

# Owner reaches out to mate caught in Black Saturday

By NARELLE HIGGS

When Kevin Walker saw his friend on the news living out of a car after falling victim to the Victorian bushfires, he had to help.

The owner of Austrack Campers in Hervey Bay sent a letter to Marysville Post Office, knowing it had burned down, in hope of tracking down his friend Bob Gillespie.

"Kevin asked me: 'Will you live in a tent?' I said: 'It's a roof over my head,'" Mr Gillespie said.

"At this stage, it's home."

The memories for Mr Gillespie were still raw as he recalled February 7 this year, the day it rained fire.

"I left that town ablaze," he said, after escaping with only his dog, Girl.

"The roar of the fire was just death.

"You could smell it."

Mr Gillespie said he lost many close friends, with 40 from Marysville perishing.

"When you looked at the town, it looked like Hiroshima after the bombing.

"I try to keep my mind off it the best way I can."

Mr Gillespie was surprised he escaped alive, suffering an injury that left him with little feeling in his left arm.

"I left work when it was 48 degrees and left town when it was over 58 degrees before the fire had



Hervey Bay's Kevin Walker from Austrack Campers gave a free trailer to his mate, Victorian bushfire survivor from Marysville Bob Gillespie.

friend in Hervey Bay and collect his camper trailer.

Goodwill reached Mr Gillespie with a new car loaned for 12 months from Holden, his trailer from Austrack and tyres donated by Bob Jane T-Mart.

He also received \$7000 cash from the relief efforts nationally and internationally but said money could not replace what he had lost.

"I had hundreds of photographs that are gone, never ever to get back again."

Mr Gillespie had let his insurance lapse and said he was five days overdue in paying for his contents insurance.

"I lost all my tools, about \$35,000 worth."

reached," he said.

"The heat melted the lens on my camera."

Two weeks away from Victoria and the memories of that day enticed Mr Gillespie to visit his

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### SWITCH ON YOUR BRAND

# 150 DAYS

ON YOUR BIKE AND GET IT OFF!!

## Coupon clipping cut short for winner

By AVERYLL LOFT

Michelle Sauer was half-way through cutting out an entry form in the Chronicle's 150 Days bike giveaway last week when she spotted her name printed as a winner.

"I did a double take because it wasn't printed very big," she said. "I couldn't believe it - it was totally unexpected."

Picking up her new ride from the Chronicle office this week, Ms Sauer, a Maryborough resident, said she was looking forward to putting the mountain bike to use.

"I've only ever fallen off a bike once in my life and I've never owned a bike with gears. It should be a good learning experience," she laughed.

Ms Sauer said that over the years she and her late mother had become well-known around the city for getting around on their bikes. "Mum and I used to ride everywhere together."

The Chronicle still has 20 mountain bikes and two more BMX bikes to give away.

To be in the running for a mountain bike simply drop a completed coupon, printed daily, into a Chronicle office.

Youngsters are invited to write a letter, poem or drawing interpreting the Zero Harm policy for a chance to win a BMX.



Michelle Sauer is thrilled with her shiny new blue bike.

## Winner of bike No. 129: Jimi Houghton, Tinana

Your chance to **WIN 1 of 150 Bikes**

For your chance to WIN 1 of 150 Bikes over 150 days simply forward your completed entry form to 150 Days On Your Bike and Get It Off Promotion, PO Box 217 Hervey Bay QLD 4655 or in the entry box at either Chronicle office. You can enter as many times as you like but the entry form is only valid for 10 days from the publication date printed on the entry form.

Entries close at 5pm each business day and a winner drawn each Tuesday to Friday with 2 draws each. Prizes final entries close 5pm 1/7/09.

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**Chronicle**  
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### Win a BMX

The final two of Downer EDI Rail's six BMX bikes will be given away in a few weeks.

To win just write an interesting story, draw a picture or write a poem about how zero harm can play a part in cycling.

Include your age as this will be considered when selecting the winners.

Entries can be dropped into either Chronicle office before the end of June.