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THE NIMBIN GOODTIMES

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Strangler Fig Edition

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Ban the bag during Plastic Free July

Lismore City Council is challenging shoppers to choose to reuse and say no to plastic bags for the month of July – and beyond.

The mayor officially launched Council's Plastic Free July campaign on 1st July in the Lismore CBD.

The nationwide campaign is part of a push to eliminate single-use plastic bags and instead encourage Australians to carry their shopping in reusable bags.

Australians use up to an estimated four billion light-weight plastic bags a year, with an estimated 50 million plastic bags ending up as litter in the environment each year.

"Plastic is designed to last forever, yet every day we use it for disposable items that last a few minutes, and then throw it away," Council's Waste Education Officer Barbara Jensen said.

"Most plastic goes to landfill, some is recycled and much ends up in the environment. The Plastic Free July campaign claims that by 2050 there will be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans.

"That is a really scary statistic, and we can start addressing the problem by doing something about plastic bag use within our own community.

"Being part of the solution is easy and just takes a little bit of planning. Once you start saying no to plastic bags and taking your reusable shopping bags with you, it soon becomes second nature."

Participating local businesses have been provided with reusable shopping bags to give away during July, featuring designs by the two winners of Council's Reusable Bag Design Competition.

South Australia, Tasmania, Northern Territory and the ACT have already banned the bag, with Queensland joining them from July 2018. A recent Boomerang Alliance poll showed 63% of NSW residents support a plastic bag ban.

NSW Greens Marine spokesperson Justin Field MLC said, "The NSW Government is lagging behind other states and territories in taking action on plastic pollution and banning single-use plastic bags.

"It's time the Berejiklian Government backed the community and rapidly phased out single-use plastic bags and other single-use plastics. Every day we delay is a missed opportunity for reducing our pollution, protecting marine life and creating a healthier future for NSW," he said.

For more information on the Plastic Free July campaign, including tips and hints for living plastic free, visit: www.plasticfreejuly.org



Council's waste education officer Barbara Jensen with some of the colourful new reusable bags council will be distributing during Plastic Free July that feature designs by local artists.

A few surprising statistics from the organisers of Plastic Free July

- Every bit of plastic ever made still exists in the world;
- In the first 10 years of this century, the world has produced more plastic than the entire 1900s;
- Plastic ends up in waterways and the ocean – scientists predict there will be more tonnes of plastic than tonnes of fish by 2050;
- Plastic manufacturing consumes 6% of the world's fossil fuels.

Consumers should also take a keep cup to the café, use refillable containers and avoid takeaway utensils.

George calls it a day



Lismore MP Thomas George has announced that he will retire from the NSW Parliament at the next election in March 2019. Mr George was first elected in 1999 and said it had been an honour and a privilege to serve the people of the Lismore electorate since 1999.

Mr George said that the Lismore Base Hospital redevelopment was one of the biggest projects he'd been able to deliver for the people of Lismore, but that looking after smaller communities who are often unnoticed was just as important to him.

Rarely seen in Nimbin, however, Mr George has been unapologetic for his staunch 'war on drugs' rhetoric. Mr George only very narrowly defeated rival Greens candidate Adam Guise at the last state election and it will be interesting to see if the Nationals can retain the seat in 2019 without him, or whether it will turn Green or Labor.



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