

Libya

As the old saying goes, "the first victim of war is the truth", and once again the world's corporate media and governments are giving their interpretation of events currently taking place in North Africa and the Middle East, to justify their actions in Libya. No doubt up till now a pretty convincing argument in most people's minds, a UN-sanctioned 'No Fly Zone' (military strikes) to protect civilians from the Gadhafi government.

Haven't we heard similar stories before? In fact the airstrikes on Libya began on the anniversary of the Iraq War. Interestingly, both countries have vast reserves of oil.

If one cares to look closer, the premise on which the UN Security Council passed this resolution was not overwhelmingly supported, and the "take all necessary measures" appears to be an open-ended declaration of war on the government and people of the sovereign state of Libya.

Some interesting points have come to our attention:

1. Only 11 of the 22 members of the Arab League attended a meeting held behind closed doors to "vote" on the UN resolution, two of these 11 attending members, Syria and Algeria, vehemently opposed military intervention in Libya.

2. A resolution by the African Union representing 53 countries adamantly rejected a no fly zone or other intervention.

3. In light of the Bahrani government's (absolute monarchy) brutal repression backed up by Saudi Arabian troops against the people taking to the streets, unarmed to change their government,

we don't hear from these "humanitarians" (former colonial powers) do we?

Further interesting points can be obtained from: www.iacenter.org/anti-war/stoptheUSwaronlibyaandbahrain.

We believe that there are very few countries in the world today that can boast a clean record on human rights. Therefore "people living in glass houses shouldn't throw stones".

You can bomb the world to pieces but you can't bomb the world to peace.

Mick and Debbie Stacey
Mullumbimby

Save the sharks

Having read Madison Stewart's article in the March edition on the decimation of sharks, I felt anger.

For a few years now, there has been a campaign to get rid of the shark nets and baited drum lines that are situated on forty Gold Coast beaches. These nets and baited lines catch and entangle dolphins, turtles, whales (adults and calves) and rays as well as sharks.

The Queensland Fisheries Minister, Tim Mulherin will not get rid of these nets because he claims that human safety comes first and so it should, but not at the expense of the sea creatures mentioned above.

These nets have been in place more than forty years. Can you imagine how many sea creatures have been killed by these nets over that period?

If you are concerned about the shark finning and shark netting, please write to Minister Tim Mulherin, Member for Mackay, Level 8, Primary Industries Building, 80 Ann Street, Brisbane 4001.

Paul Brecht
Mullumbimby

Helicopter Raids

The recent helicopter raids around the North Coast serve to illustrate the petty, vindictive nature of the state's war on drugs.

An operation that cost taxpayers millions was focused against a small, politically irrelevant community of peaceful citizens who pose no threat to anyone and desire nothing more than the right to privacy and freedom from persecution.

Police spokespersons claim the operation is designed to eradicate hemp and targets commercial production of the prohibited plant, but this is far from the case. The fact is police target individuals who have one or two plants growing in their garden. They invade private properties and seize plants that are grown for personal use by folk who prefer pot to grog.

Given the glaring discrepancy in harm done to individuals and society by these two popular drugs, it seems strange that governments spend so much money targeting hemp and harassing pot smokers while private corporations spend millions promoting the use of alcohol.

If governments were truly representative of society and committed to the health and welfare of the people, you'd expect their policies to reflect public opinion and contemporary science on issues such as recreational drug use.

The deliberate persecution of citizens simply because they choose to use pot is neither fair nor rational. Juxtaposed with the pervasive promotion and consumption of alcohol, the hysterical condemnation and criminalisation of marijuana

is illogical, hypocritical and ultimately detrimental to the legitimacy and credibility of the law.

John Scrivener
Main Arm

Unda-lover

Dear Undacuva, love your headspace. Thank you for your light/serious writing. In your earthy, clear and witty style you have a lot of ground you could cover and transport us readers all over the place with greater understanding.

Paula Glenn-Bland
Tweed Heads

Refugee Camp

Two issues back I got stuck into the Hemp Embassy and its spokesperson, Michael Balderstone over their failed advocacy for marijuana drug law reform. I also invited Michael to outline why he considers Nimbin an ideal place for a marijuana distribution trial. The response was disappointing. All I got, rather oddly, was an invitation to join their cause. No thanks.

Michael seemed unable to recall what he wrote about yuppies and then rambled on about Nimbin being a free-range psychiatric farm and why this and a plethora of 'druggies' has stopped people wanting to live here. "Many people do not want their children growing up here," he writes. Well that's a shame.

As a long time resident of the village, I recall the time when children were Nimbin's main focus. The pioneering work of Birth and Beyond and Sunrise Cottage (alternative community school beside hardware store). The excitement and enthusiasm for the wonderful new central school (\$11 million). It was a sort of 'back to earth' family hippy town.



Not any more.

The school is struggling for numbers as parents (rightly so) decline to send their children because of the blatant dealing in full view of the playground. The town is turning into a sort of highly commercialised tacky tourist theme park paying homage to a marijuana monoculture. Or, as Michael keeps telling us, a refugee camp from the war on drugs.

I cannot escape the feeling that Michael and his cohorts engender a sense of anarchy in the village as well as giving tacit approval for drug dealing. The welcome mat is laid out for all the world's desperate and needy. Of course when it all goes pear shaped, as it regularly does, he is in the press blaming it all on the war on drugs.

It is no longer nearly normal Nimbin, but more like abnormal Nimbin. Way out of balance. We have lost our way since the town became the political plaything for a few people.

And it's all so pointless. Michael admits in his last letter that he is "not the right type of spokesperson for drug law reform"!

Geez... now you tell us.

Adrian Williamson
Nimbin

Nimbin Reference Group

I attended the inaugural meeting of the Nimbin Reference Group as an observer. Not sure what to expect, I was really impressed how well it went.

The committee moved fairly swiftly through a packed agenda without too many distractions, and I think the group will quickly find its feet and its invaluable place in the machinations between Lismore Council and the community of Nimbin.

Annie McWilliam,

Community Services
Organiser, handled her roll as convenor admirably!

At some stage, the group chuckled over the fact that it has a purely female membership. I think the answer to why there were no male applications may perhaps lie in the fact that this group is considered to have a guiding role only, not a decision-making one. Perhaps this is why the males of this world are noticeably absent...

However, there is no doubt in my mind that the group will move swiftly and effectively through issues at hand, which will benefit transparency and decision making of all parties involved.

I recommend that other community members come along and check it out for themselves.

Thumbs up from me!

Monika Boenigk
Nimbin

Tipping Point

My entire childhood was spent around Nimbin and Lismore. Growing up in a community that is as connected, sustainable and conscious of nature and our interaction with it has had an incalculable influence on who I have grown up to become.

Sometimes I reflect on the way I was raised. I wonder how the discipline, freedom, questions, answers, experiences and feelings shaped the mind, soul and body I have been blessed with.

I now live in Sydney where I originally came to study. I have dedicated a large majority of my time to being part of the generation wide movement that is pushing for short term political change and long term cultural change to solve the climate crisis. I have dropped out of university and work

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Editor: Bob Dooley
Assistant Editor: Sue Stock
Sub-editor: Hal Williams
Layout: Peter Chaplin, Andy Gough, Bob Dooley
Photographers: Sue Stock, Tracey Lewis, Thorsten Jones, Marie Cameron, C. Mac
Distribution: Angus, Sue, Coralie, Ben, Gabrielle & Warren (Bellingen), Dave (West End), Matt (Glebe).

Bookkeeper: Martha Paitson
Website: David McMinn
www.nimbingoodtimes.com

NGT is auspiced by the Nimbin Community School Co-operative Ltd.

Next deadline:
Wednesday 27th April

Email: nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

Please limit contributions to 600 words or less.

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Letters

two days a week doing bush regeneration so I can spend the other five days a week volunteering for the Australian Youth Climate Coalition as the NSW State Co-ordinator.

The reason I am writing this letter home is to remind you all of the battle that exists beyond the beautiful and idealistic community you live in. To me, Nimbin is a sanctuary for alternative people who are disillusioned, inspired, retired, young, old, weak and also strong who share a common vision for the future of our world.

However there is a great cultural divide that lies between this future and the rest of Australia. I am writing to the people of my homeland to remind you that you must not forget the task at hand. To not forget that the environmental movement is near the tipping point and that we need to push harder now that we have ever pushed before, before its too late.

I beg you to inspire your families, friends and especially your children to do what you can locally to push for a more sustainable world. And to also go beyond your sanctuary and reach out beyond the cultural divide to educate and support transitions in communities that are not blessed with the same enlightenment as yours.

A movement is growing, it grows stronger and deeper everyday, but it needs the people like you to lead it. People like you, who have experienced first hand a vision for what we must create. Don't give up hope, don't turn your back on it. Together we will win.

In solidarity,

Ahri Tallon
Sydney

Notices

Wanted to rent

Urgently seeking 3 b/r accom in Nimbin or out of town, range \$250 – \$310 p.w. Good tenant, no pets. Phone 0401-969-168.

Life Drawing

Monday evenings 5.30 - 8pm at Nimbin Town Hall (studio 1, at the rear), starting Monday 11th April. Cost \$15. Bring charcoal/pencils, paper. Contact Julie on 0403-609-790.

Bundjalung Elders Q&A

Saturday 9th April at Nimbin Town Hall, bush tucker lunch from midday followed by a discussion about the local Aboriginal way of life before the arrival of whiteman. All welcome.

Yoga in Nimbin

General yoga classes at the Nimbin Apothecary on Tuesdays at 9am and a more gentle session at 3.30pm. Prenatal and postnatal yoga sessions are an opportunity to introduce yoga to your new little family members in a comfortable and gentle way. These individualised sessions require bookings in advance. For more details contact Linda Roestel on 0433-722-231.

Okido yoga is on again with Sandra Nilsen throughout April in the Nimbin Town Hall's back studio. Classes are either \$10 or donations are more than acceptable and welcomed. Yoga is for all: Wednesday evening at 5.30pm for a mid-week renewal of a gentle flowing yoga; Friday mornings at 8.30am to energise the body.

Murals' true value becomes clear



Nimbin's faces need a wash! Mould and dust have accumulated on the village's iconic murals, and funds are needed to clean them and to assess their condition.

The Nimbin Chamber of Commerce and Murals subcommittee has been developing plans for this project.

Community support has been terrific, with donation tins at Nimbin businesses filled and replaced, with funds deposited. Some funds have been provided to local artist Amanda Williamson for paint for work on the mural above the Nimbin Newsagency.

Investing in the arts pays good dividends, with a recent Northern Star article stating: "Businesses looking for a chance to increase their street cred can now help to support the arts. It's all part of a drive to ensure that Northern Rivers residents are spoilt for choice when it comes to culture..."

The article quoted Tony Duke, chief executive of Arts Northern Rivers, who said, "One of the key recommendations for the future development of the arts, identified by the Arts Council, is philanthropy and sponsorship through relationships with the business sector."

"Giving to the arts not only helps to make the world – and the Northern Rivers – a better place, but carries social prestige for businesses."

Nimbin now has this opportunity to show its support with sponsorship. Enquires may be made by email to peterwise@live.com.au or Peter Hughes, accountant@nimbintax.com.au View the Murals Project at www.nimbinweb.com.au/murals.

Direct deposits can be made to Mural Fund Account, Summerland Credit Union, BSB 802222 Account No 22279160 (For SCU transfers, surname "Nim").

Psst: Wanna buy a fossil?

Local stone-waller, Clint Ellis, has an unusual feature in his garden – a two-tonne petrified log.

Clint estimates the 2.2-metre crystallised fossil of local casuarina to be between 20 million and 200 million years old.

"It's a really individual stick," he said, "with ancient claw marks and a range of colours in it."

He has owned it for 12 years – he bought it from a Jiggi farmer who found it on his property – but now it is



for sale.

Anyone interested, phone Clint on 0429-095-623.

Nimbin Open Learning Centre

Second term classes offer: Creative writing with Christine Strelan; drawing with Carole Barrett; basketry with Moksha; Daniel Kestler with his special brand of tai ji/qui gong; astrology with Tina Mews; digiphotography with Graeme Batterbury. Starting early May.

Chess stars show their moves



The Nimbin World Championship Chess tournament was held in the Nimbin Town Hall on the 19th and 20th March.

While the rain stopped the markets, chess games of the highest calibre were being played, with more than 80 people in attendance and a temporary Hemp Cafe operating from there.

There were two categories – Easy or Professional – that changed into clock timers and sheer fortitude. In all, all players determined to beat and challenge their opponents with strategic ploys.

In amongst all the castles, rooks, queens and courtiers, kings and bishops, Jake and Michi won, Ross and Gerrard mingled, Gary and Sam formed a union, Helen of Troy became of Linda, Jak and Jack laughed and sang, whistling Dion and Simonetta kept the count and tables ordered, and many people took up the challenge of chess.

Thanks to Jan, Roy, Ray Eric and others the Hemp Bar will re-open soon, with a beautiful polished floor ready for MardiGrass.

Vale Milo, the Jack of Hearts

3/08/93 – 8/03/11

Milo de Tic Toc – watchdog, rat-catcher, champion high-jumper and a star attraction at the Nimbin Show – died on the 8th March, aged 120 (in dog years).

Milo was loved by all for his friendly yet competitive spirit – he never gave up – and cleared over two-metres in his high-jumping prime, to the adoration of his fans.

Tap dog to the Nimbin Tap Bitches dance troupe, Milo was a friend, a father, grandfather and great-grandfather, and his spirit lives on in his many offspring.



Sleep now, little buddy, you're home.

Forever in our hearts, our bright dog star – Judi, Mikeh, Mimi, Rosie, Carlo, Gilbert, family and friends. Mubung Wang.

Sport and Recreation Plan Community Consultation Meeting in Nimbin

Lismore City Council is currently developing a 10 year Sport and Recreation Plan for the period 2011 - 2021.

As part of this process Council invites interested members of the community and representatives of sporting groups to attend a meeting to gather information on future sport and recreational developments in Nimbin.

Date: Monday 11 April, 2011

Time: 4 - 6pm

Venue: Nimbin Bowling Club

For additional information about this consultation please contact James Voght, Council's Sport and Recreation Planner, on 1300 87 83 87



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Vast experience with Multiple Occupancy Communities

Centenary of International Women's Day celebrated

by Justine Elliot, MP

It was great to recently see so many local events celebrating International Women's Day. This year marks 100 years since the first International Women's Day rallies which were held in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland, sparking what would eventually become a world-wide movement to champion the cause of equality for women.

I saw the anniversary as a great opportunity to celebrate the many advances the Australian Government has made towards genuine equality for women.

We are implementing our country's first ever National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children which is backed with over \$86 million in funding for new initiatives announced since April 2009.

We have delivered Australia's first national Paid Parental Leave scheme, which means that from 1 January this year, eligible primary carers of new babies are able to receive 18 weeks paid leave to stay at home with newborns. "We introduced the Fair Work Act and



Justine with (left to right) Michelle Coolwell, compere Maggie-Ann Leybourne, Noeline Brown Lisa Frost and Showna Wilkins celebrating IWD with the Coolangatta-Tweed View Club.

abolished AWAs, to provide a stronger safety net for women in the workplace and improve equal remuneration and anti-discrimination provisions.

We have increased the Child Care Rebate from 30 per cent to 50 per cent and lifted the maximum threshold from \$4,354 to \$7,500 to support Australian families with the cost of child care.

Over the past year, our pension reforms have driven

increases for pensioners worth an extra \$100 a fortnight for singles and an extra \$74 for couples combined – this change will have a significant impact on women who make up around 70 per cent of single age pensioners.

To further help ease cost of living pressures being faced by many families, we will also provide parents with the option to receive Child Care

Rebate payments fortnightly from 1 July 2011.

While the Australian Government has made great progress in supporting Australian women more needs to be done to achieve greater equality between women and men in Australia.

We have set a target for Government Boards that at least 40 per cent of members should be women.

We will strengthen

protections against discrimination by improving the existing Sex Discrimination Act.

This Government believes that equality benefits everyone and that equality will be best promoted by women and men working constructively together.

Our commitments will deliver practical, tangible reforms to help women in this country reach their potential – which is good news for all Australians."

Launch of Nimbin's Community Solar Farm

I was very honoured to launch the Nimbin Community Solar Project on 31st March. The Gillard Government delivered \$313,596 under the Jobs Fund Project to establish this 45 kilowatt Solar Farm.

The Solar Farm project has created up to 10 jobs and five traineeship or work experience opportunities. The Nimbin Neighbourhood and Community Centre and the Rainbow Power Company have together developed this project to provide the community with a vital piece of infrastructure. I congratulate the Nimbin

community for the success of the project, which also provides a working model for solar farming in rural and remote communities.

The project will benefit the community, as local organisations will share in the income generated by the systems. It will also assist the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Community Centre to continue its valuable welfare work in the area.

I have delivered more than \$2 million for Jobs Funds Projects in the electorate of Richmond and this has created 62 jobs, 6 traineeships and 129 work experience places locally.

The projects have included:

- \$1,818,182 - Jack Evans Boat Harbour
- \$489,589 - Building The Environmental Capacity of Tweed Valley Farmland
- \$313,596 - Nimbin Community Solar Farm
- \$63,902 - The Byron Bay Community and Cultural Centre

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

Janelle's Page

by Janelle Saffin, MP

Live Exports

In March I introduced a Private Members Motion in Parliament on the issue of live animal exports because over the past 30 years the live export trade has led to tens of thousands of job losses in meat processing in Australia. These job losses concern me deeply. There is also the issue of animal welfare.

The live export industry

is not going to change overnight and the motion did not call for a ban on live exports. Rather it called for "consideration of a planned and supported transition in the medium term away from live exports and towards an expanded frozen and chilled meat export industry."

I would like to thank the many people who have sent supportive messages to me since I raised this issue. I also acknowledge those who

have contacted me who don't agree, and I think this shows that this is indeed an issue debated in the community that warrants debate in the Parliament.

Milk pricing

The move by Coles to discount milk to \$1 a litre has many worried about what this will mean for local dairy farmers and the industry. I have been speaking to local farmers and share their concerns.

In Parliament, I spoke in support of a Private Members Motion calling on the ACCC to examine the issue.

We know about cost of living pressures and we all like cheaper prices but price cuts are not good for any of us if they threaten the long term viability of the dairy industry.

As I said in Parliament, we do not want an industry that is already feeling it especially with some of the weather events that we have had-exposed to more threats, and we want the ACCC to examine these price cuts to see if it is predatory pricing and so we have all the facts.



Janelle with SBS football commentator Craig Foster and children at Goonellabah Public School promoting football as a way of celebrating Harmony Day.

Rural Financial Counsellors

There is currently a Government review of Rural Financial Counselling Services (RFCS) and I have written to the Agriculture Minister, Senator Joe Ludwig, seeking an assurance that there will be

continued funding of the service which is so important to the well being of local farming families.

The Casino-based Rural Financial Counselling Service plays a vital role supporting primary producers and rural businesses in Page and across northern NSW,

particularly in times of natural disaster and financial crisis. They also play a key role in helping farmers adjust to climate change.

Support for Cane Growers

I have also written to the Agriculture Minister in support of the NSW Cane Growers Association's call for a Commonwealth and State funded sugar industry recovery package.

The industry is seeking a one-off grant to help with the cost of replanting an additional 6070 hectares this year following one of the worst seasons for crop damage on record.

I was very active in ensuring the Australian Government responded quickly to recent flooding which I know had a severe impact on canegrowers in the Richmond Valley, Ballina

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From the Mayor's desk

by Jenny Dowell
Jenny.Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au

New State Government

Congratulations to Thomas George on being re-elected as Lismore's Member of the Legislative Assembly and for being part of the new Government.

We have seen the benefits of having local Federal members, Janelle Saffin and Justin Elliot, sitting in Government rather than in Opposition. We can now anticipate similar benefits from having Thomas in State Government rather than in Opposition. I look forward to working with Thomas for the betterment of the communities we both serve.

Like all local governments in NSW, Lismore City Council is awaiting the changes that the incoming coalition government is expected to bring. We know that the O'Farrell government has promised to revoke Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act that sees developments of 'state significance' determined by the Minister rather than by Councils. We hope that the new government will work with our sector to improve our relationship and the delivery of state government services in rural and regional areas.

I'm pleased to hear Premier O'Farrell talk of his priority of addressing transport needs and hope that this means our languishing Regional Integrated Transport Plan finally gets underway. After all, transport is not just an issue for Western Sydney.

McLeans Ridges

After many years of community and Council consideration, the 62 lot Camerons Road rural residential subdivision was approved (vote 7/4) at the March meeting.

The land for this development was rezoned by the previous Council in 2004. Since that decision, the developers have entered into a voluntary Planning Agreement that provides Council with an additional contribution towards roads and a community park at no cost to Council. The main issue of concern is the current inadequate condition of roads and intersections in the locality and the cost to the Council to bring them to the required standard.

Further rezoning for rural residential development is on hold pending a review of Council's Rural Housing Strategy.

Dunoon

Following significant community opposition, a new application for a housing estate in Dunoon also came

before Council.

The proposed 24 lot development was unanimously approved because it is much more aligned to the existing village layout than the previous 62-lot proposal and is generally well-supported by all.

Caravan Park

Council will seek a new lessee to manage the Lismore Tourist Caravan Park at the end of 2011.

We will also work with current permanent residents and local housing agencies to secure alternative accommodation because the Park is only licensed for short stays. Council is mindful that the location of the Park places many vulnerable residents in jeopardy from flooding but we are also aware that precipitous action may result in some residents becoming homeless. Further investigations of options are currently underway.

KPoM

The membership of our Koala Plan of Management (KPoM) Stakeholder Reference Group has been determined.

Jolyon Burnett, Kath Robb, Malcolm Scott, Andrew Tickle, Georgia Beyer, Sandra Heuston, Tony Walker, Lorraine Vass, Kel Graham, Jeffery Zanette and Julie Reid will provide input on the impacts, opportunities and issues that may arise during Council's development and implementation of a new KPoM.

The first stage will be to review the previous KPoM that was shelved by Council in 2003.

Milk Prices

Cheap milk is an attractive option for local families but I urge all readers to buy the NORCO product if possible. The dairy industry plays a significant role in Lismore's economy and Council is concerned that the current discounting of milk prices by major supermarkets will adversely affect the viability of this industry.

Council voted unanimously to support Cr Clough's motion that we request the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to investigate the discounting and its impact on the long-term viability of the industry.

Please buy local to assist.

LEP

As readers may recall, Council received submissions from almost 1400 residents when we put our Draft Local Environmental Plan on exhibition last year.

Council is now in the process of reviewing the Draft with a focus on flood mapping and environmental protection and rural zones. Following the reviews,

evening workshops will be held with Councillors over two weeks in June prior to a report and recommendations to be considered at the July Council meeting.

Following that meeting, it is highly likely that sections of the Draft LEP will be placed before the community for further comment in July-August.

New look website

If readers have not checked out Council's website lately, you will be pleasantly surprised. The site, www.lismore.nsw.gov.au has been given a modest makeover to ensure it is attractive and easy to navigate.

Photos supplied by Councillors, staff and community members complement the fresh look.

Sports and Recreation Plan

Council staff are talking to local sporting groups, schools, seniors and



village communities to develop a new 10-year Sport and Recreation Plan for our Local Government Area.

Council is keen to hear all ideas on how we can plan for future sport and recreational needs while considering settlement patterns, demographics, health and social needs and the ever-present financial constraints.

Budget

March until May is Budget

preparation time for Council. Community applications for our Budget through the annual Operational Plan close on April 7 so if you have an idea on how Council should spend its money, log on to Council's new-look website and fill out a one-page form on line or print off, fill out and post or fax it back.

Council's frugality over the past 12 months has reduced the deficit to a modest \$3600 in the March quarter so we are on our way to a balanced budget by June 30. 2011-12 is expected to require similar restraint.

GM Recruitment

Applications for Council's new General Manager closed on March 21 with a very pleasingly large number being received.

Shortlisting will take place on April 4 for interviews on April 18. A small number of finalists will go before the whole Council in May for a presentation, final interview and, hopefully, a recommended preferred candidate.

Simon says...



by Simon Clough
Deputy Mayor of Lismore

Congratulations to our very own Sue Stock for taking the Greens vote in the recent state election to over 20% and 30% on a two party preferred basis.

My highlight of the election was being told by a National Party booth worker very loudly and with utter conviction that "Carbon monoxide was good for trees", thank you Alan Jones and your shock jock cronies for educating the masses. By the way, where are the fairies at Fairy Hill (10kms north of Casino)?

I wonder what the implications of the stunning coalition victory will be on local government and this region in particular. I certainly don't envy Barry O'Farrell trying to control his huge majority and stop them getting up to some of the rorts and shenanigans of their ALP cousins.

Last month's Council meeting was very

interesting. I was pleased to get unanimous support for my motion that the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission (ACCC) investigate Coles's "predator pricing" of generic milk. There's no way that Coles will continue paying out over \$18m a year to subsidise this milk. Inevitably Coles will put pressure on milk producers and processors to reduce their prices. This could be the final straw for local milk producers, not to mention NORCO. NORCO employs 300 people locally and a one-cent reduction in the price it gets for its milk would halve its profit. NORCO is a producer cooperative so much of that money goes back to the farmer.

If we are serious about food security in this country and with peak oil, climate change and nuclear accidents we certainly need to be, we must stop Coles and Woolworths having the power to dictate food prices and returns to farmers. One fact that impressed me regarding food security that came out of the Brisbane floods was that NORCO was able to provide fresh milk to the city when the other major provider was underwater. So at the very least please buy NORCO milk, and as much food as you can from

local produce markets.

The Camerons Road subdivision at McLeans Ridges got its final approval at the last Council meeting. This is a 62-lot subdivision that has a recreational lot and a community hall a couple of kilometres down the road. Almost everything the future residents do will be car dependent. Someone said to me you'd have to get into the car to clean your teeth.

The development will be similar in size to The Channon. The Channon has a general store (where you can buy almost anything), post office, laundromat, petrol bowser, primary school, pre school, hall, tavern, large oval with two toilets and sheds. Unfortunately these facilities are absent at Camerons Road.

Not that you could reasonably expect these facilities to be provided by a developer, but it certainly points to expanding our villages, rather than large car-dependent rural residential subdivisions that are too big to mow and too small to plough.

An interesting contrast to the Camerons Road development was the development in Dunoon village. This was a much smaller development that had been designed cooperatively with the local community. This development went through virtually unopposed giving the lie to the idea that ours

is an anti development Council.

I have just returned from the official opening of the \$313,000 Nimbin Community Solar Farm. I've rarely been so inspired by an official opening. The number of jobs created, the 45kw of photovoltaics installed, the level of collaboration between the Neighbourhood Centre, Rainbow Power and all aspects of the community... wow! Well done Nimbin. I was particularly impressed by Nat Meyers (team leader of the Neighbourhood Centre) saying that this is an on-going 35-year old project in Nimbin and was really only possible because the community had purchased and maintained so many buildings.

Cycling in autumn is magic. I just love the cool mornings and sometimes I feel like I could ride forever, but then my aging hip brings me back to reality. I hope you've all got your winter vegies in! Our street garden in suburban Lismore has taken off with lots more plantings to come.

You can follow me on facebook, not only will you be able to keep your finger on the pulse of Council activities, but there are heaps of helpful links to sustainability articles and issues. (fb Cr Simon Clough) or www.facebook.com/pages/Cr-Simon-Clough-Lismore-City-Council/207693789243865
May all be well and happy.

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by Christina Chester

MardiGrass preparations are in full swing.

Many local artists,



community groups and businesses are getting ready for the important law reform protest, every year, first Sunday in May.

Lots of volunteers are helping to beautify our lovely Nimbin, with flags, murals, plants and decorations.

Even Lismore Council couldn't help themselves, adding to the colorful, picturesque scene of Nimbin by putting up a few more of their street signs and parking regulations. Endless funding it seems!? Also the Police are making sure that we will be not overwhelmed with a friendly, peaceful crowd, by turning the tourists off now with raids and scare tactics, prior to the event.



That's Emah Silberstein and her creations

I will also try to contribute and do what I do best, making costumes for MardiGrass. The machines again are running hot in my workshop at CC- Design 39 Cullen Street. And just in time, a young woman from Germany, well educated in tailoring and dressmaking, appeared out of the rainbow sky. I am lucky to be able to work with her on all these fantastic costumes for a new, elaborate float, again a brainchild of our brilliant Dionne who created last year's winning float "The Budbabs". Here at CC-Design we will be able to help you with your costume or you can hire some of the great costumes and dresses fit for the occasion.



Emah Silberstein of Mana Fiesta Designs has been an independent designer transmuting unwanted goods and materials into original creations. Emah's recent manifestations have been inspired by the upcoming 2011 Nimbin MardiGrass, which has encouraged a new concept of design. Integrating recyclable materials into unique, enigmatic and multidimensional Ganga Faerie Wearable Art, Mana Fiesta has been on the journey of acquiring light refracting garments. This is done by utilizing

industrial bubble wrap as the source of creation. These iridescent body canvas's will reflect the greenery of the parade, shedding light on the cannabis prohibition,



and will be available for sale at Christina's CC Design Nimbin.

Nimbin Computer Support will be another great service available from 1 May, at the same premises. Services will include computer repair, virus removal, desktop publishing, and friendly assistance.

Come and join all the color and wonder that Nimbin can be, at MardiGrass this year.

Dust off your old costume or get a new one made. Do it now... It's Nimbin's Time to shine.

If you want any photographic work done, contact Thorsten Jones via e-mail at pangalacticgargelblaster2001@yahoo.com.au



Something funny about MardiGrass...

This year the MardiGrass Comedy Club will be an extra-special event on Saturday night, 30th April, from 8-10pm.

For a start, it will be held in Nimbin Town Hall. Pretty fancy. This beautiful and venerable space will be transformed into the coolest comedy club this side of the Pacific.

But the really exciting news is the line-up. Headlining the bill is the remarkable Harley Breen from Melbourne – Australia's best young comedian. He absolutely killed at Woodford Folk Festival, even making gumboots split their sides.

The Age described him as "a hilarious break from stereotypes. Very funny." *The Herald Sun* wrote, "Breen is real talent who's not afraid to speak his mind, or yours." MardiGrass comedian and columnist S. Sorrensen said: "I hate this bloke. He gives me stitches and jaw ache."

Harley has performed in Edinburgh, London and south-east Asia, and has worked with major comic talents like Steven K. Amos, Fiona O'Loughlin, Greg Fleet and Wil Anderson.

There will be another new face performing at the MardiGrass Comedy Club – Paul McMahon.

Byron-based McMahon is an ex-bank manager who realised he wanted to do something useful – so he became a



comedian. He is now in demand on the Gold Coast, Brisbane and Canberra comedy circuits.

Hosting the show will be MardiGrass's resident comedians, Alan Glover and S. Sorrensen (pictured).

These two comics (and Hemp Olympix officials) do two-handed stand-up – and that's a rare trick. Two blokes bouncing off each other (verbally mostly but sometimes physically), they'll discuss just what is happening at MardiGrass in a serious, dignified and refined manner using all their scientific and commercial expertise. No, really.

Musician Andrea Soler will perform a few of her songs and imbue the club with MardiGrass bliss.

There'll be food and wine, laughs and candlelight.

Entry is \$10 or a MardiGrass armband.

Music line-up for Peace Park

FRIDAY 29th

Kaptain Reefer and The Cone Scrapers - 4pm

(before the opening ceremony)

CC The Cat 8 - 8.50pm

CC The Cat have played hundreds of shows and amassed a devoted fan base along the East and West Coasts of Oz in the last four years with their house-packing live show, addictive songs, message and reggae-rock-funk sound.

Fyah Walk 9-10pm

Fyah Walk breaks the boundaries of reggae in Australia, reaching out to all music lovers with a fusion of authentic Virgin Islands reggae and their own fresh, contemporary, high-energy style.

SATURDAY 30TH

The Irie Knights 6-7pm

If you feel good in Jamaica you'd say you're feeling 'Irie'. If you feel good in Australia you've probably just seen the Irie Knights! An infectious 10-piece that combines their overwhelming spirit and energy with hard-hitting reggae grooves.

Anarchist Duck 7.30-8.30pm

Anarchist Duck's live shows are renowned for their house-shaking dance-adelic hugeness, driven

by body-rockin beats, Flawless' boundary-smashing guitar style, and the unmistakable rare talent of singing bassist Julz... this band has an original sound that takes Gold Coast music to a new level.

A French Butler called Smith 8.50-9.50pm

When a French Butler Called Smith come to town you want to be prepared with some serious, high energy dancing to step into their realm!

OKA 10-11pm

Their sound is an organic tapestry of phat earth rhythms in a smooth hi-fidelity sound that is full of uplifting melodies, tones and textures.

SUNDAY 1ST

Nigel McTrusty 4.55-5.40pm

Well crafted songs combine with infectious tones, producing trance-like riffs and grooves. The sound and instrument has its roots both from the Deep South and Africa, Home of the Blues.

Nathan Kaye 7-7.45pm

Eastern melodic rhythms of the 12-string guitar, the droning of the didgeridoo, and then soaring above comes Nathan's rich, gliding vocals. With your eyes open, you realise all of this is



Bertha Control

being masterfully woven by one person

Bertha Control 7.55-8.45pm

Five-piece, all-woman explosion of funk, reggae, politics and soaring vocal harmonies. Bertha tickles your ears with a phat bass sound, chunks of funky guitars, an excitable horn section, drums, keys, flute of the forest and, of course, their famous vocal webs of harmony. (Destiny's Child... eat your heart out!)

King Farook 9-10.30pm

Takes threads from familiar styles like Funk, Urban, Rock, Pop, Soul, R'n'B, House and Latin, and weaves them together into a colourful, musical fabric.

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STREET SHUFFLE

Journal of the North Coast's longest serving covert

Unda settles in with the Pipe Tribe

by Undacuvva

Not sure whose idea it was, but having an Undacuva bucks party on the Byron bus tour to Nimbin was as dumb as it gets. And then for one of them to belt the pub manager, who I know really well, even though he doesn't know me.

Why didn't they ask me about my favourite village, which I know like my own backyard? Stupid bureaucratic processes that ignore history.

Unless they deliberately left me out. "Hippy-lover" I've copped for years and it pretty much bounces off, but there was a new nasty undatone I detected when I was reporting in about the Pipe Tribe. Envy it was, and thick as hash oil.

It didn't help that I was with the prettiest trio of scantily dressed hippy faeries from the tribe, bare feet, bright eyes, mad hair and the

remains of rainforest camo paintwork which we've all been wearing for the chopper the last few weeks. My "contact" had been watching us shopping, laughing, stoned, carefree.

He asked me to tell the tribe my mother was ill and to track my old Hemp Bar friends who in turn were tracking the new Premier. I surprised him and me by how much I didn't want to and said I'd already told them my mother was dead so that wouldn't work and I was onto "something big". And "it was going down soon". The magic words that make them leave you alone. Some things never change.

When we left town in the battered and unregistered landrover and headed into the mountains, he looked positively furious as we drove past and I realised yet again, this is the life. The hippies did get it right, as they keep saying, and it's my good fortune ending up with the mob who have the whole



north eastern face of a giant mountain to themselves.

Back at the camp I tell them I got the word the chopper raids are over and it's a big celebration. Not that they would ever get "spotted" with their invisible climbing pot vines covered in tiny flowers, but there is always the chance of being dobbed in by the redneck farmer down the valley who is one of the very few who know we are here.

"As soon as the harvest is finished we move to the northern camp," said Pipe that evening

out of the blue, and I could feel the ripple of excitement run around the campfire. "The caves, the caves," squealed the children and even I got caught up in the mystery. Most of the girls are making costumes for MardiGrass and Pipe decided to wait until after the annual harvest celebration before the move to the cave.

Down the swimming hole today lazing on the warm rocks like a lizard, stoned on the vineweed as we call it, watching row upon row of superb skunk colas swinging on fishing lines in the shade and soft breeze, I forgot for a very long time I was Unda. Then for the longest moment I thought, this is the exit I've been dreaming of. Like The Dalai told me, "We get what we wish for, if only we can recognise it when it appears."

Pipe snapped me back into reality with a verbal whack. "Who told you the chopper raids were over?"

All my training was there instantly. "A fellow I know in the bank who has a good connection."

I have no idea if he bought it, but he did know I'd been to the bank because I gave the girls \$100 each and paid the bill at the health food store, which was more than a few hundred.

"You on the dole bro?"

"Nah, pension like you, Pipe. They leave me alone."

Vision Statement seeking signatures

Premier O'Farrell has pledged to bring on urgency motion debates in Parliament if 10,000 signatures are gathered on any issue.

"An ongoing people's Parliament should address issues that citizens believe are important, rather than those that are convenient for the government," Mr O'Farrell said.

"Gathering 10,000 signatures is a monumental task, but we have got to do it," said Max Stone, "If we have one ace up our sleeve, its the world famous MardiGrass on the 1st of May and more than 10 thousand people are expected this year.

"This means we will have a wonderful opportunity to get the signatures we need and ample video and photographic proof

as well that cannabis law reform is an important issue."

The true beauty of the re-legalize cannabis campaign is that we have liberal reasons for changing the cannabis laws, (taxation revenue) we have lots of green reasons (carbon fixing plant number 1, reduce dependence on rainforests), we've got labour reasons (hemp job creation) and we even have national reasons (new crop for farmers with high cash yield per hectare), all said and done, I am sure Premier O'Farrell and his team, when presented with all of the reasoning at a cannabis summit, will be able to see the positives for NSW, if it were to develop a regulated and taxable cannabis industry.

MardiGrass organisers cool as ever

MardiGrass organisers remain unfussed by the slow progress of Nimbin's new skatepark which has Peace Park, their primary venue, looking like a building site.

"It's disappointing the ramp doesn't look like being finished, but we'll just work around it, and the old skatepark site now cleared will replace the lost space," said Michael Balderstone, spokesperson for the MOB (MardiGrass Organising Body).

"We had hoped to include a skateboarding event in the Hemp Olympix, along with the Joint Rolling and Bong Throwing, but that may have to wait for next year.

"We have to remember MardiGrass is essentially a protest rally for cannabis law reform and every year it becomes more glaringly obvious how much we need it.

The money spent on trying to stop cannabis in Nimbin this year could have done a lot of good for a lot of people. Instead it is being wasted on hurting people and their futures.

Frankly, it's pathetic and I hope everyone who knows that bothers to come and join our protest."

There is a full program for the annual event, and with the MardiGrass weekend just three days after the BluesFest finishes, some flow-on is expected.

There are international speakers and experts on all things cannabis, including Americans who are legally growing and using medicinal cannabis in 14 states.

Since Obama became president and ordered the Feds to back off, there has been an explosion of medical cannabis dispensaries, said Michael, and one will be created at MardiGrass to show visitors how it could be here if our politicians would only grow up a

little."

The 19th annual Cannabis law reform rally and gathering begins on Friday 29th April at dusk, with the Opening Ceremony and the Pickers' Ball in Peace Park.

Industrial hemp exhibits will be on show behind the Oasis Cafe for the duration, and the Medical Cannabis Tent will host the other side.

Highlights on Saturday include the Mind Candy Forums in the Town Hall, which will be a mine of information and stimulation. The Hemp Olympix (Joint Rolling, Bong Throw and Yell, Growers' Iron Person Event), the Kombi Konvoy, 4.20 Mass Enlightenment and the evening Harvest Ball in Peace Park.

There's plenty of music all weekend from the Peace Park (see line-up separate story), Mingle Park and Market stages, plus Pot Poetry, Pot Art, the MardiGrass Markets, Buskers competition, Cookie Queen classes, movies and workshops, Hemp Fashion show, Comedy Cabaret, Stoned Chess, and more.

Sunday sees the finals of the Hemp Olympix and the main street Rally for Law Reform and float parade, with the Ganja Faeries and Polite Big Joint preceding the rally speakers.

Volunteers are the backbone of this annual Protestival and locals and visitors are welcome. Contact the Hemp Embassy on 6689-1842. Program details are at www.nimbinmardigrass.com/2011/program11.html and you can support the weekend by buying a ticket early. A weekend pass, including camping, costs \$100. Without camping it's \$50 but then you may have a parking problem.

You can buy the usual weekend and one-day passes there too.

A vision statement about the positive benefits of regulated and taxable Cannabis / Hemp

Let this vision statement inform its readers that a multitude of medical discoveries regarding cannabis as a cancer cure have been made this century - prostate and breast cancer, to name the top two.

Let it point out that the number one carbon scrubbing plant is cannabis.

Let it point out that growing hemp for fiber and paper is more eco friendly and sustainable than logging trees or fertilizing cotton.

Let it point out the nutritional quality of the hemp seed is greater than that of fish or soy beans.

Let it point out that the concept of legalizing cannabis is more popular with the 'man in the street' than ever before, with every online 'poll' (ABC/SMH etc) about re-legalizing / decriminalizing cannabis have shown over 60% in

favor, with most registering in the 70 percentile bracket.

Let it point out that in November of 2010, 48% of Californians were in favour of outright legalization of recreational cannabis and let us remember that 56% of Californians voted for (and now have) a legal and taxable medical marijuana industry.

Let it point out that that the current NSW (and Australian) governments are lagging behind most every other state in the global economy simply because they have not been able to conduct research into the realities inherent in cannabis/hemp re-legalization because of the enforcement of cannabis prohibition.

Let it leave the reader in no doubt that re-legalizing cannabis for fibre, fuel, food and medicine is in the best interests of everyone.

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