



Roxy Gallery

143 Summerland Way Kyogle
Phone 6632-3518

Opening Hours

Tues - Fri: 10am to 4pm
Saturday: 9.30am to noon

- Promoting local and regional arts;
- Providing emerging artists with opportunities to display and market their artworks in a professional exhibition space;
- Fostering cultural experiences for community and visitors to the area.

Email: roxygallery@kyogle.nsw.gov.au Web: www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au

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'She thought her heart would never blossom again in spring' by Michelle Walker

The current exhibition at Blue Knob Hall Gallery is inspired by the exciting prospects of heading into 2015, with the new Café Blue Knob, getting the Ceramic Studio finished and who knows what else!

The artists and members of this community Gallery have produced some fantastic work for this exhibition. They have literally jumped 'Into the Blue' theme with a beautiful knitted and crocheted creation of soft sculpture by Lynda Clark and Margaret Karam of our endangered coral reefs. These pieces show how we can get any message across through art as an informative and protest medium.

All the artworks express a very diverse representation of the theme. The Opening night for this exhibition

Into the Blue reprised

was a great success for the Gallery and the Cafe with over 60 artists, friends and musicians staying for a great meal provided by Joline Shervey that celebrated the opening of the new Cafe Blue Knob.

Next Artists and Friends Lunch

The next Artists & Friends lunch will be on Thursday 26th March at 12.30pm. Cost is \$18 per person for a set vegetarian mains and dessert. Please contact the Gallery on 6689-7449 if you are planning on coming.

FoodLovers Sunday at Cafe Blue Knob

The first FoodLovers Sunday of the year was a great success with new Cafe Blue Knob proprietor Joline Shervey presenting a Mexican Feast.

The next FoodLovers will be on Sunday 15th March with from 12.30-3.30pm with Zoe Isakidis presenting her beautiful Greek menu. Zoe is passionate about food, cooking and life and many of her favourite recipes are from her family and tradition. She co-owned and ran a patisserie in Sydney for 15 years and has recently moved to Mt. Burrell.

The menu consists of entree of humus, tzatziki, cheese and spinach pies, keftethes, feta cheese, dolmades and preserves with crusty bread. Mains are your choice of Lamb Souvlaki or Baby Octopus cooked in red wine served with lemon and oregano baked potatoes and Greek salad. Dessert



'Blue Horizons' by Dawn McDonald

will be your choice of Galatobouriko (semolina custard baked filo pastry with cinnamon syrup) or Baklava and then Greek coffee and tea.

The cost of Zoe's entire menu is \$35 with all proceeds after expenses going to breast cancer research. Please wear something pink, it is going to be a tasty, fun and great day. Bookings are essential and you will need to let us know your choice of mains and sweets when you book. Contact Jeni Kendell 6689-7236.

Workshops

Sachiko Kotaka - Oriki Felt
2-Day Workshop 14th-15th March,
10am-4pm

This class is suitable for beginners to advanced felt makers. Fee: \$170 - includes a handout, plus hot drinks (tea and plunger coffee) and nibbles in the class. It is essential to make an early booking. Please email Sachiko at: kotakaart@gmail.com

Magic at Nimbin Artists Gallery

by Peter Ptschelinzew

Many of you know Nimbin, and Nimbin Artists Gallery in particular, to be a magical place. Well, we're now able to offer you the chance to create some of your own magic. Our current guest artist is Nicole Maxwell, and she has a display of magical wands for all occasions. If you want to weave some magic, perhaps a love spell over that pretty someone you've been admiring, or to conjure up the lotto numbers, I'm sure one of the wands can help (no guarantees or refunds offered).

We enjoyed a splash of colour at the last hanging. The gallery is very pleased to see Ian Pearson giving us some of his distinctive landscapes to display, rather than have all lost to the city. Great to enjoy his work again locally.



'Three in a Row' by Maureen Whittaker

Maureen Whittaker added to the colour with two of her wonderful oil paintings, and many of our other regular contributors have refreshed their displayed work to catch your interest. Many of you know Kach Perrott and her family have left our fair valley (she'll be back), so what we have is the last you'll see of her in the gallery. Unless we can coax her in as an occasional guest artist. Come have a look.

And with summer nearing its end, it is, of course, almost autumn. And we know that every autumn, rather than slowing down for the cooler months, your volunteers at the gallery turn it up a notch for the Autumn Arts Extravaganza. It runs from Good Friday this year, 2nd April, until 27th April. We know it'll be another fine exhibition and are now calling for proposals.

Drop into the gallery, or go to the website: www.nimbinartistsgallery.org to get copies of the guidelines and consignment forms. We'd like to see these by Monday 23th March as it greatly helps us to plan the event. Come talk to us if you have any questions.



'Nardoo Hills' by Ian Pearson
Wand by Nicole Maxwell



Local wins international photo award

by Bob Dooley

Nimbin local, Raphaela Rosella has taken out first prize in the prestigious 2015 World Press Photo Awards in the Portraits category, singles.

Her winning photo is of Laurinda, a young Kamilaroi girl from Moree, waiting in her purple dress outside her family home for the bus that will take her to Sunday School, on 18th May 2014.

Currently based in Brisbane, Raphaela is a documentary visual-storyteller who has been working closely across communities facing recurring hardship, using photography to question our readiness to stigmatise and to stereotype.

Known for her work documenting the lives of several young mothers, Raphaela continues to investigate relationships between social class, stigma and gender among young Australian women and men experiencing social disadvantage.

As her artist statement point out, "Many communities in Australia face entrenched poverty, racism, discrimination, trans-generational trauma, violence, addiction and a range of other barriers to health and wellbeing."

The international award culminates 10 years of study and practice of her craft, encouraged by her parents: Judi Kent, who studied photography at Sydney College of the Arts, and sculptor Donato Rosella.



In 2005, as a Year 11 photography student at Richmond River High School, Raphaela took out first place, digital print at the Nimbin Show against a field of older photographers, and later that year won a \$5000 scholarship from Father Riley's 'Off The Streets' project, going on to study photography at Southern Cross University.

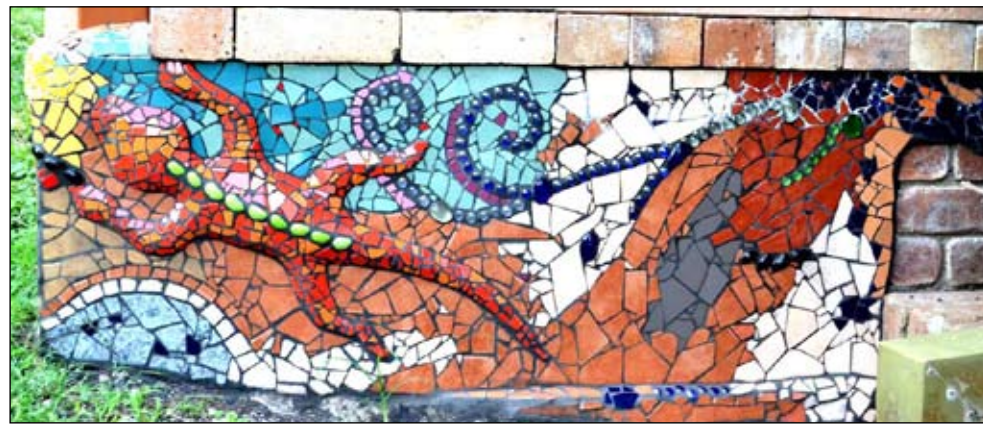
In 2012 she joined the Australian photography collective Oculi, and in 2013 some of her photos were selected for Sydney's Vivid Festival, where controversially one image,

'Tamaras Pregnant Belly' was dropped from the selection to be projected onto buildings at Circular Quay as it was deemed to be "not family-friendly".

At the time she said, "I find it hard to comprehend how a pregnant belly is not family-friendly."

Raphaela Rosella is currently represented throughout Europe by Agence Vu, and is co-editor of *The Australian PhotoJournalist*, a non-profit publication dedicated to celebrating the human condition and casting a critical eye on journalism and mass media practices.

Learn the art of Mosaic making



Mosaics have fascinated people for centuries.

Intricate designs created from many tiny gleaming pieces immediately capture the eye and give the viewer a dual pleasure – the image itself and the beauty of its constituent parts.

Mosaics are both a functional form and a decorative art, making them endlessly versatile and appealing.

When you begin to design and make your own mosaics, the pleasure of creating something out of something else is an intriguing process and quickly becomes addictive.

The craft of mosaic making

is easy to start to learn, but can be taken to any level you want.

The Beginner course in basic mosaic making, to be held in the Creative Learning Centre at Black Sheep Farm, Nimbin this month, is designed to teach how to make functional mosaic art objects for the garden and home. Make original and long-lasting Mosaic stepping stones, platters, garden pot planters and more.

All techniques and materials will be covered, and you will take home a completed Mosaic artwork.

By the end of this course, students will have the skills required to create a mosaic

piece and see it through to completion. They will have a basic understanding of the requirements for exterior and interior pieces and be able to choose materials accordingly, as well as know how to cut materials, prepare bases and grout.

The course is suitable for students with no previous experience in mosaics.

It will run on Saturday 21st March from 9am to 4pm at Black Sheep Farm. Cost is \$80 incl. all materials and morning tea (a \$20 deposit is required).

For more info & bookings, phone Suzanne on 02 6689-1095 or go to: www.blacksheepfarm.com.au

Euphorian escapes

Euan Boyd's first solo exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery presents a showcase for his love for drawing and design.

Euan's Euphorian Escapes are mind maps, based on personal experiences. As the artist unwinds, seeking to deal with the mundane, the stresses of everyday life, he experiences his "euphoric escapes", small visual escapes into other worlds.

These visual escapes draw on his creativity and imagination, as he reflects on, and unwinds from, his work as a bespoke picture framer, his study as a visual artist, and his social life style in contemporary Brisbane. He maps out his euphoric territory as mind maps, charting a journey from the pragmatics of everyday life that sustain us to the expansive possibilities of the sensual and spiritual life that makes us human.

Euan invites you to journey with him from the mundane to the euphoric as you enjoy the works in this exhibition.

The exhibition runs 18th-31st March, with the opening on 20th March at 6pm, all welcome.

Life Drawing

Life drawing is continuing at the Serpentine Gallery on Monday nights, 6.30-9pm. It is a great atmosphere, with people from all walks



'Picture 1' by Euan Boyd

of life and artist experiences. Come along for a draw – we have a 30-minute break in the middle for coffee/tea/biscuits. BYO paper and drawing utensils. Cost \$10.

Models wanted, all shapes, sizes etc welcome, call the gallery on 6621-6845 or email: serpentineartsgallery@gmail.com

Felt - timeless textile, the ultimate eco-chic

by Suzanne McGauley

Felt is a fantastic medium for many people to explore their own creativity. The possibilities are endless, and once the basic skills are understood an exciting journey of fun and creativity can begin!

Spend a day learning the basics, exploring new techniques and discover the joy of felt making in the beautiful Creative Learning Centre at 'Black Sheep Farm' in the hills of Nimbin. All levels of experience from beginners to the more advanced are catered for.

Suzanne will share with you techniques and discoveries she has made on her own felt-making journey. You will learn the simple hands on process and discover the limitless potential of this versatile medium. Depending on what workshop you attend, you'll leave at the end of the day with either a unique piece of felt textile or scarf, a pair of warm winter slippers or a bag, plus a head full of inspiration.

You will be amazed at how you can use warm soapy water, soft tufts of colourful wool, some pressure and agitation, to create beautiful handmade felt of your own design. This is a fun, creative and sumptuously tactile experience of an ancient art form still practiced today. Discover why so many people are fascinated by felt-making! All materials and fibre included in cost.

Nuno felt & flat felting workshop

This will teach how to make a felted piece of fabric. "Nuno" felt is produced by using a fine woven cloth to apply wool fibres upon. As the wool shrinks it takes the cloth with it, resulting in a crinkle effect. Saturday 28th March, 9am to 4pm, cost \$80 incl. all materials & morning tea.

Slipper making workshop

Learn how to make warm winter footwear in a riot of colour. Sunday 26th April, 9am to 4pm, cost \$80 incl. all materials & morning tea.

Flat felting & Nuno

Painting with wool, creating a felted fabric that can be used as a wall hanging, pillow case, table runner etc, or making a nuno felted



warp or scarf – for all levels. Saturday 9th May, 9am to 4pm, cost \$80 incl. all materials & morning tea.

Felt Bag workshop

Students will make a felt bag using the resist method. They will learn to design inside and outside using all over patterning. The bag will be made without sewing any seams. 3-dimensional work. Saturday 30th May. 9am to 4pm, cost \$80 incl. all materials & morning tea.

Once you have understood the basic technique of felting, you can make hats, shoes, booties, dresses, bowls, anything really.

For more info and enquiries, phone Suzanne on 02 6689-1095 or go to: www.blacksheepfarm.com.au



by Philippe Dupuy

Divestment Day

On February 13, a small group of activists tackled the big four banks in Lismore for investing in fossil fuel development. The big four have invested over one billion dollars in Whitehaven coal project at Maules Creek, located in the Leard forest. Our banks are short sighted, the Leard forest is irreplaceable, the coal is not. There are over 34 threatened species in this area, including the iconic koala, feather tailed glider, regent honeyeater and barking owl to name a few.

It was heartening to see local residents responding positively to our message. Even though our numbers were low, we had quite an impact with some people pledging that they would cancel their account with the big four.

If you have money invested with ANZ, Commonwealth, Westpac or NAB, please consider it. All you have to do is to go to a credit union or a financial institution like Bendigo Bank and others who have pledged not to invest in fossil fuel. A number of credit unions, including Summerland Credit Union make the job easy and will process your request without you having to see your existing bank. Remember, we cannot allow our money to be used in the destruction of our precious essential environment.

The Greens campaign

The Greens have launched a very strong campaign to unseat Thomas George in Lismore and on 28th March, the current NSW government will face the wrath of the people!

We at the Environment Centre are very concerned about the state of the environment. We are concerned because both major parties have placed the economy

above the environment, an approach which can only bring disaster. The Greens is the only party that has adopted the policy of environment first. Consequently for most of us concerned about the environment, our only choice at this stage is to support the Greens.

With that in mind, a number of us are taking part in the Greens campaign. We don't have the funds, but we are willing and able to do door knocking, volunteer for data entry and other office duties and hand out 'how to vote' info at the polling booths. It is imperative that we do our utmost to unseat the Nationals. Their environmental policies are abysmal and if they win they will no doubt claim to have been given a mandate on the CSG issue!

We recommend that people enrol to vote (which can be done right up to polling day) and vote 1 Greens, number every square and put the Nationals last because they put the environment (which we desperately need to survive) last. Longtime supporters of major parties who are dissatisfied with the major parties' performance should consider a protest vote; that is put Greens or independent ahead of the major parties.

Remember number every square and put the Nats last.

Great Barrier Reef

At long last, a cloud of doom is lifting over the Great Barrier Reef. Contentious Queensland projects such as the Galilee Basin and Abbot Point have been put on hold. The new minority Labor government is investigating back door deals as the spillover continues around developments linked to corporate donors of the ousted Liberal-National party.

Greg Hunt, the Federal Environment Minister, has also extended deadlines for decisions on three projects: expansions

of the New Acland coal mine, Abbot Point Coal Port, and the Aquis Casino in Cairns. The Abbott government is showing clear dislike for the newly elected Qld government and there is fighting between federal and state jurisdictions as they play out environmentalists' sympathies. Typical of politicians, but we are watching because Labor is not to be trusted. Here is what has been reported:

"Labor has said it will end the LNP plan to dump spoil from dredging for Abbot Point in the Caley Valley wetlands, and oppose dredging in Great Barrier Reef waters until Adani can demonstrate the financial viability of the project." In other words, until there are enough incentives for them to change their minds.

Lismore Biodiversity: BMS

Lismore City Council's Bio-diversity Management Strategy was on exhibition until 24th February, and it has been pushing hard for public support.

And yes! As it claims, the environment is rated by most as a very important aspect of life in Lismore.

And yes! Our region and the Border Ranges are relatively tiny compared to the rest of the state, but has one of the highest concentration of endemic species and is home to over 70% of threatened species.

And yes! It is fair for the Council to say that it wants to see this area protected and consequently wants support for its Bio-diversity Management Strategy.

Its argument is based on the fact that currently Lismore City Council spends less than .05% of its expenditure on the environment.

We are told the Bio-diversity Management Strategy is the product of intense consultation with the Stakeholder Reference Group, including representatives of farming and environmental interests.

It also says that the BMS is aimed particularly at rural environments, and that it is a major change in policy from a highly regulated system of environmental management based on penalties, to a voluntary system of education and

incentives.

And the Council tells us it is acquiring money for its BMS from the state to do a joint project of education with SCU. Some other projects being considered include eradicating weeds from road verges, eradication of wild dogs, riverbank restoration, tree planting, urban bushland management, koala habitat restoration and much more!

The Council is also claiming that the BMS will create the opportunity for creative partnerships with Council and farmer organisations, the State government, landcare groups, Green Corps and locality-based groups.

The catch is that the Council does not currently have the financial resources to fund the \$500,000 BMS. It says that the proposed 1.9% special rate variation will impact on most ratepayers by less than 50 cents per week. Farmers will on average pay less than \$1 per week. Farmers will pay more because their properties are more valuable. However, farmers will receive most benefit from the strategy.

As much as NEC would love to see the Council become more responsible towards the environment, most of us have little faith in what is being proposed.

Now Council admits that it spends less than .05% of its budget on the environment, yet only recently it is reported that it went in joint partnership with the state government on the development of a sports complex in Gonellabah costing over one million dollars. That is not good BMS in my view.

NEC would dearly love to work with the Council, provided environment issues are given the priority it deserves. Lip service to far reaching issues such as biodiversity won't do. Tokenism and symbolical terms such as BMS are hollow and do not address this very important issue. Let's start by getting Council to audit its expenditure and re-evaluate its priorities. Allow ratepayers to indicate to Council on their notices which issues are the most important to them and how they want their money spent. Then and only then can Council be trusted with our money.

Koala Kolumn

by Lorraine Vass

Friday 13 February 2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the gazettal and commencement of State Environmental Planning Policy No 44 - Koala Habitat Protection (SEPP 44) in NSW.

The SEPP, introduced by the Fahey Government in 1995, operates within the legislative framework of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979. Its purpose is "to encourage the proper conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to ensure a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population decline:

(a) by requiring the preparation of plans of management before development consent can be granted in relation to areas of core koala habitat; and

(b) by encouraging the identification of areas of core koala habitat; and

(c) by encouraging the inclusion of areas of core koala habitat in environment protection zones."

And what do we have to show for 20 years? Not a lot if measured by preparation of plans of management. Four approved Comprehensive Koala Plans of Management (CKPoMs) across the state: Port Stephens, Coffs Harbour, coastal Kempsey and South-

east Lismore; a couple adopted by their respective councils, coastal Bellingen and Tweed; a few more in the pipeline: coastal Byron, the lower Clarence Valley and shire-wide Ballina, Campbelltown and Gunnedah. Oh, and there's a scattering of approved Individual Koala Plans of Management – probably fewer than 20 in the Northern Rivers.

Clearly planning regulations aimed at controlling development are not, in themselves, a silver bullet for koala conservation. Far from it! SEPP 44 cops a lot of flack from all of us and some are even more critical, concluding it has obscured the landscape-scale, cross-tenure approach necessary for habitat protection effectiveness and damming it as fundamentally enabling legislation.

There's certainly enough evidence to support these views but before condemning the CKPoMs out of hand we need to remember that they are much more than planning instruments. They aspire to coordinate a range of multi-disciplined actions to promote population recovery, including restoration and fire management of koala habitat, reductions of road mortalities and predation by dogs,

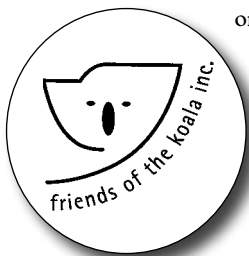
support for welfare and disease issues, population monitoring, identifying research needs and raising awareness of all the above. Having served

on the steering or reference groups for four of them over recent years I can vouch for the effort that has been invested in developing and refining each, so the particular challenges presented in the four study areas are properly addressed.

Assessment of the success or otherwise of these CKPoMs will take two or three koala generations. Competent and consistent application of their regulatory actions and innovative processes to raise the profile of koala conservation and to elucidate the contribution that citizens can make, will be absolutely vital. The stronger the community engages, the better the likelihood of koala recovery.

With the four contiguous councils of Lismore, Tweed, Byron and Ballina implementing or close to implementing their CKPoMs, we are, I think, on the threshold at last of a truly meaningful scale of koala conservation. New collaborative opportunities afforded largely by social media will assist in delivering information to the public and also to motivate people to active involvement in koala conservation.

But persuading people to act and supporting their work is only part of the battle. We need a strong all-of-government commitment as well. What's the point of handing



Seriously wet weather accompanied by high winds can be trouble for koalas. If you see one on the ground and it doesn't look to be moving/ changing trees, please call for advice on the situation. Also, joeys can be left behind when mum decides to find shelter in a storm. A joey (the size of a rockmelon or smaller) on its own, with no mum in a tree nearby, should be reported immediately.

out a few shekels here and there if Forestry Corps continues to log koala habitat or Roads and Maritime Services continues to compromise koala populations by inappropriately located upgrade routes?

Only last week the North East Forest Alliance (NEFA), the NSW Nature Conservation Council (NCC) and the National Parks Association

of NSW (NPA) called again on the Government to immediately halt logging operations in state forest compartments known to or likely to be koala habitat and impose a moratorium until koala habitat is independently mapped and properly protected in accordance with rigorous scientific criteria.

They have offered to share their knowledge and understanding of the koala habitat remaining in state forests to determine areas to be covered by the moratorium but whether or not this is taken up remains to be seen, at least until after the upcoming elections.

When all is said and done, I don't expect the election results to change much at all for koala survival in the Northern Rivers. The imperative to finding an alternative route for Stage 10 of the Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway Upgrade, to progress the Great Koala National Park concept and to stop logging koala habitat in state forests are community-driven anyway.

To report a koala in trouble, or a sighting (live or dead), please ring Friends of the Koala's 24/7 Rescue Hotline: (02) 6622-1233. For information about koalas, their food trees and how you can assist koala conservation, visit: www.friendsofthekoala.org or email: info@friendsofthekoala.org or phone 6622-1233.

To report environmental incidents, including removal of koala habitat ring the 24/7 Office of Environment & Heritage Enviro Line: 13-15-55.

The problem with weeds

by Triny Roe

A sweeping statement on bookface asserted that weeds are not a problem because they have not caused the eradication of any native species and that native pioneer species still abound, often becoming weedy themselves.

Just because no native species has become extinct because of weeds doesn't mean weeds don't cause massive problems on a localised level. In many areas, some exotics grow faster than and/or overgrow the natives. They change the balance of ecological communities.

A number of imported species have also been shown to exhibit adaptation, changing their physical attributes in response to the conditions here so they are highly successful in their new home. Arriving without their natural pests and diseases there is nothing to stop them taking over. Except human intervention...

It is important to assess 'weeds' on their individual merits. Introduced species are not all 'evil' as some assert. Some plants are problematic in one region and not in another. Temperature, rainfall, soils and even the microclimate all contribute to the success or otherwise of a particular species in a specific area.

Australia comprises a huge range of ecosystems – from desert communities, coastal heathland, our iconic eucalyptus forests, rainforests and wetlands. Many of these individual vegetation zones

and localities can be and are currently seriously adversely affected by the rampant nature of a range of exotic species. As well as causing serious damage to fragile native ecosystems, weeds cause production losses to the tune of an estimated A\$1.5 billion dollars in the livestock industry alone. This equates to higher prices in the supermarket.

One also hears that camphors are good because native species can germinate under the canopy. But will they push through the canopy or do they need to wait for a gap to open as they would in a natural ecosystem? Wendy Neilan's (Griffith University) research identified 181 rainforest species growing under camphors but she noted that the camphors needed to be progressively removed in order for the rainforest trees to reach maturity, given camphors can live for 300 years. Do you want to wait that long? Wattles, with a much shorter lifespan and the ability to fix nitrogen, do a much better job of creating a suitable environment for regenerating rainforest.

Biomass does not equate to biodiversity. When a particular vegetation ecosystem is dominated by a few energetic species the overall biodiversity is actually reduced as the few species take over and outcompete the existing larger variety of species.

If you live in the Northern Rivers and you want your landscape dominated by a few vigorously naturalising species such



as camphor laurel, lantana, morning glory, cats claw, maderia vine, giant devil fig, privet and paper mulberry, it's easy. Do nothing. Do not weed, anywhere, anytime. Lounge on your deck, wipe your butt with lantana leaves and marvel at the beneficent biomass that is generating before your eyes. Before long you won't be able to get out the front door, but outside will be a fecund tangled jungle. And you will be unlikely to be popular with your neighbours.

Humans have altered landscapes and vegetation on this planet for millennia, deliberately and inadvertently. Learn about the particular plants in your garden or on your property. Identify new species as they arrive. Understand the particular nature of each one so you can determine whether to utilise, remove or encourage. A weed is only a plant you don't want where it is.

Avoid further spread of the uber-successful exotic species. Don't let weeds set seed and don't dump garden waste in bushland.

Happy weeding.

Alternative energy

by Geoff Dawe

With the understanding that the demand for energy in a materialistic society has led to extensive environmental degradation there is a grasping for straws. After 10,000 years of certainty that technology can solve all human problems, even after we can see the widespread damage it causes, civilized humans are hanging on to any reasoning that allows them to continue the technocratic life. One such straw is renewable energy.

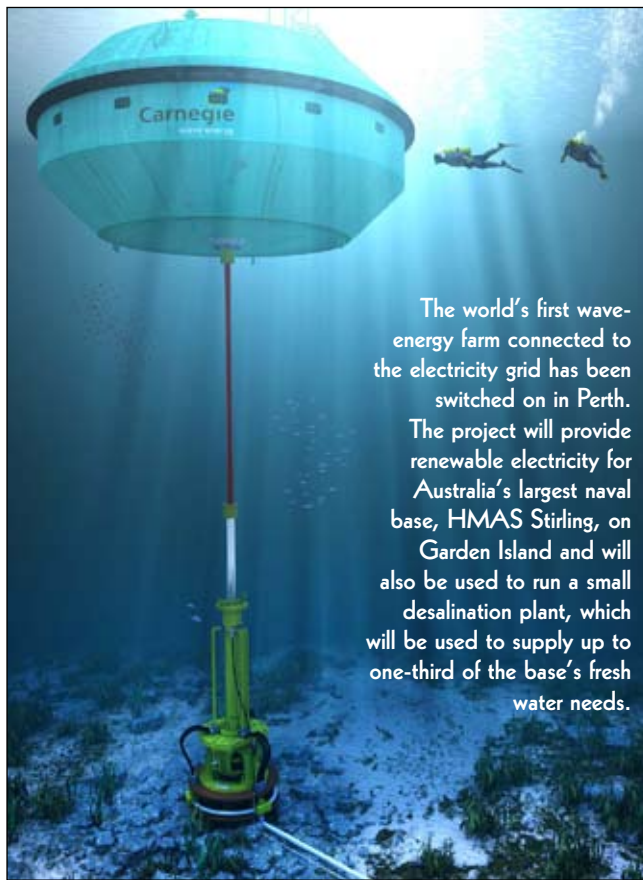
Renewable energy even if it was to replace fossil fuel sources, does not overcome an environment crisis. Renewable energy infrastructure is still required that is dependent on mining, manufacturing and disposal processes that are all Earth degrading. Furthermore, potential hybrid tractors would still be involved in soil compaction, the promotion of monoculture and the widespread application of pesticides. The motorcar however environmentally benign it might eventually become in regard to energy requirements to run it, is still implicated in the creation of nuclear families and isolating the living of individuals, is still involved in the loss of much land under tar and cement, and is not solving the essential problem of being discontent with being here, now. The problem of an environment crisis is not

primarily related to the types or quantities of energy sources available, but on the need for excessive energy; on the need for excessive resourcing.

There are many habituated behaviours that the civilized engage in that can be seen to unnecessarily call forth huge energy demands. The inability of many Westerners to be able to habitually squat for example, calls forth chairs, benches and couches. The inability to squat also tends to cause the bowel to be inadequately emptied during toileting.

Shoes on the feet of children in an environmental science class, is a travesty. Despite all the attempts to come up with just-right footwear, none is as right for the feet, or as benign for energy demand, as bare feet. Safety with bare feet becomes less an issue when it is realized that it is the shod that do not watch where their feet go, and the unshod that use the energy source of the eyes to keenly observe what is on the ground. What blindness is it that bypasses the gift of the eyes by making cumbersome the feet, whose bindings contribute to the development of a dead planet!?

Then there is the contemporary scarcity of the compost heap, with its potential ability to shorten hospital queues. Sir Albert Howard had already established in India in the 1920's and 30's that animals



The world's first wave-energy farm connected to the electricity grid has been switched on in Perth. The project will provide renewable electricity for Australia's largest naval base, HMAS Stirling, on Garden Island and will also be used to run a small desalination plant, which will be used to supply up to one-third of the base's fresh water needs.

that ate vegetation grown with properly prepared compost exhibited a resistance to pest and disease attack, and this immunity was not just preventative but curative. Those who make compost have little understanding that weeds exist. What are called "weeds" are mere grist for the mill for the production of healthy soil and healthy people.

There have been plenty of people down through the ages and across cultures who have warned of the discomfort that is the result of excessive sensory stimulation. This need for stimulation creates technology in a futile attempt

to gain comfort from outside the body. Taken to excess it leads to an environment crisis.

Solutions to an environment crisis at a physical level, of course lie in movement away from technology dependence, but that can only be affected as a result of humans noticing the inner disturbance that creates the unremitting search for contentment through external sources. Robert Lawlor writing in Voices of the First Day suggests, "Esoteric Judaism and Christianity, like Buddhism, see the fall as mind that becomes attached to the appearance of the objective world."

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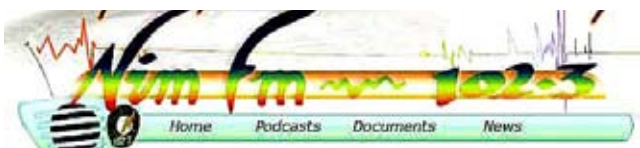
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Natural law

by Helene Collard

For those who have been reading Natural Law recently, you will remember I have been encouraging everyone to 'keep things simple', to think 'less is more', and to choose 'quality over quantity'.

This is far from cutting corners, in fact the simplicity I speak of is underpinned by a significant level of thought and action. The simplicity I speak of is inherently complex and has depth of meaning. So in the first week of March, give everything the energy it deserves.

Continue to work on improving your way of relating. If verbal communication with someone feels regularly difficult, try writing with them.

Aim to have 'clean connection lines' with everyone. This is important. Air your grievances directly and clearly – this goes for past, as well as recent complaints. This will 'clean' the connection line.

Therefore, 'clean connection lines' don't define the relationship (i.e. now we are 'best friends') it simply means you have addressed transgressions, (both theirs and yours) in an honest

and integrous manner. It means you raise information, particular to that relationship, for the sake of creating and then maintaining clean connection lines.

With this approach, some relationships will prosper and flourish, while others will dissolve. However, in both circumstances, you will have behaved authentically, and the connection line will be clear. Furthermore, important new connections will have a perfect environment to emerge.

This process also applies to persons deceased. You may write them a letter, visit their grave, light a candle, look at their photo, sit at a significant place, and create special time to speak with them and clear the connection line.

'Clean energy connection lines' is the natural law of social conduct. It fosters high levels of cohesion and unity, which in turn, creates productivity and reciprocity. Therefore, this system of relating is an important element of a sovereign society – where authentic conduct is paramount, where grievances are aired and where keeping connection lines 'clean' is seen as integral to the success of the group.

In the second week of March, we will be more focused, and this is for good reason. We will be attending to whatever is necessary for the changes that are upon us. A powerhouse of



*"I am self-sovereign, as are you.
I acknowledge the ancestors, mine and yours, past and present.
You are all my relations. All is One."*

energy will occur around 20th March, and this will signify a turning point. From here, there will be no turning back and in 12 months time you will see how much has changed. Use the preparation time prior to 20th March wisely. You will be guided to 'clean and clear' many things: connection lines; possessions; land; beliefs; values; behaviours; projects; your home; and more.

Make time to be silent and still, so you may hear the voice within.

Helene Collard has a Bachelor of Trauma & Healing and is a Reiki Master-Teacher. She lives in the NSW Northern Rivers area with her life partner, Mirek and their two young children.

I believe, therefore I am

Beliefs are dangerous. They cause people to do things they otherwise might not do!

Some people believe that if they strap a bomb to their belly and then walk into a crowded place and explode themselves and a few dozen infidels... men, women and kids... they will end up in Heaven, with their own harem of virgins whom they can shag for ever and ever. So they do just that! Although there's no proof of the heavenly big brothel-in-the-sky, they still hopefully do the bomb bit with regular and blind monotony. Incidentally, the virgins are exclusive property, all gorgeous, sexy and loyal... even the same religion. They obediently wear their burkas when shopping and stay virgins forever, even though they regularly root like rattlesnakes.

Some people believe that if they go to another country and wound, maim, cripple and kill innocent civilians, including countless children... destroy their towns, cities, farms, homes, hospitals... everything... all for oilfields, weapons and Corporation profits... that they are "defending their country" and making the world a better place! A whole nation once believed it was the "master race" and set about exterminating everybody else!

Some people believe that putting refugees, drug users and political "problem people" (like whistle-blowers, truthers, protestors and dissenters) into prisons, is a morally acceptable way of dealing with a perceived social

problem. Even torture is okay! You only have to bring the word "terrorist" into the equation to justify that!

Some people believe that putting scientifically-proven toxins in public water supplies and forcibly injecting everybody with Government-backed, profit-driven, often-untested Pharmaceutical Corporation products is the right thing to do for public health. Many people believe the opposite. The trouble is, once these things get put in place as mandatory, there is no control over what might get added down the line through these force-fed, public-personal, compulsory conduits. Taken to its logical extremes, it doesn't bear dwelling on... yet the possibility exists.

People once believed the planet was flat, that the Sun revolved around the Earth... and a dwindling bunch still believe that you can solve the rapidly-worsening world-situation through existing political systems.

When I was a kid, in Catholic schools, I was beaten and threatened with burning in Hell for the rest of Eternity if I didn't memorise to the letter and live by certain dogmas, prayers and especially beliefs. There were plenty of prayers and hymns affirming the massive barrage of propaganda... especially there were "creeds". This word comes from the Latin "Credo" which means "I Believe". Of all these indoctrination tools, nothing quite matched the "Apostles' Creed" for sheer tell-it-like-it-is-ness.

It's worth quoting it in its entirety for you to ponder. So

here goes:

"I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen."

It sets up the whole myth in one go. God, JC and the Holy Spook are the board of directors, the virgin birth (well actually it says the Spook did it... doesn't say how!) and it says that a Roman guy (who even gets named) gave JC a bad time and then killed him. JC then went to Hell (dunno why!) then up to Heaven to join Dad and the Spook. It even defines Heaven as up and Hell as down. Anyway, he's coming back one day to judge everyone who ever lived, including all these corporate gangsters and lying politicians, jailers, torturers, crook police... everybody! I wonder do they believe their church's creeds?

Then it winds up with a short list of other stuff you better believe in... which includes the "holy" church (the boys' club), the



Mookxamitosis

by Brendan (Mookx) Hanley

forgiveness of sin and eternal life in Heaven with all the other winners... with the Church holding the franchise!

There was once a 400-year long, cruel-beyond-belief war waged on people who didn't particularly want to believe such a lot of implausible tripe when clearly they knew about and travelled other paths. An estimated 9 million women were tortured, raped and horrifically massacred for being involved in witchcraft. It was seen as a secret feminine realm and therefore a direct threat to the Roman boys' business expanding across the landscape like a viral disease... heading for lands and people yet "undiscovered"... innocents who needed these beliefs and all that go with them like a hole in their collective head.

It's not a good idea to go and do stuff just out of a belief. Spend a bit of time looking at everything and ask questions of every aspect of all you are told. Don't put people down with the insult of being a "Conspiracy Theory" nut-case just because they say "look at this" or "what's going on here?"

The moment you "believe" something you can't prove... you close your mind to ever knowing the truth.

New generation of bee hives

At the end of February was the official launch of Flow Hive, a new and innovative way of keeping bees that allows you to harvest the honey without opening the hive, by just simply turning a lever the honey is released from the frames and directed to the back of the hive using plastic tubing into a jar. This has been ten years in the making for father and son team Stuart and Cedar Anderson.

Stuart is a second-generation beekeeper who lives with his family on an intentional community in The Channon where he co-designed and built an off-grid solar and water powered electricity supply to serve a dozen homes on the co-operative. With a small group, Stuart helped to start the Men's Shed in Lismore that still continues today. Cedar has been keeping bees on a semi-commercial basis for ten years and is a third generation beekeeper.

What makes this new hive special are the frames. Regular frames start off with just a sheet of foundation wax and the bees build the honeycomb up on both sides and when the honey is ripe cap it over, sealing it with wax. The Honey Flow hives are designed with honeycomb moulded out of plastic on both sides of the frame. The bees just add a bit to the end of the honeycomb and then cap it over when the honey is ripe (when the water content of the nectar is reduced to 17%).

The windows on the end of the super (honey box) allow you to view the ends of the frames that show how much of the cells are capped and ready to be harvested. With the turning of a lever all the cells

are split and release the honey to the bottom of the frames where it is gravity fed with a plastic tube to the outside the box into a jar.

The regular way of harvesting the honey is that the frames are removed using smoke to calm the bees, the frames are removed and taken away to have the cappings removed and spun in an extractor and then are returned to the hive. This has always been a very invasive experience for the bees and a lot of work.

It will still be necessary to open the box and inspect the health of the hive, checking for disease, small hive beetle infestations and making sure the hive has an active queen.

The current beehives we use are called Langstroths which were developed in 1852 in the USA and have changed very little since then, but with these new types of frames, this is the biggest change in over 160 years of keeping bees.

At the moment the cost of a complete Full Flow Hive is \$A773, but with time and mass production it is expected to reduce. You can also buy the frames themselves and modify a regular box to suit the 'honey flow' system. This means cutting the back wall out and installing a viewing window that needs to have a cover to place over the opening.

There has been some criticism of the frames. Kirsten Bradley from Milkwood Permaculture Centre in southern NSW says, "Bees want to build their own wax comb. It's part of the bee superorganism. The wax is literally built from their bodies."

"The comb is the bee's home, their communication system which

doesn't work nearly as well if it's made from plastic rather than bee-drawn wax."

This may be true, but the frames in the brood box (bottom box) where the queen lays her eggs contain regular frames that the bees still build up with wax on both sides.

There has been some concern about the use of plastic in creating the honeycomb on the frames, but Stuart says that there has always been the use of plastic in commercial honey production from the large pallet-sized storage units and plastic bee foundation to plastic jars for shop and market sales. The plastic used for the new frames will be a food grade that is covered under the Australian Standard for plastic. The frames will be something that can be recycled and will have a very long life as a frame in the hive, not something that is disposed with a one-off use.

The honey flow frames that are used in the supers (upper boxes) are deeper than the cells in the brood (bottom) box that have been built by the worker bees. The deeper cells in the honey flow frames are not suited for the queen to lay her eggs in as it is too deep for her to reach to the bottom of the cell. This would mean no excluder might be necessary like in a regular hive.

However, it has been occasionally found that the bees have used the Honey Flow cells for drone brood, but once they have hatched and have been cleaned out, they can be re-used as honey storage.

Bridging comb (comb that had been built on top frames and bridged to the ceiling of the lid) is no problem with these new frames. The splitting of the frames is completely enclosed in the new frame units, so harvesting is not encumbered by the bridging comb.

Often, if frames are left for extended periods of time, for example leaving full frames of



Cedar and Stuart Anderson

honey to get them through the winter, honey can crystallize, just like if left in a jar for a long time. Stuart found in the spring when it is time to harvest, the splitting of the cells will release the liquid honey and the remaining honey that has crystallized will remain. He has found that the bees remove it to another cell and it becomes liquid again.

Stuart had found that the occasional deposit pollen in the honey frame cells could block the drainage in that particular channel. He has noticed the bees often clean these cells out and move it to another cell. Sometimes it has remained there, but doesn't seem to be a major issue.

I have ordered several frames and am looking forward to trying them out and see how they flow.

Michael Howes from Tyagarah Apiaries near Byron Bay said, "I put the Flow Box on one of my hives, and the bees took to it straight away. The honey came out clean, no wax. The bees just remove the capping and start filling it again. Great System!"

The amount of support for the new hives has been staggering. In

the first five minutes they raised their original goal of \$70,000. In just under a week they have raised \$A5 million using a crowd-sourcing web page called Indegogo. Stuart was having a hard time getting his head around the speed and magnitude of the response. He had never expected such support, believing it would be hard work to get people interested in the frames.

Stuart felt one of the greatest values the hive would offer would be how people would find a way of connecting with bees. By watching them working in the hives through the viewing window, thinking about where the bees are collecting their nectar pollen and water from, what is flowering in their area, who may be spraying what, people can open up to the world of bees, developing more of a connection with the environment in which they live.

There are plans in the near future to have a local display of a Honey Flow hive in action for everyone to check out.

For more information, see: www.honeyflow.com

Facebook page for the Nimbin Natural Beekeepers: www.facebook.com/groups/327832207427674/

I'm being audited!

Don't worry, the audit officer isn't a city guy in a sharp suit, but a thirty-something female with a nose slightly too big for her face, and twinkling blue eyes that make me unsure as to whether she's laughing at me, or at herself.

And don't worry, it's not your regular kind of audit. Afterwards I'm going to be healthier, and happier, on a cleaner, saner planet. I'll be able to sleep at night. It's something I've put off for a while, but now I've set my challenge, and there's no backing out: I'm looking at my daily intake of food, honestly and thoroughly, and auditing it to meet as close as possible three main requirements:

1. It must be certified organic, or home grown organic. I can verify its organic status by the presence of an Organic Certification number on its label or packaging, and the "bud" symbol as authorised by Australia's six main certification bodies. If it is home grown organic, I must be able to verify its growth inputs by having either

grown it myself or having direct contact with the farmer who did.

2. It must be as locally sourced as possible. I can verify this by calculating its food miles from its farm of origin. I've set a reasonable maximum distance for my food to have travelled in the verdant area where I live at 75km, including its distance travelled to be packaged or processed.
3. It must contain no GM ingredients. The GM-free status of my food should be ensured by the satisfaction of the other two requirements, but if the origin of an ingredient is dubious enough as to jeopardise this requirement, it must be audited out.

We know that the emissions from Australia's agricultural sector exceed the entire transport sector in tonnes of carbon emitted per annum, so if you've been feeling guilty about driving your car, it might be more effective to change your diet instead. If you're worried about the financial cost, consider the social and environmental costs of ocean acidification,



Permaculture Principles with Anastasia Guise

climate change, species and habitat loss, pollution and human ill health such as cancers, diabetes and heart disease.

It is also important to note the ever-closing price gap between organic and conventionally-farmed products. As the costs of fertilisers, pesticides and transport rise, as well as the on-farm costs of mitigating environmental impacts, the cost of conventionally farmed produce has skyrocketed. We also know that, aside from the problematic ethics and health concerns surrounding genetically modified organisms, the biotech companies in charge of such organisms at best perpetuate the problematic aspects of broad-scale

monoculture-farming, and at worst, threaten the fabric of life itself.

My auditor's concern with food miles has a triple reasoning: to support minimum footprint consumption, local livelihoods, and local inter-reliance. The side-benefits are the freshness, and thus maximum flavour and nutrition of the food.

So let's start with breakfast. I'm an egg-on-toast kinda girl. I lay out my ingredients for inspection: A loaf of organic sourdough bread from my local bakery, a dozen eggs from my neighbour, a block of Aldi certified organic butter, a bottle of Australian olive oil (for frying), and an avocado from my local organic market. The bread says it's organic, but I can't find a certification number, so I ring the bakery.

"Hi," I say, "I'm being audited. Food audited. So I need to know the source of your ingredients. Do you have a Cert number?"

The girl explains to me that no, the bread is not certified organic. It's made with certified organic wheat and spelt flour from a local farm. Why they don't put that on the label I don't know. It's other ingredients are salt,

which cannot be certified organic, as it is not "raised from the soil", and sunflower oil. I ask where the sunflower oil is from. She heads off to the kitchen and comes back, saying, "Thailand."

I'm devastated. We're just on the bread and I've failed. I know Thailand is a long way away. 5,798 kilometres away to be exact, and that's by the most direct route. There's also no way of knowing whether the sunflower oil is GM or not. The bread goes.

Next we take a visit to my neighbour, the mad chook lady. She raises her hens from chicks, feeding them exclusively on organic garden scraps and sprouted certified biodynamic wheat from a local farm. The distance the wheat travelled is 24km, and the distance the eggs travelled from my neighbour to me is less than a kilometre. Having had direct contact with my egg lady, my auditor is confident the eggs pass. Additionally, I arrange to have my neighbour pick up a few kilos of spelt and wheat flour the next time she goes to the farm, so I can make flat bread to accompany my egg – that puts the bread back in, and the eggs tick all boxes. I'm back on track!

Now consider my butter and oil. The butter is certified organic, but it's from New Zealand. While New Zealand is closer to me than Perth, its 2291km away, or about 2,216km above my local food limit. Similarly, the olive oil is Australian certified organic, from Woolworths, but a quick call to Woolworths puts the source as "somewhere in Western Australia". That's 5,798 km away. I figure a more appropriate oil for this area would be macadamia oil, so we head to my local organic market where, voila! I can purchase certified organic macadamia oil from Federal, 46 km from my place! While at the market, I introduce my auditor to the lady who grows my avocados. She's driven in from Kyogle, just 14kms up the track. That puts the oil back in, but not the butter, for now.

Wow! I've worked hard for my breakfast! I feel like a modern-day hunter-gatherer! No wonder they were so buffed and healthy – they had to do all this running around... without the internet!

www.rightsofmotherearth.com
www.communitypermaculture.com.au



by Kirrah Holborn

'Traditional Wisdom'

1. What are the benefits of placenta encapsulation?

The placenta contains many beneficial hormones and nutrients and helps the mother to have a smoother and easier postpartum experience. Consuming your placenta can help balance out hormones, reduce the chance of baby blues, help prevent post-partum depression, boost iron levels, reduce postpartum bleeding, increase milk supply, increase energy levels, help with mother-baby bonding and help the mother feel calmer and more balanced. Having your placenta turned into capsules can be done quite soon after birth, making it easy to take and is very nourishing for those precious postpartum weeks.

2. What nutrients are in the placenta?

According to www.placentawise.com the placenta contains estrogen (that helps with breast feeding, regulating postpartum moods, helps the uterus to contract back to pre-pregnancy size, decreases depression and normalises libido). It also contains Prolactin (helping with lactation and enhancing mother-baby bonding), Oxytocin (helps decrease pain, increase bonding, reduce bleeding and stabilises moods) and Placental Opioid-Enhancing factor (helps the release of endorphins, reduces pain and increases a sense of well being).

It also contains Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (helps boost energy and aid recovering from stress), Corticotropin Releasing Hormone (helps prevent post partum depression), Cortisone (reduces

inflammation and promotes healing), Interferon (helps stimulate the immune system), Iron (increases energy and decreases anemia/fatigue), Urokinase Inhibiting Factor and Factor XIII (reduces bleeding and enhances wound healing), Immunoglobulin G (supports the immune system) and Human Placental Lactogen (this hormone helps promote growth of the mammary glands in preparation for lactation in the mother. It also regulates maternal glucose, protein, and fat levels).

3. How do I store my placenta after birth?

If you plan to consume your placenta, it needs to be birthed onto a clean surface and then put into a clean leak-proof container and put into the fridge or on ice in an esky within 3-4 hours of birth. It's best to refrigerate as soon as possible. Ideally the placenta is processed within 24-48 hours from birth so you can start to enjoy the benefits before your milk comes in around day 3-5.

4. What is the process to turn the placenta into capsules?

The placenta is first rinsed gently to remove blood clots. The umbilical cord is then removed (and can be shaped and dried as a keepsake for the child). The placenta can be left raw or steamed first as per the Traditional Chinese Medicine method. Once gently steamed on both sides, it is then sliced thinly and dehydrated at around 40-45C in a dehydrator. It is then ground and the powder is placed into capsules. It is usually returned to the mother within 24-48 hours of the birth.

5. What are the differences between TCM and raw?

The main difference is that the TCM method involves steaming the placenta before dehydrating. According to TCM theory, giving birth is very cooling so the mother needs to be warmed to help with recovery. By steaming the placenta with lemon, chilli and ginger it helps the placenta to become a warming, nourishing and tonifying supplement. Steaming also kills off any surface bacteria that the

placenta may have been exposed to during the birth process. It's important to note that there may be a loss of B vitamins during the steaming process.

For people who adhere to a raw food diet, they usually prefer the raw method. It is thought that more vitamins and enzymes are kept intact by keeping the placenta raw (not steaming) and then dehydrating.

For those that are undecided, I recommend the TCM preparation as it is warming and nourishing and can safely be taken for a longer period of time. It is the most popular method used around the world. For those wanting an instant boost straight after birth, raw placenta can be used in smoothies to help reduce blood loss and replenish lost nutrients. But, the TCM method is better suited to long term use.

6. What does it taste like?

The placenta powder is encased in a vegetable capsule so there is no taste. It's just like taking any other herb or vitamin pill.

7. What are the capsules made from?

I use vegetarian capsules made from cellulose. They are preservative free and gluten free. The capsules contain 100% placenta and nothing else is added.

8. How many capsules will I get?

An average sized placenta yields around 120-150 capsules. The amount can vary from 100-250 capsules from one placenta.

9. What does a placenta homeopathic help with?

A homeopathic remedy can be made from a small piece of placenta. It is considered a constitutional remedy for the baby throughout her/his life. It helps with immunity and bringing balance through times of change.

10. Can I still bury some placenta if I want?

Yes! If you would like to bury some of your placenta, a small section can be removed so you can have a ceremony and plant it under a tree.

For more information about placenta encapsulation visit: www.traditionalwisdom.com.au

How can a person learn to move easier?

by Brent Shaub

Mindfulness applies to the observation of movements as well as thought. One effect of becoming aware of moving is receiving more details like smoothness, direction and ease. With this information, distinctions can be made about the quality of movement as it changes. Higher quality movements take less effort to perform the same activity. They are also more enjoyable. Because mindfulness plays an essential role in learning so many things, including moving easier, and Feldenkrais is cultivating mindfulness of movement, it is also called Awareness Through Movement.

Options for communicating instructions in Feldenkrais can be spoken, through touch or read. In a class, hearing spoken cues gives the listener the chance to self-monitor. A student in a class repeatedly decides how far to go in a movement, how often to perform, and how to be more comfortable. A student is open to follow their curiosity. People do things differently, and a person can have their own insights by observing others in a class. A class also generates a collective sensitivity to movement, which deepens learning.

Another means to refine movement is through touch. Being fully supported in gravity with props like head pads, rollers, folded towels that are, neither too high nor too low, can very profoundly show through experience what true comfort is. Opposite to what a person might think, it is easier to pay attention from this place of comfort and fall awake. With less background desire to shift, more attention is allocated to the unfolding of each moment. The movements in a session are entirely focused on finding ease through direct experience after reducing as much background chatter as possible.

Reading is a visual conduit for learning. Books are persistent and available all the time. Books let the reader re-read an instruction many times, and a reader directs their time. Moshe Feldenkrais authored several



books including, Awareness Through Movement (ATM), Elusive Obvious and Potent Self, three of his classic works. Each offers insights into the formulation of proficient and deficient movements. ATM contains a series of classes.

In all of these means, Feldenkrais starts with where a person's capabilities currently exist. The resulting attitude of acceptance is very supportive for anyone to feel safe with themselves as they are. Reducing stress held in the body that's held trying to protect against being perceived as faulty or limited can restore abilities. Because less activity is used to create protection, more is available for movement. As movement increases, a fundamental change in one's self image emerges, further signalling less need to guard. This non-imposing strategy rooted in listening to start with ability and develop trust is a tenet of Feldenkrais. It is a key reason why Feldenkrais leads to easier movements which continue over a long-term basis, having met the individual at wherever their starting position was, and introduced new information with a non-striving, non-judgmental attitude similar to how a child plays.

If you would like to learn more about Feldenkrais, local practitioners are hosting a stall at Yoga Spirit Fest. Throughout March and April, I teach hour-long classes at 9am and 6pm Monday through Thursday at 3/104 Stuart Street Mullumbimby, next to Betta Living. Between these hours, I offer individual sessions. Books by and about the benefits of Feldenkrais can be purchased online. This article and others are available at: <http://moveEasier.com.au>

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Creating

The page is blank and I'm wondering how to begin. I've been walking around for days thinking about what to write, and then it dawned on me this is the very thing that needed to be said: that the page is blank and I know that the doing of the thing is literally the doing of it. Staring at the page and hoping that something gets written is useless. And so I write this.

Wondering what and how to say it is a common as muck problem for all people who engage in creative acts. There is always a blank page, or canvas, or raw materials. The tools of the artist-writer, of brush, palette knife, pencil, pen, pastels, paint, chisel, keyboard can be in tip-top shape (and they are intrinsically lovely, I think), but they're useless until a mark is made.

We had a game as children where one of us made a mark on a piece of paper and then another of us had to draw something that the mark evoked, and then the next person had to draw something that the mark and the other person's drawing evoked in them, and so, very soon the whole paper was a mass of drawings. The complete effect was beautiful. It is in the doing



by Dr Elizabeth McCardell

that a thing is made.

The creative act depends a lot on being alive and open to possibilities, which is the meaning of receptivity. To hold oneself alive to whatever comes along is not waiting for something random to grab one's attention; it's surrounding oneself with various materials, people, ideas and contexts that nurture and stimulate interaction and a desire to participate in a seed of an idea. Receptivity doesn't depend on a time frame, but permits access to a creation at any and all points of our engagement.

This last statement is a crucial one, as it implies that any beginning is a useful one. Any mark on the page is the start of a creation.

Of course, this is not to say that there are not other factors that get in the way of creating something. The stories we've been told about ourselves, the difficulties that we've had growing up, the

traumas we've experienced, and so on have a huge bearing on the making of something new (all of which may be successfully addressed in counselling and hypnotherapy). I've known this rather well in my own life, but over the last month have experienced these apparent barriers more keenly.

Nearly a month ago I began a 30-day challenge to write for 10 minutes a day and post it on an internet site designed just for this: to get writers writing. Just doing the thing has thrown up a barrage of resistances. Many days have passed when I've left the writing till nearly midnight, but then when actually writing it hasn't been hard. So, what is all that about? Why the dragging of feet?

Writing has quite a history for me. I started out a terrible writer in all ways. My handwriting was practically unreadable and because even I couldn't read it, my written expression was garbled. I had been taught to write with my right hand, but I was (am) left-handed, so I actually couldn't control my pen for a very long time. It was embarrassing and I didn't want to do anything with a pen. That changed when I was sixteen and starting to prepare for my matriculation exams in order to get into university. Until

then I really was un-grabbed (if that's a word) by the essay questions given to us.

Here, suddenly was a question that set me on fire. It was an English Literature question on the poetic uses of language in everyday life. I wrote and wrote and wrote all night and submitted it the next day. My teacher was surprised, for until that point, I was a mediocre student. She gave me a distinction, but said she wanted to tutor me and teach me to handwrite again. So began intensive training both in handwriting and essay construction, a learning process that continues today.

The greater control of my right hand paralleled the greater control of composition and a greater ease of expression. I'm extremely grateful for this help I received. It changed everything. I was finally free to pursue the learning I wanted. That's my story. I realize there are many other accounts of difficulties that get in the way of present day creativity.

Resistance to creativity can be broken through, simply by making a mark on the paper and elaborating on it. Combining this with such tools as journaling and counseling eases up the creator's block. It's powerful stuff, just this doing business. dr_mccardell@yahoo.com

The small intestine

by Brigid Beckett

On the 19th of last month the Year of the Goat began.

In Chinese cosmology the goat or sheep is also a symbol associated with the 6th lunar month, which is the last month of summer. Co-incidentally similar to the present season.

Chinese cosmology sees the macrocosm, the universe, being reflected in the microcosm, ourselves and other parts of the natural world.

Symbolism for this time of year includes the sun withdrawing into the earth, as nature pauses and fruits and seed are maturing. Plants are giving up their bounty and foliage becomes dense, forming dark spaces. It is a season of introspection and closing off the outer senses. Also a time of connecting with ancestors and ancestral energy.

The associated organ is the small intestine. Although sometimes overlooked, the small intestine has important functions.

It aids digestion in co-ordination with the spleen and transforms fluids in co-ordination with the kidney and bladder. Probably overlooked because the spleen and kidney are primarily associated with these functions, the small intestine is important in linking these energies which can be seen as linking pre-heaven and post-heaven qi.

It is associated with the brain, and the blood brain barrier, being important in mental clarity and discrimination. A weak small intestine can contribute to learning difficulties because of this connection between digestion and the brain.

The small intestines function is to absorb what is needed and to expel what is harmful.

If it is not functioning well the body will absorb some harmful substances, resulting in food allergies.

Conversely it may not absorb needed substances such as vitamins and minerals causing depletion.

Symbolism both for this season and the small intestine includes cooking, ripening and flavour. Too much cold and raw food will damp down or put out the cooking process. This even occurs in warm climates, where often spicy hot food is common, for example in India, and drinking hot tea seems to cool the body rather than heat.

So the small intestine has quite complex functions with this energy of digestion, immunity and brain function.

Overuse of antibiotics harms the small intestine, compromising its functions.

At a deeper level, as with separating the good and bad from food, it helps in choosing the right direction in life, pointing us to listen to the voice of the universe rather than our own voice.

And taking into account the greater good rather than just self-interest.

There is symbolism infinding the right way amongst the rubbish of life, surrendering to nature rather than complaining about the season. Also connecting with and listening to ancestors. The end acupuncture point of the spleen is "palace of hearing" about



hearing and listening. The small intestine is the official in charge of giving and receiving as it gets bounty from the stomach then gives it up, giving from a place of abundance. It is associated with a later stage of life, giving away rather than accumulating.

The animal associated with both this year, and this time of late summer, is the sheep or goat. Sheep and goats resemble goodness in Chinese culture.

There is the symbolism of the leader leading the flock and members of the flock experiencing equality and justice, with a softening of the ego in this flock situation. They are also symbols of filial piety, with lambs or kids going onto their knees while suckling.

The city of Guangzhou in Southern China, is known as goat city and it has a large statue of five goats as a tourist attraction. The legend is that there had been a famine for many years, until five celestial beings arrived on five goats with sheaves of rice in their mouths. Ever since then crops prospered; again goats symbolising benevolence.

There is also the connection between goats and strong digestion as they can eat weeds and a variety of food or even non-food items without ill effect.

So bringing this all together, again the importance of digestion for overall physical wellbeing, and of connecting to the season, to others and to universal energy. And make the most of the year of the benevolent goat.

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