

Hilary Clinton to visit PNG

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, one of the world's most powerful women, will visit Papua New Guinea to highlight the importance of empowering women – in a country that has made little improvement in bridging its gender divide.

Ms Clinton is due to arrive in Port Moresby on Wednesday, November 3, for a flying visit to “stress the importance of empowering women”, the US State Department said.

Of particular interest to Ms Clinton is PNG's UN-supported ‘22-reserved seats’ proposition, designed to give every province a female representative.

Currently, PNG only has one woman in its 109-member parliament, Minister for Women and Community Development Dame Carol Kidu.

But Australian-born Dame Carol's push to get the 22 reserved seats bill passed has been an arduous challenge, failing on several attempts.

Ms Clinton's jam-packed four hours in PNG will see her meeting dignitaries and then women from the army, police, jails as well as business and professional women, survivors of sexual violence and women with disabilities.

Police Union attacks CMC

THE Queensland Police Union has accused the state's Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) of witch-hunting following the quashing of a case against two police officers.

Police Union president Ian Leavers, in a statement from Rockhampton, condemned the CMC for laying charges of attempting to pervert the course of justice against one serving and one retired police officer, only to have them thrown out in the District Court.

“Today's quashing of the CMC's charges against these police brings to a conclusion a sorry chapter in the CMC's history that culminated in the disgraceful inferences contained in the CMC's provocatively named Dangerous Liaisons report, stemming from the CMC's long-running and hugely-expensive Operation Capri,” Mr Leavers said.

“The recent not guilty verdict several months ago for a former police officer coupled with today's quashing of charges against these two people has demonstrated the CMC did not have one skerrick of evidence in relation to Operation Capri,” he said.

NQ constable stood down

QUEENSLAND police have stood down a 24-year-old male police constable for undisclosed reasons.

The constable, serving in North Queensland, was stood down from duty in relation to a number of allegations about his conduct both on and off duty, a statement said.

The allegations were being investigated and no further details were available.

Convicted paedophile allowed to look after children

Pervert outrage

A BURDEKIN man who walked free this week after being found not guilty of inappropriately touching a seven-year old is a convicted paedophile who had been chemically castrated.

A child protection advocacy group is outraged the child sex offender, who “played a tickling game” with the girl in which he touched her “boobies”, was allowed to look after children in the small Burdekin community.

An Ayr mother unwittingly let the 58-year-old man look after her daughter for the evening.

“Clearly this mother would not have let this man near her child if she knew his background,”

ROANNE JOHNSON



Bravehearts research manager Carol Ranken said.

“Because this type of behaviour he displayed is concerning – by gaining the girl's trust and getting close to her.”

The disabled pensioner, who was first jailed in Victoria about 20 years ago, was this week acquitted in the Townsville District Court of two counts of unlawful and indecent treatment of a child under 12.

He walked free after ad-

mitting in his trial that he inappropriately touched her chest twice, kissed her on the lips and said “I love you”.

His legal counsel argued the defendant was “a lonely old man” and his actions were “innocent and accidental” – which the jury accepted.

However, for the ex-prisoner to get a fair trial the jury did not know his history of sex offences against young girls.

Documents obtained by the *Townsville Bulletin* reveal the defendant had been convicted three times between 1986 and 1992 of offences involving female children as young as 10.

And during the child sex offender's incarceration he

was administered with injections for chemical castration.

Since his release from Fulham Correctional Centre protection unit in West Sale there are no records he has re-offended.

The man, who cannot be named under Queensland law, was allowed to look after the girl and her 10-year-old brother by their mother who attended a concert in Townsville on April 17, 2009.

In the woman's evidence she said the neighbour had come to her house frequently before the incident.

“We used to go fishing and I would take him into town and give him lifts home,” she said. The evening she

asked him to babysit was the first time and after that night the family fled the neighbourhood.

Bravehearts said the situation could have been avoided if police had some way of legally notifying neighbours that a convicted offender was living in their street.

“It is really concerning that we don't have a way of letting communities know about a paedophile's release back into the community,” Ms Ranken said.

“We don't support a public sex offender registry as they tend to go underground – but we do support the release of limited information to inform people personally affected.”



SPARRING PARTNERS . . . Camp Quality's Mark McGregor and The Cure Starts Now's Ren Pedersen shape up for the match

Going the biff a tactic to support charity

YOU could have knocked Mark McGregor down with a feather when he was asked to star in a charity boxing stoush but, armed with bubble wrap, he is now ready to take on his opponent Rampaging Ren Pedersen.

The Camp Quality and The Cure Starts Now charity stalwarts will go the biff at Jupiters next weekend on the undercard of Jamie Myer's King/Orlate Australian Jr Welterweight Boxing Title, which will be screened nationally on Fox Sports 3.

There has been much trash

talking floating back and forward between the pair but word on the street is they're both big softies who are doing it for the kids.

Mr McGregor said he would employ a variety of tactics to defeat the wily Mr Pedersen.

“When the match is finished the kids can help pop the bubble wrap that I'm going to be wearing to protect myself. I think if I wear a motorbike helmet as well that would be pretty good as he'll only be able to step on my toes,” Mr McGregor said.

“Even if I end up with a split face, on my back knocked out cold, this

still couldn't compare with what our Camp Quality kids and their families go through.”

Mr Pedersen said even though the bout was for a good cause, he would be showing no mercy in the ring.

“The biggest advantage I'll have is it'll be like trying to hit the side of the house as I have a big target,” Mr Pedersen said.

“We're just hoping Mark will turn up on the night. When I first mentioned this concept to him the line went dead and all I heard was a little squeak so we've called him Mark the Mouse.

“We raise awareness about a particular type of children's brain cancer, brain stem glioma, which I lost my daughter to last year. If you've ever looked into the eyes of a child who is about to be wheeled into brain surgery, you would know what I'm about to do is really just nothing.”

To make a donation visit www.thecurestartsnow.org and go to the Australian chapter page or call Camp Quality on 4723 2250 with all donations tax deductible.

Tickets to the November 5 bout can be purchased at Jupiters.

— EMILY MACDONALD