

Does Death It Take?

It would be good if undacuvva pulled his/her head in and got over the tongue-in-cheek poking, and offered something more positive to our local paper.

Stewing cynicism in the guise of humour doesn't work for me.

Benny Zable has been a completely tireless campaigner all his adult life on behalf of all of us and our future generations – against the selfish and destructive practices of multi-national corporations. Yet the author chooses to denigrate, make fun of and belittle this man – who is honoured and recognized as the champion he is, in America – more than he is in his own hometown of Nimbin in Australia.

I do not feel that it is good for a community paper to support such views. Shame on your lack of respect.

Tall poppy syndrome strikes again. We DO have trouble honoring those that dare to stand up against oppression and injustice – even here in so-called 'alternative Nimbin'....

Let it not be death that stirs one to speak honourably about others. Let us do it sooner – rather than later....

Binnah Pownall

Just an observation...

In the same week council voted to dismantle the SK8 park with little more than mayoral speak on some local radio, the same council came out fighting in opposition to the Comms Tower erected in the village.

In the days and weeks after, I have never seen so much public support by council for the wishes of the Nimbin community. But what about the Sk8 park? I suppose the local kids can always travel to Goonellabah...

Perfect use of spin and media manipulation by the elected representatives; Warnie would be chuffed.

Maybe it's all the short term memory loss...

Just a thought.

Dave Hood

Parent of a young SK8R

Rights sold to highest bidder

It would seem to me that all the spin associated with the rally has had its desired result, at least for the moment anyway.

Yes, I do oppose the rally for a multitude of reasons, beyond which, at the moment, is everyone's right to choose. Whether you are for or against a rally, don't let the bigger picture pass you by. Our Rights, Freedoms,



Values, Environment, Heritage and more being sold to the highest bidder to further enrage the wallets of a few.

This chase for money with disregard to others is at the core of the problems we face on our Earth daily. Let's really think it through.

See you at the protest to oppose a rally, to stand up for our future and the need/desire to change our 200-year old way of thought.

Paul Ryder
Uki

Koalas Crossing

Who were the two Repco Rally Australia representatives who were on the Capeen Road (Kyogle Shire) section of the rally routes recently and who saw for themselves, a koala crossing the road in the middle of the day?

Wendy Sibley
Kyogle

Crash mentality

Today I went to the video shop and whilst browsing saw a DVD entitled 'FIA World Rally Championships: Crashes', with a duration of 150 minutes.

The blurb on the back cover goes on to say, "In the WRC you should expect the unexpected. When you or I drive a car, one for the worst thing that happens to us is to be involved in any type of crash. For a rally driver though, crashing is almost

as much part of the job as driving the perfect stage."

This is not the kind of propaganda that the Repco rally organisers have been publicly promoting, in fact they have been claiming the exact opposite, that it is a 'safe' event.

I left the DVD on the shelf, praying that the next edition won't feature a rally car crashing into my vehicle whilst en route to Mullumbimby hospital with my heavily pregnant wife who is due to give birth on the 6th September.

Andy Gough
Larnook

St. Mark's Church

On behalf of the congregation of St Mark's Anglican Church, I would like to extend an invitation to all past, present and future parishioners to attend the National Anglican Church's 'Back to Church Sunday' on 13th September at 10am at St Mark's Church, Nimbin.

I also invite you to attend our Centenary BBQ Lunch at noon, followed by a Centenary Service at 2pm, on Saturday 19th September.

The church will be open to the public so that they can enjoy a display of our history from 13th to 19th September between 11am and 3pm.

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In the village, fully-furnished, large double bedroom, must like animals, and be an honest person. Short term, \$95 pw. Phone 6689-1150.

Ticks Wanted

Adult unengorged female paralysis ticks. \$2 each. Deliver to Lismore Vet Clinic 20 Uralba Street Lismore. Phone 6622-0033.

Womens Health Service

Women's health service has started up again on the 3rd Thursday of each month, next one 17th September. Appointments can be made at Nimbin Hospital 6689-1400 or 6689-1288.

Childhood Immunisation Clinic

Nimbin Childhood Immunisation Clinic at Nimbin Hospital. Birth to 5 years. Next one 8th September. Call Lismore Community Health 6620-7687 for appointment.

AGM

Nimbin Health & Welfare Association Annual General Meeting 11th October, 2009. Old Hospital meeting Room, 3pm. New members welcome. Enquiries Helen 6689-1288.

Tunable Folk Cafe

Friday 12th September for a night of great food and excellent music. All acoustic musicians welcome – starts around five. Bring the family along!

Wanted: 'Grandparents' to share time & smiles!

We are looking for mature age volunteers to help provide company and comfort to children in day care in the Lismore area. Read to youngsters, listen to their stories, join in their play. You will be greatly appreciated! For more info, call Jeanette at Volunteering Northern Rivers on 6621-7397.

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Simon says...



by **Simon Clough**
Lismore City Councillor

Wow, what did Nimbin do to attract the "Tower"! (to use the very tired New Age rhetoric). Or to use the universal catchcry of the Y Generation, "What were they thinking!!!"

Anyway, I am assured that it will be taken down and stored while a new unobtrusive and safer site is found. All this is to happen within two weeks. It's heartening to see the Nimbin community and Council working together (the Council's condemnation of the tower's location was unanimous except for Cr. Graham Meineke). It was also reassuring to see the local Police keen to find a solution to what was obviously a public relations disaster.

The Nimbin Skate Park is back on Council's agenda. The Commonwealth Government has offered Council \$449,000 for capital works projects. The guidelines have not been released yet, but it is presumed they will require that the money is spent quickly on projects of community significance.

There is strong support amongst Councillors for a new concrete skate park to be located in Peace Park. This proposal should overcome the problems with the existing facility. However there are a number of Councillors who want the funds to be spent instead on a water park to replace the Lismore Lake Pool.

The water park needs extensive community consultation which will put it out of the timeframe for the expenditure. So if you want the new skate park now's a good time to talk to the

Councillors (phone numbers are on the website or are available from Council).

The last Council meeting was the first when there was not a single motion from Councillors, except for the Mayoral Minute on the tower – are Councillors running out of ideas?

News from Council financial reports was not good. Council's Northern Rivers Quarry and Asphalt lost \$662,500 when a surplus of \$511,800 was anticipated a variation of \$1.174m for last financial year. In addition, the anticipated income from Council's Goonellabah Sport and Recreation Centre was \$233,500 under budget.

These results have strengthened the need for a full budget review of Council's activities which should be completed by December this year.

On a more positive note the Lismore Promotion Program for Lismore's CBD was unanimously approved. This plan developed by the new City Centre Manager Stephen Nelson will see a significant improvement with a move away from a "scatter gun" events focus to one that looks strategically at the revitalisation of the heart of the city.

Stephen is proposing moving the organic markets and bringing quality music and performance into the CBD. The Lantern Parade, with additional activities, is likely to become the city's signature event.

Another cause for Optimism and a great step forward for the whole Lismore community has been the acquisition of the Winsome Hotel by the Soup Kitchen as accommodation for Lismore's homeless. There have been tireless efforts on the part of the homeless accommodation committee over the last four years to achieve this fantastic result. It is a privilege to be a part of a community which is taking the plight of the homeless so seriously.



by **Jenny Dowell**
Mayor of Lismore

Jenny.Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au

Police Communications Tower

The NSW Police communications tower, erected on July 28, came as a huge shock to both Council and the community.

Fortunately it soon became clear that proper process had not been followed, and it was agreed that the tower should be dismantled as soon as a crew was available to do so and stored until a more agreeable location is found.

Skatepark

The bad news about the current skatepark not meeting noise requirements was met with mixed reactions from the community. Some people have been thankful, others relieved, resigned or angry.

Whatever the response, I am committed to finding a solution preferably with a concrete facility somewhere in Peace Park. There is the possibility of using part of the latest allocation of Federal funds but it will need a DA and strong community and Councillor support.

The allocation of the funds will be the subject of a report to Council at the meeting of September 8. Some Councillors favour a water park on the Lismore Lake pool site so we need to hear Nimbin views about the importance of a skatepark for the community's youth.

I met with the young skaters of Nimbin on Sunday August 23 to hear their views and was highly impressed by their maturity

From the Mayor's desk

and the clarity with which they expressed their opinions. I have passed on their questions to staff and await responses.

Quarterly Budget Review

At the August meeting, Council was shocked to find that the Quarry operations, a business unit of Council that should be generating funds, ended the year with a \$662,500 deficit. This together with \$282,000 less than expected revenue from GSAC was bad news.

Fortunately there had been savings in several other areas so the budget result was a deficit of \$139,300 because a larger buffer had previously been established. The end-of-year result was an surplus of \$559,800.

Budget Review

Council has requested the General Manager, the two Executive Directors and the Manager of Finance to commence a full budget review based on a modified zero budget model.

The group will start with a zero dollar figure and add those inevitable and statutory costs before an analysis of the remainder across all Council departments. Councillors will then be involved to determine where cuts are possible.

Special Rate Variation

At the meeting staff were also asked to prepare a report for the December meeting seeking endorsement to apply to the Minister for Local government for a Special rate Variation for 2010/11

A special rate increase could be considered for the Margaret Olley Art Centre, our roads or environmental works. If Council decides in December to proceed, there will be comprehensive community consultation and engagement.

Hannah Cabinet

On August 4, I had the honour of being present for

the Governor's unveiling of The Hannah Cabinet, the third major work by Lismore furniture maestro Geoff Hannah.

As the silk sheet slipped away there were audible gasps from the guests and many tears of wonder at the superb craftsmanship in this magnificent work that took 6 ½ years to complete. The cabinet measures 8'x8', has 140 drawers and 18 doors and is inlaid with wood, stone and shell veneers

The broader community will be able to see the piece doors when it goes on display at Lismore Regional Gallery on September 11.

Don't miss it.

Living Library

Nimbin and the Aged Care and respite services feature prominently in the Living Libraries in Action film that will be used to explain and promote Living Libraries throughout Australia and beyond. You can watch the video on www.livinglibraries.org.au and see people you know.

Cultural Precinct

Councillors met for the whole day on Friday August 14 to review the Master Plan for Lismore's Cultural Precinct and the proposed Olley Arts Centre.

After robust discussion and consideration of several options, Councillors and staff reached an agreement for a preferred site. The next step involved asking architects to come up with a design for Council consideration.

Nimbin Visitor Information Centre

Happy 2nd Birthday to the Nimbin VIC! Its hard to imagine Nimbin without Andrew, and the others who provide such a great and enthusiastic service to the thousands of visitors and locals who visit the VIC each week.

September in Lismore

Lismore will be buzzing in September with CrikFest, Masters Games, Women Bowls Carnival and Lismore Cup as well as the finals of many winter sports competitions.

We are all hoping for fine weather and the opportunity to offer warm Lismore hospitality to all the visitors in town this month.

Workshops and Meetings

Lismore Council's draft meeting schedule for the coming month is:

- September 8 – Council meeting
- September 29 – 1pm start- Four year Delivery Plan

It is recommended that readers check this information in the NR Echo each week as the schedule may change. Unless listed as otherwise, meetings and workshops begin at 6 pm and are held at Council Chambers in Oliver Avenue Goonellabah.

To discuss any Council issue, please contact me by email: Jenny.Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au or by phone: 0402-651-394.

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Janelle's Page

Janelle and Kevin Rudd talking to construction workers Scott Bennett and John King on the site of the new Integrated Cancer Care unit at Lismore Base Hospital.

by Janelle Saffin, MP

Our local health issues received attention of the highest level when Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, Health Minister Nicola Roxon and the Minister for Ageing, Justine Elliott conducted a health forum in Lismore on August 24.

Following the recommendations of the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission, the Rudd Government is consulting with the health sector and the public about making some of the biggest reforms to health care since the introduction of Medicare.

I asked Kevin if he could do a consultation in Page and I was pleased to be able to get this attention for our area. The forum was attended by community leaders and health sector representatives from across the electorate.

While in Lismore the Prime

Member for Page
63 Molesworth Street
Lismore
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Minister also announced \$8.3 million for Lismore Base Hospital to establish an 8-bed Medical Assessment Unit, to take pressure off the Emergency Department.

Health reform is of great importance locally, because research shows that people in regional areas are not getting a fair share of the health dollar, compared to those in metropolitan areas.

Not surprisingly, this can result in poorer health outcomes for people in rural and regional areas, and this is one of the issues we can start to address by having this national conversation on health system reform.

The consultations being held across the country are looking into the Health Reform Commission's

recommended options for reforming hospitals and health care. If you would like a copy of these recommendations, and would like to comment on them please contact my office on 66219909 or email Janelle.saffin.mp@aph.gov.au.

Telstra fees

When I received my latest Telstra bill I was appalled, like the rest of you, to find that Telstra is going to impose a penalty on those of us who want to pay our bill in person over the counter, or by mail.

I have written to the new CEO of Telstra, David Thodey, calling on him to immediately withdraw the planned new charge, which I consider to be an unfair penalty on those who can't or don't want to pay electronically or by direct debit.

While the \$2.20 penalty may not seem much to some people, for those on low and modest incomes every dollar counts. The new charge is particularly mean in the light of Telstra's announcement of an annual profit of more than \$4 billion.

There is a clear opportunity here for the new CEO of Telstra, David Thodey to demonstrate he is genuine about improving customer relations by getting rid of this unfair billing charge. I will be speaking on this issue in the next sitting of Parliament.

Janelle.

Supporting Community Volunteers

by Justine Elliot, MP

\$21 million will be distributed across Australia in the 2009 round of volunteer grants, supporting more than 7000 organisations and 900,000 volunteers. I encourage non-profit organisations, supported by volunteers, to apply for Australian Government grants of up to \$5,000 to purchase equipment and cover the cost of petrol.

The Rudd Government values the enormous contribution volunteers make in our community and this funding will ease the financial pressure on non-profit organisations and volunteers. Organisations will receive grants of between \$1,000 and \$5,000 to purchase equipment, including computers, tools and air conditioners and also help with fuel costs.

Earlier this year 7,200 organisations received funding to help purchase equipment such as first aid kits, fridges, barbecues, computers and software. The funding has also helped thousands of volunteers cover fuel costs incurred while helping others in the community. These grants are a great way for the government to recognise and directly support volunteers who selflessly give up their time to help people in need.

Applications are open until 25th September 2009. For more information on the 2009 Volunteer Grants program including an online application form, visit www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/disability/funding/Pages/volunteer_grant09.aspx

More than \$16.2 Million for local Primary Schools

Fifteen primary schools in the Richmond electorate will receive \$16,278,000 for major new infrastructure projects under the third and final round of Primary Schools for the 21st Century (P21).

The Rudd Government is undertaking the largest school modernisation program in Australia's history to support local jobs. This investment in our local primary schools is long overdue and will go a long way to supporting local jobs during the global recession.

Teachers and students in our local schools should be teaching and learning in 21st Century facilities. It's been great to see local principals, school communities and the building industry working together with the State and Federal governments to deliver these important projects.

P21 Round Three projects will start as soon as possible, to provide immediate support for jobs. The \$14.1 billion will deliver much needed funding for major infrastructure projects, including libraries, multi-purpose halls and classrooms.

Successful schools in Round Three include:

- Aetaomah School Terragon - \$250,000
- Clunes Public School - \$850,000
- Dunoon Public School - \$850,000
- Goolmangar Public School - \$301,000
- Newrybar Public School - \$250,000

Member for Richmond
107 Minjungbal Drive
Tweed Heads South
Phone 1300-720-675

- Nimbin Central School - \$850,000
- Rainbow Ridge School Lillian Rock - \$850,000

Building the Education Revolution is a key element of the Rudd Government's \$42 billion Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan to support jobs, stimulate local economies and invest in important infrastructure for the long term.

By combining the development of a new truly national curriculum, greater transparency, a renewed focus on literacy and numeracy and record investment in school infrastructure and quality teachers, the Rudd Government is delivering an Education Revolution to all our schools.

A full list of successful schools and their planned projects are available at: www.buildingtheeducationrevolution.gov.au or at: www.economicstimulusplan.gov.au

National Seniors Australia – Promoting Productive Ageing Online

As the Minister for Ageing, I recently officially launched two online tools developed by National Seniors Australia to help recognise and promote productive ageing in Australia.

The new internet tools are from the research arm of National Seniors Australia and the National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre - a joint initiative of National Seniors Australia and the Australian Government - and they are:

- The Productive Ageing Centre website - www.productiveageing.com.au - which provides users with research, education and information; and
- The Atlas of Productive Ageing, located at www.productiveageing.publichealth.gov.au that allows users to find regional information on five broad indicators of productive ageing - activity, health, finance, housing and population.

In less than 50 years the number of people aged 65 and over is expected to triple from 3 million to 9 million, but our ageing population brings with it opportunities and benefits, not just challenges.

The Government is pursuing broader action to encourage positive and active ageing through initiatives and activities involving Australia's first Ambassador for Ageing, Noeline Brown.

Noeline's role also includes the promotion and recognition of the contributions that have been made, and continue to be made, by older Australians.

Need Help?

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Justine.

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NIMBIN STREET SHUFFLE

by Undacuvva

Of course I was posted to watch the Polite rabble hippies with their giant inflatable joint when it headed out of town. Earlier in the day the NTDAS, (Nationwide Total Drama Alarm Signal) had gone off incessantly, apparently triggered by the words "blow up the joint".

The PM himself was irresistibly drawn to the giant balloon and his security team had to physically restrain him from walking over to the Polites as they battled with their balloon in the gusty winds around the hospital entrance. The media monitor minds were terrified he'd be photographed with the thing. Only when the hippies finally pricked their giant balloon on the hospital No Smoking sign did he get in the car and leave.

It happened like this. The first time the minders signalled he was ready to depart, the message got relayed to security out the front where the Big Joint cockatoo cheerleader, a hempster dressed like a Texan marching girl (Kevin was calling her Hiawatas) was watching the security guy like a hawk. As soon as he talked into his wristband she gave the thumbs up to the Joint team across the road who immediately leapt to their feet, trying to hold afloat the giant balloon in the blustery wind.

Kevin was watching it all through a window, and he loved the show so much he made us do four false starts. The hippies in their hot Polite overalls were leaping up and down at each signal until finally they hit the sign and pricked their big balloon. It was like real life pinball for Kevin.



The clue for the hippies law reform campaign was in the wording on the sign that did the damage, he said, adding, "smoking is sooo last century".

Immediately after saying this he made a joke about wishing the 'Nimbin People' had done the catering. Was it a coincidence?

The editor of *The GoodTimes* sent me a message via the Boss this week. Apparently he got an abusive phone call about Undacuvva not printing their real name. Of course the editor has no idea who I am, so no good phoning him.

This is therapy really, this column, and I'm ever grateful to the Boss for allowing it. I've been feeling extremely guilty about busting the young lads and at least this column is a bit of a warning for them. Of course I can't tell you who I am, that's the whole point of being Unda.

Anyway the Boss made me change my sex, and name, again. "Ya can't be too careful Annie," he said, which is the name of a German backpacker I played two years ago. Even he can't keep up with who I am.

That the toothless lunatic reference upset some readers last month was a surprise

though. Like the Indian gurus, I always thought obviously missing teeth was a sign of great wisdom, "beyond the ego" as you hippies would say. Aboriginal rituals knew that too and did it deliberately. It's just one of the things I love about you poor ferals, your missing teeth, a real sign of honesty in a world of perfect plastic white picket fences.

Now the Tower is coming down, you probably think you've won the war I suppose, but don't get carried away, not yet anyway. It will be re-sited with Towcom beneath it again and everything will be fully functional by Christmas, by which time we expect the bush to have run out and stress levels will be peaking. Then we go in for the kill says the manual, but we are already arguing about it, of course.

Where will we get sent after Nimbin? Will there be good bush weed there? Nowhere is a patch on this scene... I mean there's real danger out there, and for not much pay. Biggest drama here is mistaking mugwort for weed and losing a chunk of the Undakitty.

I can tell you one thing about the Tower stuff-up. It



was nothing to do with the Boss, we didn't even know it was coming when it did. It's one thing we have in common with everyone in Nimbin, Sydney treat us like a fish and chip wrapper.

Not so with the contract to pull the Tower down however, it's another big embarrassment for the Boss. There was a sense of urgency about it all, and nobody bothered to find out who exactly NLB was before the contract was signed. Their quote was easily the best received, and promised the entire Tower and fence would be down in 24 hours. They had multiple local references for being 'fast and efficient at removing any structure.'

Dibs are in for the fence and a Well Known Tourist Attraction looks like getting it.

Study finds no link between cannabis and schizophrenia

A new study has cast doubt on previous research that suggested cannabis use increases the risk of being diagnosed with either psychosis or schizophrenia.

The study, led by Dr Martin Frisher of Keele University in the UK, examined the records of 600,000 patients aged between 16 and 44, but failed to find a similar link.

Frisher and colleagues compared the trends of cannabis use with general practitioner records of schizophrenia and psychosis.

They argue if cannabis use does cause

schizophrenia, then an increase in cannabis use should be followed by an increase in the incidence of schizophrenia.

According to the study, cannabis use in the UK between 1972 and 2002 has increased four-fold in the general population, and 18-fold among under-18s.

Based on the literature supporting the link, the authors argue that this should be followed by an increase in schizophrenia incidence of 29 per cent between 1990 and 2010.

But the researchers found no increase in

the rates of schizophrenia and psychosis diagnosis during that period. In fact, some of the data suggested the incidence of these conditions had decreased.

"This study does not therefore support the specific causal link between cannabis use and the incidence of psychotic disorders," the authors say.

"This concurs with other reports indicating that increases in population cannabis use have not been followed by increases in psychotic incidence."

Source: AAP, ABC News

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Big Joint to light up law reform in Sydney

The Big Joint had an eventful outing to the Lismore Hospital when PM Rudd visited recently on his health rescue mission across the country. AAP had written a story that was printed across the nation that morning, 'Lobbyists to ambush Rudd with giant joint.' And the giant inflatable didn't let them down, dancing majestically in the sharp breeze until it pricked itself on the hospitals "smoke free" sign.

"Isn't all drug use a health issue?" asked a Polite spokesperson. "We are as determined as ever to keep cannabis law reform on the agenda. The PM needs to pull this issue out from the bottom of the too-hard basket.

Just this month Mexico and Argentina joined the growing list of countries allowing personal amounts of previously illegal drugs. The reasons they gave...to counteract prison overcrowding, an increase in organised crime and rampant drug violence' are a clear warning to us. There is also a new report out about Portugal, decriminalised since 1996, having less problems and a decline in drug use! How long do we have to wait for some sanity on this issue?"

And so the Big Joint is again venturing off, this time to Sydney's Powerhouse Museum to attend the first National Cannabis Conference on September 7-8, hosted by NCPIC, the National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre. The Polite BJ crew will bring some real life experience to the conference and again be collecting HEMP Party members and putting decriminalisation on the menu.

"Stopping at a couple of beaches on the way down, we want to bring awareness to the desperate need to end prohibition and regulating medical cannabis as the obvious next step on the way to full legalization," said Max Stone, the unofficial smokesperson for the mission.

On Friday 4th September, a "Cannabis Convoy" of unmarked Polite cars and vans will be leaving Nimbin and if you are interested in joining drop in to the Polite Bureau HEMP Bar. On Saturday, Big Joint plans to visit Dixon Park Beach in Newcastle, then on Sunday visit Bondi Beach for a photo op and membership drive. On Monday 7th, BJ visits the Power House Museum, 500 Harris Street Ultimo, assembling at 8am.

The Polite Service in conjunction with the Interpolite will be doing a dawn photo shoot / live web cast starting at 4.20am (Aussie time) so that our UK and European supporters can watch. This venue will be somewhere in the Sydney CBD and will be announced 'twitterishly' at www.bigjoint.org and facebooked as well.

And the Polites are forming a choir, apparently to sing at the Festival of Dangerous Ideas at the Sydney Opera House with the Big Joint in early October. Anybody wanting to join the Polite Choir should register at the Polite Bureau, Nimbin.

WANTED

500 FEARLESS

H*E*M*P* PARTY FAITHFUL

PLANTIA SAYS;
YOU MUST BE ENROLLED TO VOTE & YOU MUST BE PREPARED TO CONFIRM YOUR MEMBERSHIP WITH THE GOVERNMENT IF ASKED!

HELP END MARIJUANA PROHIBITION

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