



THE NIMBIN GOODTIMES

Citizen journalism, for FREE

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Don't just lock it, rock it!

The Lock the Gate Alliance National Week of Action kicks off at Murwillumbah on Saturday 13th October with a rally and concert entitled Rock the Gate – Northern Rivers.

The event protesting coal and coal seam gas mining will feature high profile speakers, (not including national broadcaster Alan Jones), and a march through the Murwillumbah CBD at noon.

A concert will follow from 1pm, starting to the rousing drum beats of the Samba Blistas. Performers appearing include Kerriane Cox, James T from Canned Heat, Natalie Pa'apa'a from Blue King Brown and the Round Mountain Girls.

The Week of Action has been called to give local communities a chance to stand up against the rapid expansion of coal and coal seam gas activities – and "have a bit of fun at the same time", say organisers.

Activities are scheduled across the nation, and throughout the Northern Rivers, in the following week.

"Recent announcements by the NSW state government do not give communities any confidence that they are actually listening to the people they



Protest rally in Tyalgum, the first community in the Tweed to go gasfield-free.

supposedly represent," said Michael McNamara, from Lock the Gate – Tweed.

"Communities all over the Northern Rivers are saying they want to be Gasfield Free with the average level of support running at 97%.

"In Lismore recently a poll conducted in conjunction with the local council elections returned a resounding 87% opposition to coal seam gas mining by local residents.

"This was a mammoth result with over 25,000 of an estimated 30,000 registered voters choosing to vote in the optional poll.

"In the Tweed Shire, we have communities covering half the land area of the Shire and all of the Arrow exploration licence within the shire (PEL445) declared Gasfield Free."

The state government recently announced the renewal or extension of 22 exploration licences, and the granting of a production licence in the Casino area with no community consultation.

"They have also removed the moratorium on hydraulic fracturing, or fracking," Mr McNamara said.

"The state government doesn't seem to have taken into account the numerous breaches of licence conditions that have occurred or the expressed wishes of local

communities.

"The message the state government is sending to gas companies is that they can do what they like so long as the dollars roll in."

He says the "gateway" process the government has announced for high value agricultural land is focused on how to enable mining, rather than on how to protect the land.

"They propose to appoint a Land and Water Commissioner who will have no powers to deny consent. He or she will only be able to advise landholders and the government.

"We must protect our communities. We must protect our water catchments. Our local industries depend on the health of both."

Video messages will be beamed onto a large screen next to the stage. Recently retired Greens Senator Bob Brown and musicians Xavier Rudd, Leo Sayer and John Butler will also send video messages of support.

People attending will be able to record their own video message of support at an interactive booth in the showground arena, and these will be beamed to the large screen during the day.

More information from: lockthegate.tweed@gmail.com or rainbowregiongigs@gmail.com



Spring Arts on show

Nimbin's Spring Arts Exhibition has proved once again to be a hugely popular attraction for visitors during the school holiday period.

The exhibition, in the School of Arts Hall until Sunday 7th October, features the work of dozens of excellent artists from around the Rainbow Region, and has attracted thousands of viewers.

Hall committee president David Hallett said, "On one day alone, on the long weekend, 500 visitors attended the exhibition, and there have been an incredible number of votes this year for the People's Choice award.

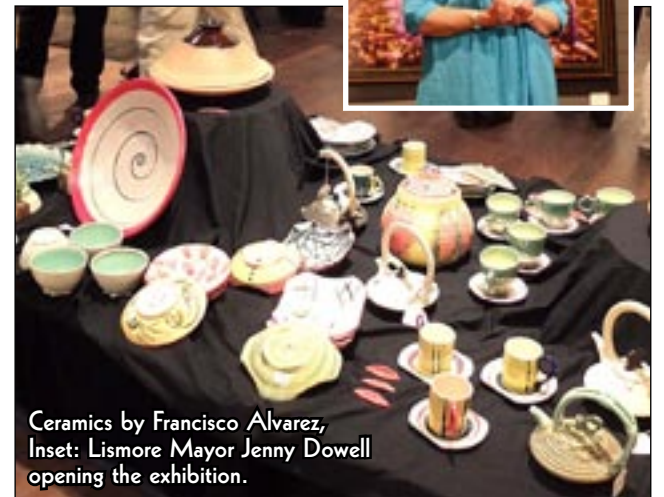
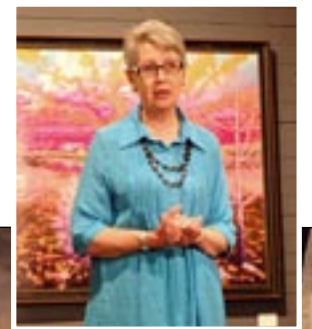
Many visitors liked what they saw so much, they had to take some art home with them, and the walls have become speckled with the red

dots indicating sales.

"It is very pleasing to see various artwork purchased from a wide range of the fine artists, designers, photographers and craftworkers featured in the exhibition," David said.

Nimbin artist Mac McMahon was delighted with the response to his work on show. "I've sold three works so far," he said, describing the income as "very handy."

Commissions on sales during the two-week exhibition will assist in the maintenance of the 108-year old hall.



Ceramics by Francisco Alvarez, Inset: Lismore Mayor Jenny Dowell opening the exhibition.



Protest outside the Ballina office of Don Page MP, Minister for the North Coast.

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