



Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras

For the last five years the Nimbin Hemp Embassy has sponsored a group of supporters as well as patients to go to the Sydney Mardi Gras to demand that cannabis, one of the oldest medicines on the planet, be legalised and made accessible for sick people with a range of illnesses.

As the benefits for cancer patients, MS sufferers, HIV positive, glaucoma, etc are no longer questioned, it was a great success for the patients and us to see Bob Carr in May 2003 coming out and announcing, after another successful Nimbin MardiGrass with talks and forums on "medical cannabis", that he had gained an understanding of the issue and knows now that cannabis can be helpful to some patients in minimising the harm, pain and suffering of these human beings.

The sad and very shameful part is, that the NSW government hasn't done anything since then to implement law reform for these very needy people, no card scheme to identify them as legal users of cannabis, or making cannabis accessible to them without having to go to the illegal drug market. The Greens and Democrats have been the only political parties supporting the issue.

Nearly 4 years have gone by and these patients still have to go through the unnecessary fearful stress of being busted, as well as having to deal with the psychological impact of having a terminal disease.

On the 3rd March 2007 the Sydney Mardi Gras parade is on again, and after years with the "Gunja Fairies" dancing along Oxford Street, we have sadly dwindled to four people walking last year to keep the issue in the public eye.

People who would like to support the cause, either financially or by participating, should get in contact with <chibo5@hotmail.com> or ring/sms me on 0428-313-587 ASAP.

Chibo Mertineit

They could build it right next door to you!

Who wants a nuclear power plant near where they live? People have the choice to knock back the nuclear option. Our democracy still affords us some decision making power.

If enough people vote Green then they will have the balance of power to veto proposals such as Switkowski's twenty five reactors by 2025 proposal. Nuclear power is a ridiculous scenario when renewable energy technologies are available and cost effective.

Global warming is a pollution issue. So why replace it with another power source that creates another pollution that will last for hundreds of thousands of years? Sure it is different, but is it good? Of course not.

Renewable energy neutralises the nuclear issue.

Ruth Tsitimbinis
Kyogle

Clever Country

Imagine flying into Lismore or Ballina or Sydney and seeing no red roofs. Instead there's a glassy gray set of rectangles on every house, factory, school and office. They're solar panels!

Australian schools and Australian science and Australian engineering could make it happen, along with sensible government assistance of course.

Imagine us no longer burning coal to produce electricity. Not satisfied with being the lucky country with lots of wind, lots of land, lots of tides, lots of waves, geothermal hot rocks and an abundance of sunshine, we became the clever country.

No more offering billions in subsidies to the fossil fuel industries, instead we gave many of those dollars back to the citizens in the form of rebates for personal solar systems.

You would own your own source of energy. You would be independent of the big energy companies. Your country's solar technology could be exported to the world.



Pacific Rainbow

The illegal sacking of the Whitlam government in 1973 convinced me that we needed a republic. Then seeing the aboriginal flag for the first time more than twenty years ago got me thinking about a peace flag for the republic. Their flag brings the dead-heart to life.

Then the battle of the Eureka stockade came to mind, which Howard would

like us to forget about, no way.

Flocks of rainbow lorikeets used to flood into my garden when this great coral tree was in flower – it was magic.

I fished the beautiful blue Pacific between Brunswick Heads and Byron Bay for many years, so then came the name of the flag, what better name for a peace flag than Pacific Rainbow?

Jim Jones
Brunswick Heads

Labor offers rebates on solar panels. State Labor recognises the advantages of solar power but there's more work to do. Labor needs to offer subsidies for storage batteries, regulators and inverters.

Individual ecological footprints must be reduced further.

And has this school principal, who is working to be your voice in state government, installed solar hot water and solar panels to power his own home?

As a matter of fact ... yes.

Peter Lanyon
Country Labor Candidate
State seat of Lismore

Solar Hot Water

One of the most effective ways for households to reduce their home greenhouse gas emissions is to install solar hot water systems in new houses and when old units are replaced.

Hot water accounts for about 30% of residential carbon dioxide production in NSW. Switching to solar hot water would cut that in half, that is, reduce household greenhouse gas emissions by about 13 per cent. The greenhouse gas saving over a solar hot water unit's lifetime is approximately 40,000 kilograms of carbon dioxide. This may not seem much compared with the proposed Anvil Hill coal mine in the Hunter Valley, which will produce 25 million tonnes of CO2 each year, but it all adds up.

Some local councils such as Leichhardt in Sydney have made solar hot water compulsory on all new buildings and major renovations since 1994, and significantly, have entered into arrangements with companies like Solahart for interest-free loans for residents for their purchase, to ease the financial burden. So the units are paid off in the same manner as your electricity bill. Check out the current provisions relating to solar hot water in section B2.6 of DCP 2000 at Leichhardt Council's website: <http://www.lmc.nsw.au/planning/05/1047878233_803.html>

It would be great to see Lismore Council being more proactive in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by providing incentives for solar hot water.

Sue Stock
Nimbin Greens

Hicks spin

First we were told by Colonel Morris Davis, US Military Prosecutor that David Hicks returned to Afghanistan and reported for duty to al-Qaeda commanders immediately post 9/11. This, of course, raises the question that if Hicks could so easily locate these terrorist leaders, why couldn't the yanks?

Now this same military lawyer is alleging that David Hicks was conducting surveillance of the US and British Embassies in Kabul circa August, 2001, embassies

that were abandoned in 1989 and did not re-open until at least December, 2001.

Presumably Colonel Davis was told this information by someone and without checking chose to accept it.

Hopefully the Colonel will now accept the pitfalls of the acceptability of hearsay evidence, however I have a reasonable doubt that this will occur. His legal expertise appears to be solely directed to finding trumped up charges to lay, which charges will conceivably again be the subject of an application to the US Supreme Court thus continuing to prevent David receiving any semblance of the human rights the United States so proudly extolls via its Bill of Rights.

When are the troika of Howard, Ruddock and Downer going to cease their pathetic kowtowing and take action to put an end to this farcical and appalling injustice? Or are they too embarrassed to admit that the yanks are suffering from selective deafness when David Hicks is mentioned.

In the meantime this Australian citizen is denied basic justice and the rest of us are subjected to more war on terror progaganda from the Howard Government's sultans of spin.

Kate Barton
Annandale

What's wrong with Unions?

Our society is permeated by unions. Corporations are unions of interested persons working towards a common goal of production and profit.

Shareholders are a part of this union of interest. Voluntary organisations are unions of people working toward some social goal. Churches are unions of like-minded people aspiring for a particular kind of society.

Why then, are trade unions being vilified by the Liberal/National parties and the governments they form?

The answer lies in the age-old struggle for the share of the wealth created through the productive processes. We have seen the share that the majority of workers get in this struggle, shrink over the last 30 years.

The Howard government has ramped this inequitable distribution up to gross levels. Australian Workplace Agreements are clearly tools to keep this unfair process in train. Not only will the sharing out of profits be unfair, but the process by which workers can negotiate will be made so lop-sided that individuals are expected to strike an agreement with large corporate unions that are predisposed to offer as little as they possibly can.

I urge everyone to reconsider the value of being in a trade union and helping make that union their representative in the process of sharing out the national wealth. When a recession hits we really will feel the brunt of the workchoices legislation that fully supports the corporate unions and leaves the workers to struggle amongst themselves for the jobs and wages that are left.

Eric Kaiser
Kyogle

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Next deadline: Wednesday 31st February
Email: goodtimes@nimbinaustralia.com or put stuff in the ComSchool's pigeonhole in the Nimbin Community Centre.
Responsibility for election comment in this issue is taken by Bob Dooley, Cullen Street, Nimbin NSW.

The Greens will work to

- Stop climate chaos - go renewable, not nuclear or coal
- Restore rail services and improve public transport
- Defend worker's rights - reject 'WorkChoices'
- Fund public hospitals and schools
- Ban developer donations • Reject fluoridation
- Sensible drug laws - decriminalise marijuana



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A Bike for All Seasons
(to the tune of the Eton Boating Song) by Len Martin

Jolly cycling weather
Peddling through the rain
Splashed by all the mo'rists
Buckled by a drain
Oh it's fine cycling weather
If you-ou can stand the pain

Jolly cycling weather
Peddling in the sun
Feet rotating smoothly
Having lots of fun
Oh it's fine cycling weather
Why would you want to run

Jolly cycling weather
Peddling in the cold
Hands and feet are freezing
Feeling frail and old
But it's fine cycling weather
And really rather bold



Jolly cycling weather
Peddling in the heat
Dripping, dripping, dripping
Feeling rather beat
But it's fine cycling weather
Despite the sweaty seat
Jolly cycling weather
Peddling in the spring
Feeling rather younger
Quite a lot of zing

Then one's passed by kiddies
The joys that age doth bring

Jolly cycling weather
Peddling in a gale
Branches fall around you
Battered by the hail
But the lightning just misses
Oh what a macho male!

Jolly cycling weather
Peddling up a hill
Getting even steeper
Feeling rather ill
But with thirty gears or more
I can do it still

Jolly cycling weather
Pedalling down the hill
Going ever faster
Mustn't have a spill
But what a buzz it gives me,
round the bend at speed
Crazy, crazy crazy
But it fills an inner need

Council Jottings . . .

by Cr. Jenny Dowell

With no Council meeting in January, Councillors have had a welcome break over the past month. There have been a handful of special project or committee meetings on such things as the Goonellabah Recreation Centre, the Local Government Women's conference to be held in Lismore in May and meetings of some Policy Advisory Groups and a public meeting on the Lismore Park (sports grounds in the CBD) plan of management but otherwise its been a good chance to recharge the batteries for another year.

Resident issues do not take a break however, and while most issues are not urgent, it has been satisfying to find solutions to the numerous requests that come my way.

Homelessness

One more challenging issue that arose several times during the past month is the level of homelessness both in Lismore and Nimbin.

There is a desperate need for a shelter for crisis accommodation in both communities and it is important that representatives of various welfare and human services sectors including housing, material aid, Centrelink, local government, drug and alcohol, mental health, neighbourhood centres and churches together with homeless people themselves, unite to find solutions.

Climate Change

The universal issue on most people's minds at present is climate change. As readers will recall, Lismore City Council is progressing along the milestones of Cities for Climate Protection with the public exhibition of our Local Action Plan.



Submissions on the LAP, available on the Council's website, have been extended to February 23.

The plan outlines ways in which Lismore will meet the target of a 20% reduction in its 2001 greenhouse gas emissions by 2012.

After the less than enthusiastic response given to Samlara Canin-Henkel when she addressed Council on climate change in December, I have decided to appeal directly to residents on this vital issue.

While a few people continue to deny the reality of climate change and Australia and USA refuse to ratify and implement the Kyoto Protocol, it is my belief that the people on the North Coast are concerned and want to do something.

Readers of the Sydney Morning Herald would be aware that 7.30-8.30pm on March 31 has been designated Earth Hour, an initiative of the World Wildlife Fund to highlight the need to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Cities of Sydney, North Sydney and Parramatta have committed to supporting Earth Hour by encouraging businesses and householders to switch off lights and appliances except those necessary for security and safety.

I am therefore suggesting that we participate in Earth



Hour by encouraging our communities to turn off excess lighting, air-conditioning and other non-essential electrical appliances, including those on 'stand-by' for Earth Hour.

March 31 is also an ideal day on which to publicise Lismore's CCP LAP and it may be possible to measure the savings in emissions from that hour.

I look forward to NGT readers' responses to see if Earth Hour can be adopted in our region on Saturday March 31.

Australia Day

Those of you who attended Lismore's Australia Day ceremony would have been uplifted by the stories of the 48 nominees for our local awards. The wild applause for the two 90-year-old women nominated for a community services award was an example of the wonderful reception all the candidates received from the huge audience.

The warmth of the welcome extended to the 31 people from 16 countries who became Australian citizens also sent a strong message that we, unlike some other cities, welcome newcomers.

Lismore's Living Library

If Nimbin residents are in Lismore on the first Friday of the month, I encourage you to visit Lismore's Living Library in the library on Magellan St. From 11am-2 pm readers can borrow a living book and spend 30 minutes in conversation with someone you may not meet in your everyday life. 'Books' include people of different religions, ethnicity, sexuality or occupation. It will really open your eyes and minds to the diversity of our city.

Lots of library fun at Kyogle



School Holiday Fun @ Kyogle library

School hols were a lot of fun this December through February at Kyogle library with a number of very well supported programs including the amazing Read Around Oz Summer Reading Club "Reading Rulz" program which ended 2nd February 2007. Other free, fun events for kids included the School Hols Activities days for 5 - 7 years, 8 - 12 year and Young Adults 12 - 18 years. Pictured are the very cool teens from the YA Craft Day Wednesday 17th January where the group made a groovy beaded bookmark using jewellery making techniques to take home free. The YA's snapped included Joanna, Jes, Jon, Karlie, Rebecca and Sharee with Corinne from Kyogle library.

Bookworms

Are you interested in bringing your preschooler to Bookworms in 2007? This storytime program introduces 3-5 year olds to the joys of literature through stories, poetry, finger plays,



action rhymes and craft. Bookings are essential! Please contact Kyogle library to register your interest.

What's Happening @ YOUR library in February?

Check out the in-library displays for -
 • LandCare - this display features a selection of wonderful new items for borrowing, including: "Field guide to weeds in Australia", "Plants of the forest floor", "Grasses of the Tweed Valley of NSW", "Nest boxes for wildlife" and "Subtropical rainforest restoration" all generously donated by the Cedar Point LandCare group.

• Eden Creek Fairy Mount Pre-school - learn about your toddler from the library's range of materials featured on this display as well as the care and services available at Eden Creek fairy Mount pre-school.

YOUR Review

Carved in Bone by Jefferson Bass

"Excellent novel, a different slant to a murder mystery. Please study diagrams at back of book to be familiar with the technical references to the human body."

Look for the Silver Lining by June Francis

"If you are a woman and just want a good story, well written, I recommend this one. Women surviving in the Blitz of WWII."

Reviewed by Lynette 59 and Vonnice 82

Want to know what's happening at YOUR library?

Just look-up and view the library's amazing, new in-house communication screens where all the library's services, events and much more are available to you at a glance.

Retro Cafe

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