks is expected to be completed by the end of January.

Mayor Shane Van Styn said the newly designed facilities would meet current Australian standards and be universally accessible.

"The construction of the two toi-



City of Greater Geraldton mayor Shane Van Styn and WA Country Builders Mid West general manager Phil Raven lay the first brick of the new toilets.

let blocks is under way with the brick walls going up quickly," he said.

"The City is very pleased to partner with WA Country Builders, a local business through and through, in our new sponsorship

program that enables business and industry to sponsor or partner with the City to deliver projects and programs the community highly values."

WA Country Builders Mid West general manager Phil Raven said

his company had been in Geraldton for 21 years and wanted to give something back to the community.

"Brickstory is about giving back to the community by providing them with the facilities they want

most," he said. The project is part of the City's Everlasting Partnership program, with WA Country Builders becoming the first "diamond level" sponsor for investing more than \$60,000 in the City's initiatives.

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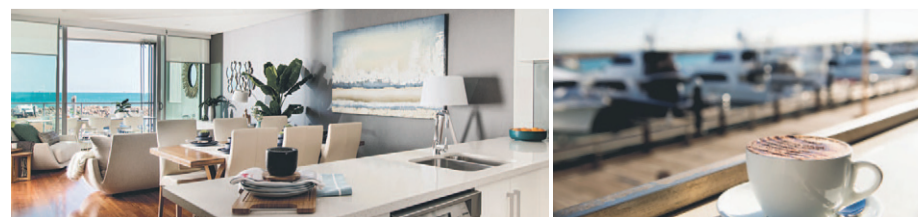


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