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Woodford NYE

Another successful Woodford Folk Festival was held from 26th December to 1st January. Local artists performing included Nick Hanlon and James T (left) at the Blues stage and comedian and poet S Sorrensen (right) amusing the crowds at the Tropic stage.

Pics: Martin Ollman and Andy Gough

Freedom concert: 'We the people'

by Benny Zable

A fake 'Freedom Concert' poster action mounted in the US is a bold action strategy to raise money for specific groups through the internet, to help out when push comes to shove when Donald Trump takes office at the White House.

In December, the image (pictured), purportedly showing a flyer for a 'Freedom Concert', was widely circulated on social media. This is not a real flyer for a 'Freedom Concert' – the image is a concept poster that was posted to Facebook by Adam Theis: "Please share if you would like to see this concert happen on the same day as the inauguration."

The idea for a "Freedom Concert" was proposed by former Labor Secretary Robert Reich who explained his vision for such an event in an 18th December Facebook post:

"The Trump people are upset that the only musicians willing to perform at the Trump inauguration are Kid Rock and Ted Nugent. "Someone just suggested a televised "freedom concert" to air at the same time as the inauguration – with huge celebrities like Beyoncé and Jay Z, Madonna, Katy Perry, Justin Timberlake, Gaga, Bruce Springsteen, and so on. Alec Baldwin MC's the event, playing Trump as he does on SNL.

"Presto. The Trump inauguration loses all the TV ratings. Basically, no one watches it.

"Even better, the proceeds of the freedom concert go to the ACLU, Planned Parenthood, Lambda Legal, NAACP, Common Cause, CAIR, IRAP, SPLC, Environmental Defense Fund, Human Rights Campaign Fund, MoveOn, Economic Policy Institute, Inequality Media, and GLAD."

While the image is fake, a real 'Freedom Concert' on Inauguration Day may eventually come to fruition. According to *Politico's Playbook*, Mark Ross, a concert promoter, is "in the process of putting together a large-scale concert called 'We the People' to directly compete with Donald Trump's inauguration."

However, Ross has not provided any details about the event. While a *Politico* source said that talent is "banging on our doors" to be involved with the event, no musical acts have officially been confirmed to play the show, as of this writing.

Ross confirmed that he was planning a concert in a 23rd December Facebook post: "Getting together a really big show. Stay tuned."

Thinking globally, acting locally

A suggested local concert is in the process of being considered for a 'Freedom Concert' at the Nimbin Bush Theatre on Sunday 20th January, which for instance can help raise money for the Environmental Defenders Office in Lismore which had its grant terminated by government intervention. They have most successfully defended activists in court and supported many an ongoing environmental battle.

It is now more than ever essential that We The People continue to push back with our creative bold non-violent ideas to inspire others to stop corporate/government human rights and environmental abuses.

Standing Rock donations

by Benny Zable

Proceeds from the 'Nimbin Standing with Standing Rock' Bush Theatre benefit have been sent, and are being used at the North Dakota protest camp via the Nimbin-Woodstock connection.

Betsy Stang of the Wittenberg Center for Alternative Resources said, "We have been able to help a woman water protector who was injured. We have sent money to the Standing Rock legal group, to the medics and healers and to some of the elders, who were critical to the entire prayer events, to help with housing and transportation.

"The camp is doing really well with supplies. They have lots of clothing, heaters etc. However, several of the cars and trucks of the Standing Rock people got totalled during the blizzard, helping rescue people, and having to drive around the barricades to the hospitals with the wounded, in absolutely horrible conditions.

"We are now trying to help some of those folks in whatever way, also dealing with pneumonia."

Cool Pool Olympics



by Sue Edmonds

The Nimbin Pool Olympics are coming into their seventh year, and they're shaping up to be even bigger and better than in past years. How can that possibly be, I hear you ask?

Well there are rumours of more synchronised swimming teams for a start. And the Floaters have been practising hard, making sure they don't move when competing for the title of Best Floater for 2017. There will be the usual events like racing on crocodiles, and we don't need to worry about shark

attacks because the pool has been declared safe for now.

The trophies are made and ready for the winners, so make sure you come down to the pool on Thursday 26th January from 10am. It's an early start so the competitors will be in their best condition. The competition will be followed by the ever-popular sausage sizzle/tea/coffee/cordial and cake.

All this for a \$10 donation, which goes towards extras the LCC forgot, like providing seating for grandmothers as they watch their darlings have a splash and a swim.

Coffee guru offers masterclass

Coffee makers, baristas and enthusiasts have an opportunity to meet and learn from the most influential expert and leader in the world on matters of all things coffee when a world-leading coffee expert and guru comes to Nimbin for a one-off coffee workshop in January.

Scott Rao is a world-renowned writer, consultant and coffee industry trainer who is recognised globally as the foremost master of his art.

Scott will discuss espresso extraction theories, barista techniques to optimise extraction levels, and will discuss manual and batch filter brewing. The class will include a demonstration, tastings and a Q&A session. There will be a chance after the session for private consultations.

"When I began in the coffee business in 1992, I read every book I could find about coffee. However, after reading all of those books I felt as if I hadn't learned much about how to make great coffee," Scott says.

"My coffee library was chock-full of colourful descriptions of brewing styles, growing regions, and recipes, with a few almost-unreadable scientific books mixed in. I would have traded in all of those books for one serious, practical book with relevant information about making great coffee in a cafe.

Fourteen years later, I still hadn't found that book, so I decided to write it myself. These books are my attempt to give baristas what I had been missing all of those years."

Scott has now written several books, including *The Coffee Roasters Companion* and *The Professional Barista's Handbook*.

Scott has gone on to be regarded as the world leading expert on coffee and coffee techniques, and this is an opportunity for local coffee connoisseurs to learn from his extensive experience that would benefit not only those in the coffee industry, but for any coffee enthusiasts who wish to learn a new level of extraction and appreciation.

Apart from classes in Sydney and Melbourne, this is the only workshop and masterclass Scott Rao will do



"These books are my attempt to give baristas what I had been missing all of those years."
- Scott Rao

whilst visiting Australia, and attendees are anticipated to come from Brisbane and beyond to this special event at the Bush Theatre.

The Phoenix Rising Cafe will be open with delicious locally sourced produce, tasty meals, cold drinks and international award-winning Nimbin-grown Mountain Top Coffee.

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Rare Earth metals and the business of green technology

by Bernadine Schwartz

As 2016 came to an end, I decided to do a little research into our new International Agreement to end fossil fuels and determine what this treaty really means. If governments and the major mining companies are serious about ending fossil fuels, then their future plans should reflect the decision that our world leaders have taken.

I wasn't shocked to discover that this couldn't be further from the truth.

The world's mining companies are very busy indeed with their plans for future operations and are being supported by many of our major governments around the world. Doesn't this contradict our world leaders who have signed an international treaty to end fossil fuels? If we are really committed to ending fossil fuels, why are we still continuing to explore for more?

For the last 65 years, our global economic expansion has been sustained by the stockpiling of resources but we are now approaching wholesale exhaustion. Historically these powerful companies have continued to extend their spheres of operation from traditional sites in Europe, North America and Russia to forbidding and remote regions of Africa, Asia and South America.

Today however, virtually all accessible resource areas are now in production; except for the extreme locations such as the Arctic, the Congo, the ocean bottom and unyielding rock formations. There is now nowhere left, therefore massive amounts of money have been put into researching new techniques to mine in these remote areas. How to construct the infrastructure that will be required to transport the resource once it's mined is a logistical nightmare, but this hasn't dampened the governments' and mining companies' determination at all. Drastic times means drastic measures as all these necessary resources dwindle away.

The government of Greenland has been in a frenzy, auctioning off leases to huge companies such as ExxonMobil

and Chevron as the ice melts away. One of the sites covers an area of more than 77,000 square miles, the size of Nebraska. Many are calling this The Arctic Oil Rush as oil companies bid on more and more exploration blocks. Exploiting the Arctic will not be easy, but with oil prices rising and few other areas to rely on, many leading energy companies view production in the Arctic as one of their best remaining options.

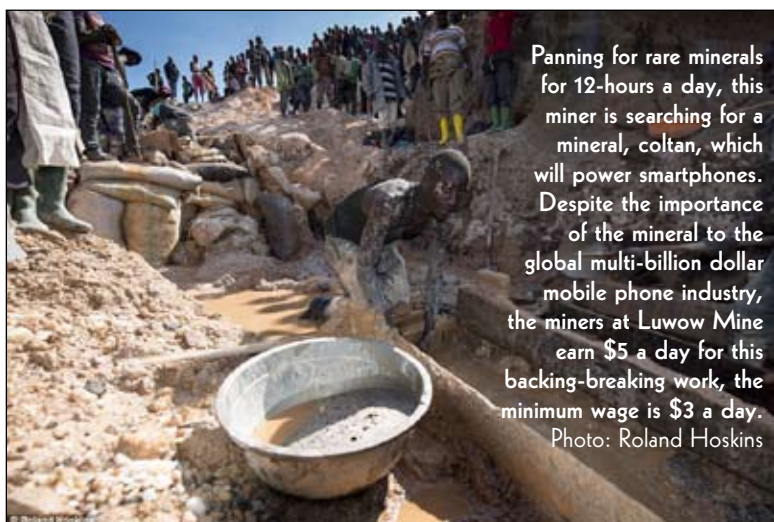
The invasion of the planet's final frontiers has a unique significance because what we mine from these places, represents all that remains of the world's once abundant resource bounty. In all likelihood, we are looking at the last oil fields, the last uranium deposits, the last copper mines and the last reserves of many other vital resources.

These materials will not run out all at once, but gradually we will see the complete disappearance of many key resources that our modern society has long depended on.

What is very worrisome is that we are still going to continue mining fossil fuels in the last wilderness areas left where environmental damage is going to be catastrophic and in addition to that we now also rely on rare earth minerals as never before. This means mining in more locations around the planet, which means more environmental destruction.

These exotic materials that we call Rare Earth Minerals are needed for specialty purposes such as high strength steel, superconductors and hybrid car motors, and they are also rapidly vanishing as demand around the world grows.

What are rare earth minerals? Without them our high technological society cannot function and the implications of what would eventuate when these minerals are depleted is unimaginable. So our new challenge is acquiring rare earth minerals that are essential in the manufacturing of so many products, ranging from computers, catalytic converters, fibre optics, hybrid cars, stadium lights, high strength magnets, portable electronics, energy efficient light



Panning for rare minerals for 12-hours a day, this miner is searching for a mineral, coltan, which will power smartphones. Despite the importance of the mineral to the global multi-billion dollar mobile phone industry, the miners at Luwov Mine earn \$5 a day for this backing-breaking work, the minimum wage is \$3 a day. Photo: Roland Hoskins

bulbs, metal alloys, aircraft parts, wind turbines, solar panels, smart phones, modern weaponry and the list goes on.

Some of these minerals are scandium used for aluminium alloys, semiconductors and stadium lights, and yttrium needed for lasers, fibre optics, and energy-efficient light bulbs. Even our smart phones require eight different rare earth minerals. Many of these rare earth minerals are vital components in the manufacturing of hybrid cars such as lanthanum, neodymium, terbium and dysprosium.

Titanium is also an REM and the global demand is also likely to outpace supply. Titanium is prized by many industries for its low weight and high strength and it is found in a handful of locations. Many existing mines are reaching depletion and now they are looking at Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique and a number of other countries. This also applies to lithium, tantalum and the platinum group metals.

Looming shortages of rare earth minerals that are critical for so many high-tech applications will become a huge problem in the near future. Our emissions have tripled since the 90's, and like many people I thought that green technology was going to be our saviour or at least slow the process of global warming, but this isn't the case at all.

China is the major supplier and makes

up 95% of the world's needs, but this will change as the rush to secure REMs sweeps across the globe. At one time these minerals were produced in significant quantities in the USA, but extracting them from constituent ores typically requires using large amounts of acids and other toxic chemicals, so most American rare earth mines have now been closed due to environmental problems, and China is slowing down production for the same reason.

These minerals are, as the name says, RARE and unfortunately Australia has the second largest reserves in the world. Therefore the pressure will be on to provide the world as China pulls back on its quota. Minerals such as gallium are needed for electronic devices, primarily high speed semiconductors and light emitting diodes (LEDs); they are also used in photovoltaic cells.

Then we have lithium which is a soft, silvery metal that has long been employed in various commercial products, including heat-resistant glass and ceramics. More recently, lithium has gained its greatest importance in another area – the manufacture of rechargeable batteries. Because lithium is lighter than most other materials used to make batteries and holds a charge for longer, lithium-

based rechargeables have become the standard in most mobile phones, and laptop computers, as well as a growing array of cameras and portable tools. Even more significant, many automobile manufacturers, whether they are working on hybrid-electric cars, plug-in hybrid cars or pure electrical vehicles, plan to employ lithium-ion batteries as a power source.

All of these innovations, of course mean that worldwide consumption of lithium is bound to increase. Finding and developing new reserves of this critical mineral will soon be essential. Of all the potential sources of lithium, none hold greater promise than the remote southern highlands of Bolivia. Near the Bolivia-Chile border lies the Salar de Uyuni, the world's largest salt flat and a treasure trove of lithium infused brine. It covers an area of 4,000 sq. miles with a thick crust of salt as roughly four metres deep with estimates of 5.4 million tons of lithium below. This massive salt lake sits in the Andes at an elevation of 4,000 metres, far from any roads, railways or airports. The need for lithium is so great that locations like these aren't deterring the mining magnates at all when so much is at stake.

Eliminating our dependence on fossil fuels and other finite materials cannot be accomplished overnight as our current reliance on them is just too great. No matter how much corporate and government officials might like to deny it, there are nowhere near enough non-renewable resources on this planet to satisfy the growing demand, and eventually continuing current industrial practices will simply prove impossible.

The bottom line is that escalating environmental damage across the planet will be the final outcome. We are 'damned if we do and damned if we don't'.

So all this fanfare concerning our new international agreement to end fossil fuels is just all rhetoric once again. Mankind's future, and the planet's, is more precarious than it has ever been, and where we go from here is unknown.

Phone towers are innocuous – until one falls on you

by Alan Roberts

Wild claims of unfounded health effects from phone towers are used for objections at Bentley, where a phone tower is being constructed near Manifold school, and at Koonorigan where the proposed tower is near a house. Only people unaware of the revolution in physics more than a century ago could be so fearful.

What revolution?

Two unsolved mysteries troubled physicists at the end of the 1800s, namely the measurements of black body radiation and also the behaviour of spark gap transmitters – the earliest radios.

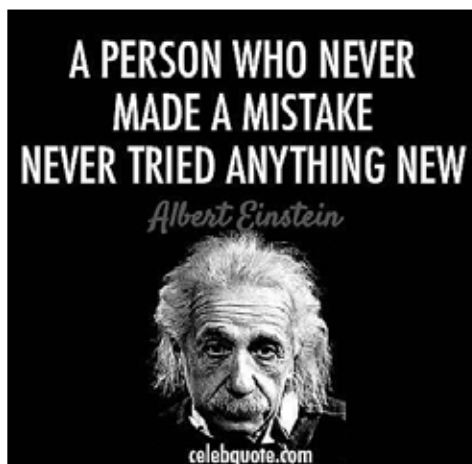
Black body radiation is what you see coming out through a peep hole in the side of a furnace. Careful measurements of the power spectrum of this radiation were made in 1895 by German standardisers to assess which was best – gas or electricity for street lighting. Classical theoretical physics was able to accurately predict the amount of power coming out of the peep hole at each oven temperature but it got the UV end of the spectrum utterly wrong – theoretical UV power increased without limit which was known as the "ultraviolet catastrophe".

In December 1900 Max Planck published a mathematical formula that fitted the black body radiation spectrum perfectly but it depended on him using what he called a "mathematical trick" which he thought would be replaced later. The trick involved assuming that the radiation in the oven could only exist in discrete packets (or quanta) of energy. The energy of a packet, E, (later called photon) was h (Planck's constant) times the frequency of the electromagnetic

radiation f . Written $E = hf$. The packet of energy was transferred in full or nothing – there were no fractions of a quanta.

This changed everything in physics, where until now quantities varied continuously. But no one took it seriously, least of all Planck. The immediate reaction was... nothing. Then in March 1905, Einstein, reworked Planck's black body equation removing some inconsistencies in its derivation and noted parallels to other equations. Einstein also recognised that quantisation of wave energy would solve another puzzle that classical physics couldn't explain – a puzzle sparked by the spark transmitter.

In 1886 Hertz built a spark transmitter to study Maxwell's electromagnetic theories. His apparatus charged up a capacitor until the spark gap broke down and dumped the charge suddenly into a tuned circuit (coil and capacitor) connected to an aerial. The electromagnetic waves travelled through space to a similar aerial and tuned circuit connected to an adjustable spark gap. This all worked as theory predicted. The puzzle came when Hertz enclosed the spark gap in the dark in order to see it more clearly. To his surprise the spark in the light was much longer than the spark in the dark. Further experiments using a carbon arc light source confirmed that the spark was aided by electrons ejected from the metal by light and in particular UV light. In 1902 Lenard's experiments showed that below a cut-off frequency of light there were no electrons ejected, regardless of light intensity, then above the cut-off frequency the electrons were ejected with a kinetic energy proportional to light frequency. This was called



the photoelectric effect.

Classical physics thought of electrons in metals as oscillators, like a person on a swing, that as the swing swung higher with each push, so too the electron oscillated harder as it soaked up the light energy until it broke through the metal surface. But no matter how intense or how long the light was applied no electrons came until even low intensity light of high enough frequency ejected electrons immediately.

Einstein, in 1905, saw both Planck's black body equation and the photoelectric effect being solved in one go, by recognising that electromagnetic waves came only in discrete packets of energy (hf). Scientists railed against the particle theory of light but in devising experiments to prove it wrong they only confirmed it more conclusively, much to their chagrin.

How does this apply to phone towers?

A convenient unit of energy on an atomic scale is the electron volt or eV, which is the energy gained by an electron in travelling between 2 metal plates 1 volt apart (in a vacuum). An example of a low energy chemical reaction is photosynthesis, powered by red light photons of 1.8eV absorbed by chlorophyll a. Our skin holds together in sunlight until chemical bonds get broken at frequencies above violet where the photon energy is 3eV and above.

By comparison the photon energy of a 2.4GHz wifi photon is 100 thousandth of an eV and the mobile phone frequency of 0.915GHz has a photon energy of 4 millionths of an eV. Hence these frequencies are incapable of effecting any chemical change which is just as well otherwise we'd disintegrate before reaching a temperature of 1 degree K.

Comparing intensities: People can lie on the beach for hours in solar radiation of 1000 Watt/square metre (W/m^2). Phone tower radiation near the tower is typically about one hundredth of a W/m^2 . If you're a long way from the tower your phone might be transmitting 1W to 2W of which 30% or 0.3W to 0.6W might be absorbed in your head. Compare this with the heat generated by your brain, whether or not it's thinking, of about 12W. Or compare the 0.6W with the 450W of heat generated in your leg muscles when riding a bike at about 20km/h. If it can get rid of 450W your body can manage 0.6W.

So the thermal effects of mobile phone frequencies are minuscule and the touted "non-thermal effects" are non-existent. Better to focus on valid existential threats.

Challenging times ahead: building unity in diversity

by Aidan Ricketts

The election of Donald Trump presents very challenging times ahead for those of us who care about the planet, human rights, equality and peace. He represents the raw face of corporate power over people and the environment, the veneer of civil democracy has been torn away and in its place we are seeing an aggressive oligarchy of corporate interests gain control of the very formal institutions designed to restrain them.

There's no doubt that western power (US, UK, Europe) is in decline and has been for some time, and that of itself has not been a bad thing. At a minimum, it would have simply required the US to share power with other nations rather than assume a role of unilateral global policeman. The decline of western power could have been a steady and graceful senescence but it won't be now. My studies of complexity theory tell me that we are hurtling toward abrupt collapse. I see Trump as the US equivalent of Boris Yelstin, a dangerous populist who will oversee collapse into chaos. But Trump is more dangerous by far, because the very chaos he is promoting is a free-for-all for globalised corporations.

Conservatism is a maladaptive virus. At the very moment when a nation or culture needs to see the challenges facing it, and its own potential decline and respond in an intelligent adaptive way, conservatives start trying to run backwards up the pipe. It never works and it always accelerates the very collapse they are trying to delay. Those people in middle America who felt so much anger at their declining living standards and voted for Trump are going to be some of the ones most hurt by the new corporate oligarchy they have unleashed. Buying into meaningless reactionary chants like "Make America Great Again" or "Deutschland Uber Alles" or "Rise up Australia" is a road to violence and suffering. This kind of jingoistic fascism is one of history's uglier diseases of civilisation.

Enough of the gloom though, how can we best respond? Despair is a luxury that history doesn't offer us, we need to accept our time and place and search, always, for positive adaptation. When societies move closer to the edge of chaos, they also enter a phase in which abrupt shifts (for better or worse) are not only possible but highly likely.

First we need to understand just why climate change



denial is so prevalent and how fossil fuel corruption plays a part in this drama. The control of the supply of fuel has been the lynch pin of the American century, oil in particular. In an energy hungry world, whoever controlled the fuel supply controlled the world and this has been the US obsession since WW2.

"You got to ask yourself, what's the priority? The change you wanna see or who you want to be seen to be?"
— Urthboy,
'On your Shoulders'

Climate change is the great disrupter. Climate change denial is driven entirely by the vested interests of the fossil fuel sector and their traditional embedded relationship with US military and political strategies. Renewable energy doesn't only offer us a chance to have a cleaner atmosphere and a more sustainable world, it also threatens to make fuel much less important. This is why there's a multi-billion dollar denial industry: some corporations and political constituencies simply don't want to transition at all.

The historic power of European societies owed much to scientific empiricism, but now we are seeing a retreat from rational thinking and a retreat from truth itself. With Trump and climate denial we are living in a post-truth world. We can't know exactly how destructive the West's flirtation with corporate fascism is going to become, but we do know that it has no answers for the people who voted for it.

We need to consciously build new movements that can offer our societies empirically sound, adaptive and inclusive alternatives to denial. They will eventually come looking for answers and we had better have a diverse range of experiments

on the go when they do. The climate change movement has the potential to become the lightning rod around which a very diverse social movement can emerge to offer sound, empiric and practical alternatives to a diseased political culture, but first we need to reflect on how we have all contributed to Trumpism, Brexit and One Nation.

Social media has given us all the ability to select our news sources and to gravitate to social networks that support our personal biases. This is how climate deniers have become so deluded, but it has been happening to us all. When we hide in our greenie, leftist or feminist social media and information enclaves we start to also construct a political echo chamber for ourselves that not only makes us less open to others views and less engaging with difference but that actually excludes the vast majority that we should be trying to influence. Ask yourself what diversity in politics means to you? Does it simply mean including traditionally excluded minority groups (as it should) or does it also extend outwards to the mainstream of your society and build bridges with people who may not immediately share your perspective?

We on the left aren't even always kind and respectful to each other on social media, bashing each other over the latest artefact of political correctness and often engaging in pack mentality against those who challenge our foundational narratives.

Our victory at Bentley was a great model for us all. First and most importantly, it was a victory against the very fossil fuel industry that threatens our planet and our democracies. But more importantly it was built on genuine social inclusiveness. Farmers, greenies, indigenous communities, meat-eaters, cis males and cis females as well as the gender diverse, office workers, national party

voters, nurses and teachers, the unemployed, local businesses. We learned to put aside our differences to build community and protect what is dear to us. We built a vision of community and mobilised to defend it.

We can't choose our time in history, but we can choose to open our minds to new people, new information and new perspectives. We are facing a battle between people and global corporate power. It's been coming for a long time but now it shows its teeth in full view. It is time to back off from choosing small targets from amongst our own communities to serve as our symbols of what we hate about the wider world, whether it's racism, patriarchy, heteronormativity or any other battle line, our battles in the future are not primarily with our neighbours they are with the larger institutions of a very corrupt and truth denying version of capitalism. We won't win this by point-scoring on our pet issues against our neighbours on social media. When we open our minds and hearts to diversity, including inviting the mainstream in, we will build new movements, attract new supporters and transform our politics like we did with the gasfield-free campaign. Even many pro-capitalists will join us as they too can see that fossil fuel industry protectionism and cronyism is destroying the innovative and competitive market that they value, as much as it is destroying the planet.

So, I'm sorry if the new year looks like a lot of work, but I think that it will be. Let's learn from our successes and our unity in diversity at Bentley and build our communities towards resilience. And let's choose our battles, respect our neighbours, respect those that we have disagreements with and let's embrace a new understanding of diversity that calls in as many people as we can from what we may have seen as the mainstream.



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From the mayor's desk

by Cr Isaac Smith, Lismore City Council

I loved ending my first year as Mayor in Nimbin with my final event. And it was a great event too, as we launched the Nimbin soundtrails.

The visitor information centre was full of locals, despite being so close to Christmas, as we gathered to let people know that a trip to Nimbin will now be filled with local stories. For the first time visitors can hear first hand from those who created the Nimbin we know and love today. As they move around our village, many different voices will talk about the history and culture. I really hope these stories can be carried near (locals need to

listen as well) and far so that Nimbin history is a shared history.

Council is also starting work this year on the new Nimbin water supply to replace the old reservoir which has passed its use by date. This water will be of a much higher standard than is currently available and will be fluoride free.

As with a lot of council water, sewer and road infrastructure, the costs are shared across our whole community to ensure generational equity and fairness. This sharing over time and across the LGA allows people to move around the area without being stuck with all the costs at any one period of time. While council is running more like a business than ever, we still need to rise above the PiR user pays model to provide community assets for future generations.

Our February meeting has a report on a new rural residential suburb on Blue Knob Road. This is in keeping with our plan (growth management strategy) to only allow development around our villages so that we can be more sustainable in the future. We can not justify large green field expansions at a time when we have to be more economically and environmentally sustainable in coming decades.

Speaking of sustainability, I am really excited by the results coming through in the Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Our community is very happy with our focus on being a sustainable council and the feedback is mainly tweaking a few areas to better deliver on community needs. We continue to develop our community solar so we can be energy independent by 2023 and with more saving being found over the next few years

we are finally getting back on top of roads. As you can see by the crews out and about, we have never had so much road work being done as we have in the past year.

The other great direction supported by our CSP is our move towards participatory democracy. Basically this is where local people make the decisions in local groups. This is a global movement to empower communities to work more closely with local government in particular. Council will continue to grow this by resourcing our community panels and the Nimbin Advisory Group, so they make decisions right on at street level.

I can't wait to see you all in 2017, as I know this is going to be a big year for our community. So many amazing and wonderful things are about to happen, so I can't wait to share these with you.

Call for signature trees

by Cr Vanessa Ekins, LCC

Should Lismore and villages have signature trees or floral emblems?

Councillors are keen to have a conversation with our community about what tree or trees could be celebrated and feature at our village and city entrances.

I like the hoop pine (*Araucaria cunninghamii*) which is the totem tree for Lismore, and I also like the silky oak (*Grevillea robusta*) and the brown kurradjong (*Commersonia bartramia*) which is gorgeous in flower at the moment.

In the Northern Rivers we have some of the highest biodiversity in Australia and therefore the world.

Maybe our signature can be clumps of several species of trees or a tree for each month, which the *Nimbin GoodTimes* does so well.

The hoop pine in the photo was planted by *Bunyam Baigham* Landcare Group.



by Laurence Axtens

It's just not funny – I mean it is hilarious but it's so black – it's so neo noir that it's simply the comedy of grief.

The theory is that when we grieve we go through phases. Shock, denial, blame, sadness and finally acceptance in any order you like.

Loonie tunes

During this era of mass extinction, over population, mass exodus of refugees etc etc etc we'll need to grieve a lot. We've done the shock bit but everyone's over pictures of polar bears on vanishing icebergs, and islands vanishing below the ocean and bleached coral reefs. We've enter the next phase and this is the phase called denial. The government is filling with denialists and we are setting up bigger and nastier penalties for scientists and do gooders determined to keep reminding us of the reality of our loss.

We're doing denial thank you very much. Indeed we're doing it big time - we're going to dig the biggest coal mine in the world. We're going to expand the military industrial complex so everyone

can have their dead end job back. We're going to keep pretending that the big issue is terrorism, rather than the actual bathos of seven billion plastic coffee cups pumped out daily into the Pacific Trash Vortex.

And denial is the nice bit – wait till the blame starts. We're already watching it's beginnings – refugees imprisoned forever for trying to escape persecution, doctors arrested for whistle blowing... in cosmic laughter terms this is the deepest and darkest of the belly laughs – ok it's just the universe sobbing. And that's the point – let's try skipping the denial and the blame and just being sad about sad things and accept the hard changes ahead. We can do this.

On the same Page



Kevin Hogan MP
Member for Page

I hope everyone enjoyed their Christmas/New Year break and thank you to all the people who worked or volunteered over this period to keep our community safe.

Working together for the past 12 months, we have achieved a lot, but there is always more to be done.

Some highlights for the year were passing legislation allowing the medicinal use of cannabis. This was great news for many in our community who cannot use other types of pain killers.

I was happy to vote for this after I heard numerous stories from members of our community with debilitating illnesses who wanted access to medicinal cannabis to help relieve their chronic pain and improve the

quality of their lives.

I am also happy the Lismore Regional Art Gallery will finally be completed, soon after I secured a grant of \$2.85 million, and that NORPA can continue to produce plays that tell our local stories after I got them a grant of \$400,000.

Last year also saw a massive investment by the Federal Government of about \$3 million to fix and maintain our local roads.

As you know, Stony Chute Road from West Road to Green's Bridge is a dangerous hotspot. That is being fixed under this program.

It was also great to hand out grants like the \$150,000 for the Rainbow Ridge School for Steiner Education at Lillian Rock to build a new administration block and refurbish learning areas.

We live in a great community, which is why we are all here. Our strength is our unified purpose to make this community a safe and prosperous one for ourselves and our children. I look forward to continuing to advocate and promote our region with you in 2017.



Community Centre news

Capital works

Nimbin Community Centre has been successful in gaining \$3,495 of NSW Community Building Partnership funding towards the cost of repainting the Bottlebrush building. This is the building painted in iconic rainbow colours (pictured) that houses the Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Service.

The funding grant is being matched through a joint contribution from NCC and NACRS. 2017 will be a very busy year at the Community Centre, with this and many other capital works planned.

Comskool

The Nimbin Community School Co-op Ltd is a community-based education group located at the Nimbin Community Centre that has undertaken very valuable work over many years, and which auspices the Nimbin Open Learning Centre.

The Open Learning Centre aims to offer a programme of interesting and useful classes and workshops at low fees four terms per year. Their classes enliven our building regularly with people participating in a range of activities such as art classes, learning Spanish or ukulele.

The Open Learning Centre is always seeking new tutors with ideas for classes. To find out further information please contact the Nimbin Open Learning Centre on 6689-1477.

The Community School also auspices vacation care programs that operate every holidays. Kylie and her helpers keep the children entertained with a mix of indoor and outdoor activities. See the Summer Program on Page 33.

Holiday closure

The Nimbin Community Centre office will be closed from Friday 23rd December to Wednesday 11th January. We'd like to wish you all a safe and happy holiday season. If you would like to get involved and take part in the future of Nimbin Community Centre, membership fees are \$15 (adult), \$10 (seniors over 60) and \$5 (youth).

Room hire

The Nimbin Community Centre Dance Studio and the Birth and Beyond Room are available for hire at \$11 per hour or \$33 per day, with a \$20 key deposit. Phone Nimbin Community Centre on 6689-0000 after 10th January to make a booking.

Open Learning courses kick off

Nimbin Open Learning Centre will begin term one when classes start on Wednesday 8th February, with enrolments opening on the 1st and 2nd.

The timetable is yet to be finalised, however in the past art, Spanish, yoga, ukulele, Mim's choir and creative writing have been offered.

If you have an enquiry or would like to offer your skills, please call 6689-1477 or find us on facebook under nimbinopenlearning.



Soundtrails developer Jeanti St Clair (left) with two of the Nimbinites interviewed for the project, Pauline Ahern and Ruth Miller

AGM

Another AGM has come and gone. We had three committee members who did not stand again for election: John Seymour from the Cubes Development, David Piesse from the Museum development and Jane Mari representing Armonica.

David and John are both busy with their developments, and Jane has also too many work place demands to continue to attend regular Chamber meetings, but is happy to continue her great work on the street beautification project, renovating the existing planter boxes and improving the visual amenity of our main street.

We would like to thank them for their time and contribution to the Chamber over the past year.

We would also like to welcome four new members to the Chamber: Stephanie Seckold from the Truffula Café, Kylie Cain from the Green Bank, Fabian Provost from the Nimbin Headers and Marnika Young from the Hat Shop. Thank you for your commitment to the economic future of our great village.

Members voted for last year's executive to continue to form the committee. That means I am still the President (Teresa Biscoe), Diana Roberts is our Vice-President, David Spain the Secretary and Peter Hughes our Treasurer. Darren Butcher and Elen Jones also continued as ordinary committee members.

We have had a brief meeting to welcome new members and talk about the upcoming year, and I am excited by the energy and

Chamber Chat

by Teresa Biscoe, President



enthusiasm of the committee to keep moving forward on our action plan and implement projects that will improve and support our lovely village.

Soundtrail

Some of the committee attended the launch of the Nimbin Soundtrails Project at the Nimbin Tourist Information Centre, just before Christmas.

This great project that was funded by a grant achieved by Lismore Council to promote Nimbin after the Museum/Rainbow fire. This fantastic project has collected sound recordings from many local people and tells the story of the Aquarius festival which brought the alternative culture to Nimbin. The Soundtrail comes as an app, which can be downloaded for free from the Tourist Information Centre.

The sound trail begins with a welcome to country from local elder and Nimbin Rocks custodian Cecil Roberts and leads the listener on a walk through the village to 18 locations where the Aquarius story unfolds through the words of our local community. This project is a great opportunity for the community to share our story and introduce visitors to a deeper understanding of the values and history of our town. It has enormous potential to support future projects like our Nimbin Walking Trail Project and the Virtual Museum Project.

I encourage locals to download the app

and check it out. I would like to give many thanks to Andrew from the Tourist Information Centre and the crew who facilitated this great project.

The year ahead

The Chamber will begin its year with a General Members meeting to be held in Birth and Beyond on 15th February from 6pm. We are inviting all the councillors from LCC and our community to attend. This is a great opportunity to discuss issues relevant to Nimbin and see what commitment LCC council can give for Nimbin issues.

An agenda is being prepared which will be forwarded to the councillors attending; this is to ensure that we have informed answers and to keep the focus on our village and issues that directly concern our town. Please feel welcome to come and see what the new Council has for Nimbin.

We have heard that the 7 Sibley Street project has received DA approval for stage 1 of their project; congratulations to the Sustainability Hub Crew.

I hope 2017 proves to be a productive and prosperous year for all, and we can all work together for the benefit of our wonderful community and fantastic town. Think globally, act locally.



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Turning the first sod at Bonalbo MPS

by Noelle Lynden-Way
Community representative,
BUNK Quality & Safety
Committee

The "first sod" of earth was turned in mid-November 2016 to mark the start of work on the Bonalbo Multi-Purpose Health Service (MPS).

The first work will include the demolition of the existing Community Health building, and Community Services have been relocated to the present hospital building.

The new MPS is anticipated to be completed by mid-2018 and is proposed to include:

- 24 hour emergency department;
 - 4 acute/sub-acute in-patient beds;
 - 15 residential aged care beds;
 - Consultation and community health service rooms;
 - General Practice; and
 - Staff accommodation.
- The access to the existing



From left: Community member John Tate; NNSW Local Health District Richmond Clarence Health Service Group Executive Director Lynne Weir; Thomas George MP, Member for Lismore; former NNSW LHD Chief Executive Chris Crawford; and community member Alan Hoskins.

hospital and Caroono will be maintained throughout the construction period.

Dementia pilot program

Other news from the MPS (Nimbin, Urbenville, Kyogle and Bonalbo) Network is that Vicki

Wale (Nurse Educator) and Nerida Adams (CNS2 Aged Care) have been trained by Alzheimer's Australia NSW to facilitate and pilot a State-wide project with 20 staff at Kyogle MPS called 'Insights into the Hospital Dementia Experience.'

The pilot was so successful that executive managers at the MPS Network agreed that all staff should receive the same training. Vicki and Nerida obtained funding from Nursing & Midwifery Office Strategy Reserve to provide this full day workshop to train staff on dementia, delirium and depression and how this impacts the patient/resident in a Hospital/MPS setting.

Nerida explained that the aim of this experiential workshop is to provide staff with an understanding of the frustration, confusion, exhaustion and disorientation experienced by a person with dementia and how the approach, attitude, language and care practices of staff and/or a

"disabling" environment can compound feelings of confusion, helplessness, frustration, humiliation and anger.

This can lead to increased disability, alienation and the development of behavioural responses.

An independent evaluation showed workshop participants had increased levels of empathy for people with dementia, increased understanding of its impact on individual people and of the triggers that influence behaviour and strategies and skills to address responses.

Congratulations Nerida and Vicki on your success with the pilot and the planned training at Nimbin, Kyogle, Urbenville and Bonalbo MPS.

Dementia is a condition that is affecting more and more members of our society and an increased understanding and how to respond is absolutely necessary, particularly for professional staff at our MPS.

SMART Recovery Group sessions

SMART (Self Management and Recovery Training) Recovery is a free group program assisting any problematic behaviours, including drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, gambling, food, shopping, internet and others.

Guided by trained peers and professionals, participants come to help themselves and help each other using a variety of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and motivational tools and techniques.

Sessions are held weekly on Mondays, 10.30am-12pm at FSG, 121 Ballina Road, Lismore.

The group is open to all community members recovering from addiction. Health professionals can refer clients to the program and community members can self-refer.

Al-Anon family groups

Is your life being affected by somebody else's drinking? Al-Anon family groups can help. For more information and meeting times, phone ALANON 1300-252-666 (cost of a local call) or go to: www.al-anon.org.au

Nimbin Hospital information



Child immunisation clinic

For 0-5 year olds. Held on the second Tuesday of every month. Next clinic 10th January. For appointments, phone 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health Centre).

Early childhood nurse

Every Tuesday. For appointments phone 6620-7687 (Lismore Community Health Centre).

Women's health nurse services

Third Thursday of the month, next clinic 19th January. Confidential service, pap smears, breast checks, contraceptive advice, post-natal checks, general health information. Phone 6688-2401 to make an appointment.

Nimbin community nurses

Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm. Phone 6689-1288. For assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy, provision of palliative care in the home and co-ordination of aged care packages.

Wound clinic

New service run by community nurses every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning. Referrals from Nimbin Hospital, GPs, self-referral. For self-referral, phone 6689-1288.

Nurse practitioner clinics

- Diabetes clinic: third Thursday of the month, next is 19th January.
- Respiratory clinic: 2nd Tuesday of the month, next is 10th January. Phone 6630-0488 for appointments.

Free health checks

In front of the Neighbourhood Centre every second Friday, 11.30am – 1.30pm. Cardiac, diabetic and stroke risk assessments, run by a Nurse Practitioner and a Registered Nurse. Smoking cessation advice and assistance. Weight, blood pressure, oxygen sats, BSL, cholesterol levels. Referrals to appropriate health professional, if required.

Cannabis clinic

Every Monday. Confidential counselling, Phone 1300-664-098 or 0427-465-708.

Drug and alcohol counsellor/psychologist

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

Nimbin NSP

Open Monday to Thursday, 9.30am-12pm. Arrangements can be made to see a Community Health Nurse.

Health advice line

Phone 1800-022-222 if you have a health issue. It's a 24-hour, seven days a week free service. A registered nurse will assess whether you need to go to the emergency department at your MPS.

Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary

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





Capitalism and politics

Voters are always swayed by parties and wings, who never have solutions. This time they dared believe the Trump dogma will deliver them. Always there is a minority group who is blamed by the saviour.

But this one is different. Trump, a Prince of Capitalism has been voted Pope of all Capitalism. Because really Capitalism is a belief system professed by all politicians, and the masses. Most have two religions.

Worshippers in all of them are conflicted by profound ethical dilemmas: thou shalt not worship Mammon, or charge interest. Love your neighbour, have compassion. Perish the competition.

The professed belief in Capitalism is so widespread, its power so great, that people fearfully suppress doubts about its dogmas. The priests in the temples of Capitalism, namely the mass media, deliver weekly indoctrinations to the faithful. We shall all be doomed unless our sacrifices to Mammon are increased!

Capitalism will be fully exposed in the limelight, warts and all. It must improve or perish. People's patience with corrupt unworkable political system has ended. Most don't yet realise the corroding forces are powered by Capitalism.

Vested interests make it nigh impossible to fix it from within. Mass people power must encourage change from without.

The doctrine of scarcity is false. Private reserve banks around the world create

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scarcity by manipulation of tokens named dollars. The hunt for tokens of depleting value keeps people busy and creates the trickle up effect. The grand capitalist doctrine of competition can remedy that.

Local trade of goods and services with barter currencies will do it. It takes half the effort by avoiding contributions of profit and tax for the ineffective system.

The dogma of survival of the fittest is redundant in this millennium. Many don't yet follow that voters for a Trump or Hanson are having a punt. They want a compassionate system, so family and friends don't fall through the cracks. The new creed is to adopt inclusivity, just as nature which does with its own kind.

Allowance of the principles of competition and transparency, will allow ethical and zero interest banks to dominate.

Transparency in corporate business replacing business confidentiality, is potentially

more profitable. The public wants ethics and sustainability on display.

Similarly, secrecy masks evil profits and payments to arms manufacturers. Transparency in banks will stop ISIS dead in its tracks.

Happy New Year's await us, if humanity seizes the opportunities presented. Whatever Trump's intentions are, the fireworks will spark results he can't anticipate. With capitalist and political ethics sharply in focus, and economics in a state of flux, we will likely have meaningful reform.

Trump's proposed 15% corporate tax could facilitate more businesses to become taxpayers. A similar strategy for individuals can create many happy families, less avoidance and increased total tax collections.

He who dares wins. Will he pull a rabbit?

Hayo van der Woude
Mullumbimby

Flawed petition

People are signing a petition based on misinformation. There is overwhelming support for a men's shed, the problem is its location. Mayor Katie Milne has been working with the Pottsville and District Men's Shed to assist them in finding a permanent site for their shed.

After the 15/9/2016 Council meeting, it was found that Council had made an error in process and that the licence at Black Rocks should not have been approved until it had gone out on public exhibition for 28 days. There was not enough time for Councillors to consider over 400 submissions received, so granting the licence was held over until after the election when Council resolved for it to be deferred so that a more suitable permanent central location could be found, in the best interests of the men's shed, the koalas and the community.

However, people are being incorrectly told that Council does not support a men's

Nimbin mourns loss of Jake

by Bob Dooley

Well-known Nimbin local Jake Monahan has died, and two others were left critically ill after an apparent overdose at a bush doof at a Mount Lindesay property on New Year's Eve.

On-site medical staff and revellers at the YewbuNYE rave party say the men displayed bizarre and erratic behaviour and clawed at the ground after apparently ingesting an unknown substance, before all three suffered heart attacks.

Queensland Ambulance Service paramedics arrived about 10.30am on New Year's Day, and despite the crews working on him for a considerable amount of time, Jake could not be revived. His two friends were flown to the Gold Coast University Hospital in critical conditions, with one later released on 3rd January.

Known to friends as "Monzy", Jake grew up in Nimbin, attending Nimbin Central School and becoming a well-known character in the village.

Former Nimbin school principal Margaret Hayes described Jake as "forever young".

"Such sadness and grief for everyone who loved and respected Jake and his kind heart and fun-loving nature," Ms Hayes wrote in an online message of condolence, one of many tributes posted on social media.

Many remembered Jake's kind and happy personality. A family member told the *Gold Coast Bulletin* Jake called himself a "mad doofer", but was a "level-headed" kid who had been raised well.

Jake's mother has thanked the community on Facebook for their "kind words of love and support."

A smoke cleansing ceremony was held in Nimbin on Tuesday night, with about 100 people attending the one-hour ceremony conducted by Bundjalung Elders Lewis Walker, Cecil Roberts and Gilbert Laurie.

Frances Hood attended the "beautiful" event, which she told *The Northern Star* was "a bit of



closure for the town" in the wake of Jake's death.

A Queensland Police Service spokesman said toxicology testing of the drug believed to have been

taken by the group had been expedited, but no official results have yet been released.

Jake's death has prompted renewed calls for police to allow pill-testing at music events.

Last October, 16 people were hospitalised on the Gold Coast after taking a drug dubbed "flakka", one of the new synthetic drugs labelled New Psychoactive Substance (NPS), designed to mimic cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy and LSD.

Queensland Ambulance Service supervisor Daniel Towson said revellers take their lives in their own hands when they take illicit drugs, and the results are never predictable. "The effects can be catastrophic," he said.

Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation's Dr Alex Wodak proposed a pill-testing trial last February, which was opposed by NSW Police minister Troy Grant, who wrote in *Fairfax Media* at the time, "I have no firm evidence before me that pill-testing will save a life."

Dr Wodak maintains, "This is yet another battle between abstinence and pragmatism."

Greens NSW MP Dr Mehreen Faruqi said pill-testing "makes complete sense" to reduce drug deaths.

"Experiences from overseas show us that pill-testing is not a radical or novel idea. (It) makes complete sense from a harm reduction perspective," she told *News.com*, back in March.

Vale Vale

Obituary by Tamaso Lonsdale

Seems like a strange title I know, but Vale Mendelson herself was known to remark on what a great title it would be for her obituary!

Yes, my dear old friend Vale left us on Tuesday 12th December, peacefully and alone as she often was in her forest retreat, in spite of having so many loyal friends.

Vale and I had been friends for years and shared a love of Nature. For some time she was a wildlife carer, and had a strong affinity for living things. A prolific writer, she was a regular contributor to *Beyond the Rainbow* from its very inception.

In her daily life, Vale had an enduring connection to the poetry of Hafiz and consulted his *Divan* for inspiration. Hafiz was indeed an intimate friend with whom she conversed on life, death and spirit.

In recent years Vale became rather



reclusive, and with her quirky sense of humour remarked to a friend, "I'm not fit for human consumption nowadays." On the contrary, she will be sadly missed by all those who loved her.

shed, that the Black Rocks sports field is permanent and they could wait up to 6 years to find another site. According to Minute No. 505 of 21/8/2014 Council meeting, a licence at Black Rocks is up to 5 years and that Council is to continue looking for a permanent site. There are permanent Crown Land sites which are available for consideration, but there is no way of knowing if a men's shed would be approved on

them or how long it would take unless P&DMS makes an application. However, P&DMS has shut down all discussion of alternative sites at meetings.

An old map is being shown of the land surrounding the sports field before it has naturally regenerated into koala habitat. People are incorrectly being told that the only koala corridor is between the sports field and the urban footprint and

the men's shed is therefore outside the corridor. The regional corridor includes all of the Pottsville Wetlands (within which the sports field and proposed men's shed is located) and extends south of the sports field.

Based on the above misinformation, the petition is flawed and should not be accepted by the Legislative Assembly.

Lyn Dickinson
Pottsville

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