



GRAND DESIGNS: The award-winning Viridian Resort and Spa on Noosa Hill.

PHOTO: GEOFF POTTER

# Sustainability catches eye at building awards

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TWO young industry beacons and the environment were among the big winners at the Sunshine Coast building industry's night of nights.

Fourth year apprentice Elijah Henebery had his name added to those blazoned in lights at the 2010 Master Builders Housing and Construction Awards on Saturday night.

Mr Henebery, house builder Daniel Pignat and "sustainability" were among those to receive top honours in front of 400 people at the Novotel Twin Waters Resort.

Mr Henebery, from Acclaim Apprentices and Trainees, was named the 2010 Sunshine Coast Regional Apprentice of the Year.

The award cements the Coast tiler's emergence into

the building industry after he received a bronze medal at the World Skills Australia 2010 National Titles in May.

Coastal Modern Living builder Daniel Pignat's dual gongs for the Rising Star Award and President's Award were a welcome return for the previous winner.

Mr Pignat's works of art on the Sunshine Coast first caught the eye of judges in 2007, and again in 2009.

His Ballinese-inspired two-bedroom house at Eumundi was named the 2010 winner of the Rising Star Award, the builder of the home for most exceptional value under \$400,000.

It is the second time Mr Pignat has won the award, his first in 2007.

The President's Award went to Mr Pignat's business Coastal Modern Living.

The Women in Building Award was presented to



**WIN: Mick and Sally Devlin of Braeden Constructions.**

Acclaim Apprentices and Trainees company secretary Wendy Grieve.

Acclaim Apprentices and Trainees won the 2010 Sunshine Coast Regional Apprentice Employer of the Year award.

The business that has been in operation since 1984 has more than 400 young

apprentices and trainees under its care.

Braeden Constructions won the coveted title House Of The Year for the second consecutive year.

Master Builders Sunshine Coast regional manager, Stephen Robinson, said the judges were extremely impressed with the breadth and scope of the magnificent home built on the slopes of Cooroy Mountain.

The final major award for the evening went to Matrix Projects for the Viridian Resort and Spa on Noosa Hill

The \$300 million, five-star resort complex features 39 luxury two-and-three storey villas, 139 units, 16 penthouses, a health spa, restaurant and a central facilities complex servicing 11 multi-storey blocks.

Mr Robinson said Viridian Resort was "a triumph" for the Coast due to the difficult

site, substantial environmental issues and the need to adhere to strict building conditions.

He said a sustainability principal was noticed in the majority of category entries this year.

"From the lower end to the top end, a lot of houses and projects were focused on sustainability from aspect and orientation, water collection systems, waste minimisation to the use of materials with low toxicity.

"These awards are the one time of the year where the building industry gets together to recognise some fantastic achievements with friends and family, and clients."

The 47 other winners will feature in a special Master Builders 2010 Housing and Construction Awards lift-out in the Sunshine Coast Sunday on August 1.

## Lawyer urges Hicks to fight terrorism conviction



**LEGAL FIGHT: David Hicks.**

FORMER Guantanamo Bay inmate David Hicks should go ahead and have his name cleared of any terrorism links, because he was never in breach of the law in Australia or abroad, his former lawyer says.

Adelaide-born Mr Hicks was held at the US military detention centre in Cuba for more than five years after he was captured in Afghanistan in December 2001.

He pleaded guilty at a US military commission hearing in 2007 to providing material support to terrorism.

Under a plea bargain, he was sentenced to seven years' jail but ordered to serve only nine months, with the rest of his sentence suspended.

He returned to Australia and was released from jail in December 2007.

Questions have been raised about the conditions under

which Mr Hicks signed his 2007 confession.

"It has always been my position that he never committed any crime," his former lawyer, Adelaide-based Steve Kenny, said yesterday.

"We looked at Australian law, international law (and) Afghani law, and we were unable to identify any breach of those laws.

"The law that he eventually pleaded guilty to was not ac-

tually an international war crime at all. In fact, it was a crime that didn't exist."

Now 35, Mr Hicks lives in Sydney following his marriage last August.

He has recently sought legal advice to have his terrorism conviction quashed, it was reported yesterday.

He may also appeal to US President Barack Obama for a pardon.

- AAP

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Over the edge

A MOTORCYCLIST escaped with minor injuries after running off a small cliff at Maleny yesterday. Emergency services responded to the call on the Maleny-Stanley River Road about 11.30am. A Department of Community Safety spokeswoman said the man was able to climb back up the cliff and walk to the road to get help. He was taken to Caboolture Hospital in a stable condition.

### Murder charge

A 27-YEAR-OLD man has been charged with the murder of a woman in north-west Queensland. The woman and the man were taken to hospital on July 13 after falling ill while "socialising" at a Mornington Island home in the Gulf of Carpentaria the night before, police said. The man was later released from hospital but the 19-year-old woman's condition deteriorated and she was flown to the Mount Isa Base Hospital, where she later died. - AAP

### Body recovered

THE body of a 27-year-old Irish backpacker has been recovered from a billabong near Kakadu National Park. Northern Territory Police said they received a report just after 7pm Saturday that a man had gone for a swim in the Malanbanjbanjdju Billabong and failed to surface. The man was travelling with about 20 other backpackers, but police believe he was the only one in the group who went swimming. - AAP

### Passenger killed

A 20-YEAR-OLD man was killed when the car he was a rear seat passenger in hit a tree at Byron Bay, police say. The male driver, 26, and another male passenger, 24, were taken to Tweed Heads Hospital with non-life threatening injuries. Police said the driver lost control of the car turning off Bangalow Road and hit the tree about 3.15am Saturday. - AAP

### Suspicious death

NORTHERN Territory police are investigating the death of a man whose body was found in Alice Springs on Saturday. Police are treating the death of the 57-year-old Aboriginal man as suspicious. An autopsy will be conducted tomorrow to determine the cause of death. - AAP