



THE NIMBIN GOOD TIMES

Bigger and better, and **FREE**

Cannabis
Sativa Edition

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MardiGrass a hoot again, despite police

Organisers have hailed Nimbin's 17th MardiGrass as the biggest ever, with very few problems.

The large police presence did little to dampen the enthusiasm of the crowd, estimated at 15,000.

But MardiGrass organisers said the police were not friendly to them with one volunteer saying, "They were constantly walking through, with very few of them showing any manners or respect."

But for most visitors, the exceptional entertainment from visiting Japanese band Dachambo was a highlight, along with numerous other excellent acts.

The visiting medicinal cannabis growers and experts opened many people's minds to how far behind Australia is on cannabis law reform. Licensed growers, sellers and users of medical cannabis told the audience how their governments allow the distribution of medical cannabis.

Michael John from Faifax, an alternative community town of around 7,000 outside San

Francisco, told MardiGrass visitors he works for a dispensary that sells about 10 kilos of top grade medicinal pot, every day.

"They thought our psychosis and 'strong skunk' fears in Australia were laughable," said Michael Balderstone, President of the HEMP Embassy, which hosts the event.

Mat Beren from Canada, who owns a consulting and research company that helps individuals with the production of their medicinal crops said, "Strong pot is healthier and not to be feared, the less people have to smoke to get the desired effect, the better."

Sita von Windheim, a Canadian medical pot licence holder and ex-Amsterdam Cafe owner, said psychosis propaganda doesn't get anywhere in Canada. "Too many parents have had their own experience with pot and would rather their children smoked than drink alcohol or use other more unpredictable and dangerous drugs."



Photo: Greg Soward

"Warnings about mental health problems from pot is another tool governments use to try and frighten parents to keep the drug

war going."

Michael Balderstone said, "As far as we are concerned it was the best and biggest MardiGrass we've

had since 1996, and we'd especially like to thank the NSW police for making us politically relevant again, and raising our numbers."

Gen Y at forefront of drug law reform resurgence



Photo: Sue Stock

by Bob Dooley

Judging by this year's Mardi Grass, there has been a significant generation change in the cannabis law reform movement.

There was a defining moment, just before the parade began on Sunday afternoon, where Cullen Street was lined six-deep with Generation Y – well-heeled, well-informed and well behaved – waiting with an expectant hush that was almost reverential. The mood was palpable.

They weren't there to party, they displayed none of the clothing or accoutrements of a stereotypical drug user; they were there simply with a quiet determination to bring about a change in the legal status of cannabis.

And determined they certainly were, having heard the police warnings in the media; having been breath-tested, drug-swabbed and subjected

to car searches on the way here; then having their bags and purses searched at random and being under constant surveillance on the street and in their campsites – still they came, and stayed, in their thousands.

If seasoned observers found the parade rather samey and old hat, with no floats and little creativity, it didn't worry Generation Y. They followed the police horses down to Peace Park for the speeches, acknowledging each pro-cannabis speaker with thunderous applause.

The effects of this new demographic will be far-reaching. Encouraged by international progress towards legalising medical cannabis, and frustrated by the mish-mash of Australian state laws, these young people have the determination, energy and longevity to continue the struggle for rational and compassionate drug law reform.

After all, they work, they smoke and they vote.

**MARDI
GRASS
PICTORIAL
LIFTOUT
INSIDE**



Alphadale: p. 6



Lake Cowal: p. 17



El Salvador: p. 25



Gaza Strip: p. 26