



# From the mayor's desk



by Cr Jenny Dowell

As I write this month's column, the sun is shining and the sky is blue; quite a change from last weekend.

Fortunately the Lismore area escaped with only minor flooding and the usual temporary restricted movements for some residents. Communications improve at every flood, and even when electrical outages limit access to websites, the trusty battery radios keep us connected.

The aftermath of any flood event is more potholes and some fallen trees, but hopefully everyone can resume normal activities for the time being. Our catchment is saturated so further high rainfall could result in further flooding so we remain vigilant.

## Council meeting

The Council year began officially with the February meeting. It was a fairly tame event and all finished before 8pm. 'Fit for the Future', the State government's reform agenda for local councils, was the topic of some debate after an invitation was received from Kyogle Council to meet to discuss a possible merger.

I hasten to add that neither of the Councils sees a merger as the

preferred future, and we will both proceed to demonstrate our own viability as stand-alone entities.

The current government has always stated that there will be no forced amalgamations in this term, but the election at the end of March may bring a different view.

Lismore Council, despite its strongly-held opinion that we should not merge with Kyogle, voted to explore the pros and cons in order to be prepared for a directive from the government that we must merge. We need to know up-front the costs in monetary and other terms, so if we are placed in that position, we can negotiate from a position of knowledge of all the issues.

As just two examples, Lismore Council's financial position is modelled to weaken if Kyogle were to merge with us, and many Kyogle residents would lose identity and representation.

At the March meeting, I will be proposing that Council supports a LGNSW campaign to engage all March 28 election candidates to gauge their views on forced amalgamations and other related matters.

## NAG

Also in February, Council held the latest Nimbin Advisory Group meeting. Among the agenda items were the request by the A&I Society to buy the Aussie Rules ground, a parcel of land in Cecil Street from Council, the Council's Sport and Recreation Plan and progress on the upgrade of the Nimbin water supply. See the report elsewhere in this edition. The next meeting will be on May 7.

## Mini iPad giveaway

Nimbin Aged Care and Respite

Services is a very happy recipient of three Mini iPads courtesy of Council. As part of a Telstra communication package, Council received 25 of these devices and chose to call for expressions of interest to give away 20 of them. Representatives from seven community organisations received between one and four Mini iPads and left Council with wide smiles.

## Fire sites

Also in February, Council staff met with the owners of the Museum and Rainbow Café sites to facilitate a planning mini-charrette. Both landowners were very positive about the outcomes. Apart from building relationships and information sharing there were agreements in principle on the key urban design elements for both sites between landowners and council staff. Some of the commonly agreed elements were:

- Reinstating the common laneway between the landholdings with shops or cafes fronting it to ensure active surveillance and crime prevention.
- The importance of including a residential use in the much larger former museum site to ensure active surveillance particularly at night.
- Ensuring that both sites are developed to maximise the view to Nimbin rocks.
- Reinstating the frontage onto Cullen Street in accordance with the heritage DCP.
- A willingness to be flexible on parking requirements to maximise the proposed large plaza area at the rear of the sites and in recognition of the proximity of the western car park

The next steps are for Council to meet with Police, who could

not attend the charrette, to discuss the outcomes. Once the landowners have developed concept drawings there will be a public meeting in Nimbin in the coming months to hear views from the and to outline the findings of the charrette. Following that process, Development Applications are expected to be lodged and to process through Council including being open for submissions.

## Tribal Magic

Progress is also apparent for other businesses affected by the fire. I note the live music and other activities at Bringabong at the Bush Theatre site and this week I'm visiting Tribal Magic for its official re-opening at the vacated hardware store site further down Cullen Street.

## Nimbin bus stop

Following a request from the Nimbin Health Service and support from the bus operator, the Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) has recommended to Council that a bus zone be introduced outside the hospital for the hours of 7.30-9.30am. Normal parking would apply at other times. The next step is for the minutes of the TAC to go to the March 10 Council meeting for approval.

## MardiGrass

Also at the TAC, the Traffic Management Plan (TMP) for Mardi Grass was approved. The TMP involves the closing of Cullen Street for approximately one hour on Sunday 3 May and No Stopping signs in Cullen, Thorburn and Cecil Streets for the safety of the expected large crowds.

This TMP is part of the DA submitted for three years for the MardiGrass, and the organisers are

to be congratulated for submitting an excellent TMP well in advance of the event to allow appropriate liaison.

## Nimbin Pool

On the last Tuesday in February, one of the items discussed at the Councillor briefing was the medium to long-term future of Nimbin pool.

Several years ago an independent audit was performed on the pool and a list of items requiring attention was presented to Council. Some of those items were addressed but others including supervision, First Aid provisions, access, amenities and equipment storage require around \$900,000 and increased ongoing operational costs.

Council is not making any decisions in the short term and will consult the Nimbin community on options probably in conjunction with the community planning forum early next year. Rest assured that Council appreciates the importance of the pool for Nimbin residents and that there is no urgency for these decisions to be made.

## Council questions

If residents have questions and concerns about Council matters, there are many ways to make contact. Phoning 1300-878-387 is the quickest, but there is also Live Chat during office hours on the Council website: [www.lismore.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lismore.nsw.gov.au) email: [Council@lismore.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Council@lismore.nsw.gov.au) or facebook and twitter.

You can contact me via Nimbin Hook Ups, my own facebook page, email: [Jenny.Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Jenny.Dowell@lismore.nsw.gov.au) or phone 6625-0403.

# Vote Labor for a gasfield-free North Coast

by Justine Elliot  
MP for Richmond

The North Coast is such a great place to live, but as locals know there is a huge threat posed to our way of life and that is from Coal Seam Gas mining.

I've made my position very clear on this issue – as your Federal MP, as a local, and as a mum, I do not support CSG.

At the State Election on 28 March I'm supporting our great Labor candidates on the North Coast. All our candidates are working hard to protect our precious environment.

Labor's election policy is very clear. Labor will ban harmful Coal Seam Gas mining and unconventional gas mining activities on the North Coast.

One thing I've learned in politics is that actions speak louder than words and the Labor Party have listened and worked closely with the community to develop this plan for a gasfield free North Coast.

In contrast it's shameful that the North Coast National Party representatives have announced their support for a pro-Fracking 'NSW Gas Plan'.

This National Party policy will see rural families being forced to live just 200m from CSG wells. It means under the National Party's 'NSW Gas Plan' it's business as usual in existing licence areas for risky CSG and other unconventional gas mining activities.

Labor's policy is to ban CSG in our region whereas the National Party's agenda is to expand harmful coal seam gas mining even though our communities overwhelmingly don't want this toxic industry here.

The National Party's pro-Fracking 'NSW Gas Plan' does absolutely nothing to protect communities, water resources or farmlands. In fact the National Party's irresponsible CSG policy puts existing clean and green businesses like tourism, agriculture and food production at risk.

Locals deserve to hear the real story about risky coal seam gas from independent experts rather than just being bombarded with industry spin from the pro-CSG aligned National Party politicians and lobbyists.

Independent research by the National Water Commission has found many potential dangers associated with coal seam gas developments and its impact on our precious water systems.

Out of the many risks identified by the commission, let me briefly touch on three standout threats that underpin my drive to see the North Coast declared CSG Free.

Firstly, the commission warns that CSG drilling may cause reductions in surface water flows that could affect surface water systems, ecosystems, irrigation and grazing lands. It has the potential to also lead to land subsidence over large areas of ground;

Secondly, CSG production requires large

volumes of waste water to be treated. Should this water make its way into other surface water systems it could alter natural flow patterns and have significant impacts on water quality, and on river and wetland health.

Thirdly, the practice of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, involves injecting water, sand, and chemicals into underground rock to free reserves of gas. Fracking has the potential to damage the quality of groundwater and result in cross-contamination between aquifers.

On the issue of water alone, I believe that CSG presents itself as just too great a poisonous risk to residents, the environment, farms, valleys and communities

Locals constantly tell me that dangerous gaslands are not the sort of future they want to hand over to our children. Labor's position on CSG is very clear. We stand with the community in opposing harmful coal seam gas mining.

But we can't trust the National Party and their pro-CSG drilling and fracking agenda.

The fight to stop CSG demonstrates that our region is so much more than just the beautiful beaches and hinterland; it's about the strength of the people and groups that live here.

Let's keep working together to make the North Coast an even better and safer place to live. Please make your vote count on 28th March – Vote Labor for a CSG-free North Coast.



Labour candidate for Lismore, Isaac Smith. Other Labor candidates in the region are Ron Goodman (Tweed) and Paul Spooner (Ballina).

# Final call to action – vote Green!

by Adam Guise,  
Greens candidate for Lismore

Welcome to my last column of Green Scene as a candidate in the state election.

It has been a pleasure to be part of *Nimbin GoodTimes* for the past eight months, during which time I've stood alongside the community on numerous issues.

I've fought to protect women and children from violence by maintaining funding to refuges. I've called for increased funding of our public libraries. I've said no to the privatisation of our TAFE, health services and electricity network. I've fought to protect our environment and climate from the insanity of coal seam gas. I've spoken out against the corruption in our parliaments and of our democracy through political donations buying off the major parties. It's time for a different way of doing politics, and that time is now.

Straight off the back of the five-month Bentley Blockade, and before that, working in the intense environment of parliament for Greens MP Jeremy Buckingham, I feel I have given it my all to keep our region Gasfield Free. We are nearly at the moment of truth, because on 28th March the people decide whether we choose the dinosaur politics of dirty coal seam gas, or whether we embrace a clean energy future. You know where my heart lies!

I also want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped during the campaign. It has been the most challenging, rewarding and extraordinary experience. I have met



## Green Scene

many wonderful people along the way and been inspired by the amazing people in our community.

This final column is a call to action. I need your help to end the National Party stranglehold over our region. Like we did at Bentley, where thousands of people from all walks of life came together to protect our farmland and water, we need to use the next four weeks to secure this win. So please, enrol to vote. Volunteer to doorknock and make phone calls. Spread the word. Hand out on election day. Use every conversation to re-enliven our democracy. A thousand voices cannot be ignored.

This election is a pivotal moment in political history. We have the chance to elect a Greens member to the seat

of Lismore for the first time ever. This would be an extraordinary achievement.

Electing a Green would send shockwaves through the halls of power. No longer could the government ride roughshod over this community. No longer could they take us for granted. No matter which party forms government, they would have to take note and listen to the voice of the Lismore electorate.

So please, build the movement for change now. On March 28, vote Greens 1, number every square and put the Nationals last.

History is in the making. It's exciting to be part of it. See you at the ballot box!

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- lismore2015@gmail.com
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'Number every square and put the Nationals last.'

This is the mantra for the state elections on Saturday 28th March. It was the high level of preferencing in the Queensland election that was responsible for the last three seats going to the ALP, which was critical in the extraordinary dumping of the Newman government. So the message is clear, please vote for the Greens or the ALP which are committed to a gasfield free Northern Rivers and vote for the Nationals last.

All the Nationals seats in the Northern Rivers are vulnerable. The Nationals' refusal to accept the community's demand that the Northern Rivers be gasfield free is a major factor in disillusionment with the Nationals. It has become clear in recent years that the National Party is much more committed to the mining industry than to the protection of farmers and the land, water and air that we are all dependent upon.

I blame the extraordinarily entrenched connections with the fossil fuel industry, involving electoral donations and the "revolving door" between senior positions in the mining industry and the major political parties. It is these deep connections to the fossil fuel corporations

## Simon says...

that have led conservative governments that are publicly committed to enterprise and innovation to have such a negative attitude to renewable energy.

The Clean Energy Council estimates that the current uncertainty around all aspects of the renewables industry generated by the federal government has set back renewable energy by 12 years in this country. No surprise that with the downturn in the mining industry and the uncertainty in renewables, Australia is experiencing its worst unemployment figures since Tony Abbott was Minister for Employment.

For those of you interested in all aspects of climate change, Paul Gilding has just written a very powerful and positive article, "The Year the Dam of Denial Breaks – Ready for the Flood?" <http://t.co/kc153rnx3E>

Meanwhile at Lismore City Council, I will be putting forward a motion that the Council start a process of divesting itself from organisations that invest or lend money to the fossil fuel industry. There are two provisos

to this motion, that the investments must conform to the relevant legislation, and that the Council not lose out financially. The motion also requests that Council make a publicly available six monthly report on its progress towards fossil fuel free investments.

If this motion is passed, Lismore City Council will become only the second Council in NSW and the fourth in Australia to have a policy of divestment from organisations that support the fossil fuel industry.

At Council's briefing on Tuesday night there was a long discussion about the Nimbin pool. Let me start by saying every Councillor in the chamber appeared to be committed to the continuation of the pool. In the longer term, the pool will require a significant level of capital expenditure to resurface it, provide disability access and possibly more toilet/change facilities. The difficulty here is that such an upgrade can mean that Council will have to employ lifeguards which could cost over \$250,000, and this would be an annual cost. Several Councillors



by Cr Simon Clough,  
Lismore City Council

suggested that perhaps the community would be interested in establishing a volunteer lifeguard group to take on the role, much as the surf lifesaving organisation protects our beaches.

At Council's last meeting I was very disappointed that my motion to protect a healthy koala colony of 200 animals from being divided by the Pacific Highway upgrade was lost. This colony of koalas in Ballina Shire in the Blackwall range is nationally significant, and it seems very likely that the health of our Lismore koalas is dependent on the survival of this important gene pool.

Contact Simon: phone 0428-886-217, email: [simonclough@internode.on.net](mailto:simonclough@internode.on.net)

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# A day in the life of a nurse practitioner



by Noelle Lynden-Way,  
Community representative,  
Quality and safety  
committee

I thought it would be interesting for readers to learn more about the work of a specialty nurse practitioner in our area who services our multi-purpose system (MPS) network and districts of Nimbin, Kyogle, Urbenville and Bonalbo.

I spent a morning with Anne Maree Cheffins recently, first at the Nimbin MPS and then at the clinic she runs with Gail Day, RN at the local Nimbin Park.

A nurse practitioner graduates with a nursing degree from a university and then studies for a further three years to obtain a masters degree in their specialty. Anne Maree Cheffins is a nurse practitioner in chronic cardiac and respiratory diseases. We are talking here about hearts and lungs that are not functioning well.

Ann Maree sees patients who come into the emergency department at any of the MPS hospitals and people who are referred by general practitioners (GPs), community health nurses, inter-agencies like Kyogle Care Connections or a relative. She works five days a week, generally spending one day at each facility, and follows up on people who have been in hospital in acute care for cardio/thoracic problems going to their home to look at their situation. During this home visit she can assess correct medication, look at safety, behavioural changes and provide further education that people may need to manage their condition.

Another aspect of her job is to run education clinics at GP practices in a one-on-one situation. The doctor advises Anne Maree that he/she has a newly diagnosed cardiac or respiratory disease patient which may be long term. The patient needs to know more as to how to cope with the aftermath of a heart attack, stroke, or the onset of asthma or emphysema. As a nurse practitioner (NP) she can prescribe medication and at the end of the consultation the doctor will come in and there will be a three-way discussion for a treatment plan.

On this particular Friday in Nimbin, I accompanied

Anne Maree and Gail to the Nimbin Park where we set up a table and chairs provided by the local Neighbourhood Centre. After talking to Aboriginal Elders about improving access and flexibility in service to marginalised people who may have heart or lung problems, it was decided to hold a clinic outside the Neighbourhood Centre where each fortnight many people come to get some hot, nutritious soup. A sign is put up telling people, "Free health checks here today" and Anne Maree and Gail welcome people to stop by and have a yarn about their health.

People who attend the park clinic can be scheduled to see Anne Maree at the Nimbin Hospital. She had already seen a woman from a previous park clinic that morning and would be seeing another in the afternoon.

Many different people of all ages stop by the table and are asked, "Would you like a free health check?" Weight scales are on the pavement and they asked to fill in a questionnaire which is a risk factor assessment of the likelihood having a heart attack ('cardiovascular event' in medical parlance) within five years.

Their heart is listened to, cholesterol level, weight and blood pressure checked as well as oxygen in body cells. If problems are identified, the person is asked to see Anne Maree at the MPS or referred to the local GP clinic.

The table is filled with education brochures on various conditions for people to read and take with them if they wish. Cardiovascular disease, cholesterol, early warning signs of a stroke, nutrition, macular degeneration, diabetes, kidney disease, a medicines list – helping you keep track of your medications, short wind – how to use puffers and spacers.

Many of these brochures are publications from the NSW Chronic Care for Aboriginal People program. There was a fridge magnet which gave the answer to the question, "Will you recognise a heart attack?"

For me it was a privilege to see how well Anne Marie and Gail interact with the public and because of their genuine care and professional attitude, people are very open and willing to talk about their health concerns, behaviour and diet.



Ann Maree Cheffins, nurse practitioner and Gail Day, RN (blue shirt)

One young man had stubbed his toe, which was bleeding profusely, and he arrived at the table with his dog. After cleaning and band-aiding the toe, this led to a lung and cholesterol check and a good chat about smoking and its effect on lungs and heart.

The photos with this article will give you an indication of what an interesting informative morning this was and an appreciation of two excellent professionals associated with our MPS network.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Remember to call the Health Advice Line if you have a health issue. It's a 24-hour 7-days a week free service on 1800-022-222. A Registered Nurse will speak to you and assess whether or not you need to go to the emergency department at your local MPS. Read more information about this service on: [www.healthdirect.org.au](http://www.healthdirect.org.au)

Mental Health Helpline:  
1800-011-511.

## Nimbin Hospital Info

### Child immunisation clinic

For 0-5 year olds. Held second Tuesday of every month. Next clinic: 10th March.  
For appointments phone 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health).



### Early childhood nurse

Every Tuesday. Phone 6620-7687 to make an appointment (through Lismore Community Centre).

### Women's Health Nursing Service, rescheduled

Confidential Pap smears, breast checks, contraceptive advice, post natal checks, general health information.  
Next clinic: 19th March. For appointments phone 6688-1401.

### Nimbin community nurses

Monday to Friday 8am to 4.30pm. For assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy. Provision of Palliative Care in the home. Provide and coordinate Aged Care Packages.

### Free health checks

Now in front of the Neighbourhood Centre, every second Friday, 11.30am - 1.30pm. Run by a Nurse Practitioner and a Registered Nurse. Cardiac, Diabetic and Stroke risk assessments, weight, blood pressure, oxygen sats, BSL, cholesterol levels, referrals to appropriate Health Professional, if required.

### Free respiratory clinic

With Specialist Respiratory Nurse and a nurse practitioner. Second Thursday of each month. Next clinic: 12th March. For appointment phone 6688-1401.

### Free diabetic clinic

At Nimbin hospital, every third Thursday of the month. For appointment phone Leanne Boothe 6630-0488.

### Nimbin NSP opening hours

Will be open on Mondays and Thursdays, 9am - noon. Arrangements can be made to see a health nurse through NSP.

### Cannabis Clinic

Every Monday at Nimbin hospital. Confidential counselling. Phone 1300-664-098.

### Drug and alcohol counsellor/psychologist

Every Thursday. For appointment phone 6620-7634 or Mobile 0428-109-474.

### Wound Clinic

Cancelled for now. Hopefully to restart in near future.

### Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary

Meetings are held on the second Friday of each month in the hospital conference room at 10am. Next meeting: 13th March.



# Plant of the month

## Turnipwood *Akania Lucens*

by Richard Burer

Turnipwood is an attractive tree common in coastal rainforest throughout the area. Although growing to 15m within and under the forest canopy, I find this tree most stunning when restricted in height in the understory, where its prickly-toothed pinnate glossy foliage catches the eye and warms the soul, reminding us of the calmness and the power of our wonderful rainforest.

In and around the Nimbin valleys this handsome tree can be found in the Nightcap and Mebbin National Parks and surrounding country.

Those interested in trying to grow their own will relish the commitment and patience to grow this one, as seed can take up to a year to germinate with only a small percentage viable after this time. I have rarely seen this tree in propagation, but highly recommend it.



## Nimbin Advisory Group updates

by Max Pike

A huge amount of ground was covered at the NAG meeting in February.

In attendance were Cr Jenny Dowell (Chair), Diana Roberts, Lois Kelly, Sue Edmonds, Rob Fisher, Natalie Meyers, Max Pike, Lizette Twisleton (LCC) with Dave Fawcner appearing to speak for both the A&I Society and Rainbow Cafe committee.

First item on the agenda was Bellevue Park (the Demons AFL field). Council plans to transfer this space to the A&I (who have leased it for many years). The advisory group proposed council gift the land to the society in recognition of their good works and due to the community gifting council the skate park site.

The next item was a follow up regarding the recent Waste Management survey. Nothing new to report, except proposals for extending the area covered by waste collection will be delayed as council is digitising existing runs with more accurate GPS readings.

Council reported approving the installation of "97% voted Gas Field Free" signage

in Nimbin. Diana Roberts is to liaise with council works manager on location.

The upgrade to Nimbin's Water supply will be a major infrastructure job including the construction of a new weir and pump station plus new pipes. Council is undertaking consultation and will then put the job to tender with a view to begin work at the end of the year.

Proposals were heard regarding locating a new Nimbin Museum in the Nimbin Community Centre. Plans include outdoor attractions as well as the Aquarius Archives plus links with 7 Sibley Street and the Aboriginal Cultural Centre. Ties with the Nimbin Rainforest Walk were also tabled.

This proposal included plans to move the Dance Studio from the front section of the Com. Centre to the old Youth Club space next to the RFS station. This would allow dance groups to still access a space in the community centre and means if a youth club starts back up they only need to pay for time used not weekly rent on a space often empty. It would also give the Museum street frontage to attract visitors.

Council has also made a commitment to assist the two developers of the Rainbow/Museum site fast-track development with planning and pre-lodgement assistance. Plans are moving forward and council recently hosted a 'design charette' or planning workshop. Landowner/architects' initial plans are to integrate both designs with a view to public amenity.

Council staff are providing technical advice on: strategic engineering; fire and safety; heritage; planning; and the Nimbin Recovery Program. NSW Police are to provide information and advice on CPTED and community safety.

Council also stated that funding for post-build advertising is available.

The Nimbin Advisory Group meets with representatives from council every three months with a view to facilitate smooth dealings with council regarding decisions affecting Nimbin and surrounds. The group is only an advisory panel and has no power to make decisions, but by working with council we can help to make Nimbin's voice heard.

## Water supply work to start

Progress on the proposed upgrade of Nimbin water supply has now reached a point where Council is planning to engage a consultant who will carry out a detailed survey and design of proposed work, involving the construction of a new pump station, pipeline and reservoir.

The main purpose of this upgrade is to address water quality concerns affecting rural customers of the water supply. At present, these customers are connected to a trunk water main that connects the Mulgum Creek weir to DE Williams Dam, whereas village customers of the water supply receive water from the DE Williams Dam.

In mid-2012, Council consulted with the Nimbin community regarding a proposed upgrade of the Nimbin water supply. Feedback received from the community indicated a clear

preference for an option that would enable rural customers to be supplied with water from DE Williams Dam, in the same manner as village customers of the water supply.

Council adopted that preferred option.

Rod Haig, Strategic Engineer (Water and Wastewater) said, "It is anticipated that survey and detailed design would commence in the near future and be completed by midway through this year. Following a tender and procurement process, construction works should commence either in late 2015 or early next year."

Council plans to inform the Nimbin community of developments and progress regarding this project. Any feedback regarding Council's engagement with the Nimbin community would be appreciated.

## Kyogle Council notebook

What wonderful Australia Day celebrations we've had all across the Kyogle LGA.

I was especially impressed with the spirit and enthusiasm shown throughout the villages, with a special mention to Woodenbong, where I had the pleasure of attending and thought the service was outstanding.

I send my warmest congratulations to all the recipients of awards, and especially to Kyogle's Citizen of the Year – Brian Hoffman. If you see Brian in the street, you know what to say.

There's been lots of talk lately about the possibility of Council amalgamations.

My advice, based on the best information available, is that there's no need to panic. The State Government has assured us that this will not happen before the election in March this year. So much is dependent upon directions from the State Government, and understandably their attention is focused on other matters for the time being.

The whole 'Fit for the Future' initiative is a long-term strategy and not a quick fix for any particular problem.

In the meantime, Council has been gathering information and will be having discussions with other local governments in the area to see what they are proposing to do and working on the preparation for our own submission to the 'Fit for the Future' initiative, due at the end of June.

Council will identify what our best case scenario is, if



by Cr Danielle Mulholland, Mayor of Kyogle

amalgamations proceed, and present these options to the community: What will be our position if we merge with Lismore? If we merge with Richmond Valley? If we stand alone? Once we have all of this information, the community engagement process will begin and you will have an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

A memorial was unveiled in honour of the late Aunty Patsy Nagas on 24th January, coordinated by the Kyogle Reconciliation Committee. It was very moving, with stories being told about Aunty Patsy and the inclusion of the most amazing song called the Bundjalung Bingle.

Many thanks to everyone who attended and contributed to making it a wonderful day.

The pumpkin competition was again a success with some enormous pumpkins being displayed!

For those who are concerned that a giant pumpkin has been placed in the centre of town, please rest assured that The Northern Star photoshopped

the pumpkin into the photo and the story was a bit of whimsy about Kyogle.

The Woodenbong Bridge Building Boys have made headlines again with their innovative bridge designs, even managing to impress our State colleagues. Congratulations!

Tabulam, Mallanganee and Bonalbo have formed a committee to hold an arts/crafts/music festival on 2nd May this year. If you're a Facebook user, you will find the page under Lions West of the Range Festival.

It's brilliant to see these communities working together to create a signature event for themselves, and I will certainly be going to check it out.

Until next time, all the best.

Kyogle Council: 6632-0214  
Danielle.Mulholland@kyogle.nsw.gov.au

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Shabari Bird Art of making Dosas	Natalia West Nut Cheeses and Japanese Pickled Greens	Dolph Cooke Biological Fertilisers
Jenny Creasy Fabric Dyes	Johnny One Tree Earth Soil Organisms Vs Human Gut	Alan Hodgson Processing Olives using Fermentation

FREE EVENT

# blue moon cabaret

Nimbin School of Arts will present their first fabulous Blue Moon Cabaret for 2015 on Saturday 21st March. After more than 20 years, the NSA's Cabarets have developed into very popular sellout shows with an incredible variety of the performance arts.

The March Cabaret will feature singers the No Frills Twins (pictured), Kahn, Sadie and Jay, Kerriane Cox, the Baby Durgas and operatics from Eve and Bear, plus the Gypsy Rose Soiree and the Fantasies Erotique Dancers, comedian Paul McMahon, Brisbane performance poet Angela Pieta, acrobatics from Emma McGovern and Darcy Grant... and more.

The show will be fully catered and licensed (no BYO).

Tickets and table reservations are available at Perceptio (phone 6689-



Photo: Mel Carero

1766), and they are essential, as the Cabaret usually sells out quickly. Show tickets are \$30/\$25 conc.

The Cabarets are wonderful Nimbin shows while also being major fundraisers for ongoing work at the School of Arts. Book early to avoid disappointment.

# New Frackman doco tours region

The explosive new documentary film, *Frackman* tells the story of accidental activist Dayne Pratzky and his struggle against the expansion of international gas companies in Queensland's Darling Downs.

Dayne's experience with CSG transforms him from conservative pig-shooter to sophisticated global activist as 'The Frackman'. He meets the people drawn into a battle that is crossing the ideological divide, bringing together a peculiar alliance of farmers, activists and political conservatives.

"I was a roo shooting, pig hunting kind of bloke. I'm the most unlikely environmentalist in the world," Dayne said. "But when they force their way on to your land and destroy your community, you have no choice but to fight back."

The documentary will tour 20 regional cities ahead of the March State Election.

Producer Simon Nash said it was vital that the people who will see the film first are in communities who are likely to be impacted the most.

"Coal Seam Gas is a major issue in the coming NSW election, and we expect the



film to provoke an important debate and put all parties on notice that they dare not ignore this crisis," he said.

Northern Rivers Guardians President Scott Sledge said, "Dayne's story reveals the harsh reality that many NSW landowners face and the fight they have to win to keep their land and water safe from coal seam gas."

*Frackman* will be screened at:

- Lismore at 5pm on Sunday 8th March at Birch Carroll & Coyle;
- Murwillumbah at 6.30pm on Monday 9th March at the Regent Theatre;
- Ballina at 6.30pm on Tuesday 10th March at Ballina Fair;
- Byron Bay at 7pm on Wednesday 11th March at Pighthouse Flicks.



# WENDY RULE

Visionary songstress Wendy Rule is making her first tour to Australia after relocating to the USA last year, and she is including northern NSW in her touring schedule.

A world renowned musician and spiritual life coach, Wendy draws on her deep connection with nature and ancient ritual to present a live show that is both joyous and deeply transformational.

Join Wendy and her partner Timothy Van Diest (guitar and Native American flute) for an intimate and unique night of music and magic at The Castle on the Hill in Uki on Saturday 14th March. Doors open 7pm, show starts promptly at 8pm. Chai and cake available.

Tickets at Uki supermarket or on-line, \$20 or \$15 concession, 16 years and under free. See: [www.wendyrule.com](http://www.wendyrule.com)

# Hillbilly Goats do Nimbin for Easter

Kick yer shoes off, put yer hoe down and hang on to yer britches! After much demand, the Hillbilly Goats are heading to Nimbin for the Easter weekend to perform two entirely different shows at the Nimbin Bush Theatre.

On Saturday night, The Goats will perform their "Out of the Mountains Show". Expect high energy performances of traditional folk songs arranged in a Goatish manner coupled with stories of the immigrants, (predominantly Irish, Scottish and African), that created this music high in the Appalachian Mountains of America.

This January the Goats performed to 15,000 revellers at the official opening concert of the Tamworth Country Music Festival. These guys are not a country band though –



they're in a category of their own and are more than just a band, they are a *show*. Full of passion, energy, rhythm and stories, The Goats perform in colourful costumes with crazy antics.

Goat Girl plays double bass, bones and tap dances, whilst Goat Boy plays drums with his feet, harmonica and banjo at the same time! Adorned

with female fiddle and female banjo on either side, expect to hear four-part harmonies from this wild North Queensland group. As an added bonus, 2015 StarMaker Finalist, Sian Evans will be performing solo to open the night on Saturday with her old-timey banjo songs.

Easter Sunday will see the courtyard of the Bush Theatre

blessed by the "Church of Goat". This is a favourite festival sideshow of the band, dressed in straight-laced vintage frocks singing gospel songs in full harmony around a 1950's style condenser microphone. Tongue in cheek but not quite cheeky, a great way to kick off a Sunday Recovery Show.

Get in early though – church begins at 11am and goes for about half an hour, then the Goats flow into a chilled-out Sunday jam. Please be dressed appropriately: horns and goatish dress appreciated.

It's on Saturday 4th April, \$15 at the door – doors open 7pm, food available.

Sunday 5th April Phoenix Rising Church of Goat: 11am by donation.

Nimbin Bush Theatre, phone 02 6689-0095.



Acid Bleed

It's a warm welcome back to the City Bowlo to this entertaining and original quintet playing a virtuoso blend of hot swing with a Latin groove. The repertoire covers a broad range from familiar standards to plucky originals all with the hot Acid treatment.

The band consists of Adam Blenkhorn (lead guitar), Jimmy 'Shoes' Chiu (Spanish and Gypsy guitars), Josh 'Big Wood' Kirk (upright bass), Peter Costin-Neilsen (drums / percussion), and Andrew Horowitz (tenor and soprano sax,

electric violin and mandolin).

Based in Lismore and the surrounding hills, they've been playing together for nearly five years and have lately put their stamp on the local jazz scene. A popular regular house-pleaser at the New Tatt's in Lismore on jazz nights, they have developed a loyal following of supporters.

Catch them on Sunday 22nd March, 3pm-6pm at Lismore City Bowling Club, \$15 / \$10 Members

Jazz at the City Bowlo – a pleasant way to spend a Sunday arvo.

# Sharing the good oil on songwriting

Legendary Midnight Oil drummer Rob Hirst (pictured) is taking to the stage in Southern Cross University's Studio One29 for the first APRA Songwriters' Workshop of 2015, at the Lismore campus on Thursday 19th March.

The APRA Songwriters' Workshop series has been developed to give students of the University's contemporary music program insights into the music industry.

This special workshop with Rob Hirst will be open to the public, with no cost to attend.

Rob is probably best known for his incredible performances as Midnight Oil's drummer, yet he has written or co-written many of the

band's best-loved songs; a musical legacy which has thrown the spotlight on important issues from Indigenous land rights through to nuclear disarmament, youth homelessness and asbestos-related diseases. He is also a published author and magazine contributor.

Over the past three decades, Rob has played, sung and written songs in The Ghostwriters, Backsliders, Hirst & Greene, The Angry Tradesmen, and more recently with the instrumental surf rock outfit, The Break.

The APRA Songwriters' Workshops are held in the School's state-of-the-art Studio One29 in the Contemporary Music Building (D block).



MUST SEE CIRCUS

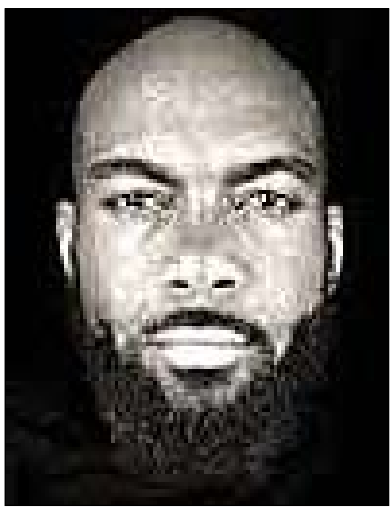
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# Rob never gives in

Direct from New York City, Sony recording artist Rob Johnson is on his debut Australian tour promoting his latest single, *Never Give In*.

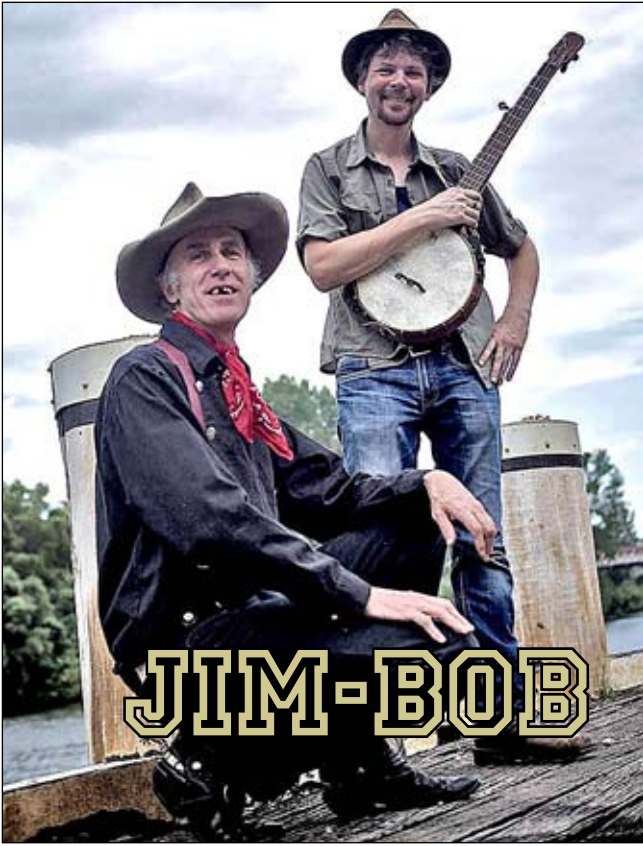
Rob Johnson, aka rAce, has the ultimate male soul/R&B voice, and is the front man of Manhattan band, rAcemusic.

The roots of Rob's music lie in the so-called "race music" first developed in the Southern American States in the early '20s and '30s in juke joints, churches, shacks and homes. With his heart in

the past and his mind on the future generations, his songs have really come to life on the lively streets of New York City.

This March you can catch Rob Johnson with a live five-piece band showcasing his original music plus a handful of his favourite tunes from such artists as Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson, Prince, Earth Wind & Fire and Musiq Soulchild.

Rob Johnson will play the Nimbin Hotel on Friday 13th March at 7.30pm.



Performing songs by Skip James, Memphis Minnie, Roy Rogers and a sack full of their own, Jim-Bob feature the broad talents of Jimmy Willing and Davey-Bob Ramsey.

Country Blues is their specialty, but they also do a grand cowboy waltz and a hell of a toe-tapping polka. Jim-Bob are performing at the Nimbin Hotel on Sunday 8th March, 5pm 'til 8pm.

## Dillion James Band



### Transition times

A community event at the Hanging Rock Hall

At beautiful Hanging Rock Hall, the community has decided to celebrate the balance of light and dark at the equinox on Saturday 21st March.

There will be a brief ceremony and a short mythological play encompassing deep human values relating to the spirit of the times, and celebrating the approaching darkness and inexplicable mystery.

Dance the night away to the Brisbane-based Dillion James Band, a collective of

travelling and local musicians giving audiences an authentic taste of the roots of blues and reggae from a modern, socially critical view point. They have entertained the locals numerous times in the past decade.

Dillion has been in the engine room with the likes of Mojo Webb, Blind Dog Donnie, Die Rude, Blind Lemon, Mick Hadley, and many touring blues artists as a keyboardist or bassist.

They will be supported by local band Elemental.

A 6pm start for a 7pm ceremony, \$10 entry (all proceeds to the hall) with tea, coffee and chai available.



## Jo Jo Smith

by Georgina Pollard

I am absolutely thrilled to be able to announce that a true Australian musical living legend will be performing at my first House Concert for 2015.

Jo Jo Smith is a woman of not only immense musical talent and knowledge but a heart bigger than Phar Lap.

If you can get to this House Concert, I promise you that you will not regret it.

I will also be jumping up with Jo Jo and we will close the afternoon with some duets. I feel quite humbled to be able to listen and learn from this Aussie Diva.

Jo Jo has worked with Marcia Hines, Renee Geyer, Glenn Shorrock, Jon English, Olivia Newton-John... Yep,

this lady is the real deal!

Renee Geyer said, "Jo Jo has been an inspiration to myself and many other musicians in Australia for many years. She truly sings from the heart."

The concert will be held on Sunday 22nd March, 3pm - 5pm, at 34 Clarice Street, East Lismore. Entry is \$25 per person (BYO drinks, afternoon tea will be provided.)

Numbers are strictly limited to 25 people... so first in best dressed! Please RSVP to: [SingwithGeorgina@gmail.com](mailto:SingwithGeorgina@gmail.com) or phone me on 0417-640-369.

I'm really looking forward to seeing many of you and hopefully some brand new faces in my lounge room very soon!

Website: [www.jojosmithsoul.com](http://www.jojosmithsoul.com)

## 100th band!

Tweed Creative Studios is celebrating a milestone, hosting its 100th band in the studio: 'Machinery Drive' (pictured).

The Studio's services range from music lessons to guitar and amp repairs, pre-loved instruments and amps for sale, musicians accessories, strings and things, retro and vintage wares, vinyl, rehearsal room and workshop spaces, costume design and computer repairs.



Jam night is on the first Thursday of every month at the studios, 1/19 Buchanan Street Murwillumbah, open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Saturday 10am-3pm and after hours by appointment: 6672-5556.

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### March Gigs

<b>Saturday 7th</b>	<b>Ruben Garcia</b>
<b>Sunday 8th</b>	<b>Cruise Brothers</b>
<b>Saturday 14th</b>	<b>Lou Bradley</b>
<b>Sunday 15th</b>	<b>Afro Moses</b>
<b>Saturday 21st</b>	<b>Sarah McCafferty</b>
<b>Sunday 22nd</b>	<b>Freowin Harper</b>
<b>Saturday 28th</b>	<b>Sarah Stando</b>
<b>Sunday 29th</b>	<b>Reuben Barkley</b>

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### Sunday Gig Guide

**March 1pm start**

**8th Romaniacs**  
*Original music inspired by Gypsy, Folk, Latin, Celtic, Spanish and Eastern roots grooves.*

**15th Luke Vassella**  
*An authored performer, the authentic voice of the 'new country'.*

**22nd Loa**  
*Loa is the solo project of singer/songwriter Nikkie McJungles, best known as vocalist and guitarist for Australian 8-piece dub/funk/reggae and soul outfit Chocolate Strings.*

**29th Andy Jans-Brown**  
*Andy's music has been described as being uplifting, in the vein of those classic songwriters from the past who wrote songs you remember the words to and want to sing along to.*

## Nimbin Hotel & Backpackers

53 Cullen Street, Nimbin. Ph: 6689-1246

### March Gigs

Friday 6th	7.30pm	<b>Mescalito Blues</b>
Saturday 7th	6.30pm	<b>Slim Pickens</b>
Sunday 8th	5pm	<b>Jim-Bob</b>
Thursday 12th	6.30pm	<b>Bill Jacobi</b>
Friday 13th	7.30pm	<b>Rob Johnson</b>
Saturday 14th	6.30pm	<b>Quazi Smith &amp; Electric Suede</b>
Sunday 15th	5pm	<b>Thrillbilly Stomp</b>
Thursday 19th	6.30pm	<b>Adam Brown</b>
Friday 20th	7.30pm	<b>Moondog Blues</b>
Saturday 21st	6.30pm	<b>Spanx with Sinfundos</b>
Sunday 22nd	5pm	<b>Rob Yeatman Duo</b>
Thursday 26th	6.30pm	<b>Guy Kachel</b>
Friday 27th	7.30pm	<b>Trombone Kellie Band</b>
Saturday 28th	6.30pm	<b>Brommers</b>
Sunday 29th	5pm	<b>Lez Karski</b>

All Gigs are Free of Charge

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Thurs \$10 steak 250g

# Australia... so far behind

## **Ironically yours**

by Dionne May

If the first medical cannabis forum in Nimbin planted many ideas in fertile soil, then the second forum produced the abundant resilient seedlings that we love so dearly in these parts.

The brimming hall (pictured) was again energised by new and original speakers from the first forum, all sharing information with growing optimism. First speaker Andrew Kavasilas asked some pertinent questions regarding just where are the political and medical hindrances to this 'miracle cure'?

With overwhelming, irrefutable evidence mounting in every state of Australia supporting medical cannabis, just why can't our government facilitate policies already implemented in Israel and America?

One big problem is the very nature of the plant itself... it is

an unlicensed, unprescribable product with no insurance for doctors. Distorted studies, unqualified comments by police and politicians and decades of cannabis propaganda have muddied the waters completely. We are one of the very last countries still using expensive unreliable saliva testing, and we still cannot access highly nutritious hemp seeds, let alone cultivate it here in Australia.

It seems the whole hemp industry is hog-tied and medical cannabis is riding solely on the back of terminal illness. "Why?" questioned the next speaker, Dr Andrew Katelaris. "There should be a full federal judicial inquiry," he declared to resounding applause. "It is the common law right of jury to nullify any existing law but we must force the issue! We need a revolution!" he said, and the crowd went wild.

Doctor Katelaris was then joined on stage by Daisha, a playful eight-year old girl and her proud Dad.

Daisha (pictured, inset) is one of Andrew's star patients, and her very existence is due directly to cannabis. Their self-made video portrayed the harrowing nightmare Daisha's life was as a sufferer of severe epilepsy since birth. With up to five seizures every eight seconds and some lasting up to 38 minutes, her life, and that of her family, was untenable.

Desperation led this man to find help. Here in Nimbin at the annual MardiGrass Protest Festival he met Dr Katelaris and their lives were turned around. Cannabis tinctures have literally saved her life, and since beginning the treatment she has been seizure-free for ten months. Sadly, earlier treatment could have prevented her brain damage.

"Cancer also responds well to cannabinoids. The very fact that modern medicine is using drugs that are carcinogenic to fight cancer is a crime against humanity," he



suggested.

Local Lismore Labor candidate Issac Smith was a surprise speaker. This young local man was refreshingly candid and believes cannabis should be "rolled out to help people". When asked how he would tackle the supply problem, Issac paused then said, "Give us a couple of weeks and we can solve it with the 20 to 30 years of experience we have in this region!"

So if you are curious, or need any

information ranging from hemp seed nutrition, safety with home preparations, medical delivery methods from juicing, cookies and tinctures to vaporising, then the next Medical Cannabis Forum is scheduled for Saturday 14th March at 11am.

Viva la revolution!

## MardiGrass Hemposium rolled and ready

Be prepared for some mind-bending action at this year's Hemposium at MardiGrass - from 2pm Friday 1st May until 2pm Sunday 3rd May in the Nimbin Town Hall and Indica Arena, where we'll pull back the curtain to reveal creative, happening and abundant places around the globe basking in the post-prohibition green glow.

As Australia is just yawning and waking up to the benefits of medical cannabis, the MardiGrass Hemposium will be an important crossroads to learn, share and network about our favourite plant ally and healing herb.

On Friday 1st May, we plan a drug law reform day of talks and panels, with a Cannabis Cabaret on Friday evening, Saturday 2nd May and Sunday 3rd May will be devoted to medical cannabis.

Already there is an impressive line-up of international speakers coming from North America who will showcase their medical cannabis methods, discuss cutting edge advances in cannabis science, and share their experiences with the evolution of law reform. We're excited to welcome from Canada, Ajia Mae Moon, creator of WeedWoman, and founder and owner of Threehappycats; from the booming green economy of Colorado, Abe Acton and Matt Poulton from High Country Cannabis Tours; and Dr David Bearman from California who is a leader in the field of cannabinoid medicine.

We are also excited to announce an outstanding line-up of Australian-based post-prohibition proponents and medical cannabis experts, including Senator Richard Di Natale, Dr Alex Wodak (Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation), Fiona Patten MLC Victoria, Will Tregoning (UnHarm), Damon Adams (Law Enforcement Against Prohibition), Dr Andrew Katelaris, as well as a magnificent array of local medicine folk.

We look forward to making the Hemposium a space to inform, learn, inspire and connect.

Then there is a terrific music and comedian line-up to balance the serious talks. Maybe it's Tony Abbott's influence, but we are inundated with comedians for this year's 'Grass, Reefer



Miss Guidance beside the MardiGrass DA on display near the Hall

Gladness, Marijuana Mirth and Laughing Grass' which promises a good time to be had by all.

Everything usual plus some more is in the pipeline: the Kombi Konvoy, the HEMP Olympix, joint rolling, iron person event and bong throw is pleased to hear announcer Alan Glover is back; Pot Art and Pot Poetry; the World Stoned Chess Championship will be at the Oasis this year; the Seed Swap and Global Marijuana March; the fringe Olympix beard stash, correct weight and taxi run; the Ganja Faeries and the Best Activist Float Awards in the Sunday Rally; and the Polite versus Police tug 'o drug war on the hemp rope to kickstart the athletes at midday on Saturday, just to mention some of the action!

MOB (MardiGrass Organising Body) meetings are happening every Friday at the Hemp Embassy from 4:20 and all are welcome. We always need local knowledge amongst the backpacker volunteers, so please consider enjoying MardiGrass from the inside this year. Jungle Patrol and other volunteers can call the Embassy on 6689-1842 or drop in and write your name in the book.

It will be different this year as there has been real movement, even if it was only a toenail that stepped forward. But the toenail broke the mould and is a significant recognition that the extraordinary plant Cannabis does have medicinal properties after all. Damn hard for them to admit the hippies were right yet again, so let's not wait for that but come and celebrate with us on the first weekend in May.

If you can, support us by buying a \$50 Golden Bud pass for entry to all events all weekend, for sale online now at: [www.nimbinmardigrass.com](http://www.nimbinmardigrass.com)

## Rallying the troops for 'Dan's Law'

The death from cancer of a young man in his mid-20s is inescapably tragic.

Dan Haslam discovered, like thousands before him, that using cannabis was a way to control the by-products of his conventional cancer treatments, including nausea, severe vomiting, weight loss, pain and mental distress.

The loss of three children in that same week to seizure activity is no less tragic - especially when these deaths could have been prevented by the stroke of a pen on a statute.

Hundreds of parents who have children with severe intractable epilepsy, and who know about cannabis, are staggered by the results they see and the speed at which cannabis works to stop the life threatening seizures. They see measurable benchmarks in the improvement of their child's quality of life.

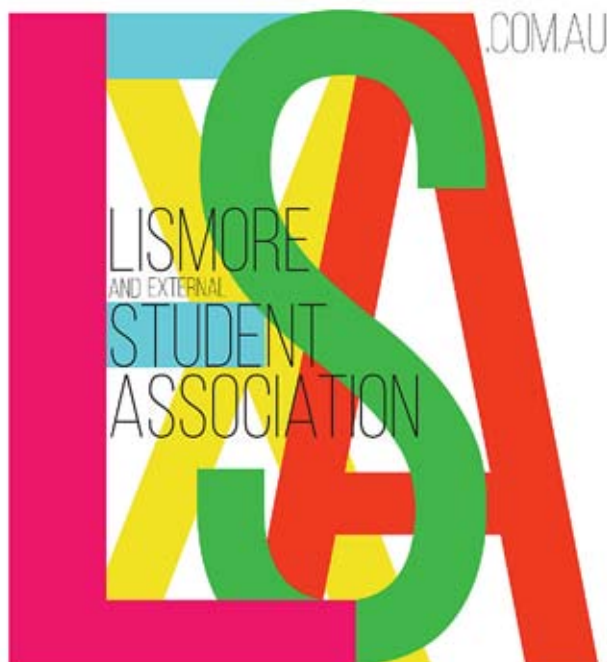
Choosing cannabis was the "mistake" made by Adam Koessler, Queensland's brave dad who took it upon himself to do whatever he could to make life better for his little girl Rumer Rose. He is being charged with administering a prohibited drug to a minor.

The NSW Medical Cannabis Users Association and HEMP Party members will be supporting Adam in a rally in Brisbane on Saturday 7th March, and have extended an invitation to others to join them in a show of support for Adam, who made his informed decision to try cannabis therapy for his child, but is now being subjected to watching authorities force-feeding his child chemotherapy.

The Brisbane Fearless Father Rally and March is a family event and people from northern NSW are encouraged to participate. See: [www.facebook.com/events/1533293423619389](http://www.facebook.com/events/1533293423619389)

The Medical Cannabis Users Association Australia was born out of the Haslam story after it aired on Channel 7 last June, and when a public opinion poll showed that 2.8 million Aussies were now aware of, and wanted access to, cannabis medicine.

Since then the MUA has grown to over 5600 members who want legal access to cannabis medicine - and not just for terminal illness, but for relief of chronic pain and a range of debilitating mental illness conditions, including depression and PTSD, which can rob people of a life.



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# HEMP HEADLINES

## Haslam family vows to continue campaigning [news.com.au]

The family of cancer sufferer Dan Haslam says the best way to honour his memory is to continue the push for the legalisation of medicinal cannabis. The 25-year-old, who was diagnosed with bowel cancer in 2010, died in East Tamworth surrounded by family. He was the man who helped change NSW Premier Mike Baird's attitude towards legalising medicinal cannabis.

"Our amazing Dan has set the path for a journey we intend to finish. We need to honour his fighting spirit and continue his legacy," the family said in a statement. "We will keep fighting for medical cannabis to make it freely available to people who need it."

The family also thanked Mr Haslam's many supporters: "The best way you can honour Dan's memory is to continue pushing for change."

## A father's desperate plea [Northern Daily Leader]

A father desperate to treat his child with safe medical marijuana has staged a dramatic stunt, walking in the front door of a police station and demanding he be arrested. Michael Lambert was carrying a mature cannabis plant and a number of seeds when he calmly strode to the counter of Gosford Police Station last week. Mr Lambert's three-year-old daughter Katelyn is living with Dravet syndrome, a form of catastrophic epilepsy that causes her to suffer regular and severe seizures.

Concerned about the quality of his daughter's black-market oil, and incensed he could not travel with it because it was illegal, Mr Lambert challenged Gosford police to arrest him last week. The cannabis plant and seeds were seized but Mr Lambert was not arrested.

## Marijuana may be even safer than previously thought, researchers say [Washington Post]

Compared with other recreational drugs – including alcohol – marijuana may be even safer than previously thought. And researchers may be systematically underestimating risks associated with alcohol use. Those are the top-line findings of recent research published in the journal *Scientific Reports*, a subsidiary of *Nature*. Researchers sought to quantify the risk of death associated with the use of a variety of commonly-used substances. They found that at the level of individual use, alcohol was the deadliest substance, followed by heroin and cocaine. And all the way at the bottom of the list? Weed – roughly 114 times less deadly than booze, according to the authors, who ran calculations that compared lethal doses of a given substance with the amount that a typical person uses. Marijuana is also the only drug studied that posed a low mortality risk to its users.

## Stoned drivers are a lot safer than drunk ones, official US data shows [SMH]

Drivers who use marijuana are at a significantly lower risk of being in a crash than drivers who use

alcohol, a new study from the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows. And after adjusting for age, gender, race and alcohol use, drivers who tested positive for marijuana were no more likely to crash than those who had not used any drugs or alcohol prior to driving, it found. For marijuana, and for a number of other legal and illegal drugs including antidepressants, painkillers, stimulants and the like, there is no statistically significant change in the risk of a crash associated with using that drug prior to driving. But overall alcohol use, measured at a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) threshold of .05 or above, increases your odds of a wreck nearly sevenfold. The NHTSA doesn't mince words: "At the current time, specific drug concentration levels cannot be reliably equated with a specific degree of driver impairment."

## More than 1 million Australian children affected by the drinking of parents or carers [ABC]

More than one million Australian children are adversely affected by their parents' or carers' alcohol abuse, a new report has revealed. The report – titled 'The Hidden Harm: Alcohol's Impact on Children and Families' and launched by Rosie Batty – found that 10,000 children were in the childcare protection system because their parents or carers abused alcohol. It also found that 140,000 children were badly affected by their parents' or carers' alcohol



## Melting snow being used by police to find cannabis farms in the Netherlands [Independent UK]

Cannabis growers are being arrested by Dutch police in their droves after being caught by melting snow (pic above). The wintry weather is proving to be a surprising foil to drug lords in the Netherlands as the lack of snow on roofs can give them away. The warmth required for cannabis farms usually makes them hotter than surrounding properties, meaning the one house in the street with a bare roof may have more inside than bad loft insulation. "No snow on the neighbours' roof? You can report suspected cannabis farms anonymously," police in the city of Haarlem tweeted.

consumption. The chief executive of the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, Michael Thorn, said 47 per cent of child protection cases involved alcohol.

## Baked Alaska [The Economist]

Smoking cannabis became legal on 24th February in Alaska, the latest state to lift its prohibition of the drug after Colorado and Washington, which took the plunge last year. Alaskans over 21 can now grow up to six of their own plants, share up to an ounce of harvested pot, and smoke as much as they like in private without breaking the law. Selling the stuff commercially will become legal next year, once the state authorities have hammered out a set of rules to regulate the business.

## Congressmen introduce Bills to regulate and tax marijuana like alcohol at the Federal level [MPP Blog]

U.S. Reps. Jared Polis (D-CO) and Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) have introduced separate bills that would regulate marijuana like alcohol and tax it at the federal level, respectively. Rep. Polis' bill would replace the federal government's current marijuana prohibition model with a regulatory model similar to the one in place for alcohol. States would decide their own marijuana laws, and a federal regulatory process would be created for states that choose to regulate the cultivation and sale of marijuana for adult use. Rep. Blumenauer's bill would tax marijuana at the federal level.

# STREET SHUFFLE

Journal of the North Coast's longest serving covert

## Waxed up Unda

People say Pipe is obsessed with weed. He uses the fibres as dental floss, the oil on his skin and he boils the roots to make an ointment that friends swear by.

I was up in the ranges with him checking a patch of fifteen foot Sativas, original seed from the Himalayas, when he got the message to 'return to camp'. I'm not sure how he gets these messages. He says it's just a feeling, but he says that about a lot of things.

The walk back down takes a few hours and for the trip we smoked some 'wax', which is what he calls his latest extraction. Eighty percent resin he tells me. "Less of the fibrous material, just the glands pure and simple. You wait, you'll see." And he grins at me as he heats a speck of the golden toffee. It does look a lot like earwax.

I inhale the smoke and in no time at all everything is clear as a bell in the Swiss mountain air. Sharp as the sharpest tack. I look at him in astonishment and he laughs from his belly. I couldn't stop my grin from ear to ear if I tried. The walk back down the old logging tracks is awesome and timeless.

I heard a new guru was in town and we were impressed he'd found his way to Pipe's hideaway so quickly. In no time, out came his own wax from Colorado. He shrugged his shoulders, "This is how we can all be using the plant when prohibition is gone. Once we were allowed legal pot, our product quality has surged and all sorts of healing doors have opened in the States," he drawled.

"But that's not what I'm here for. Once we're fully waxed, as they say, we discovered our powers of concentration were magnified a hundredfold. Especially together in group

meds we found we could move mountains, or almost anyway."

Spike from California was his name. "I heard you have a group of ganja faeries here meditating on changing the weather when the chopper raids. I need to meet them. We can end the chopper raids if you want. We can bring on storms at will, even cyclones."

We looked at each other around the fire. We all know the faeries have had some success in making it rain on the raids but this was exciting. Two faeries from the camp offered to show Spike the way to one of the meditation caves.

We never saw him again but the girls returned with tales of wonder. It might be a case of too much too soon because as soon as the group gathered and he gave them a few lessons, and they were fully waxed up as he called it, things started happening quickly, but not exactly as they envisioned.

First up, a cyclone started forming north of Darwin, which was very suspicious because they'd just been talking about going there on the way to Bali, just before smoking the wax. Others had been saying they'd rather go to the Great Barrier Reef, and next thing a cyclone appeared there too.

The girls got spooked and quickly broke up the circle, but they knew something had happened way beyond their control and meanwhile Spike mysteriously disappeared. Who was he and where did he come from and go to remain big questions, but no answers have been found, yet.

**HipiLeaks:** Nov 2014 PM's office Canberra to all Premiers. The new movement where our citizens are refusing to watch or listen to the news must be reversed. We have no other medium to keep the people afraid of the never-ending threats we all face every day. Be it terrorists or the weather, we must be able to warn people.

Measures like random phone interviews are in the pipeline to ensure everybody listens to our ABC, which is needed to warn us of the endless threats to our welfare and the economy. No other station will repeatedly broadcast every press release from our police and emergency services.

Fear must be maintained and profit is to be pursued at any cost, as without it our society will collapse. We cannot trust the people to know what is best for themselves. Eternal vigilance please. – TA.

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