



Koala Kolumn

by Jennifer Creed

Great news! Friends of the Koala will be visiting Nimbin on Sunday September 16th to offer **free koala food trees** at the Nimbin Aquarius Fair Market. We hope many readers of the Good Times will come and say hello. We look forward to discussing any of the issues written about in the past few months and will be displaying a photographic update of our featured Koalas. So why are we giving the trees away for free?

Habitat loss is the greatest problem facing koalas. The main reasons for this are land clearing, bushfires and diseases of the eucalypts, like 'dieback'. Australia has one of the highest land clearing rates in the world and 80% of koala habitat has already disappeared.

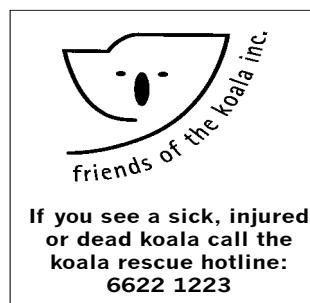
Although koalas themselves are protected by law, 80% of the remaining habitat occurs on privately owned land and almost none of that is protected by legislation. Even planting one or two trees on your property can help maintain this fast diminishing habitat.

Of course if you would like a larger quantity for a corridor planting we are more than happy to give them. With the recent heavy rainfall around the rainbow region and the end of winter frosts it is now an ideal time for planting out.

If you are unable to make the trip to Nimbin on the market day do not despair as Free Koala Food Trees are available right now by phoning the Friends of the Koala hotline 6622-1233.

Some interesting facts about koalas

- Koala is an ancient Aboriginal word meaning "no drink". Koalas receive 90% of their moisture from the leaves they eat however they actually do drink water sometimes if the moisture in the leaves



If you see a sick, injured or dead koala call the koala rescue hotline: 6622 1223

is insufficient due to dry weather.

- Over **two million** koalas were hunted and killed for their fur between 1908 and 1927. Now it is estimated that fewer than 10,000 remain in the wild.

- A mature male has a dark scent gland in the centre of his white chest which exudes a dark, sticky substance. He rubs this on his trees to indicate to other koalas that this is his territory.

- Different species of eucalypts grow in different parts of Australia, so a koala in Victoria would have a very different diet from one in Northern NSW.

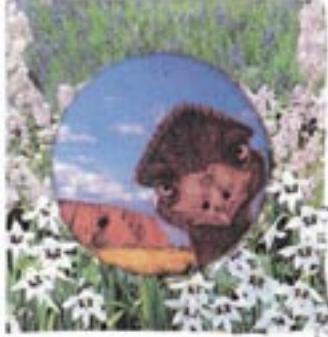
- Koalas have no sweat glands. A koala cools itself in hot weather by licking its forearms and stretching out along branches with its arms and legs dangling to catch the breeze.

- Koalas are strong swimmers.

- The closest relative of the koala is a wombat. They both have pouches which open towards the rear. This is perfect for the wombat as it is a burrowing ground dweller and the rear opening prevents dirt from entering the pouch whilst digging. The female koala however is a tree dweller and climbs upward. To prevent gravity taking its natural course she has strong muscles ringing the pouch to prevent her joey from falling out.

For more fascinating Koala facts please visit our website <www.friendsofthe koala.org> Hope to see you at the market but for now...happy koala spotting.

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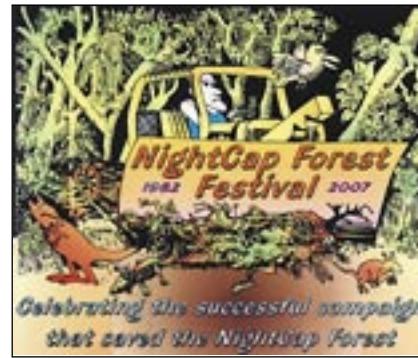
For Love of the Forest

by Sophia Hoeben

There was a moment in October of '82, when my life was again changed forever, as a massive brush-box in a secluded part of the Nightcap Ranges, wrapped me in its' arms and captured my heart. Spontaneous tears streamed down my face in those few precious moments of unadulterated bliss, when I suddenly remembered what it was that was really important in life! The message was clear - 'Love is all' - said the tree, whilst at the same time gently conveying, through language unknown, that my life was always going to be intimately connected with the forests.

Like many other members of the Nightcap Action Group, I then set off to other parts of Australia in defense of Mother Earth. In my trusty 67' Kombi, I ventured from the desert of Roxby Downs, trying to close a uranium mine, to the rainforest of Cape Tribulation to face both the loggers and the developers. I even had a go on a national level in Canberra, when, along with others, I tried to establish a non-profit peace foundation and lobbying service for all environmental groups.

Twenty-five years later, I'm still active, just not able to travel as far, in keen consideration of green house emissions from my vehicle. Instead, I act locally, for my village and my tribe, who are also in trouble. Love is not heard, nor felt as it was in the early



Celebrating the successful campaign that saved the Nightcap Forest

eighties when Mother Earth touched all our hearts. Now it seems people are only interested in being 'stars', or even worse, just making money. Through my own observations, the real work needed to keep a community such as Nimbin running at all, is rarely performed by people seeking the limelight. The real doers are normally the people behind the scenes, the ones doing what they do out of love, not self-indulgence.

As planning co-ordinator for the Nightcap Forest Festival, I discovered those lovely people, willing to support their community by helping to make the Festival happen. I also came across those people whose energies were negative, and purely based on the gratification of their ego. Yet, as the years' planning progressed, I felt heartened by the response from the long time settlers and the new comers who feel that the time for a resurgence of love is long overdue.

Forest Festival Update

Firstly, a big thank-you from the Committee goes to Burri Jerome for his truly marvelous painting of the Nimbin Rocks. The raffle tickets are currently being sold by Judy Hales who also receives our gratitude for her constant magical ability to raise money for worthy community causes in Nimbin.

Make sure you catch up with Judy for a chance of being the owner of this amazing work of art.

Thanks also to Happy High Herbs, whose donation of \$100 cash and \$100 worth of herbs was amongst the first to be received along with the Nimbin Pharmacy who donated a gift pack for raffle.

We are still in need of volunteers to fill various roles during the Festival and are on the look-out for some big tents for the camp-site.

The next meeting to finalise Festival plans will be held at the back of the Oasis Cafe at 4pm on Friday 14th September, and every week after that. I can be contacted by phone 0428-685-698 any day for update information.

The Nightcap Forest Festival will run from 17th to 21st October, with a camp at Mount Nardi and a dance, a display and markets in the village.

The full Forest Festival Program will be published in the October edition of the GoodTimes.

GRIST

Unable to Flush With Success

Sanitation a big problem worldwide, says U.N.

The United Nations has declared 2008 the International Year of Sanitation, but we won't wait until then to ply you with depressing statistics: One-third of the global population has no access to a toilet. In 38 African countries, more children under the age of 5 die from diarrhea than HIV/AIDS. The World Health Organization estimates that 80 percent of all sickness in the world is attributable to unsafe water and sanitation. But tackling the sanitation problem is a dang good investment. According to the U.N., \$1 spent on improving sanitation would save between \$3 and \$34 in the areas of education, health, and socioeconomic development. All we're saying is, don't be so quick to pooh-pooh sanitation.

And Now for Something Completely Familiar

China's environment still terribly polluted, and getting worse

Almost nowhere else on earth today is a source for so much environmental gloom and doom as China. Nearly 500 million people in China lack access to safe drinking water. About 750,000 people die every year due to outdoor air pollution and water pollution. And only 1 percent of China's 560 million urbanites breathe air that's considered safe by the European Union. Relatively recent attempts by the central government to control pollution have met resistance from local leaders who are often in collusion with industry. Thousands of protests and riots break out each year in the country due to pollution and health concerns, and the government has banned the publication of pollution health statistics since it could incite further social unrest. "Typically, industrial countries deal with green problems when they are rich," said Ren Yong, of the Center for Environment and Economy in Beijing. "We have to deal with them while we are still poor. There is no model for us to follow."

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS FROM WWW.GRIST.ORG

REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION

Atomic Wrongs

U.S. nuclear weapons program killed over 4,000 Americans, analysis shows

The U.S. nuclear weapons program has sickened an estimated 36,500 Americans and killed over 4,000, according to an analysis of government figures by the Rocky Mountain News. The newspaper's estimates may be lower than actual numbers because it only counted people who have been approved for government compensation and not those who were sickened or killed but denied aid. The numbers include workers who built nuclear bombs, troops that inhaled dust from bomb tests, and workers who mined uranium. Since 1945, the U.S. has constructed some 70,000 nuclear weapons and remains the only nation to have detonated any outside of tests. The bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, instantly killed over 200,000 people total and injured and sickened hundreds of thousands more.

Word Gets Around

New bike, parking policies leave polluting vehicles in the dust

Now for some wheely good news: officials around the globe are moving forward on innovative eco-transportation schemes. Last week, the city council of Reykjavik, Iceland, enacted a rule that gives free parking to those who drive fuel-efficient vehicles. In Ontario, Canada, officials said they will develop a rating system for eco-friendly cars and trucks, with an eye toward debuting a green license plate in 2008 for low-emitters; the tag could net owners perks like free parking and access to commuter lanes. In Paris, the first three weeks of the free-bicycle Vélib program saw 10,000 bikes used a total of 1.2 million times -- an average of six times per day. And others are taking notice: London's Lord Mayor has asked his city's transportation agency to develop a similar scheme.

NIMBIN BUILDING MATERIALS

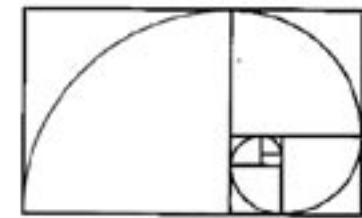
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Bali, Borneo or Bust?

by Ian Browne, Shamrock News Darwin

As I flew into Kuching in southeastern Sarawak; Malaysian Borneo, my first thoughts were that this surreal river wetland landscape must surely be croc heaven.

I knew I would fall in love with Borneo, I was seduced years ago before visiting the equator. But now I have been intimate with this kind hearted paradise I know it is more than infatuation.

There was talk while I was there that Asia Airlines would be flying directly to Kuching from Darwin in the near future, wow, and within a week of returning home to Darwin there it was in the paper, only Kuching wasn't mentioned, rather the more common cities such as Kuala Lumpur in the region. The irony is that Qantas decided to scrap its flights from Darwin to Bali the same week also.

But surely the Kuching that I now know, the beautiful river side city with its friendly folk, cheap food and refreshing beer will become the next Bali for Australian travelers, the extra distance permitted. Yes I missed the 10th anniversary of the 'Rainforest Music Festival' in Kuching, I almost got there but I was in transit between Kuching, Miri and three jungle areas. I was planning to go also but the closest I got to the festival was buying a t-shirt with the Indigenous stringed instrument the Sape illustrated upon. My main ambition being to hike on trails and to visit the giant caves by myself and I did just that, so next year the festival is mine.

But is tourism a good thing for Sarawak? I mean the backpackers I met there were peaceful and respectful, and tourism is still relatively subtle and consists mainly of 'Indie' folk from abroad. There is plenty of time to rub shoulders with the interesting and helpful locals; the Malaysians, the Chinese and the Indigenous Iban (pronounced E-barn). I fear a Kuching ripe with pulsating tourists, perhaps 'footy' teams sucken back cheap lager is nearing though. I am so glad I finely made it to Borneo and perhaps just in time before the touro-wave of mutilation.

I befriended park rangers who; over many ales and rice wine, explained their jungle management details, as I discussed ours here in Oz. They swapped email addresses but in reply via the net, partly in pigeon also, was a friendly but somewhat fearful desire to remain anonymous from their own Government's attention in relation to the 'eco' details they shared with me. You have to understand that as the clearing of biodiverse jungle areas for huge African palm oil plantations does provide both the indigenous groups and other Asian regional folk with employment, but too a tide of destruction of these equatorial habitats. 'Biofuel' is currently making its controversial presence felt in Australia. It is eco-friendly as a diesel substitute but if you have recently flown over, or driven amongst the Sarawak and Malaysian Peninsular terrain as I have, the majority of much of the landscape



now functions as an African oil palm-monoculture.

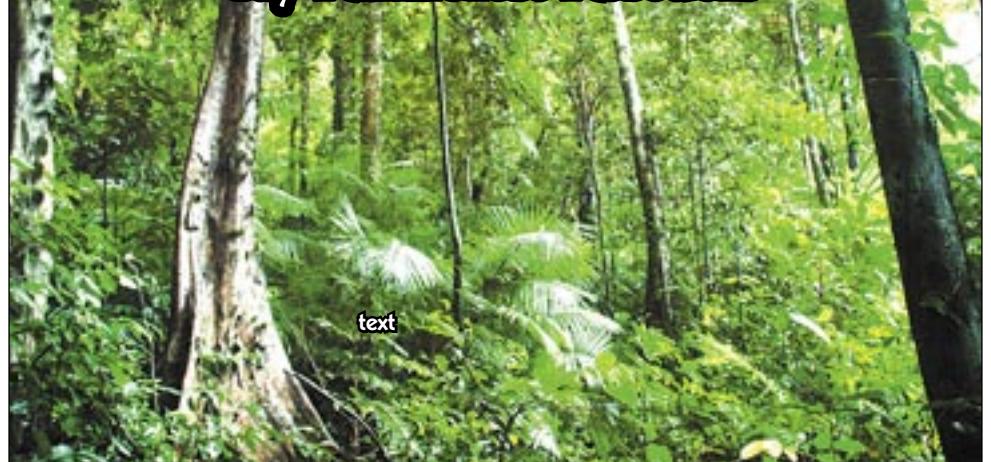
I sent my rainforest doco that was produced with Nimbin locals last year to them all and I am now busily occupying my spare time compiling a rainforest education package for a National Park near Kuching for visiting school students and for online-students back here in Australia studying the jungle reserve. I was also privileged to befriend local academic Kelvin Egay who lectures at the University of Malaysian Sarawak. He is boldly outspoken and introduces himself as the Anthropologist who 'dislikes' Anthropologists. He was happy to discuss with me his disgust at the international scientists that enter his country only to continually write the same thesis' time and time again. They misunderstand the truth about the impacts on the Iban and other Indigenous groups by international and Government dealings and are satisfying their own needs in the end with their nonsensical academic rhetoric. Kelvin is approached on average by four international Anthropologists daily who ask the same questions and write the same misguided untruths about his country. He is sick and tired of the economic dealings dealt out at the misfortunes of the rainforests and its people in Sarawak. I will remain friends with Kelvin.

The Kuching locals are both savvy and humorous and much can be learnt by their experiences. Back here in Darwin a local Kuching bar and longhouse tour operator; Peter Jaban, will visit and stay at my place as his girlfriend coincidentally lives on nearby Bathurst Island. I have told my students that I am bringing them a real life Borneo 'headhunter' into class for show and tell. You must visit Peter at his authentic Sarawak bar named Ruaikitai Tribal Café and you will meet folk full of information and good spirit. 'Ruaikitai' is Iban for 'our living room', and it is near where all the funky bars are in Kuching, some are visually wicked with stepping stones over fish ponds within steamy courtyards, and Peter loves nothing more than offering you a free rice wine on arrival; a hug when you depart.

It might seem hypercritical of me sharing this information with you all, but I only write for the those with imaginations and goodwill. "So let's hope Sarawak and its wonderful Kuching remains the beautiful, friendly place, never to evolve into another Bali."

"Buy the bush and save it"

say Rainforest Rescuers



text

by Michael Snedic

Rainforest Rescue, a not-for-profit organisation, is pleased to announce the purchase of its ninth rainforest property in the Daintree region, north-east Queensland. Thanks to donations from members of the public, businesses and organisations, another piece of tropical rainforest has been saved from human settlement.

Most people believe that due to its National Park status and World Heritage Listing, that the Daintree is fully protected. Unfortunately, this just isn't the case. In the 1980's, with the assistance of the Joh Bjelke-Petersen government, a rural residential development comprising more than 1,100 private blocks was established over much of the Daintree lowland rainforest. For this reason the majority of the priceless ancient lowland rainforest area was never listed as World Heritage.

The vast majority of rainforest blocks have been already privately purchased for either investment or residential/retirement purposes. Whilst some have been cleared, partly cleared or selectively logged, the majority are covered by rainforest, providing essential habitat to the endangered Cassowary. There are only around 1000 of this species left in the wild.

The new award-winning Douglas Shire Planning Scheme has done much to take the pressure off a number, but by no means all, sub-divided residential areas, by declaring a number as Rainforest Conservation Precincts. This scheme also places no new development

restrictions on around 180 residential blocks of Daintree lowland rainforest, lying south of the Alexandra Range but still north of the Daintree River.

The new property purchased is a rectangular block of 2.12 hectares (5.29 acres) and located in a rainforest residential precinct. It lies near the upper end of a street known as Camelot Close, only one block away from the national park. According to the Vegetation Management Act 1999, the main ecosystem within this block is listed as "of concern", with a nearby area listed as "endangered".

Fortunately, much of the rainforest within this property is still intact and the area has never been significantly logged. There are a number of palms species growing on it, including Fan, Alexander and Black palms as well as many large, established rainforest trees. One of the other great features of this property is a beautiful creek, known as Tribulation Creek, that goes right through the middle of it.

Due to the limited ability of the government schemes to adequately protect the Daintree, Rainforest Rescue has set its aim

on buying those blocks of freehold Daintree rainforest having the highest conservation values, but where development is still permitted. The land is bought and placed in purposely created and gazetted Nature Refuges. With development continuing every year, the race is on to save the Daintree. With the support of everyday Queenslanders, Rainforest Rescue has now contributed to the purchase of nine properties in the Daintree and Rainforest Rescuers are now looking forward to purchasing a tenth property.

Donations from the public are essential in helping to buy back more rainforest blocks and protecting them forever. To contribute to the 'Daintree Buy Back and Protect Forever Project' with your tax-deductible donation, please contact Rainforest Rescue on 1300 763 611 or visit the Rainforest Rescue website at www.rainforestrescue.org.au Alternatively, you can send a cheque or money order made out to Rainforest Rescue, PO Box 1511 Toowong, Queensland 4066.

Michael Snedic is freelance writer and nature photographer www.michaelsnedic.com

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Homeopathics etc

by Tarang Bates

Not long ago we had fires to the left of us, fires to the right. Smoke billowing over the top of the ridge, behind our homes.

The last time that happened, we were in trouble and the fire went on for many days and nights. Trying to get local information, about where the fire is and which way it's headed, is very difficult, but it is crucial information. Ringing 000 is a last resort, obviously, because it is not an emergency, yet.

We don't live in neat rows of houses and roads, and they ask questions geared, for what seems like flat open country. How far away is the fire, what road is it near, can you see the flames? Well no, we can't see the flames, if we could, it would be on top of us.

We are fairly well prepared, but there is always last minute preparation. We don't have town water and aren't entitled to rain water tank rebates, which is absurd.

You would think, living in the hills and being subjected to bush fires, would be a good enough reason to extend the subsidy, it can be a matter of life and property danger.

So we go from this, to that - pouring rain, streams and tanks overflowing, gardens green and smiling.

The Saturday Rainbow Lane markets are cruising along. A definitive Nimbin delight, with no medieval diseases in sight. We will have faith and we hope faith will be here, even if she has been out dancing all night.

In the meantime we'll hang a string of sarongs, a flutter of windswept colour. The Scaly Breasted parrots are happy and the majestic Nimbin Rocks bask in the early morning rays. Dog on a lead takes man for a drag, while the saxophone stirs the air.

The weather is warming and everyone is stirring



from their long winter rest. This month, the remedies relate to snake bites.

LACHESIS

is made from snake venom and is a handy remedy to carry, if you regularly go bush. In case of a bite, the remedy should be used every 10 minutes, while help is being found, or the person is taken to the hospital.

THUJA

is useful in the weeks after the bite, for any residual effects the person may feel from the bite, as well as the treatment with anti-venom. Also useful in case of reaction to vaccination.

APIS

is one of the remedies to keep in mind for adverse reactions to the antivenom, particularly when there is swelling of the airways and rashes.

I have heard recently of a few instances where a young roughscale has been mistaken for a young python, with similar markings. The effect of the bites are vastly different.

The remedies here are used in a first aid context. They are available from Nimbin Homeopathics, contact Tarang on 02 6689-1452, or email tarangbates@yahoo.com.au



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Voiceless animals, now humans too

Australian taxpayers may be forced to foot the bill for legal action taken against those that speak out against animal suffering and other public interest matters, under legislation introduced to Federal Parliament late last month.

The proposed amendments to the Trade Practices Act, which slipped through under the guise of small business reforms, empower Australia's peak consumer protection body, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), to take representative action against groups that call for consumers not to buy products on ethical grounds.

Earlier this year, the Federal Treasurer, the Hon. Peter Costello MP, foreshadowed the changes, saying they were aimed at protecting Australian farmers who may be targeted by animal protection groups that call for boycotts. However groups that stand to be affected by the Bill, such as the leading animal protection

group Voiceless, view the new law as a misuse of legislative power and say that it may have a chilling effect on freedom of speech.

Voiceless's director, Brian Sherman AM, said, "It is extremely worrying that in a liberal democratic society like ours, nonprofit organisations can no longer feel safe from prosecution, when engaging in awareness raising campaigns. This new law appears to be a political exercise designed to reinforce the relationship that the Australian Government has with rural industries, at the expense of animal welfare and the public interest".

"Staggering numbers of animals in Australia today are enduring institutionalised suffering in factory farms. Australians have the right to be informed about these issues and to exercise their consumer choices accordingly," he said.

Expanding on the legal implications of the Bill, Voiceless's corporate counsel, Katrina Sharman said, "This

Bill is concerning because the ACCC is intended to be Australia's independent consumer protection watchdog. Under this new law, community groups who seek to educate the public about ethical issues such as the suffering of animals, may be reluctant to speak out, or may be deterred from doing so because of the need to first obtain costly legal advice.

"This means that the ACCC, rather than acting as an agency that enhances consumer protection, may actually be wielded as a political weapon to prevent the flow of information to consumers and to stifle public debate."

The Bill has been referred to the Senate Economics Committee for inquiry and report next month.

For further information please visit <www.voiceless.org.au>

Voiceless promotes respect and compassion for animals, increases awareness of the conditions in which they live, and takes action to protect animals from suffering.

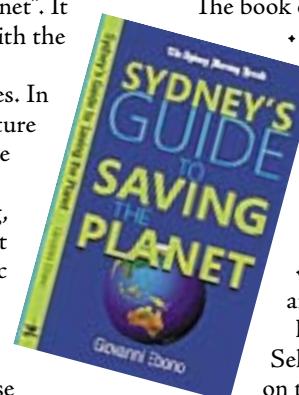
What's so bad about unnecessary packaging?

Greens candidate for Richmond, Giovanni Ebono has released his latest book "Sydney's Guide to Saving the Planet". It is published by Woodslane Press in conjunction with the Sydney Morning Herald.

The book contains 101 tips and six major articles. In his foreword, Professor Ian Lowe writes, "The future is not somewhere we are going, it is somewhere we are creating."

One tip Giovanni (Joe) gives involves packaging, which is an enormous imposition on the planet. It consumes irreplaceable fossil fuels to make plastic and trees to make paper. It's mostly used once and discarded, using more energy.

"I buy goods in simple packaging, and let the retailer know that I chose particular items because of the packaging," Joe explained. "For the planet's sake we have



to minimise packaging, especially disposable stuff."

The book outlines several problems with packaging:

- Packaging is waste. Its original function was to make products easy (and hygienic) to handle. Often, though, its purpose is to make products more attractive or look bigger.
- Packaged food is not fresh, is highly processed, and contains corn, soy meal and canola oil. These ingredients are grown on a large-scale and are often genetically modified.
- Packaged food also tends to contain more salt and sugar and other preservatives.

Buying fresh food avoids all these problems. Select brands that use little packaging to cut down on the resources you consume and the waste you produce, and you'll be using healthier ingredients.

Rural Lands Protection Boards Major issues remain unresolved in Bull report

The Commonsense Lands Group hears complaints – endlessly – about Rural Lands Protection (RLP) Boards from farmers all round NSW, but most from those east of the Great Dividing Range.

These complaints formed the basis for the group's response to Richard Bull's recently released report to the Minister for Primary Industries about changing the RLP Rating System.

Spokesperson for the group, Laurie Stubbs believes it is time to change the name of the Act to "Animal disease early warning system" since that is its primary function.

"If mad cow, or foot and mouth hit NSW, the big losers would be the meat eating public – no beef or lamb in the shops for months – and the animal production industry. Thus, users of the early warning system are the general public and animal farmers and they should be paying for the system," he said.

Mr Stubbs estimated that between 40% and 50% of today's RLP ratepayers

are not focused on animal industries. Total ratepayers stands at around 140,000, and of the total 70,000 minimum ratepayers (m/r's), more than 40,000 are east of the Great Dividing Range, in 9 Boards.

Most of these are lifestyle blocks for escapees from cities. The remainder, some 30,000, are spread over 39 Boards. "Probably half of all minimum ratepayers have no connection with animal industries," he said.

He cited Tweed/Lismore as a typical case, where 60% of rates come from the 6,000 minimum ratepayers (of a total 7500 ratepayers), at least half of whom have no connection to animal farming. He also pointed out the corollary: many of the big properties out west that are full-rate payers are focused on cropping.

Mr Stubbs gave a bleak assessment of the role of the RLP Boards. "When you check the Act, there's more than enough authority to provide valuable services (S.42) as well as do the regulating that's needed. So those few Boards,

like Yass and Goulburn, that have set out to provide useful services for their ratepayers are well respected. The remaining boards are mostly stuck in a 'regulator outlook', and so get to be widely resisted."

He maintained this has led to some Boards doing a poor job with pest animals, particularly east of the divide where city returnees have left behind domestic animals such as dogs. "Feral cats are ignored because they don't attack sheep or cattle," he said.

"It's our view that if a poll were held today asking ratepayers about the need for the Board system, it would get big 'NO' – except of course for the 1000 or so farmers who are in, or on the fringes of the RLP bureaucracy."

Except also, for those animal farmers who realise that the RLP rates subsidise the industry's need for the early warning system on animal disease.

The Commonsense Lands Group can be contacted by email at <chendana@bigpond.com>

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Focus on children at Kyogle Library

Fast Facts

Did you know in 2006/2007 Kyogle library issued a massive 48,359 items? And did you know the Regional Library now has a whopping 54,979 items available for borrowing! Why not add to our issue statistics and borrow some of our 4,102 new items of stock today!!

Children's Book Week

Howdy partners! It was Children's Book Week or CBW 20–24th August 2007. Kyogle library's children's area was transformed into a scene from the wild, Wild West with this year's theme "Rediscovered" and a little help from local sponsors "B & B Produce" and "Eden Country" who very generously supplied the necessary rural display items.

A total of 104 children visited Kyogle library to help celebrate CBW with groups including Kyogle after School Care, Kyogle Pre-school, Kyogle Early Learning



Pictured during Children's Book Week are kids from the Kyogle After School Care group and Kyogle Pre-school.

Centre, Rainbow Ridge Steiner School and a Home school group.

Everyone had a rip-roaring wild west time during CBW with each little partner receiving a wild west colour-in or puzzle and what every cowhand needs - chocolate bullets.

Child Protection Week

Launch

Kyogle library will be hosting a launch and poster/information display for the Kyogle Domestic Violence Committee to raise awareness for Child Protection Week 2007, on Wednesday 5th September

2007, 10am for 10.30am start through to noon. Everyone is welcome, and it's free.

Thomas George MP will launch the event which will include the poster/information display, KRINKL puppet theatre's performance "Suitcase" and various speakers on the day.

There are benefits to being over 55

by Lisa Yeates

That's right, anyone who has reached the milestone of 55, even if you are employed, but earning less than \$800 per week (which means you are a low income earner, Ha Ha Ha).

Centrelink seems to expect you to intuit this as they don't actually tell you. It seems you must be the one to apply. So

go ask them for the application forms.

I was amazed, when I went to pay my rego, it was free and I got a 5 year licence for nothing as well; a saving of \$400. The Concession Card gives you two free return train trips, free reading glasses every two years, Land Rates rebates, phone and power bill concessions and much, much more.

Give it a go, you've nothing to lose and lots to gain.

Cook's corner

by Carolyne

Come on all you guys, with spring here and the wonderful warm weather, it is time to pull the "Barbie" out of the garage, give it a good scrub down with vinegar and hot water, fire it up and show the family or friends what great cooks you are, not to mention giving the girls a day off, OK we won't mention that !!!

This month I am giving you a complete meal just in case you want to celebrate something.

Recipes of the Month

Balsamic Mushrooms with Lamb and Tomato

Ingredients

1/3 cup olive oil
1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
2 garlic cloves crushed
8 small flat mushrooms
8 lamb cutlets
3 medium vine ripened tomatoes
thickly sliced
1 bunch rocket trimmed



Method

Combine oil balsamic vinegar and garlic in a small jug. Season with salt and pepper.

Remove mushroom stems and place stem side up in a large shallow dish. Drizzle balsamic mixture over mushrooms, set aside for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile preheat a greased barbecue plate on medium high heat. Season lamb with salt and pepper.

Barbecue lamb for 2-3 minutes each side (for medium rare). Transfer to a plate, cover with foil and set aside to rest. Barbecue mushrooms basting with remaining balsamic mixture for 4 to 5

minute and tomatoes for one minute on each side until just tender.

Arrange rocket, mushrooms, tomatoes and lamb on plates and serve.

Chocolate Mousse

Ingredients

125g cream cheese
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
250g Cadbury premium dark cooking chocolate
600ml thickened cream, lightly whipped

Method

Beat cream cheese, egg and sugar together until smooth.

Break chocolate into small pieces, melt over a saucepan of hot water, add the melted chocolate to the cream cheese mixture and stir through until well combined. Chill until required, spoon into glass bowls top with grated chocolate and serve.

For information or help with these recipes contact me at the Retro Cafe on 6689-0590.

Natural Foot Care for Diabetics

by Cheryl Beasley

It's very important for diabetics to keep their feet in healthy condition.

Because of the disease, damage can be caused to blood vessels and nerves and then circulation can be impaired and infections can form on the feet, without the person realising. This can ultimately cause major complications and even amputation.

Diabetes also impairs the immune system so they are more prone to infection. Those who suffer from the disease should have regular foot examinations by their doctor and should know whether or not they have nerve damage.

To prevent and check whether there is injury to the feet you should get into a routine of checking and caring for your feet, this is especially important if you already have nerve or blood vessel damage or current foot problems.

Here are twenty important natural tips for keeping your feet healthy:

1. Inspect your feet thoroughly every day.
 2. Clean your feet daily in lukewarm water (test this with your hands) with a natural soap, dry them thoroughly to prevent fungal infection.
 3. Protect your feet constantly by wearing well fitted, comfortable but sturdy shoes.
 4. Never walk around without some kind of footwear to protect your feet.
 5. Clean, dry cotton or wool socks are also a good way to protect your feet from pressure points and bacteria caused by sweat.
 6. Always apply a little amount of a natural foot cream that contains antibacterial agents to the soles of your feet after bathing, avoiding the skin between the toes. Diabetics can find that the skin on their feet dries and cracks easily which can potentially leave them open to infection.
 7. When cutting toenails always soak the feet in a good foot soak that has antibacterial properties in it to soften the nails and cleanse away any bacteria.
 8. Using a gentle natural foot scrub can smooth any small rough areas before they become a problem.
 9. Exercise promotes good circulation so walk daily and don't sit in one spot for too long. An easy exercise is to make circle with your feet ten times in each direction, keeping your leg as still as possible.
 10. Sitting with your feet elevated for 10 minutes will also help your circulation.
 11. Regularly massage your feet, this will also stimulate the circulation.
 12. If you do notice a sore or any type of infection, see your doctor for treatment.
 13. Stop smoking. It's awful for the circulation and your health generally.
 14. Have any bunions and corns removed by a professional to avoid infection.
 15. Regularly clean the shower with a natural cleaner and spray a little diluted tea tree oil around the drain.
 16. To keep your feet warm in bed wear loose, comfortable cotton or wool socks.
 17. Always make sure your feet are kept at a comfortable temperature, avoiding cold feet.
 18. If you have any pain in your feet see a podiatrist or your doctor immediately.
 19. Use foot powder.
 20. Follow a healthy diet and lifestyle; this will help prevent problems and complications.
- Please visit us at <http://www.lanab.com.au> for further advice and a healing range of natural skin care products.



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