



THE NIMBIN GOOD TIMES

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FREE

Not worried by the hype

MardiGrass organisers are not worried by the extra Police attention focused on Nimbin in the lead up to the event.

"All the more reason for us to have a strong rally for the law to change, it's the real crime," said spokesperson Michael Balderstone. "An increased Police presence will make us adopt new strategies on a few events, but that's no big deal. We'll use oregano instead!

As Strewth replied in The Australian, "Tell that one to the judge."

Police commander Bruce Lyons told the Northern Star, "Revellers are reminded that even though Nimbin is unique, officers will not tolerate any illegal activity," he said. "Visitors and locals alike are warned any sale, use or consumption of illegal drugs observed by police will be acted upon."

Mr Balderstone told the Northern Star, "We don't need cannabis to have MardiGrass. That's what it's



Man in the middle. Oregano, damiana or coltsfoot?

all about, we're asking for the right to use it," he said. "I feel for the police – the law is the crime and the police don't have much say about it."

Following his meeting with senior police, he said, "There is speculation that there will be more police this year, but the commander has assured me that crowd safety will be their main priority."

"I told them there was lots of talk in town about being 'set up,' and he assured me that was nonsense."

Nimbin police sergeant Greg Pike said, "We want everyone to have a good time, and we can do that if we respect each other's space."

A full program for MardiGrass has been organized, which has been published in a free colour programme guide for the event, but as usual last-minute additions can be expected. It culminates with the Rally at 3pm Sunday.

The annual MardiGrass Forum at the Town Hall will

discuss PM Howard's new anti-marijuana push, hydro v bush, psychosis, industrial and medicinal HEMP and new laws. It is a rare gathering of 'pot experts' and everyone is welcome to come and be educated.

The Hemp Olympix and Hemp Expo in Peace Park along with the traditional 'Harvest' and 'Pickers' Balls are all included as usual in the \$20 weekend ticket, which begins on Friday evening.



There are even more different venues this year, with a diverse and delightful line up of performers. Didj legend Charlie McMahon heads a stellar line up of performers, Diana Anaid, Hannah Pearl, Recliners, Love Bus, Max White, Martin Preedy, Peppa Rose, Pagan Love Cult, Blissmongers, Mystic Beats, and heaps more.

One new event creating plenty of interest is the Pot Art Tattoo. Other changes include a bigger Peace Park program and a special Big Joint construction for a road trip to Canberra after MardiGrass with a message for the politicians.

Join us in our call for sanity and an end to this ludicrous American 'war on drugs'.

A village mourns



The shrine at the letterboxes at Jarlanbah community. The chalkboard inscription read, "The most beautiful man I have ever met. Rest in peace, my baby. We cherish you."

Nimbin is still in shock after the death of 24 year-old Joshua Le Bars in the surf at Southport Spit on Sunday 23rd April.

Candles burn at shines on the bar of the Nimbin Hotel where he had worked, and at the Jarlanbah community where he lived. Newspaper clippings of Gabbi's beach photo of Josh bearing the headline "Surf Hero The Best" are wrapped

around collection buckets on shop counters, collecting for his young family, Gabrielle, Bede and Panama-Pearl.

The story of Josh's death is indeed heroic, and tragic. "His sister Megan, 13, and his fiancée's son, Bede 10, were struggling in a rip only 20m from the shore about 8.30am. He reached the boy, saving his life, and assisted his sister to

her feet before becoming caught in the channel himself. He was quickly dragged under and despite the efforts of a passerby, Mr Le Bars was lost out to sea.

"Surf lifesavers and police launched a search, using jet skis, the Westpac Rescue helicopter and a police boat to search the waters off The Spit. About 1.20pm, two men fishing with their children spotted the body..."

Behind this story, which shows Josh putting his family first to the end, is another extraordinary story, the story of a young man who suffered deeply after the death of his brother four years ago, and disappeared to a seedy life in Melbourne before meeting his partner Gabrielle. Since then, he has moved back to Nimbin, as a devoted family man, working hard with Gabbi to secure their future, especially after the birth of their daughter, Panama-Pearl in 2004.

Josh had established a carpet cleaning business and worked

street sweeping for Jungle Patrol before starting work behind the bar at the Nimbin Hotel, where he was being promoted to night manager, and for a while had worked all three jobs at once.

This was a young man who had turned his life around.

His funeral was held on

Sunday 30th April - he was born on a Sunday, died on a Sunday - and the Lismore crematorium chapel was filled to capacity with mourners. The heavens opened on cue after Gabbi's tribute song intoned "let it rain."

It poured down all afternoon.



Happy memories (left to right) Panama-Pearl, Gabriella, Joshua and Bede. (Montage of family photos suggested by Gabbi)