

Drug growers scared off: police



Drug hauls are getting smaller because growers have been scared off, a senior New South Wales north coast policeman says.

Superintendent Bruce Lyons from the Richmond local area command says a recent five-day operation netted more than 1,800 plants.

"Ten years ago, 15 years ago, yes, there were larger hauls, but on today's standards we're not getting those numbers," he said.

Operation Hutching 1 saw police swoop on private property, Crown land and state forests near Nimbin, Kyogle, Casino and Drake.

Police seized 1,862 plants up to 1.5 metres high and with an estimated street value of more than \$1.8 million.

Superintendent Lyons says he was satisfied with the outcome of the operation and says large crops are becoming harder to find.

"I think we're proving a point there, that people are not prepared to do it, do large crops of cannabis and make lots of money like they used to," he said.

ABC North Coast NSW news, Monday, 27th November 2006. Photo: Peter Pedals

Meet Motdang's new chef

Popular Nimbin Thai restaurant Motdang's has taken a bold new direction, extending its hours and adding a full a la carte menu for Friday and Saturday nights.

With the new menu comes an accomplished young chef, Tommy Price, who has returned to Nimbin to work here for the first time.

Son of the well-known local Price family, Tommy attended Tuntabell Falls Primary and Nimbin Central schools up to Year 10, when he took a full-time TAFE course at Kingscliff college, finishing his apprenticeship in 2002.

He has cooked in top restaurants around Australia in the top end at Broome, Darwin and Groote Eylandt; on the Whitsunday Islands; at Eagles Nest restaurant Jindabyne and locally at Byron Thai and Bang Thai

Bangalow.

Tommy describes the new Motdang menu as "Australian Thai - it has all the exciting flavours, without taking the lining off your mouth."

The interesting new offerings include Som Tam, an exquisite green papaya salad; Goong Hom Par, a starter with farmed king prawns; and Pad Bai Karprao, a stir-fry flavoured with Thai basil leaves, which have an aniseed character, and chilli individually adjusted to hot, medium or mild strengths.

"It's great to be working back in my home town," Tommy said, but it is not a permanent move. "I want to learn more; I want to go to Thailand one day," he explained.

Take the opportunity to enjoy his cuisine soon. Motdang Thai is now open



Tommy Price

Friday & Saturday nights for a la carte service 5.30pm to 9pm.

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December will see further noise testing undertaken at Nimbin Skate Park, following preliminary testing completed in August. A specialised acoustics engineer will conduct the tests. New readings will be used to computer model sound mitigation solutions that both address the concerns of neighbours and ensure the skate park doesn't become a crime hot spot.

Background environment noise testing will occur ahead of ramp testing on Saturday December 16th. All local and regional skateboard riders are invited to participate and try out the ramps. Testing will start at 10am and continue into the afternoon. For the first time all ramps will be utilised, whether soundproofed or not.

Once appropriate sound mitigation measures

have been determined, construction will be costed and consultation will be undertaken prior to lodging a development application with Council. In addition, fund raising will be revived in order to complete this long-awaited project.

For further information contact Dick Hopkins, President Nimbin Community Development Association c/- 6689-0000

The story of the MV Nimbin

by Mike Richards

1926 was the year that the Company decided to place their first order for a motor ship. This historic order, placed in Copenhagen, called for a large vessel of 1,000 tons which was to be an improved "Ulmarra." The new ship, the famed "Nimbin" sailed for Sydney via Suez on 29th June 1927, and arrived not long afterwards. The vessel, later widely known as the "Tin Hare" on account of her speed, was a big advance on any ship that had up to that time been engaged on the Lismore run. She had better refrigerated space, more speed, electric winches and diesel engines. This change over from coal burning was a success in every way, and all but three of the later ships built for the Company were of this type.

"The "Nimbin" became one of our first war losses. At 3.20 on the afternoon of 5th December 1940, while quietly proceeding down the coast from Coffs Harbour,



"Nimbin", North Coast Steam Navigation Company's first motor ship, loading at Lismore. Photo: G. Hughes

she was racked by a violent explosion, She had hit a mine about eight miles off Norah Head, and quickly settled by the stern. Within two minutes she had disappeared, taking with her seven of her ship's company including the master, William James Bysantson, Mr Chapman the mate, Mr McAlister third engineer, A.B.s Carlson and Gorry and firemen Hutton and Hallett. The Cook was saved by Fred Gough, one-time steward of the "Orara."

"The survivors were in the water only about 2½ hours altogether, during which time a seaplane sighted them and landed on the sea nearby, then left for

assistance. The "Bonalbo" arrived on the scene about 6pm having been directed by the aircraft, and she picked up the 13 swimmers and brought them to Sydney where she arrived at 10pm. The "Bonalbo" was very lucky that she did not suffer the same fate as the "Nimbin" as it was not realised that a mine was responsible for the sinking for some time. As a matter of course, the Navy sent a sweeper to check and she caused considerable consternation all round by finding a minefield!"

Photo and text published in "North Coast Run", Turton & Armstrong, 1977, pp.115, 134.

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Why has the kebab shop closed?

Proprietor of Nimbinz Kebabs, Ish, explains to Ian Wickham, Nim-FM news:

I came to this town fourteen months ago and started this business with high hopes and expectations, of giving Nimbin something that it had been missing, and I have tried, bent over backwards, pulled my hair out, and gone to extreme lengths to try and establish this business and make it a success.

It breaks my heart when I try so hard, and I come into my shop in the morning to open the doors and have a good day, and I find a shitload of mess and vandalism, because of what and why? They're bored, they were drunk. Excuses don't cut it with me anymore, don't cut it with a lot of locals. I'm fed up with these boys, who I'd love to name, and they know who they are.

When I started, I looked at the price range and made food affordable for everyone. The street kids were some of my best customers. And boys don't get me wrong, there are some of you, and you know who I'm talking about, that I hold my head up to you guys, like wow, you still say g'day, and you come into my business, it's always a pleasure to see you, and you guys should be looking out for these other idiots who are bringing you guys down.

I have had overwhelming support with the locals, and in that, they have inspired me to continue on. But after the continual bullshit that I have copped through a selected few that I could count on one hand, young boys hanging in the laneway and destroying other people's property, destroying the moral values of Nimbin town, all for the sake of getting on alcohol and having a good time, I'm over it.

It's common knowledge who the perpetrators of this continual lash-out on locals are. There are about five,



Ish, no longer doing what he loved at Nimbinz Kebabs

five idiots in a village of five thousand, and they're ruining it for everyone. These little idiots don't have any respect for themselves, let alone the beautiful community they're living in. The freedom which we have out here is going to be lost forever, if these individuals don't get pulled into line. In my eyes, the police have got bigger things to worry about ... so what do you do?

I was going to enjoy this summer, I had some new ideas for the shop, but my health and happiness, my lifestyle, is more important to me than money. When I go home to my kids and family, I like to be relaxed, I like to go to bed relaxed, and I'm not getting that.

So I've put the business on the market. I know what I've done to the place, and it's ready for anyone to just walk in and run, and hopefully, with the backing of the community, they will not cop any bullshit I did. The shop has made an unbelievable profit margin for the first financial year; the figures are just unbelievable. It's a shame, because the hard yards are done, the hard slogging is done for this business. There's just a bit of hard work to do by serving customers to make money.

I'll continue on with my cooking career in Lismore, and start paying back some of my debts I've accumulated. But you never know, I love cooking, I love Nimbin, I could be back.

Nimbin Icecream Co up for sale



The Nimbin Icecream Company has been a local iconic business, first established 25 years ago by partners Peter and George, under the name of Pete's Passions.

Pete's Passions were at the first Channon Market and the first Nimbin Market, and have held these valuable and hard to acquire permanent sites there, ever since.

The current owners, four partners, have refurbished and upgraded the plant, while maintaining the character and historic integrity of the business, under the new name of The Nimbin Icecream Co. They have also greatly expanded the reach of the business, creating new flavours, products and distributing into retail outlets throughout the Northern Rivers.

The owners have now regretfully placed this rare and iconic business on the market because of other business commitments and health issues.

This is a business in which the hard work of rebuilding has all been done and is set up fully to take up on the many and varied opportunities available, of further growth and expansion.

For further information, please contact Dave or Robyn down at the Nimbin Servo or phone 6689-1028.

Sweet opportunity. Dave Basten with the iconic trailer, which has been fully refurbished.

Max's parting shots

by Max Maxxted

In 1978 I put a pin into a map of Australia. I was living in Melbourne and had just returned from a world trip that took in the USA, Canada, Britain and the West Indies. I could see that the world was heading for very difficult times in the foreseeable future and I did not feel confident that 'They', the Powers That Be, could control it, even if they wanted to. Variations in the ever-spiralling cycle of boom and bust towards even greater inflation means that value is always chasing the means to pay and the aforementioned powers that be like to keep a lid on things when that is profitable and then cynically play the suckers, sorry, voters into a round of blood-letting in a morally sanctioned and expensive war to relieve the pressure on inflation.

Living with this realisation and the possible ramifications of no clean air, water or food, I decided, with my heavily pregnant partner, to seek 'a hidden valley', a refuge from the madness of the coming days. The danger passed, some people lost money during the following decade and the situation sorted itself out. A small tremor was felt here Bond went bust, taking little old ladies savings with him. The little old ladies died penniless and the world forgot. Bond even had some sort of rehabilitation. Well, he paid a publicist to endear him to a sceptical public and when that didn't work, he skipped overseas.

We meantime struggled with home-births, home-building and surviving The New Age. Thirty years later I am preparing to go back to Melbourne for 'a while'. I seem to go away every 10 years or so. Both previous sojourns lasted 14 months. This one is planned to be 3 years. Has The Bin changed? Has it what. For the better? Well that remains to be seen. The nepotism and heavy-handed paternalism is still there, even some of the blackfellas have it down pat.



Meanwhile the elders are getting older but few of them are any wiser. Too many white fellas call themselves 'Uncle' and too many Uncles seem not to the will to try to fix it. When the wymmmin take over they just end up busting balls and putting people off.

The young thugs who we didn't pull into line when we could, now rule their own confined space with egregious violence and spew it onto others, intentionally disrupting life for the majority. One such thug, who I will call 'Wingnut' because of his loose mental control, during his verbal attack last week on an elderly woman recalled an incident, 10 years ago, when he attacked me with a piece of wood, not hitting me but throwing it through a window when I would not flinch. It was obvious to me that he had established a reputation in his own head. I asked him for the \$25 repair but was told 'No'. (Actually, my life was threatened and he called me names, kid stuff, you know.)

Ten years down the track he seems to have learned only that you keep grudges going. This is one of many angry little boys who have grown into nasty big men. When do we start a vigilante group to run them out of town? The Police are obviously not interested in trying to solve the problem, they seem to want one thing only, after-the-fact CCTV evidence and action for the crime report sheet.

Where have all the flowers gone?

BROOMSTICK WEDDING



Brian Thomas and Robyn Scott (above) chose a centuries-old ceremony for their nuptials on 25th N^ovember, in which other couples were encouraged to declare their vows.



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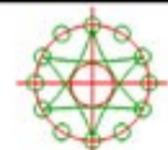
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Party animals



Nimbin local scene about town during the early party season, these partygoers were snapped at the Melbourne cup function (above right), the Central School's formals, Pat's birthday (top left), and the Broomstick Wedding.



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The iconoclastic Intergalactic Blues Mafia have been seen everywhere around Nimbin lately – weddings, parties, anything – in expanded formats that have included horns and keys.

The band is making the most of lead singer Jimi's available time, as he is about to leave for Europe soon. Of course, the band headlined at Jimi's fundraiser gig at Tuntable Hall, with their high energy brand of rhythm & blues, and got the crowd dancing.



Guesting with the band were Pepa Rose on keys, and Christina Chester on sax.

A stand-out performance was at the Nim-FM birthday party in the Town Hall, where the quartet was augmented by a 3-piece brass section.

The long awaited CD has finally made an appearance and after many demo recordings IBM have achieved a high quality product, and in the buying season. It's a limited edition, so get in quick.

What's On at your Bowlo this month

No more bowls in Nimbin this year with the bowling green out of action for its annual upgrade from 4th December until mid-January. The Club will still be open right through the festive season, closing on Christmas Day only. Don't forget to book early for Christmas parties or functions at the Bowlo. Check out the huge range of tasty Chinese and Australian meals at the Bistro. Vincent opens for lunch and dinner 6 days a week (closed 25th December).

Poker

Monday nights are now poker tournament nights. Registration begins at 6pm and there is an \$11 entry fee. All players are welcome.

Kids Party

On Sunday 17th December the Bowlo is holding its kids' Xmas party. Santa will be arriving at 1.30pm bringing games and presents for all the kids. He's not bringing his reindeer this time but arriving on his usual mode of transport when in Nimbin, the fire truck. There will also be a BBQ.

New Years Eve

And the grand finale, New Years Eve at the Bowlo will feature our popular local jazz band, the Skylarks, featuring Lisa Yeates (pictured)



with their brilliant new piano man, Marcus. Book in for a great night.

Murray returns

Murray Kyle has just spent five months journeying in the UK and US, his sweet voice and acoustic guitar singing out songs of peace and hope. He and Bodhi Seed from Nimbin's Mystic Beats hooked up for shows in California, as well as sharing a stage with the mythical Shimshai.

You can catch him locally at the Wet Paint Gallery near Uki on 15th December, sharing a bill with loved songwriter, Loren. Tickets for this unique double bill, which include an organic vego meal, are \$25 and available in advance from Sphinx Rock Cafe, Natascha at Babareki Beads in Uki or the Wet Paint Gallery



Murray Kyle – submerged in the autumn of California...

itself on Mount Warning Road. This intimate show is a chance to hear some of Murray's new songs and

takes place in a glade-like setting with local art and DJ Starfish adding to the ambience".

Play on with Nimbin Players

Nimbin Players have been a significant slice of Nimbin's vibrant cultural scene for eleven years to date-and going strong! Recent productions included "Hotel Sorrento", "Morning Coffee", "Seven Stories" - all of which not only entertained, but initiated lively discussions on the ongoing mysteries of human life! Lots of laughs, too: something for everyone indeed.

If you're interested in live theatre and think you may have something to offer, now's your opportunity to come join us and get involved on any level. There'll be a meeting for all interested people, both young and old, and old and new members, on Sunday 10

December 2006 at 10.30am at Nimbin Town Hall.

Producing theatre has a variety of aspects, requiring loads of different skills, not just acting. You may already have some of these skills, or be interested in learning. Supporting productions "front of house" is something many people also enjoy. So if you're not sure whether you "have what it takes" to be in the theatre, why not come to the meeting and find out where you could fit in? We need lots of people with all kinds of skills and interests, and you'll certainly meet some fine folks.

See you there!

MYSTIC BEATS for Summer Solstice

Once again all good pagans will be dancing into the shortest night of the year at Djambung Gardens on Thursday 21st December.

As it has been on solstices for the past few years entertainment will be provided by hot local acts Mystic Beatz, the Pagan Love Cult and Al-Kimiya. The Evening will commence with a solstice ceremony lead by Robin Francis, followed by a yummy dinner and entertainment.

Al-Kimiya will set the mood with Middle Eastern melodies and rhythms. Mystic Beatz fresh back from touring the United



States, will be there in full force with fresh material and some interesting combinations of instruments melding electronic dance grooves with improvised acoustic live performance. The Pagan Love Cult will take it into high gear lead by notable local character Neil Pike.

Also bringing with them plenty of new material to keep you dancing well into the night. DJ's Seed and guests will close out the night with funky dance music.

All are welcome to this amazing showcase of local talent on Thursday 21st December at Djambung gardens, Cecil St, Nimbin, 7.30pm.

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John's a big hit @ Kyogle Library



For the last month Year 9 Kyogle High School student, John Ceislak, has been doing work experience at Kyogle library. John's diligence, great approach to all work tasks, courtesy, up-beat personality and positive attitude have made him a big hit with all Kyogle library staff. Excellent effort John!!!

(Pictured is John hard at work copying with Narelle Ormsby and KHS Deputy Principal Mr. Marriot)

Calling all kids

There are heaps of things to do these school holidays @ Kyogle library!

It's nearly Summer vacation time again. Why not join the FREE "Read Around Oz", Summer Reading Club?

Who: 3 - 18 year olds

When: Starts 18th December 2006 and goes through till 2nd February 2007

Cost: FREE!!!

What do I need? A library card, general interest in reading and a sense of adventure

What do I have to do? Be a library member, pick up a free "Reading Rulz" kit from the library, read 10 or more books before 2nd Feb 2007, return your reading log to the library to collect bookmarks, stickers and tattoos.

Happy Summer Reading!

Wedding Photos from YOUR town now on display

Come to the library and enjoy this display of beautiful and interesting wedding portraits. This display is an amazing photographic journey through the years of Kyogle folk which

celebrates OUR home-town in pictures. A big thanks to everyone for generously lending their photos for this display.

Responsible Pet Care with Ranger David

Ranger David's Responsible Pet Care visit was a big success with 45 pre-school aged children from Eden



Creek Fairy Mt Pre-School, Kyogle Pre-School and a group of home schooled children. The children had a fun-filled time learning about how to care for their pet cats and dogs with the help of Ranger David. All children also received colour-ins and colourful bookmarks to remind them of their visit with Ranger David at Kyogle library. (Pictured is Ranger David Bevan talking with the children, Tuesday 21st November 2006).

What's happening @ YOUR library in December?

- * 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women/ LIAC display
- * Eden Creek Fairy Mt Enrolment display

Xmas/New year Closures & library Xmas Message

Kyogle library will be closed from Saturday 12 Noon 23rd December 2006 and will re-open 10.00am Tuesday 2nd January 2007

The staff of Kyogle library would like to wish all the library's members, residents of Kyogle shire, the amazing staff and Councillors of Kyogle Shire a joyful, safe and happy Xmas 2006 and hope everyone has a great New Year 2007! And to help you celebrate the festive season why not stock-up on reading matter and other library items to help you rest, relax and unwind! Going on hols? Why not check if you have any library items that need extending? Or perhaps you'd like to take your library items on hols with you.

Family centre winds down after big year

What a year it has been at the Family Centre: growing families, new families, more toys for the Toy Library and the Centre, parenting programs, and the International Children's Day celebrations. Thank you all for making 2006 a fantastic year and in particular a heartfelt welcome to the new babies born (partly) to Lilly Pilly Pl.

The year is not over yet and there are still a few dates for December. I give them to you in chronological disorder: Thursday 14th December you are invited to a Summer/Xmas Lunch at Peace Park from 10am. This is always a good opportunity to catch up before the summer break. It usually is a fun day, and I am looking forward to it. Bring a hat, sunscreen, shoes, and a small plate of finger food to share.

There will be no playgroup after 14th December.

18th & 19th December are earmarked for administrative and maintenance tasks, and you're welcome to drop in.

Please if you have any item from the toy library return it/them by 18th December lunch time so there is time



for an inventory in the afternoon.

Tuesdays 5th & 19th December, the Centre will open from 10am to 12noon for the Early Childhood Nurse Clinic.

The Centre will close on 19th December 2006, at noon and re-open on 22nd January 2007, at 9am.

I hope to see you before the Centre close but in case I don't, I wish you a safe and relaxing summer. May the festivities be joyful. Come back rested and energised.

Peace,

Marie

Why community pre-schools should get more funding

by Peter Lanyon, Country Labor candidate, State seat of Lismore

If we want our boys and girls to practise tolerance and understanding, to have the skills of literacy and numeracy and to enjoy music and art and mechanics and dance, then we need to start explaining to them early.

If we want a healthier population, one which respects exercise and sensible diet and the need to avoid drugs of all kinds, then we need to teach them young.

If we want a nation whose citizens recycle, reuse and reduce their need for material goods and who are aware of the finite nature of our carbon based resources, explain it to them early.

If we want peaceful resolutions to conflict, co-operation rather than competition and people who respect their own and the property of others, then we need to teach them well.

If we expect our professionals in the areas of speech and dental and aural

and behaviour to make a major difference, then we must put these specialists in front of our young as soon as possible.

Education begins it all and pre school education begins education.

Our local community preschools do all of this and more. They plant the seeds of much of what is good. They encourage early intervention for those children in need and they are often the heart of our rural communities.

Parents of community pre-school children contribute their time and energy and constantly offer their fundraising and organisational skills. They give and they give until it hurts. These parents have chosen quality.

Our state government helps but more is needed. Completing applications for access to those much needed dollars take huge amounts of time and once again, it is dedicated management teams and parents who give until it hurts.

These dedicated adults raise



funds for their children's pre-schooling and it is their effort, in the fullness of time, which benefits us all. All of us are enriched by community preschools.

Community pre-schools are pre eminent among community services. There cannot be anything more worthy. As the principal of a local public school, I have seen at first hand the benefits to those children who have joined us from Kunghur, Nimbin and Cawongla community pre schools.

It is imperative that our local community pre-schools receive the funding they need.

Tunable Falls Preschool Enrolling now for 2007

Open Tuesday to Thursday, 9am - 3pm for 3-5 year olds.

Our unique pre-school is located in the heart of Tuntable Falls Valley. Drop in to our friendly pre-school for a play anytime. Relax on the couch and peruse our information handout while enjoying the peaceful bushland surrounds.

We are a safe and caring pre-school where children arriving each morning on the Nimbin school bus are met by a member of staff. For more information, please call us on 6689-1179.

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Fashionable formality



by Athena Zelandonii

"So welcome to the Carnival of the Animals Praising birds and beasts and fish ..."

For those who know them well, Grade 10 year advisor Marg Canning's metaphoric use of Leunig's 'Carnival of the Animals' in reference to this year's Year 10's seems more than fitting.

So we found ourselves, birds, beasts and 'lovely inner creatures', assembled together last Friday night (the 24th) to enjoy the formal at Lismore's Fire in the Belly restaurant.

Outfits and hairstyles ranged from 20's glamour to the present, from mafia style suits to a pinch of cross-dressing. But whether polka dotted or pinstriped, arriving by limo or the more humble family car, everyone was coiffed, curled and made-up to perfection, and every ounce the individual.

The food was delicious, with entrees, gourmet pizza and a fruit platter chaser. And just when people became restless, it was time for the speeches, given by the year advisor, acting principal and several students.

A million and one thanks to Ms Canning for

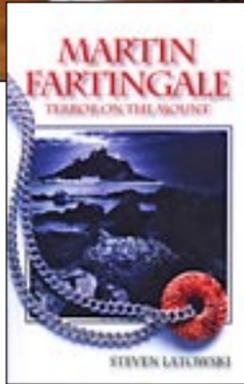
organising the evening, and for buzzing tirelessly round the room all night checking that food was being provided. Thank you also for the photographs, and your speech and humorous Leunig-inspired awards. As each student was presented with a most fitting animal persona from 'Carnival of the Animals', I see it is only fitting that you receive your own. You are a true black swan yourself.

♦ **Ed's Note:** Athena was Highly Commended at the Northern Star Newspapers in Education awards luncheon, for her story on the travelling school photographer.

he wrote 'Martin Fartingale - Terror on the Mount', the first in a series of Martin Fartingale adventures. Book two 'The Siege of Tara' is expected to be published around September 2007.

Fartingale is an unfortunate name. Martin hates it but young readers say they love it. It's a good start.

'Terror On the Mount' is a gentle tale, with lots of humour to soften the fantasy drama. It has all the ingredients that young readers like in their literature ... torture chambers, witches potions that eradicate past life experience and control the mind, witchy bats, dank tunnels and slimy pits. A mad monk, fat rats, a Black Knight and white witches, all conspire to stimulate the reader and add another dimension to children's literature, with a smattering of uncertain history and contemporary humanity thrown in.



waterfront bistros- bizarre really, he couldn't cook. He also tried his hand at acting, script writing, poetry and bus driving, before moving to Nimbin in 2003. Inspired,

Tunable Falls Primary Open Day

With the New Year rapidly approaching, it is time for parents to enroll their children for the 2007 school year. Tuntable Falls Primary is a parent-run community school established in 1972 and is truly a unique school and worthy of consideration when making this important decision. The school is nestled in the pristine environment of the green Tuntable valley only 10 minutes from Nimbin on the school bus route.

The school has a Pre-school, Lower primary and Upper primary. Children are able to transition to the next class when they are socially, emotionally and intellectually ready.

Both teachers at Tuntable primary have taught at state and independent schools. Lower primary teacher Thomas Rose is Steiner trained. Upper primary teacher Deborah Williams is trained in the Montessori method. These teaching styles combined with the school's own ethos - developed through a high level of parent involvement since the school's inception - creates a stimulating learning environment for the children at the school.

The school's facilities have recently been upgraded due to a number of government grants, which have been directed firstly towards the grounds and water supply



(fluoride free), and secondly towards a fully interactive playground which will be completed early next year.

Due to its unique structure, the school can offer parents a real opportunity to be fully involved in the education of their children. Through participating in the creation and shaping of the curriculum.

Initiatives for 2007 include:

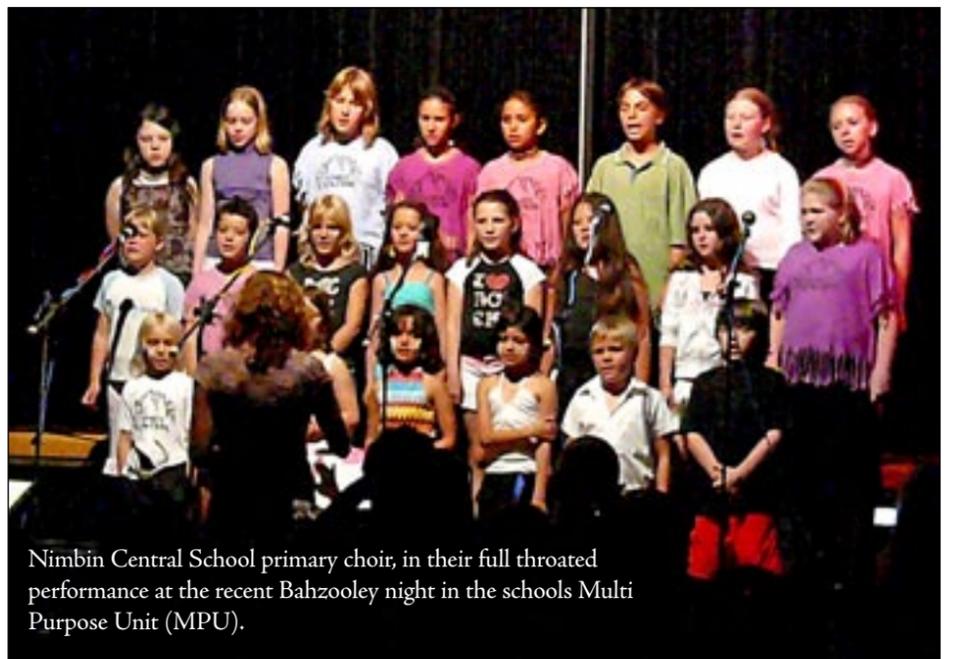
- Annual school community camp to be held at "The Dreaming Festival" in Maleny in June
- One lower primary and one upper primary school camp
- Excursions into local environment

- Weekly cooking programme for a shared lunch by students
- School garden for food provision
- Teacher guided and parent run Friday program for creative and performing arts e.g. foreign language teaching, visual arts, drama, home making skills, circus skills & fire twirling,
- Implementing the Virtues programme, throughout the whole school.

Tuntable Primary school is having an Open Day on Tuesday 12th December between 10.00am and 12.30pm.

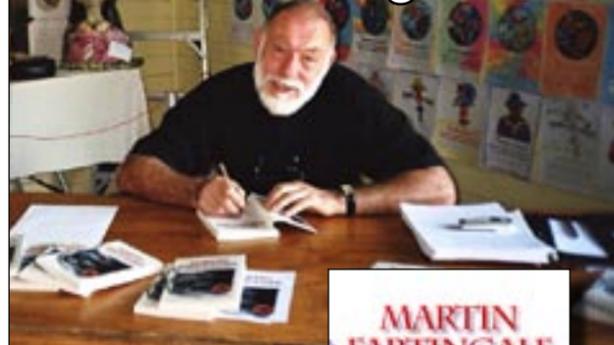
Parents will be welcomed with some light refreshments.

Beaut Bahzooley



Nimbin Central School primary choir, in their full throated performance at the recent Bahzooley night in the schools Multi Purpose Unit (MPU).

Be blown away by Martin Fartingale



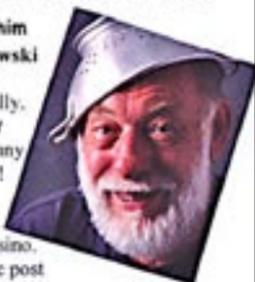
Nimbin author Steven Latowski was born in London and worked as a journalist before arriving in Australia 35 years ago with his wife and three sons on a six-month assignment. The wife and kids liked what they saw and refused to leave. He settled in Sydney and continued to work in the media until retirement.

He settled aboard his yacht and went cruising. Between cruises, he established two

TAKE MARTIN FARTINGALE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS - kids will love him written by Nimbin Author, Steven Latowski

He has a silly name but he's quite nice really. He has a scary story to tell...well, not that scary, in fact Martin Fartingale is quite funny sometimes. Parents say they like him too!

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Committee perks?

Anyone who has been around for more than a couple of years will know that I have been away from the cut and thrust of Nimbin politics while seeking my fortune at Kingscliff, a capitalist Mecca on what the developers are fond of calling The New Tweed Coast. I was most interested by Mal Rothwell's recent letter in the NGT.

I have recently sold a business at the coast and am looking for opportunities: something cushy like those high-paying board of director jobs.

Imagine my delight to read that the NCDA and NNIC have not only survived but acquired exclusive rights to distribute government funds in Nimbin and environs. The executives of these "clubs" must do pretty well with perks - or at least free lunches on the public purse. I decided to get in on the action: And why not? I have been a member of NCDA since inception. Who better than me to now benefit from all the hard work and struggle to obtain the facilities for Nimbin that other communities take for granted?

I was part of the community fund-raising to buy the old school site from the state government, and was on the organising Committee for many years. I served as Public Officer for a few years and as Secretary for several more. Never got a bean out of it, and the only opportunities I found were to volunteer for all the work days! The only pay I ever got was smiles and the status that comes from serving the community.

After reading Mal's description of the current state of affairs, I said to myself, "It's about bloody time the hard-working volunteers get something."

What's more, Mal reckons the two organisations are full of women. Well, being something like the opposite of as misogynist, that suits me fine! So I decided to go along to the AGM in November and contrive to get myself elected onto the NCDA Committee so I could share

in the government largesse and exercise unrestricted power. Mal says now the only "democratic" Nimbin institutions - like the Chamber of Commerce - are in disarray so that there's no effective opposition to the tyranny of the Committees. Sounds like more fun than the French Revolution!

Hell, the NCDA used to be a grass roots open membership organisation, and I was surprised to find that it still is! Mal said that it isn't democratic but I found that anyone can join and vote and become part of the ruling clique for the paltry membership fee of \$15. Wow! I was surprised that I didn't see Mal at the meeting, putting his hand out for a share of the goodies. Then I was stunned to find that I had no trouble getting elected onto the Committee because not enough people nominated.

Now something didn't quite square with Mal's description. Furthermore the President is a bloke! And so is the Co-ordinator. Many of the women have now moved away from Nimbin to jobs that don't rely on grants to keep going. The kind that actually pay a decent salary.

As soon as I got onto the Committee I learned that the situation had not really changed: no big director fees... in fact no money at all! Just the same expectation of doing a job for free and copping criticism from those that can't be bothered to be involved. And dealing with the difficult problems like the skate park. Surely a thankless task.

Now I'm honour-bound to serve, and what's in it for me, Mal?

All I have to say is: "Mate, you really gave me a bum steer!" The first thing I want to do is find out if you collect a backhander for recruiting mugs like me. Why did I listen to you? Anyone who comes to Nimbin to make their fortune is either a fool or dreamer. Maybe that's what I like most about Nimbin...we have plenty of dreamers!

S. Sledge
Blue Knob

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NGT is auspiced by the Nimbin Community School Co-operative Ltd.
Next deadline: **Wednesday 27th December**
Email: goodtimes@nimbinaustralia.com (no space), or put stuff in the ComSchool's pigeonhole in the Nimbin Community Centre.

Local Democracy, again

The discussion on the lack of local democracy and who controls the bureaucracy that has sprouted up in its absence, was getting interesting until Mandie Hale wrote and spoiled the fun by denying all charges, and avoiding all issues. Democracy and the Skate Park fiasco were not even mentioned.

The charges the writer denied were: There is no conglomeration of committees and sub-committees which could interfere or hinder the flow of information to the public on decisions made by NCDA and NNIC committees (the Skate park \$150,000 planning fiasco given as example): The NCDA and NNIC do not monopolise or compete with other community facilities or organisations for funds: There no hardcore feminist clique. The girls get the job because they are better qualified: Neither of the largest organisations in town is incompetent.

The first charge is easy enough to clear up. If what the writer says is true there should be NCDA committee meetings minutes recording the decision to vary the Council-approved concrete Skate Park to a steel construction four times the approved size without Council knowledge. If there are no minutes available then we know that this planning blunder was probably made by some shadow ministry outside the committee structure. Let's have some clarity.

The denial that these two community organisations

monopolise or compete for funds with other community facilities is easily refuted. Last week a quick check with Council provided the information that the Nimbin Community Facilities Fund is empty. These are funds contributed to council by developers through development and building applications. The funds that were accumulated from local developments have already been gobbled up by the NCDA. All future funds will be available only to the NCDA Community Centre and Peace Park and to no other village facility. There certainly was no competition there, the NCDA got it all.

This agreement was probably engineered with Council by the NCDA CEO who was also a Lismore City Councillor at the time. It is pretty obvious that this small bureaucracy somewhere along the line purposely left the other facilities out of this funding stream. How and why? Is skateboarding a sport? Could the \$150,000 already spent, and the possibility of a further \$100,000 required to gloss over the bungle, be classed as Sports funds? They certainly don't look like Arts or Welfare funds.

Most of us who have lived in or around Nimbin for any length of time saw the gradual increase in the aggression of the Street Scene. This climaxed in the trashing of the Rainbow Café, broken shop windows, and damage to the Pub in November 2004. It was common knowledge that the problem was predominantly male. Young,

bored, frustrated, restless, with brand new testosterone, often no male role model in the home and nothing physically or mentally to challenge them. The NCDA and NNIC were given lots of money to find solutions to this male problem. In his letter George Scott had the cheek to question one of the clique's solutions to this male problem: Hire a female Sports Coordinator as a role model, who is unqualified in any sport. Two years after the incident, this bumbling bureaucracy has done absolutely nothing to engage and include these young guys in our local circle. A gymnasium conceived two years ago with equipment in place for months is still not being used and a sexual discrimination inquiry is taking place over how job applications were handled to exclude a qualified male instructor.

An example of the denial of democracy came up when Council staff and Councillor Roberts decided it was a good idea to hit every business premises in the village with a 25% levy on already high rates. When asked what this \$20,000 pa money flow was for, the best answer I could get was 'community infrastructure', another was 'let's get the money first then think of something to do with it'. A clear majority of business people were against it, and said so in petitions and video recordings.

On the big night of the vote at the council chambers a crowd of us voted against the levy. We left early, happy in the thought that democracy reigned and here was an institution that listened to its constituents.

Alas, on arrival home, I learned from another councillor that no sooner had we left the chambers than Councillor Roberts was out of her chair negotiating with one of her mates to change their vote. She succeeded. On her own initiative she engineered a rescission motion reversing the original decision. Democracy? More like dictatorship!

Tim Koker



Born 2-3-1955,
Died 17-11-2006
Missing you

The money? It mostly went to service the loan Council took out (approx \$60,000) to install surveillance cameras which do not work. Some also goes to finance the wages of the Minister of Art Galleries and Walking Tracks, another hole to throw public money into with little hope of a return.

The NCDA and NNIC have great potential to serve the community. The new blood of these two bodies should check out the apple barrel in the cellar. The old crop needs rooting out before they destroy the integrity of the whole barrel.

M A Rothwell

Nimbin Community Development Association

As re-elected President of the NCDA at the last AGM, I would like to invite community members to contact me at any time with ideas on issues about the Community Centre. We are an open organisation and welcome feedback about 'your' Centre.

We are interested in hearing from various local tradespeople, ie plumbers, electricians, licensed builders, to perform various maintenance tasks around the Centre.

Our dance studio is available for casual hire at \$10 per hour. It is an ideal space for activities such as yoga, dance, meetings, etc.

Have a Happy and Safe Christmas and New Year!

Dick Hopkins
Office 6689-0000

Home 6689 1285

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Discrimination Alive and Well in Nimbin, Part II

I would like to keep the Nimbin Community updated with my efforts to help start a gym for Nimbin, which started back in November 2004.

As a lot of people are aware, the gym is still not open. I have continually rang the coordinator Susan Boardman and the Lismore Council to find out my hours, days, etc, as I have been ready to start since September, 2005 with qualifications and insurances.

You may be aware that I was involved with the Youth At Risk program, and was employed by NSW Sport and Recreation, which finished in early May 06. Back in April 2005, James Roberts (Development Officer, NSW Sport and Recreation) rang TURSA Employment Officer J Gorry, requesting assistance for payments of courses required for my qualifications. I, the client would gain around 20 hours per week of employment. This was verbally stated by James Roberts if I undertook these courses, upon which TURSA submitted funds I received on average three hours of employment per week. This fell far short from what TURSA and I were promised.

After the Youth At Risk Program, which ran for eleven weeks, I have asked several times if I could get a breakdown of costs regarding program funds of \$4,500, as the numbers didn't seem to add up. I was never given an answer

Can I also point out that this equipment has been sitting idle in the A & I Hall in Nimbin, gathering cobwebs, since May, which is now six months.

On numerous occasions I have offered the Get Active Committee and the Council to train the youth of Nimbin for FREE, with this equipment, which fell on deaf ears. I ask if I have all the relevant qualifications and all insurances needed to not only run a Gym facility and help with applications for funding, why were we, the COMMUNITY not allowed use of community

equipment and which would greatly benefit male youth in particular.

A couple of months ago, I lodged a complaint with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission regarding Discrimination etc and it is currently under investigation. The Council General manager, Paul O'Sullivan, would have received notification in writing of this around the tenth of this month.

On Monday 21st November, I received notification in writing from the General Manager Paul O'Sullivan, that my involvement with the Gym in Nimbin is terminated which I believe is unlawful in the presence of an ongoing complaint.

I have been abused and sworn at by a committee staff member, which was witnessed. I have been called a liar in public by a Council representative, which was witnessed by a prominent community member. I proved I was correct and have still not received an apology.

So if you asked me, was 2 years of effort trying to do something positive for the Nimbin community worth it? I would have to say no it was not. I believe Bureaucracy and some committee members do not have the best interests of the Nimbin community at heart. NO, they are about Power, Position and Control. I cannot understand why a few people would go to so much trouble to stop myself and others achieving something Positive for Nimbin.

Wayne Cuthbertson
Nimbin

Keep 'em on their toes

Will the Australia we know and love be in existence much longer? To consider the local and state situation, how will our free and prosperous way of life and culture fare in the face of widespread drought, \$3.50 per hour multinational corporation wages, massive foreign ownership, drug addiction, ballooning debt, etc?

To find a happy solution to this neglect we need more members of parliament who are not controlled by a party

machine. Free MPs will give the people a far better say, and will keep the corrupt backroom powermongers on their toes.

Many of our young folk are angry, realising they are being cheated in life. Rather than abundant foul language and P plate horrors, let's have family values, local employment (such as organic growing, cottage industry) and teaching our history and heritage.

Australia's spirit is ailing. The bible is gathering dust. For what did the Anzacs risk their lives?

Mr Vyvyan Stott
Candidate for the State
electorate of Lismore

Student journo apologises

I am writing to apologise to Wal Davies and the Nimbin community for the article named 'Brakes on at Nimbin Skate Park', which was published in the second edition of the SCU student newspaper *Properganda*. As a journalism student I believe that throughout the article's creation my inexperience allowed for mistakes to be made. There is information present which is factually incorrect and does not represent the entire truth on the issue. I am making further investigations as I would like to correct the mistakes made.

As I was unable to gain contact with Mr Davies before my due deadline, I did not interview him for the story. It was not my intention to attack Mr Davies' character in any way. Upon speaking to him, he tells me that he commends community projects including the skate park. I acknowledge that he is actively involved with the Nimbin community in areas such as the Indigenous eco-tourism project and the community garden.

I understand that by writing an article containing inflammatory statements I will not be helping Nimbin to attain a functional skate park. I believe that the Lismore City Council has a responsibility to the Nimbin community, to rectify the problems caused by approving the DA for

Council Jottings by Jenny Dowell

Annual Forum for Nimbin

Nimbin people will see more of Councillors in the coming years following the November meeting decision to hold a rural forum every year in the town.

In the past, the 3 annual rural contact forums have rotated throughout the various districts of the local government area but I was able to successfully argue that Nimbin warranted its own annual forum.

The reasons I gave included that Nimbin and surrounds has a large population, it is furthest from our Council chambers, there is poor public transport and low car ownership and that there is a high degree of interest and some general scepticism of Council.

There are good arguments to have a full Council meeting in rural areas including Nimbin but the Council accepted the staff argument that the cost of staff time and of transporting the equipment was prohibitive. In addition, it is impossible to consider confidential items, nor is there provision for discussion on any item of interest to the community.

Instead, a rural forum attended by six Councillors provides opportunity for in-depth discussion on any Council-related matter of interest to residents. In addition, there is provision for brief presentations by

a steel construction in a residential area. Once again I apologise to Wal Davies and the Nimbin community if I have created more problems surrounding what is already a tense and problematic issue.

Aaron Luke Molloy

Sorry Ruth

I thoroughly enjoy your magazine and have been an avid reader for many years. However, I would like to point out that you have an error in your November 2006 issue on page 12.

The painting that is shown



staff on particular topics such as Rural Roads maintenance.

In addition to the now 4 rural and 2 city forums, residents are always welcome at the 11 regular Council meetings held in Goonellabah on the second Tuesday of every month (except January), at the various workshops and committee meetings as advertised in the *NR Echo* and at Councillor interviews on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month.

Eltham Cottage

The most pleasurable part of the meeting came when Council voted unanimously to refuse Australian Rail Track Corporation's application to demolish the signalman's cottage at Eltham. It was wonderful to see the way the Eltham community has formed a Foundation to come up with ways to fund the cottage's restoration and future uses. We now hope ARTC will enter into serious discussions with the community to save this iconic cottage.

Water

The other major November meeting agenda item that

has generated considerable community interest is our decision to introduce an 'odds and evens' outdoor water conservation strategy from December 1. Whilst Rocky Creek Dam is at 93% capacity at present, the measure is seen as a means of community education on the need to conserve our precious supply. The initiative will be evaluated in July to assess its effectiveness in reducing water usage.

Australia Day

Applications close on December 20 for Lismore's Australia Day Awards with categories of Citizen (junior and senior), Environmental, Art/Cultural, Sportsperson (Group/Individual, junior and senior), Community Services (group/individual), Reconciliation and Multicultural. I encourage you to consider nominating someone or a group from Nimbin as a way of recognising the wonderful people in your community. Forms are on Council's website (www.lismore.nsw.gov.au) or from me (66252206)

Nimbin Events

Congratulations to David Hallett and team for a fantastic night at the recent Blue Moon Cabaret. The standard of performances was exceptionally high. By all accounts the fashion parade was also an outstanding event but other engagements prohibited my attendance. I do look forward to the Nimbin Women's Dinner on December 6 however.

Mousetrap Media AGM

Tuesday 12th December at the Community Centre office, Nimbin. Phone 6689-1184 for more details.

Come and help make decisions about your Nimbin Magazine.

Weird Noise

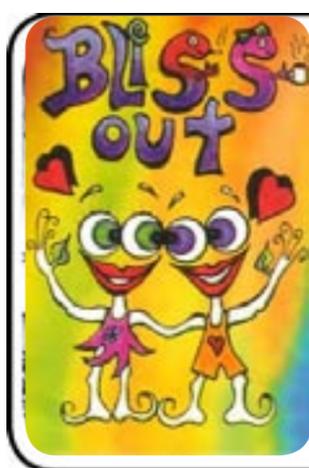
Since 27th September, have you heard electrical (or machine) humming or buzzing noise, between Crofton and Suffolk Roads? Audible around the clock, especially on a calm night. Please ring 6689-1684.

Ruth Sutter

NOTICES

Garage Sale

Saturday 9th December, Moving Sale Sat 9/Sun 10 December, Corner Gungas and Anderson Roads. Books, books, furniture, kitchen stuff.



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H.E.M.P. AGM
THURSDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2006
@ 5PM

Have your say in Australian-first online drug-driving survey

The Australian Drug Foundation (ADF) hopes at least 10,000 Australians will participate in an Australian-first confidential online survey, as part of a major social research program to better understand drug-driving and contribute to public debate on this topical issue.

The online survey is now live at www.drugdriving.org.au and the ADF urges all Australians – whether they have any experience of drugs or not – to participate and have their say by completing the anonymous, 10 minute survey.

Dr Jane Mallick, Director of the

ADF's Centre for Youth Drug Studies, said the study targets a wide cross-section of people from across Australia, including those who use drugs and those who do not. She said the web-based survey would enable the researchers to collect data from a large number of respondents and provide valuable insights into Australian's attitudes and experiences with respect to drugs and driving.

"We hope the community will get behind this research by completing the online survey, so that we can make a very meaningful contribution to the road safety of all Australians," Dr Mallick said.



"Drug-driving has become an increasingly widespread social concern, with more State Governments turning to random roadside drug testing as an enforcement measure – these tests largely focus on illicit drugs such as

cannabis, speed and ecstasy.

"As well as examining Australians' attitudes and behaviour concerning illicit drugs and driving, importantly our research will focus on the lesser-known area of prescription drugs, as well as the prevalence of poly-drug use – for example, people's propensity to mix alcohol and drugs with driving.

"Research to date suggests Australian drivers are increasingly prepared to risk their lives, and the lives of other road users, by driving while impaired by drugs. However, there is little information available as to why people think it is safe to use drugs and drive," Dr Mallick said.

The study, due for completion in April 2007, is being conducted by the ADF and Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre, with funding from leading insurer AAMI, and comprises three parts:

- a comprehensive review of available Australian and international research on drugs and driving;
 - a series of in-depth interviews with key experts in road safety and drug prevention; and
 - an anonymous online internet survey that is open to the public.
- The Victorian Department of Human Services Human Research Ethics Committee has approved the survey.

The imminent Roadside Drug Testing crash

by Assoc Prof Michael Dawson
University of Technology, Sydney.

The NSW Parliament recently passed the Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Drug Testing) Bill 2006. As a result NSW Police now have the power to demand a saliva sample from motorists. The process involves an initial roadside swab of the mouth and if that test returns a positive result, a saliva sample is collected and sent to the laboratory for more rigorous testing known as a "confirmatory analysis". The Government claims that the program is designed to improve road safety. The facts show, however, that the real agenda is to extend the policing of illegal drugs to the roadside.

In December 2004, Victoria became the first jurisdiction in the world to introduce roadside drug testing. Just before Christmas, Mr John De Jong and two others became the first drivers in the world to return a positive roadside drug test. More exacting tests showed later that two of the three initial tests falsely indicated that the drivers had taken an illegal drug. Later it was revealed that experts had quietly warned the Victorian government of the likelihood of significant numbers of false positives and to be careful about the way the program was publicised. But this advice went unheeded and Mr De Jong, one of the drivers falsely accused of drug driving was paraded before the media soon after his erroneous roadside test result was available. Mr De Jong is still waiting for an apology.

Authorities now assert that subsequent tweaking of the protocols the Police use when collecting saliva samples have solved the false positive problem. Time will tell. Meanwhile, more substantive problems remain unresolved, the most important being that we don't yet know which drugs, consumed at what levels, represent a significant threat to road safety.

If the saliva testing program is really about improving road safety, why didn't

the designers of the scheme adopt the same seemingly successful risk based approach used for alcohol? That program does not focus on whether or not a driver has drunk any alcohol, but whether the driver has consumed enough alcohol to become intoxicated to the extent he or she is likely to cause harm or even death while in charge of a vehicle.

Extensive experiments established that at a blood alcohol level of 0.05%, an average driver is twice as likely to have an accident as a driver who has not drunk any alcohol. A blood alcohol level of up to 0.05% was judged to be an acceptable level of intoxication and of risk. The higher the blood alcohol level above 0.05%, the more severe the punishment for the driver because of the increasing risk of an accident.

A consistent approach must be adopted for all drugs that impair driving performance. That is a standard level of intoxication needs to be established, at and above which it can reasonably be said that driving becomes an unacceptable risk.

But one of the many difficulties involved in doing that is not all drugs that impair driving are illegal, in fact most are not. The NSW saliva testing program looks only at three drugs: the active ingredient in cannabis (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, also known as THC), methylamphetamine also known as speed and methylenedioxymethylamphetamine also known as ecstasy. The last two substances are prohibited drugs and so use is an offence regardless of the level of intoxication and regardless of the impairment of driving performance. However delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol is a Schedule 8 drug and should be subject to the same medical exemption as morphine and cocaine..

The treatment of heroin under the new roadside testing system is very interesting, if not disturbing. The saliva testing screening test deliberately did not include heroin; the illegal drug that arguably causes most problems in our society. Not because there is no test for heroin, but because once in the

body heroin is rapidly converted to morphine and therefore to be effective, any screening test would need to look for morphine not heroin.

But any test to detect heroin users would also identify those people being treated with morphine for legitimate medical purposes. As a result morphine is not included in the saliva screening test. But the reality is that a given level of morphine intoxication resulting from legitimate medical treatment represents exactly the same level of risk as the same intensity of morphine intoxication caused by heroin use.

If the saliva drug testing program is really about road safety why wasn't morphine included in the initial screening test? The reason is clear - many drugs that have legitimate medical uses also cause intoxication and this thorny issue is one that authorities do not want to deal with.

Nevertheless for all those drugs with legitimate uses that do cause impairment, the blood level above which impairment of driving is likely to occur should be established. Driving with a blood concentration above this limit should be an offence in exactly the same way that drink driving is, with low, mid and high range offences.

As things stand there are major flaws in the way the NSW legislation is written and serious legal complexities will almost certainly arise as a consequence.

An enormous can of worms has been opened, it will clog up the courts for years on end and provide endless work for lawyers, analytical chemists and expert witnesses.

The millions of dollars spent by the NSW Government on the saliva chemical analysis program would be much better spent developing a technology-based test which measures driver impairment on the spot.

In our efforts to minimise the risks on our roads, we would be best served by keeping the road safety and drug law enforcement agendas separate. Consistency of purpose will ultimately drive the best harm reduction outcomes.

Information Seminars about the new Roadside Saliva Drug Testing

The NSW Parliament recently passed the Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Drug Testing) Bill 2006. NSW Police now have the power to demand a saliva sample from randomly selected motorists.

To raise awareness about this issue and to encourage informed discussion, INTRA, the Drug and Alcohol Outreach Service based at the Buttery, is organising two community information sessions in the local area.

INTRA invited Associate Professor Michael Dawson, a leading expert in the field of drug testing and the Head of the Department of Chemistry, Materials and Forensic Science at the University of Technology in Sydney, as the key speaker. Professor Dawson will be joined by local solicitors Steve Bolt and Cameron Bell who will make themselves available to clarify any legal issues related to the new legislation.

INTRA spokesperson, Deb Felton said, "Like it or not, the random roadside drug testing is coming our way. The world-first pilot program was recently completed in Victoria; now the NSW Government is following Victoria's lead. Whether personally affected or not, the public has a right to know more about this testing. We are very lucky indeed to have secured Professor Dawson and two well-known local solicitors to hold these seminars"

Michael Balderstone of the Nimbin HEMP Embassy said, "This is a rare opportunity to ask all the questions and hopefully get some clear answers so we are ready for the inevitable Winnebago drug bus visit. They are sure to target us at some time. From what we have heard, if everyone in a room smoked a joint and were tested four hours later, half the group would still test negative. If that's true then we can't swallow it."

The information sessions will cover topics including: the types of drugs targeted, detectable levels and accuracy of the testing, the existing evidence base for driving skills impairment, legal implications, and issues for people on prescribed medications.

The seminars will be held at:

- Nimbin Community Hall, 4th December 2006, 6pm-8.30pm, and
 - Byron Bay Community Centre, 5th December, 2pm-5pm
- Both seminars are free of charge. Anyone interested is welcome. This initiative is supported by the NSW Health Department.

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Industrial Relations affects us all



Protests. The National Day of Action against Work Choice legislation on Thursday 30th November saw hundreds rally in Lismore.

by Peter Lanyon,
Country Labor
candidate, State seat
of Lismore

Industrial relations affect us all. If you work on a farm or in a shop or at a school or hospital or factory or you repair or sell or build or drive something, then industrial relations affect you and at present, your rights at work are under attack.

If you're a student seeking a part time job or your child works at McDonalds, or you're thinking of returning to the work force, your rights at work are most important.

For over a hundred years, there has been in place, a set of fair structures that have led to a fair day's work being exchanged for a fair day's pay. But now those fundamental Australian values of fairness, care for the underdog and support for the ordinary worker, values that were held dearly by early shearers, miners, farmers and soldiers, are under attack.

National / Liberal Party control of parliament now means that for the first time since Federation, industrial power is ultimately in the hands of the bosses.

The century old system whereby employers and employees, bosses and workers, put their cases, argued, had their say and then fairly abided by the decision of an Industrial Relations referee, is finished. Now we have Work Choices.

"Work Choices" is the

name of the new book of rules and they are the rules of the powerful. They have been written by the powerful, and they have been written for the benefit of the powerful. "Work Choices" is double speak. The choices are those of the powerful.

Most threatened are women, our youth, families and workers in rural and regional Australia.

Work Choices rules are already biting hard. They are already hurting ordinary workers. They are hurting at a time when our economy is humming, when workers are in demand, at a time when the Chinese will buy any resources that we have to sell.

Imagine life when the commodity boom ends as the housing boom did. Heaven help any worker, any employee, when, as will surely happen, the economy turns downwards.

And do our local National Party members support the Lismore workers and their families? Will they do the right thing or will they obey John Howard and their coalition leader, Peter Debnam, the Member for Vaucluse, the richest suburb in Sydney!

Act now. Ask your local member where he or she stands on Work Choices.

And then get organized! Rally when you get a chance, speak up, show solidarity.

Get involved as if your working life depended on it, because workers united, can never be defeated!

"WorkChoices" means no choices

by Andy Gough,
Greens Candidate for
Lismore

The Greens oppose the Howard government's new federal industrial relations laws, which cover areas that the states have traditionally regulated, and support their repeal. How can 1700 pages of WorkChoices legislation possibly make workplace policy 'simpler', let alone 'fairer' - offering Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs), which are essentially "take it or leave it" individual contracts that put a downward pressure on wages, strip away conditions, and undermine rights at work?

The Greens stand with the majority of Australians who believe we all deserve rights at work. The Coalition has increased the power of big business at the expense of the poorest and most vulnerable in our community. They define a "small business" as one with less than one hundred employees. By creating a race to the bottom, to the worst wages and conditions, the Government has increased the gap between rich and poor, and between country and city.

The Greens think the NSW Labor Government needs to do more to protect rights at work in NSW. By extending the protection of the NSW IR system to all workers in government agencies, including government corporations. By ensuring that local government workers are protected, and by making sure that contracted government services are provided by company's that respect decent pay and conditions, so the public purse isn't subsidising bad employers.

The Greens are against businesses exploiting the overwhelming majority of Australians who work for a living. WorkChoices means that even good employers will be forced to push wages and conditions down so they can compete with the bad



employers that exploit the laws to their full advantage.

The state government has existing legislation to govern the areas "WorkChoices" tries to take over. Thomas George's coalition has committed to handing over virtually all industrial relations powers to Howard in the federal sphere, and also committed to sacking over 29,000 public servants. This would mean that not only will thousands of public service workers lose their legal rights overnight, but the services they provide would be lost to communities. What does Thomas George say about this? Not a lot. Just a silent compliance to the coalition's agenda.



Labor has said that it will not transfer industrial relations to the Commonwealth, but in Victoria, they failed to take back those powers - so despite an ALP government, workers are still fully vulnerable to WorkChoices.

In NSW, Labor has not used the maximum of their constitutional power to protect us from WorkChoices. NSW workers deserve better than the ALP is likely to deliver.

Labor say they will repeal WorkChoices, but as with all Labor promises, who knows? We must continue to campaign to ensure that any elected government protects the rights of the majority and gets rid of "WorkChoices". Our Greens Senators will be critical in holding Labor to its promises if it is elected. The ALP needs the Greens' Senate votes so that Workchoices can be repealed. This means our campaign to rescue the Senate in the federal election is absolutely critical to protecting your rights at work.

The NSW Labor Government tried to protect some sections of NSW workers from WorkChoices. The Greens supported these attempts, but are also pushing for more extensive measures to strengthen the resilience of the state IR system by including all public sector workers, and those under contract to the state government, under its protection.

The Greens also oppose the so-called "Building Industry Improvement Act" and other anti-worker and anti union legislation, and would support their repeal.

Labor has promised to maintain a NSW IR system including legislative

protections for at least some workers. Peter Debnam has promised to dismantle the NSW industrial relations system and transfer all workers in NSW into the WorkChoices regime. As junior members of the coalition Thomas George, Ian Causley and the Nationals are complicit in this outcome. They support Howard's "WorkChoices" legislation, which undermines the rights of every working Australian and will have a disastrous affect on our regional society and economy.

It is predicted that within three years, 85% of workers will be on AWAs. Together with the 'Welfare to Work' legislation, this region will be hit hard by Howard's workplace and welfare agendas, with one in three north coast residents already dependent on some form of income support. The disabled, single parents, mature-age and the long-term unemployed will be subjected to an inhumane regime of compliance. While Howard and his corporate mates get richer, the residents of the north coast will be living in working poverty. **The Greens would like to see both pieces of legislation not merely amended, but scrapped altogether.**

With your support, we can make it happen. To those of you who don't vote - now is not the time to be silent, or to give up. Enrol today and make your voice heard. Vote Green!

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