



Healing charges

In reply to Omar Cat Hart's letter regarding practitioner prices, I'm sorry that you have had ill health to contend with, but I'm not sure why you think natural medicine practitioners should be offering charity. The prices Nimbin practitioners charge is generally very low in comparison to standard rates around the country.

I'm a Chinese medicine practitioner, massage therapist, and reflexologist - and I personally have spent many years and many tens of thousands of dollars studying in my fields; and have spent a subsequent 15 years expanding and honing my knowledge and skills. This is my passion, but it is also my work, my income.

The hourly rate I charge (like any skilled service) must cover my continual on-going costs... clinic, rent, equipment, association fees, insurance, first aid certification, skill updating, taxes, advertising etc. Add into that we also don't receive any holiday pay, sick pay, government subsidies, income benefits, or the like. (Solo practitioners are rarely even close to "well off").

Most practitioners are caring, empathetic people who quietly offer many people (unpaid) help with health and life battles. Not to mention the countless hours spent cornered in a social situation, on the street, in a shop, by people wanting some free advice.

So please don't lambast us for earning a living just because our particular skill set lies in the healing area. We care, and we're there to help... but we also need to keep a roof over our heads.

Melissa Williamson
Nimbin

Native vista

In reply to Geoff Dawe's response to my letter in the January edition of NGT, "the Job" of bush regeneration (but I prefer to call it habitat restoration) in my definition is to create native habitat that resembles pre Captain Cook arriving.

Yes, after removing the non-indigenous plant species, a wonderful "native vista" has appeared, and ever growing. My soil profile and biology is in perfect health, and I have a wonderful array of fungi, mosses, humus, ground covers, grasses, shrubs and trees. I have enormous amount of frogs, reptiles, birds, etc, and I have never had to plant a single thing, never needed a plastic grow bag, never needed a shovel, let alone a fertiliser pellet. The bell birds have retreated a little, which in turn hopefully will slow down the bell minor associated dieback in the forest.

As far as the growing food tangent goes, I could not agree more with Geoff. I intensely do my best to grow my food in the zones closer to my house, I see the forest areas as habitat for animals and native plants, not for me, there is plenty enough cleared/disturbed land already to make use for food production. It really just comes down to some good training in bush regeneration, permaculture, common sense, respect, and elbow grease.

I still think we are just taking different roads to Rome, and the letters/pressure/spotlight should be put upon the persons doing nothing, instead of fighting amongst ourselves.

Omar Cat Hart
Wadeville

Letters to the editor

NGT welcomes letters by email or post by deadline, the last Wednesday of the month. Letters longer than 300 words may be cut. Letters already published in other papers will usually not be considered. Please include full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

Weed whisperer

I take on board Omar Cat Hart's concern for my "target(ing)" of bush regenerator, Triny Roe (Letters, Dec 2011). I do not see myself doing that, but rather questioning the assumption that species can be noxious. Triny appears to be a carrier of those assumptions. I am merely challenging the assumptions, not Triny, who I recognise as my sister not least because she has a heart for other species.

I continue with the challenge. In her article (NGT, Jan 2012) Triny says that naturalising immigrant species (weeds) can "out-compete the native species and adversely impact on the existing ecosystem." "Adversely impact" is an anthropomorphic view. What proof is there of this as concerns the whole, rather than above ground native species?

The major concern for what some people call naturalising immigrants (exotics) is their ability to overrun natives. However, notwithstanding the legitimate angst involved in watching natives being overrun, the power to overrun can be seen as a great beauty. Because our culture generally degrades soil, overrunning plants, through greater biomass production, can be seen as contributing to the healing of soil.

In Australia, we disorganise ourselves by generally vacating rural areas to live in urban areas. In doing this we are saying the bush can look after itself for bush regenerators have no hope of bush regenerating Australia. If we honestly believe the bush can look after itself we can leave it for 1,500 years or whatever and see if it's true that as conditions change from reduced human occupation of rural areas, the natives eventually regenerate, as Peter Andrews has suggested

in *Back From the Brink*.

If leaving the bush causes too much chewing of fingernails, then we need to more fully populate rural areas so labour is there to put Madeira corms in liquid manure drums. There are many reasons for greater rural occupation than just weeds. Space precludes development of generalisations, but urban ribbon development doesn't work, housing needs more land round it for rainwater tanks and food miles reduce if diverse gardening cultures operate rurally.

Bush regenerators, not taking account of this, are currently poisoning human food plants that are able to save labour by going wild, such as guava, loquat, monsterio, ice cream bean, Brazilian cherry, blackberries, mangoes and jackfruit.

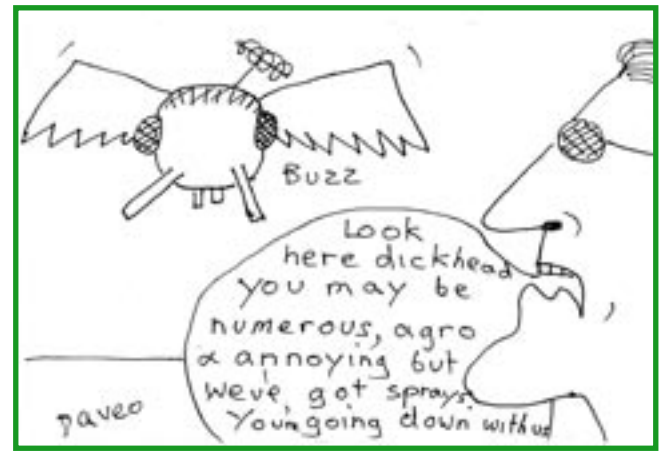
The overrunning of natives cannot be reasonably fixed by poisoning the overrunning plants. It is fixed by human beings organising themselves as though all life mattered and therefore moving away from the anthropomorphic view.

Geoff Dawe
Byrill Creek

Flood insurance

By definition one out of two people are below average intelligence. Actually that should read 'below median' but most people are too ignorant to know the difference between 'average' and 'median' let alone the nuance that separates 'stupid' from 'ignorant'. Also with huge populations as the statistical backdrop the average would be awfully close to the 50th median percentile.

Caveat emptor, buyer beware, and the reneging on this social principle and mores is in evidence with people complaining and career polities like Saffin getting on the bandwagon of demonising insurance



companies over the supposed ambiguity of flood damage and home insurance.

My only home insurance has been in Australia when I got my first policy out at age thirty. I was told in very plain English I was not covered by flooding caused by swollen rivers, etc but was covered for non-flood related water damage e.g. storm roof blowing off and 200 mm rain falling into the house.

The pressure on insurance companies to pay out for flood damage not covered by people's policies has been nauseating, and the capitulation by insurance companies has resulted in much higher premiums for everyone else.

Nothing says jungle, quite like a banana.

Paul A. Recher
Dorrroughby

XXX-mas

I read Mookx Hanley's piece in the December 2011 Black Tea-Tree edition - Right on! I forwarded it to most of the people on my list and mailed to many others. My sentiments prezakckly.

Tom Guranich
Bellingen Heights

Brown nosing

I enjoyed reading Mookx shitty article in January. It reminded me of a great scatalogical saying: "life is like a sewer - what you put into it is what you get out of it." Not pretty, but true.

I love the variety and depth of the writers in your excellent paper. Thanks for making it available in Mullumbimby.

Magenta Appel-Pye
Mullumbimby

Boob hotline

I'd like to draw attention to a new hotline for women who may be concerned about

breast implants, given recent media coverage.

The new hotline service has been set up following concerns from Europe over breast implants supplied by the company Poly Implant Prosthèse (PIP). Women who have had breast implants and are concerned can ring the Breast Implant Information Line or contact their surgeon directly for clinical advice.

While there is no evidence of increased rupture rates here in Australia, support is available for women who want more information. For women who require further follow up, clinical and radiological investigations will be covered under the usual Medicare arrangements. Just contact your GP for advice and referrals.

The Breast Implant Information Line will operate 24 hours a day, to provide advice and support. This government service will also register women's contact details so follow up information can be provided if necessary.

I reiterate that on the basis of current data available there is no evidence of increased rupture rates for PIP implants in Australia.

The Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has only received 37 reports of ruptured PIP implants since 2000. This represents only 0.4% of PIP implants and was well within the international evidence of implant rupture rates. While this rate of incidence remains within the expected risk of rupture, given concerns in Europe regarding this product the Government recommends that women see their surgeons if they are

About us

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Distribution: Angus, Sue, Coralie, Daniel, Faerie Laura's (Bellingen), Dave (West End), Roger (Glebe), Ken (Noosa).

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

Next deadline:
Wednesday 29th February

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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concerned or require further advice.

The TGA will be continue to keep a close watch on this situation and further information will be provided if more information becomes available and they are contacting all Australian surgeons who have used the PIP implants to ask that they provide a clinical evaluation to their patients.

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week the Breast Implant Information Line is 1800-217-257.

Janelle Saffin MP
Federal Member for Page

War on plastic

The year of the Dragon is now officially underway. 2012 promises to be a year of change (just like every other year). It frustrates me that we are still able to go to a local shop and purchase a couple of items and have them placed in a single-use non-biodegradable bag.

It also frustrates me that once we drink our can or bottle of drink it generally goes straight into a rubbish bin bound for landfill (in NSW 60% of drink containers end up in landfill).

I was taught at school over 20 years ago (as was everyone else) that we live in a world of finite resources. Well, change can be painfully slow, especially while the corporates have their hand on the go-slow button (unless the 'global financial system' is at risk, then suddenly there's trillions of dollars to throw at the 'problem').

Now that the 'War on Terror' seems to be loosening its grip on our consciousness we can turn our attention to that other 'War' that has been raging across the globe. I'm talking about the 'War on Plastic'. Each year over 500 billion single use plastic bags are produced and generally end up either in landfill or the ocean. To produce them it takes over 4.5 billion litres of oil (each year).

The single-use plastic bag has been banned in many countries and states throughout the world. Recently the ACT legislated a ban on them. Many small towns and cities around the world have also initiated a 'voluntary' ban. It would be such a wonderful achievement if the North Coast could

Computer theft

On Sunday, 15th of January at approx. 9am, my Apple MacBook Pro 17" screen plus my Telstra Sierra wireless device were stolen from the caravan I have for sale at Kyogle Rd, Cawongla Village. I am currently holding an extended garage sale there, as I am about to move overseas.

I have everything on this computer, my nearly completed Masters, my midwifery business, birthing seat designs, all my overseas flights and living arrangements, all the paperwork to take my two little dogs with me on the flight and all my photos. I am absolutely desperate to get the computer back.

I believe the laptop, which has a clear plastic sleeve, also known as "crystal case", was probably stolen by two tallish blokes in their early 20's, perhaps 24 or so. Both have crew cut (almost shaved head), wear white t-shirts and jeans. One of them has an unusually prominent chin. The one who allegedly took the computer has a scar under his left eye.

While the one with the chin was talking to me about buying a motorbike helmet from me (a brand-new white HJC full face one) which he bought, the other walked away from the caravan and must have had the laptop under his t-shirt. They came in a white 4WD ute. The bloke with the chin told me he lives locally and that he has a motocross bike.



I only noticed the theft later that afternoon. Nobody else had been to see the caravan as it was raining all day. I believe they also stole my golden women's metal TAG Heuer wrist watch.

The police were called and took fingerprints from the caravan. As the thief did not manage to grab the power supply, the Apple store in Lismore was alerted with the details of this matter. Three days later a guy fitting the description, entered the store and purchased a power supply. He had a bare chest and wore long, black homeboy style shorts.

If you know these blokes, or if you know anything about this matter, could you please persuade them to return the computer or please contact me, Monika Boenigk, as soon as possible on 0428-488-550, or Sgt. Reid from Kyogle Police on 6632-1444.

Monika Boenigk

achieve a voluntary ban (Lennox Head was almost there in 2010 – only 3 shops provided them).

The other front on the 'War on Plastic' is the low level of packaging recycling which could also be addressed if there was political will to do so. NSW currently recycles about 35% of drink bottles, where SA, which has a Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) recycles up to 85%. The NT recently introduced a CDS, despite threats of legal action from Coca-Cola Amatil. A CDS scheme would also provide a much needed cash flow for local Council's (who collect recycling) as well as reduce the amount of plastic going into our landfill (not to mention saving the black gold for other uses).

Ballina Council unanimously supported my motions calling for a ban on plastic bags and the introduction of a CDS in NSW (a national scheme would be ideal). Ballina Council will now write to the various Ministers calling on them to introduce legislation in support of our position. We will also be moving these motions at the NSW Shire's

Division A conference at South West Rocks in March. The more Councils that lobby for these changes the more likely the NSW or Federal Government will initiate a change.

Let's make 2012 the year we finally started to get on top in this long running War on Plastic.

Jeff Johnson
Lennox Head

Families tackle obesity

The obesity epidemic in Australian school children is a hot topic and a complex problem with the treatment options multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary.

Recent research has demonstrated the effectiveness and importance of empathetic parental involvement in family-based treatment for childhood obesity. Parents and caregivers can lead by example, praise children's progress towards goals and use missteps as learning opportunities.

"In many cases, the adults in a family may be the most effective change agents to help obese children attain and maintain a healthier weight," said Myles S. Faith, Ph.D., chair of the American

Heart Association. "To do so, the adults may need to modify their own behaviour and try some research-based strategies." Some strategies identified are;

The problem is a family problem and not the child's fault.

What do we as a family need to change?

Set family goals and monitor progress e.g. reducing or limiting television screen time or after dinner the family goes for a walk.

Provide a home environment that encourages healthier choices in food.

Praising and rewarding progress and, instead of criticising, use "slips" as an opportunity to help children and the family identify ways to make different choices if the same situation arises again.

Families have a great capacity to create change even within this complex problem and by doing so provide the platform for the development of important life skills e.g. Problem solving, understanding mistakes happen, healthy communication, goal setting etc.

Julie Leete
Interrelate, Lismore

Notices

House for Rent

Nimbin township, fully renovated, 3 bedrooms, 2 sleepouts, new kitchen and 2 bathrooms, lovely fenced yard, open fireplace, insulated. \$300 p.w. Great family home. Phone 0416-557-552.

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\$220 p.w. plus bond, plus references. Phone 6689-7534.

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Practitioners needed for beautiful space with good rental price. Days available: Tuesdays and Saturdays. Phone 6689-1554.

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Preferably self-contained, 240 volts, quiet surrounds... and cheap. Please contact Mookx on 0432-038-804.

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Long established, price includes training DVD, registered trademark, website (tunedpercussion.com). Selling for health reasons. \$30,000 + SAV ONO. Phone Jonathan 6622-6227.

For Sale – Garden Tiller

Viking VH500 Garden Tiller, 5.5hp B&S engine, 80cm cut, as new. Best offer over \$500. Phone Dick Hopkins 6689-1285 or 0427-796-304.

Wanted – local native and pioneer species seeds

Nimbin Rocks Nursery would greatly appreciate them. Please contact Monica on 0467-580-080 or Tracey at Ngulingah LAC on 6621-5541.

Yoga with Sam

Yoga classes with Sam have returned to Nimbin. Join us in awakening and nurturing more of you on every level, Fridays 9am – 10.30am at Nimbin Community Centre. (More classes starting in March.) Phone 6693-0160, or visit: www.anuraktiyoga.net

Bush Dance

Saturday 25th February at Tuntable Hall. \$5 adults, gold coin kids. Supper and drinks available from 6pm. Come along, fling your gumboots off and forget about the rain for a few hours!

Tattooing

Beki and Sophie regrettably advise that they have finished up at Nimbin Ink, and thank everyone for their support over the years. Those who have unfinished work or would like to make a booking should contact Beki on 0415-822-851 or Sophie on 0439-497-698.

Northern Rivers Greens

Next meeting is in Kyogle on 13th February 6-8pm at Grove House, 8 Geneva Street Kyogle. Enquiries phone 6689-1148.

Wildlife Rescue course

WIRES is holding a Wildlife Rescue & Immediate Care Course on 18th and 19th February at Southern Cross University, Lismore. This 2-day course will qualify you to become a member of WIRES, teaching you how to safely rescue and provide emergency care for injured and orphaned native wildlife. For more information call 6628-1898 or visit the website: www.wiresnr.org

Unity Bhajans

Meetings on 26th February and 11th March, 11am at Birth & Beyond, Nimbin. Enquiries phone Maria 6633-7261.

Janelle's Page

by Janelle Saffin, MP

As Term one gets underway, I would like to pass on my best wishes for the school year to school communities across Page.

From those starting kindergarten, to the young adults preparing for their final year, and all those in between, along with your families and teachers, may you make the very best of the opportunities this year offers you.

And I am happy to be able to pass on some good news to local school communities.

Solar Schools

The Australian Government has announced the latest round of the National Solar Schools Program and there are 20 schools from Page on the list of successful schools, including St Brigid's Primary in Kyogle, and Wiangaree, Mummulgum and Stratheden Public Schools.

The Northern Rivers region leads the way in the take up of residential solar power, and it is wonderful to see our local schools taking this on as well, and good to see that some of our smaller schools have been successful.

Under the program, schools can apply for grants of up to \$50,000 to install solar and other renewable

power systems as well as rainwater tanks and other energy efficiency measures such as skylights, ceiling fans, shade awnings and double glazing.

While many school communities are keen to install air conditioning, this program encourages schools to consider their energy consumption and look at more sustainable ways of managing their classroom environment.

The Government's National Solar School Program started in 2008 and since then about 3,800 schools around Australia have had grants approved.

This is a great way for young people to learn first hand about the use of renewable energy and the importance of water and energy conservation

And for those schools that haven't applied or been successful to date, a reminder that applications for the final round of the National Solar Schools Program open on 13 February 2012.

Save those back-to-school receipts

The beginning of the school year can be an expensive time for families, keeping up with the school uniform needs of growing kids as well as the



Member for Page
63 Molesworth Street
Lismore
Phone 1300-301-735

long list of school books and materials.

I remind you to keep your receipts for school expenses, so you can claim the Government's Education Tax Refund at the end of the financial year.

On top of regular items such as computers, home internet connections, textbooks and stationery, parents are now also able to claim school-approved uniforms including hats, shoes and sports uniforms.

Under the Education Tax Refund, eligible families can claim up to 50 per cent of expenses, with refunds of up to \$409 per primary student and up to \$818 for a secondary student.

Details including eligibility are available at www.educationtaxrefund.gov.au

Tweed-Byron Marine Reserve proposed

Conservation groups are proposing the creation of a 15,000 km² Tweed-Byron Commonwealth Marine Reserve, covering Commonwealth waters extending from the existing NSW Cape Byron Marine Park out for 220km, to encompass 4km high volcanic mountains rising from the depths of the Abyssal Plain.

The proposal has been prepared by local conservationist Dailan Pugh and has been endorsed by most state and national marine conservation groups.

The Commonwealth is in the process of establishing promised comprehensive, adequate and representative systems of marine reserves in each of its six Australian marine regions. The Temperate East Marine Region extends from Bermagui on the south coast to past Fraser Island and out to beyond Norfolk Island.

Mr. Pugh said that the Commonwealth is proposing that 25% of the Temperate East Marine Region be incorporated into marine reserves, though most reserves are still available for most forms of fishing, with only 4.3% fully protected in Marine National Park zones.

"The science is that 20-50% of each population and ecosystem needs to be fully protected from fishing to establish an adequate reserve system.

"The proposed outcomes are far worse for coastal ecosystems. For the Commonwealth controlled waters of the continental shelf a mere 1.6% is proposed for reservation, with only 0.01% fully protected. Similarly for the continental slope only 8% is proposed for reservation with none fully protected.

"Numerous ecosystems, key ecological features, biologically important areas and severely depleted species have been excluded.

"We have been duded. The Commonwealth is proposing to give us one of the worst reserve outcomes in the whole of Australia, and have totally dropped the Tweed Area for further assessment that they were meant to be considering for a reserve.

"The proposed Tweed- Byron Marine Reserve extends from the existing Cape Byron Marine Park, over the continental shelf, down the continental slope, across the 4.5-5km deep abyssal plain to take in the 4km high volcanic Britannia seamount. It includes the 2km deep Tweed Canyon eaten into the continental slope by the ancestral Tweed and Brunswick rivers.

"Many species of the deeper continental shelf and slope waters have long lives, slow reproduction and slow maturity, and thus are particularly vulnerable to over-fishing. Populations of many higher order predators, along with some targeted commercial fish, have been decimated by more than 90% off NSW in the last few decades. Complex seafloor communities, including sponge and deep-water coral reefs, are being systematically eliminated by trawling. These are the ecosystems and species most urgently in need of the reservation the Commonwealth is denying them" Mr. Pugh said.

Mr Pugh urged people to make submissions to the Commonwealth supporting needed conservation outcomes, including the proposed Tweed Byron Marine Reserve.

As stated by the Federal Minister for the Environment, Tony Burke, "We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to put in place the measures needed to protect our precious marine environment for future generations".

The Commonwealth is currently seeking comments on its proposals. Information is available at: www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/temperate-east/index.html

The full Proposed Tweed-Byron Commonwealth Marine Reserve report is available at: http://nccc.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/proposed_tweed_byron_marine_reserve.pdf

North Coast urged to support Constitutional recognition of Indigenous Australians

Local MP Justine Elliot encourages all residents of the North coast to show their support for Indigenous Constitutional recognition.

The Australian Government has received the expert panel's report on the recognition of Indigenous people in the Australian Constitution.

Over the past year the panel of Indigenous and Community leaders, constitutional law experts, and parliamentary members have led wide-ranging national public consultations to develop options to recognise the special place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution.

The Government will now carefully consider the panel's recommendations before determining the best way forward

"Constitutional recognition of Indigenous people, here on the North Coast and right around Australia, is a significant step towards building a nation based

on strong relations and mutual respect," Justine said.

"We asked the panel to tour the country and talk with people about how we can best recognise our first peoples in our founding document.

They also started the task of building support for this change – something that now rests with all of us."

Justine said local people can show their support for constitutional recognition by joining the 'You Me Unity' campaign at www.youmeunity.org.au

"You can have a look at the panel's report, learn more about constitutional recognition and register your support.

"We don't underestimate the challenge of achieving consensus for change. But that change can start right here on the North Coast.

"I want to thank all the panel members for their dedication and effort over the past year, as well as everyone on the North Coast



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

who attended a meeting, made a submission or simply went online and showed their support."

Young Australians eligible for Hearing Services for longer

Young adults aged 21 to 26 will soon be eligible for free hearing services, including hearing aids and cochlear speech processor upgrades provided through Australian Hearing.

Local MP Justine Elliot said that from 1 January, young adults living on the North Coast will be eligible for comprehensive range of largely free hearing services, such as rehabilitation and hearing devices, until they turn 26 years old. Previously they became ineligible at 21.

Justine said, "Being unable to access appropriate hearing services can have a serious effect on the future earning potential and social participation of young people.

"By extending the age to which eligible young adults can access services we can make a big difference to their lives – they will now be able to continue to get support while they finish study and establish themselves in careers.

"They will be eligible for a

comprehensive range of hearing services, such as rehabilitation and hearing devices, until their 26th birthday. This includes hearing aids and cochlear implant speech processor upgrades, provided through Australian Hearing," said Justine.

It is estimated that by 2015-16, more than 2,000 young adults will be receiving at least one service each year as a result of these changes.

The Federal Labor Government has committed an additional \$47.7 million over four years from 2011-12 to improve access to services for hearing impaired Australians including the extension of services to young adults.

To be eligible to access hearing services as part of these changes, young adults must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident, have not yet turned 26 years of age, and have a confirmed hearing loss.

For more information, visit www.hearing.com.au/youngadults

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From the Mayor's desk

by Jenny Dowell

Jenny.Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au

Australia Day

Many Australians regard Australia Day an opportunity to have a BBQ, head to the beach or just have a day off. Some decorate themselves, their homes or cars with a flag but give relatively little thought to the meaning of the day. For some people, Australia Day is met with mixed emotions. Some shun it because they see it as a day of jingoistic nationalism which, when fuelled by alcohol, can be ugly and divisive. For others, it is Invasion Day or Survival Day and conjures up grief and disenfranchisement. Australia Day elicits a myriad of responses but whatever the response, I would hope that we all reflect on the day and gain some insights into our relationships with this land and all the people who call it home.

Through Lismore Council, I hope that Australia Day is a day of respectful recognition and acknowledgement

that we live in a wonderful community filled with amazing people. For those things and for our democracy, we are grateful. We are fortunate to have an Aboriginal community that is so understanding of our bumbling attempts at reconciliation and together we celebrate the longevity of an ancient culture alongside the more recent history of multiculturalism.

One of the best parts of Australia Day for me is the conferral of citizenship on those who have chosen to adopt a new nation and this community as their home. During the year, I host four or five citizenship ceremonies with family and close friends present in Chambers to witness the occasion. On Australia Day, citizenship is conferred at a very public event. All those present can witness the ceremony and congratulate and welcome the newest Australians. This year, ten people from eight countries of birth became citizens. Whether they were from the UK, Thailand, India, Canada,



Ireland or Pakistan, they are now all proud Australians and we welcome them.

This year for the first time we held a Citizenship Affirmation ceremony too. This is an opportunity for those who consider Australia to be their home, whether they are citizens or not, to pledge allegiance to our nation. It is optional, has no legal effect and there are no certificates but the words are meaningful to many: 'As an Australian citizen, I affirm my loyalty to Australia and its people, whose democratic beliefs I share, whose rights and liberties I respect and whose laws I uphold and obey'

I was delighted to see seven nominations from Nimbin for the Lismore Australia Day awards! The celebrations at the Goonellabah Sports and Aquatic Centre included recognizing 57 nominees for awards in categories including environment, arts, sport, community service and citizenship.

The Nimbin people or groups recognised were Pam Bourne, Cedar Crompton, Rose Cubis, Darcy Goodwin and 5 Loaves, Krista Matthews Nat

Meyer and the Chamber of Commerce. Congratulations to them all- and thanks to those who made the effort to nominate them.

KPoM and LEP

By the time the Good Times hits the streets, the Draft Koala Plan of Management and the Draft Local Environmental Plan will have finished their times on public exhibition. The next step will be for staff to summarise the submissions received and write a report for Councillors' consideration in the coming months.

There has been some false information circulating about these two documents so I encourage readers to read the documents for yourselves and not rely on someone else's interpretation. It is worth noting that there are a few individuals who would like to see both documents delayed so that they become election issues.

September 8

Yes folks, Council elections will be held on September 8 this year. The Council term comes to a close on the second Saturday every four years so readers will

become accustomed to the usual raising of profiles as potential candidates jockey for attention. Undoubtedly some of our current Councillors will decide not to run again so there will be changes.

I am very keen to see an increase in the diversity of Councillor representation, particularly more women, so if you are vaguely interested, please contact me to talk how you might decide and prepare.

Post Card to 16 year old self

If you are over 50 years of age, you are invited to send a postcard to yourself when you were 16. What words of hope, advice, encouragement or love would you write? Council is inviting over 50s to write a postcard and post it back to Council (or drop it into the big red postbox at the CBD Office in Magellan St) for display during both Seniors Week and Youth Week. You can be anonymous or add your name. Postcards can be collected from Nimbin Visitor Info Centre or the Neighbourhood Centre or call Christine Minkov on 1300-878-387 and she will send you some. Please get your postcards back to Christine by the end of February.

Simon says..

by Cr Simon Clough

Lismore City Council doesn't have a meeting in January and so I thought I would write about those things that I have been thinking about most over the 'Festive Season'. Oh, and please don't forget your submissions on the Koala Plan of Management are due by 3rd February and the Local Environment Plan by 30th January.

I've spent the vast majority of my life in rural areas, mainly on the Northern Rivers of NSW. I'm proud to call myself a country person. I love the freedom, the community, the closeness to nature, the working with the land and the millions of smells, tastes and experiences the rural life has to offer. Yet on a daily basis I see these things and experiences that I treasure are under threat of annihilation.

Coal seam gas (CSG) mining is an obvious example. Just looking at aerial photos of the 'gaslands' around Chinchilla in Queensland makes me full of dread. The area is a spider web of pipes, roads and evaporation ponds. This is not a rural landscape. It is an industrial landscape that totally prevents any agricultural activity and poisons the water and air, both in the immediate vicinity and more generally. I can't bear the idea that this could happen to our area and community.

All of this is for the short term (20 years or so) profit



for some of the world's most powerful carbon companies such as Shell and Petro China. Make no mistake, this mining has only limited benefits for Australia. The profits are for mostly overseas shareholders. The energy consumers are mainly in Asia. The gas fired power stations proposed locally are small and the main focus for the corporations is getting the gas off shore even if it means piping gas through the Border Ranges World Heritage area as Metgasco is proposing.

While the CSG industry loudly proclaims that its product has 70% less greenhouse gas emissions than coal this claim is yet to be proved in reality. Fugitive emissions are a major problem with CSG as can be seen from many leaking wells in this area. This fugitive gas is methane which is 20 times more dangerous than CO². There has been a recent study in the US that found that CSG mining and use produces more greenhouse gas than similar activities with coal. I see this whole situation as far more complex

than those with a vested interest would have us believe.

I applaud those local people who are taking a stand against CSG under the current circumstances. Protestors are putting their lives on hold, risking arrest all to protect our food, water and rural landscape.

Another threat to rural Australia is the rapid expansion of open cut coal mines. The Liverpool Plains is one of Australia's most productive farming areas and yet it is threatened by open cut coal mining. In addition the Queensland government has approved over 30 open cut coal mines for the Darling Downs widely regarded as one of the major food bowls of Australia.

These open cut mines are hundreds of hectares in size and totally destroying any agricultural production. I'm very concerned about our long-term food security. It is great in our area that we have such an excellent range of produce markets encouraging local food production.

The implications of these massive carbon based developments don't end with the destruction of agricultural land. These developments especially in Queensland require massive port developments, such as the expansion of Gladstone's harbour which has been related to the deaths of fish, dugongs and turtles.

This is only one of many developments planned that directly threaten the World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef. Not only is the reef

threatened by the 120 million cubic metres of sludge from the dredging, but also by the huge gas tankers and coal carriers which must navigate the reef. Inevitably some of these huge vessels will run aground, leaking oil, killing sea life and damaging the reef structurally.

I can't finish this article without special mention of the Federal Minister for Energy and Resources, Martin Ferguson. It was revealed that Ferguson is using the Australian Federal Police, ASIO and a private security firm to spy on environmental activists. Ferguson is also behind the signing of large scale energy contracts to countries such as Taiwan, which will commit Australia into the future for the required mining and port infrastructure. I believe that the power exercised by this politician in combination with the world's largest corporations is a genuine threat to our democracy.

All of the above makes me realise that I have grown up in a privileged time when 'country was country' and that this is not a privilege that will be experienced by our grandchildren. Unless of course, more are prepared to stand up and use direct nonviolent action, our most powerful tool in defending our environment, communities and democracy.

You can follow me on Facebook
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Be part of the arts with NORPA

NORPA is the Northern Rivers premiere performing arts company that brings the best of Australian touring companies to the region as well as creating their own works.

In 2012, NORPA is presenting 12 different shows that cover a huge range of live performance including theatre, dance, circus, comedy, cabaret and kids shows. Some exciting opportunities exist to be part of this dynamic and innovative performing arts company.

NORPA's first show for the year, Railway Wonderland (March 27-31) is a spectacular home-grown theatre work that has been two years in the making and will be performed at Lismore's beautiful, disused train station platform. Combining audio visual projections, live music and physical theatre the show will take audiences on a magical mystery tour across time from the 1940s to the present day.

NORPA is calling for a professional stage manager and a production assistant to join an amazing team of 10 cast and creatives from all over Australia. This is a unique opportunity to work on an inspiring and innovative new theatre work being created in the local area. Visit www.norpa.org.au/about-us for more info.

Every year NORPA also invites people who are passionate about any aspect of theatre and performing arts to get involved with the company through their Youth Ambassadors program or by becoming a Volunteer. Youth Ambassadors (16-26 years) take part in a year-long program of behind the scenes experiences and workshops and get to see all NORPA shows. NORPA Volunteers are the lifeblood of the company and fulfill most Front of House roles, including Ushers and Bar Staff and assist on Box Office. There are also opportunities for volunteers in NORPA's busy, friendly office.

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MardiGrass 2012 inspired by the Occupy movement



MardiGrass plans are up and running, and after two meetings, the program for the 5th and 6th of May is already bursting at the seams.

All the favourite events will reappear and many of our previous popular speakers are confirmed, including Dr Alex Wodak, Professor Paul Wilson, and Dr Bob Melamede from USA.

New in the 2012 program, thanks to the outlawing of bong, is a Rubbish Bong Race where contestants have to make a bong from whatever they can find, and show it works. We're also excited to announce the MardiGrass Skatejam which is already generating national interest.

There will be some changes this year, but nothing is written in ink yet and we are still negotiating with Lismore Council over details. Sibley Street may not be closed this year, and the glorious new skate park has halved the traditional HEMP Olympix Arena, but the real point of MardiGrass - Cannabis Law Reform - remains more real than ever.

The helicopters have been buzzing the area, with a crew decked out like African mercenaries, machetes strapped to their waists. If we needed reminding that the drug

war steams on unabated, the chopper crew does a good job.

Because it's the twentieth MardiGrass - believe it or not! - we are looking to do a re-enactment of Bob Hopkins now infamous 'surrender' at the Police Station in May 1993. This time we expect a mass surrender and everyone is asked to bring a white flag. There are other symbols people may prefer to bring... like a towel, a rubber toothbrush, a joint, plant or bong, soap on a rope!

"War is over if you want it," said John and Yoko, and we certainly want it to be over. The meetings have been unanimous in wanting to bring back the seriousness of how much cannabis prohibition stuffs up people's lives so unnecessarily.

We begin our protest this year on Tuesday the first of May, with Occupy Lismore Court House, where so many lives are disrupted by the drug war, before we proceed to the Police Station (next door), then to Federal MP



Bob Hopkins' 1993 surrender. Photo from 'Nearly Normal Nimbin', by Paul Tait and Jeni Kendall

Janelle Saffin's Office, and finally local NSW MP Thomas George's Office.

Letters will be delivered to the politicians asking for change on the cannabis laws, asking them to have another look at these laws and what effect they have on the community. Our two parliamentary representatives both support the war against us. They both support criminalising us for using a plant from nature, and yet they both have children in trouble from the drug war.

Why is Australia being left behind on drug law reform? The Greens seem spooked by the matter even though it is a social justice issue of paramount importance. Under our present antiquated political system, if the Prime Minister said, "let's trial medical cannabis," the opposition would hysterically scream, "she wants to give away heroin". The madness emanating from government and media over this issue is no different from the attitudes of the 1950s.

We need leaders with vision to sit in a circle and examine the facts and make decisions that are good for society, good for happiness levels. We are still competing with each other like animals, when to make things better, we need to co-operate... like smart animals.

Tickets for MardiGrass are for sale on the website www.nimbinmardigrass.com and we recommend you purchase now if you want a campsite. The 2012 draft program is up on the website, but will keep changing.

This year we are looking for some special skills amongst our volunteers, particularly local volunteers. Traffic controllers will be treated like gold, Jungle Patrol will again provide their exemplary service and needs

local members in particular, as does CLOG, the Civil Liberties Observer Group.

We always need and love artists and painters, experienced camera operators, cooks and kitchen hands, Bud Babes [both men and women] and Ganja Faeries who we can trust to collect donations. Volunteer coordinators are needed and anyone with Woodford experience could be handy. There is a message book in the Embassy where you can write down your contact details etc, or phone 6689-1842.

MOB (MardiGrass Organising Body) meetings are on the back verandah of the HEMP Embassy every Friday from 5 pm, and everyone is welcome. If you have an event or something you want to see happen, let us know sooner rather than later.



Police involved in the removal of cannabis plants from a Blue Knob property on 19th January had to cope without their pan-tech, arranging carriage of the immature plants on the roof racks of otherwise unmarked 4WDs. Attempts to incinerate the damp haul in a local quarry also proved unsuccessful. Photos: Tub



STREET SHUFFLE

Journal of the North Coast's longest serving covert

by Undacuva

Undacuva mind power

How can a simple good idea get out of control so quickly? In a word, Twitter. Or Facebook.

What started as a small group of meditators wondering if they could

ground the Plantation Squad (PS) turned into a flood once Nimbin hookups got hold of it. The Boss ordered erasure as soon as the alert came in but by then over 300 people had said they'd make it their meditation of the week.

And the more it rained the more they must have sat inside, incense burning, visualising and willing the chopper... "to be still."

Pipe insisted they were,

"...doing God's work, and anyway they're discovering what power they have."

"Witchcraft?" I asked.

"If you like," was all he muttered, puffing away.

I assure you the PS didn't mind, spending the week playing pool in the Byron clubs and hanging out at the bayside gyms. The Force provides unlimited steroids and gym memberships and it's "looked upon favourably if members keep up their fitness levels." Deeper in, the Manual has some great reading. "Obesity, once seen as a weapon of power is now frowned upon and 'throwing your weight around' is not encouraged anymore as a response tactic in the Force."

I didn't last long with the chopper and the PS 'out in the paddock', as they call it. I'm usually playing FU (female Unda) so I stay away from any muscle building



they never run out of weed. My mates in uniform never believe me on that.

Then the truck wouldn't start and someone headed off to get a rental van to ship the crop out and while

he was gone we had one of the funniest hours I've ever spent in the Force. They had no idea they were stoned to the gills from handling the weed for hours on end and were convinced my depressed mood had flattened the battery. When the hire truck returned with lunch and they attacked the food like savages only then they realised the munchies had got them. More hysterical laughter as they agreed I was right, which infuriated the Boss. Somehow you're not allowed to enjoy the job, especially if he isn't!

I did manage to keep them away from the hippy communes you may have noticed, in exchange for the

box of about a thousand seedlings (\$2 million) that were left out like easy to find Easter eggs. Well done hippies, I never thought you'd get that one together.

Back on the street in the wet Bin I've been hanging around the pub because most of my old mates are there. Forced to keep up I'm getting mind numbing hangover headaches every morning and complained to the Boss I needed a new mission. He delighted in telling me to stay where I was and to keep writing daily reports. "Priority One Bethany. The hippy village experiment must never look a success. And if that means you have to show up looking like death every morning that's your contribution and don't Unda estimate it either."

HipiLeaks: Jan 2012. From Head Office Canberra to all Stations. The panic on Australia Day by the PM's minders who forgot wearing high heels she couldn't run as fast as them has seen the dismissal of 12 in the Force. Let it be a lesson. Whatever happens, DON'T PANIC.

NIMBIN BOWLO

25 Sibley Street
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What's On in February?

- Sunday 5th – Iluka club visit
- Saturday 11th – Mullumbimby Old Boys club visit
- Sunday 19th – South Tweed Trippers club visit
- Twilight Bowls – Fridays in February, from 5pm
- Trivia is back – Every Saturday, from 7pm
- Courtesy Bus – Book at bar
- Free Broadband – Over 50's

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The Lismore Jazz Club presents 'Feel the Manouché' (pictured) with George Washingmachine, on Thursday, 23rd February at the Lismore City Bowling Club from 7pm to 10pm. Admission is \$10 for members and students and \$15 for non members.

George Washingmachine tries to keep busy. A North Coast tour late February warms him up for a trip to Europe in March. He will be touring the UK as well as gigs in Paris and Budapest. He then returns to Oz for a couple of months before travelling to Switzerland in June for The Ascona Jazz Festival. He also has a visual art exhibition in July at The Pine Street Studios in Chippendale, Sydney.

In Lismore he is proud to present his band 'Feel The Manouché'.

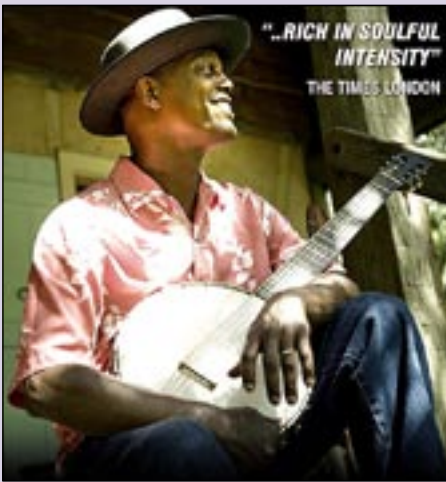
Manouché is a term derived from the Romany gypsies of Europe and what we in Australia call gypsy jazz. This fine band



has been put together by its individual members as an exercise in small group swing. 'Feel the Manouché' has a 'world music' feel through its use of double bass, guitar, accordion and fiddle. The band achieves a strong melodic groove that can take on gypsy waltzes, swing jazz, choro and many other flavours of music from our diverse planet. We invite you to sit back and 'Feel the Manouché'.

'Feel the Manouché' features George Washingmachine on violin, ukelele and vocal, Arthur Washington on guitar, Clare O'Meara on accordion, violin and vocal, and Stan Valacos on double bass. They will be performing such favourites as C'est Si Bon, I'll See You In My Dreams, Swing 39, Swing 48, West Coast Blues, The Mooche, You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To, How High The Moon, C'est Magnifique, Joseph Joseph... and many more!

New World Blues comes to Lismore



Eric Bibb (pictured), the international folk-blues master of songcraft, is returning to his Australian fans in duo mode with Swedish guitarist Staffan Astner.

A performance by Eric Bibb is an enriching experience – both musically and spiritually. Purveying a beautifully realised and deftly accomplished, soulful and gospel infused, folk-blues, Eric has no problem melding a traditional rootsy American style with a subtle contemporary sensibility.

Eric performs with matchless ease and a poet's

sensibility. He has criss-crossed the world paying his dues and absorbing musical influences, picking up countless awards and nominations, and mesmerising audiences along the way.

Taj Mahal has said of him, "Eric is one of the new, young singers that has appeared on the scene that, much to my delight, has a great voice, is an excellent performer and has a great knowledge about the roots of this music."

Eric will be accompanied by beautiful Swedish guitarist Staffan Astner, who is also featured with Eric on his live CD, 'Troubadour Live!'

Eric Bibb and Staffan Astner will perform at Star Court Theatre, Lismore on Saturday 3rd March, the only Far North Coast gig in their Australian tour.

Open Mic season at The Channon



by Gail Loader, Publicity Officer, The Channon Folk Club

The launch of the Open Mic season for 2012 took off with a great afternoon of music.

Peter, Paul and Mandy, aka Peter, William and Amanda, started the day with their sweet harmonies and uke playing. We also saw excellent performances by Toby, Serinna and Jaeden, who all just keep getting better and better and the audience really take great pleasure in all their performances. Judging by their response the crowd also enjoyed seeing Paul Dorahy playing again and Paul, Jaeden and Rayzor's impromptu jam was superb.

One of the best things about an Open Mic is the unexpected and Tara, was no exception. Travelling through the area, she saw the sign, so she dropped in and started to play and sing some wonderful folk music, she mentioned meeting up with Ralph McTell whilst in England and proceeded to play a song

he'd taught her... 'The Streets of London'!

And we were in for a real treat with Rich Latimer playing and singing all his own superb music.

The courtesy bus is now available for Folk Club, but you need to book it by ringing The Channon Butterfactory Tavern on 6688-6522

If you would like to be kept up to date with Folk Club news, please let me know by emailing me on: channon@lismore.net.au



Bush Theatre screen previews

Reviewed by Belinda Marsh

X

Friday 3rd and Saturday 4th February at 7.30pm MA, 85mins

X is the erotic story of two young women who are plunged into a game of cat and mouse.

Kings Cross escort Holly is saying goodbye to her call girl life, and on her last night on the job, she meets teenage runaway Shay... And things go horribly wrong.

If they can get through this unrelenting night, they might just have a chance at a fresh start.



AGES OF LOVE

Friday 11th and Saturday 12th February at 7.30pm MA, 124 mins

Stars: Robert De Niro and Monica Bellucci

Italian with English subtitles

The Ages of Love is a new Italian comedy that tells three separate stories about love at various ages. Cupid's bow mainly hits its target in three separate yet connected chapters in this romantic tale.



THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

Friday 17th and Saturday 18th February at 7.30pm M, 103 mins

An HR manager escorts the body of a foreign worker killed in a suicide bomb blast back to her Eastern European home.

This road movie, beautifully shot on location in Jerusalem and Romania, is tremendously enjoyable and very funny. Don't let the title put you off!



THE WOMEN ON THE 6TH FLOOR

Friday 25th and Saturday 26th February at 7.30pm PG, 102 mins

Paris, in the early 1960s. A serious but uptight stockbroker is married to a class-conscious woman. He leads a steady yet boring life.

At least until Maria, the charming new maid at the service of the family, makes him discover the servants' quarter on the sixth floor of the luxury building he owns and lives in.



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Sunday Gig Guide

February 2pm Start

5th Lucky Wonders
Byron Bay based folk, indie and pop with fantastic vibes

12th Euphonix
With Murray Kyle, Bodhi Seed & Hugh Jones, Euphonix put the funk back in the soul with their live dynamic instrumental groove

19th Green Eggs 'n Ham
Legends Li Fi and Bill Jacobi team up for a fun afternoon

26th Mitch Giddoes
Plays folk, reggae and heart music for the soul

March

4th Luke Vassella
Luke creates a unique atmosphere, blending guitar, harmonica, stomp box, tambourine and voice



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February Gigs

Thursday 2nd
Friday 3rd
Sunday 5th

Thursday 9th
Friday 10th
Saturday 11th
Sunday 12th

Thursday 16th
Friday 17th
Saturday 18th
Sunday 19th

Thursday 23rd
Friday 24th
Saturday 25th
Sunday 26th

Thursday 1st March
Friday 2nd
Sunday 4th

Ian Rowe
Broadfoot
Sugar Cane Collins

Robert Saric
Ungus Ungus Ungus
The Method
Richie Williams

Guy Kachel
Nite Star
Ted & Khan
Bevan Spiers

Bill Jacobi
Pappa Funk
Surf Report
Ritchie Williams

Adam Brown
Blues Corp
Siskin River

Gigs start: Thurs 6.30pm, Fri 7.30pm, Sat 7pm, Sun 4pm

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