

In your Weekend Bulletin



'You've got no job. You've got no income. You've got no food. It's a domino effect and it's not going to be pretty'

Dwayne Grant looks into the social tsunami heading our way



CAN-DO BUDGIE SMUGGLERS

Meet the vice president of the Broadbeach SLSC



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OSCAR SPECIAL

The winners and losers ahead of Hollywood's night of nights



Floodwater has washed away the rear of the property in Martingale Circuit, Clear Island Waters.

Photos: MIKE BATTERHAM

Slip sliding away

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THIS is the back yard of the home Meyjitte Boughenout almost bought six months ago.

The Clear Island Waters resident is now thankful the owner of the home he is renting refused his offer.

As wild weather lashed the Gold Coast on the Australia Day long weekend Mr Boughenout said he was forced to watch in horror as the backyard of his Martingale Circuit home was swallowed up by the Clear Island Waters Lake.

"At first I didn't realise the dam-

age it had caused, but then one morning I woke up and realised that the big tree we had out the back of our home was gone," he said. "We had at least two-and-a-half metres of grass behind our pool that got completely washed away."

However Mr Boughenout said the damage was minor compared to that of his neighbours.

"Our neighbour was the worst affected and he owns that house, so he is horrified," he said.

"It's not just his yard that is gone, but his whole house is at risk of collapsing ... I've never seen anything like it."

Despite the stress the situation was causing, Mr Boughenout said he was relieved he had not bought the home. "If the owner had accepted our offer six months ago we would now be faced with having to fix this," he said.

Owner of Mr Boughenout's home, Ross Pizarro, said the damage caused by the rising lake had led to a blame game between owners and the Gold Coast City Council.

"The houses are falling into the river and they are not doing a thing about it," he said.

"They've told us that it is our responsibility to fix it but when we

decided to go ahead and try to fix it, they gave us all of these rules and regulations and wouldn't allow us to fix it without engineering reports.

"It's going to cost us thousands of dollars that we just don't have."

Mr Pizarro said he had owned the home for seven years and had never had any problems until now.

"My block is less damaged than the others but if it isn't fixed soon I will lose my pool and house and then we will be in real trouble."

Mr Pizarro said it was concerning the council was not trying harder to help affected residents.

"This is canal living and it's very

important to the Gold Coast, so we would think they would be handling it completely differently to how they are handling it," he said.

"So many people live on canals but if the houses are starting to fall into the canals then something is obviously being done wrong."

Mayor Tom Tate last night said he was working through the situation with homeowners.

"Clearly, owners are responsible for their own properties. But I am working with Cr La Castro to see how the city can help without setting a precedent. I am confident a solution can be found," he said.



Resident Meyjitte Boughenout surveys the damage within touching distance of his back door. Right: The deck of another house is threatened by the erosion.

