

Nats are courting Labor: Schultz P3



Accident prompts safety calls P4



For the love of Matt

Community rallies for grieving family

By TOM SEBO

TO his parents he was the perfect son; to his three sisters he was a loving and supportive brother; and to his mates he was a constant source of inspiration and fun.

Matthew Pugh lived his life to the fullest. He worked hard, studied hard and partied hard. His motto was simple: You should reward yourself on the weekend.

He was a jetsetter and by age 30 had seen more of the world than most people ever will, travelling to South East Asia, Europe, North America, the Middle East, New Zealand and the Caribbean.

However, his life was cut short 12 days ago after an accident in the Greek Isles.

Matt was holidaying with some close friends when he fell from the first floor balcony of his Santorini apartment.

His tragic passing has left the local community in a state of grief but, in a strange way, also brought it closer together. A grass roots social media campaign has raised more than \$40,000 for the family to help with funeral and other costs.

Matt's family say they've been overwhelmed by the support they've received. When news of his death was posted on social networking site, Facebook, there was an outpouring of tributes.

The fundraising started as an effort to bring home one of Matt's best friends, Robbie Allen, now living in Canada. Robbie wanted to come home for the funeral but didn't have enough money for the airfare.

So, two of his other friends, Duncan Matthews and Heath Dennelly, started a Facebook group, asking people to donate what they could to help purchase the tickets. The response was overwhelming.



LOVED LIFE: Goulburn man, Matthew Pugh, 30, was holidaying in the Greek Islands when he lost his life following a fall from a balcony. This photo was taken the day before the June 13 accident.

Within 24 hours they had well and truly surpassed the amount needed and the boys began raising money for Matt's family, to help cover funeral costs. Today, the group has more than 5000 members and has raised over \$40,000.

"We want to thank everyone who has shown their support. We truly appreciate it," his mother, Elaine, said.

The family has been put under immense stress in the past few days. Not only have they had to deal with the loss of their son but also the bureaucratic process to bring him home. However, community support has helped them through.

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