

Grapevine Café opens its doors

It's go, go, go at Nimbin Organics as business owners David Sykes and Anna King spread their wings, and their operation, to the vacant premises next door.

The cafe closed in December last year and David and Anna were quick to pounce when the shop space became available.

"For travellers coming to an alternative culture, it's odd that there hasn't been a cafe serving organic food," said Anna. Under the management of Ashlee Jones, that is about to change.

The Grapevine, as the new vegetarian cafe will be known, opens its doors (if all goes according to plan) on Friday, February 4 – kicking off with an opening soiree with snacks and drinks for the community at 4pm.

"Opening a cafe is something we've been wanting to do for a long time," said David. "People have been saying to us we should do it, or open a deck at the back (of Nimbin Organics). Everyone wants a sit-down meal."

The Grapevine is a meat-free environment, with vegan and gluten-free options as part of the main menu. There will be a cosy corner with two couches, a communal table of camphor laurel, and six tables on the pavement outside.

David and Anna have run Nimbin Organics for six years, and say they are pleased to be able to bring some employment opportunities to town with their new venture; the equivalent of two-and-a-half full-time jobs (or five part-time ones) will be created.

"There's been a lot of support from the local community," said David. "People have been



David and Anna outside Nimbin Organics – starting an exciting new venture.



Local carpenter Tien Lee helps with the fit-out of The Grape Vine.

dropping in and helping." The painted grapevine theme that adorns Nimbin Organics will be extended to the new cafe by local artist Tanya Hall.

Rural ratepayers tackle LEP

by Greg Bennett

Want to have your say in local government? Tired of not receiving accurate information about issues that may affect your livelihood? Want to be part of a group that represents your views and concerns?

In December 2010, the Rural Ratepayers Association of Lismore, Incorporated (RRALI) was formed to give rural ratepayers a voice in local government matters.

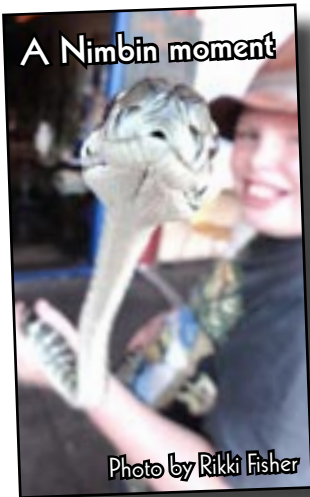
The most pressing issue is to address the Draft LEP2010. RRALI is concerned that

rural landholders have not been made aware of this plan and its ramifications:

- Property is being rezoned under the Draft LEP
- One third of the Local Government Area under the Draft LEP will have an environmental zone imposed on it
- The vast majority of ratepayers were not notified of the proposed changes. RRALI intends to cover all rural issues, including the state of local roads, the lack of maintenance to road-verge vegetation and drainage, and

services to properties. The group aims to form a united and cohesive front on landholder issues when dealing with any and all levels of government.

The group can be contacted by calling 0404 291 920 or by email at rrali@macadamias.biz



"Tom was walking around with his pet 'snape', to the delight of the locals and tourists alike."

Skate park progresses



Big Snake trail under construction at the Nimbin Skate Park. Work is now scheduled to be finished by the end of February, weather permitting.

Benefit night brings aid for Kyle

by Biko

Organisers of the Saturday Benefit Night For Kyle would like to thank the Nimbin Community for their wonderful support of this event that saw us raise a little over \$2000 for Kyle.

Kyle is the grandson of local artist Liz Johnson. Kyle was badly burned in an electrical accident in Bundaberg during the recent flooding in Queensland.

He suffered third-degree burns to more than 50 per cent of his body and has many months of intensive treatment and physiotherapy ahead of him. He also faces on-going, longer-term treatment, which is causing his family financial stress.

Steve Didge started the night with a didgeridoo, storytelling and singing performance, followed with a fine poem from a member of Kyle's visiting family. There were fine performances from locals Kesia, Doug and Biskit, Healing Earth, and a wonderful set from local middle eastern musicians Steve (oud) and Ren (tabla), with the Tribal Monsoon and Nomad dancers.

Liz Johnson spoke briefly about her grandson and



gave thanks to the Nimbin community. Lorna Laurie, as a representative of the Bungalung people, gave a very moving welcome to country where she reminded us that we are all one family under our skins.

A charity auction was held, with Bob Tissot making a fine auctioneer, and Klara and the team did a great job raffling items. The night finished with a high energy set of classic rock and roll from Blue Mango that had everyone up for a final boogie.

Thanks to all those who volunteered their time and energy to make this event happen and all the local businesses and individuals who contributed to the auction, raffles and food table. Thanks also to those who attended and gave so



Kyle Hedley

generously on the day. For those who would still like to contribute, contact Raine on 0427-336-910. All funds raised go into a trust fund that she will administer for Kyle's medical expenses. Thanks to Nimbin, the family can now cover the cost of a burn suit – and every bit helps.

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Nimbin and Districts

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Nationals MP wants to log National Parks

By Susan Stock

Forests NSW has breached licence conditions for Endangered Ecological Communities at Doubleduke State Forest.

Doubleduke, near Coraki, is classified as a sub-tropical coastal floodplain forest of red mahogany, forest red gum, pink bloodwood, swamp turpentine and grey ironbark. It also contains smaller tree species listed as endangered, as well as fern species.

The NSW Government has failed to act on these breaches in the past year, which indicates that compliance has not been taken seriously. A Liberal-National Party Coalition government could be worse, if Nationals member for Clarence, Steve Cansdell, has his way.

The North East Forest Alliance (NEFA) says Cansdell recognises that over-cutting of local forests in order to satisfy over-allocation of resources in Wood Supply Agreements has occurred – but the alliance is worried about his call to open national parks to logging.

NEFA spokesperson Dailan Pugh said NEFA is seeking an assurance from the Liberal-National coalition that it would not open up National Parks for logging.



Sundew plants

“We are seeking an unequivocal assurance from the Liberal-National Party that they will not open up National Parks for logging or reduce logging prescriptions designed to minimise impacts of logging operations on threatened species and water quality,” he said.

Recently, local Greens candidates Cate Faehrmann, Jan Barham, Andrea Vickers, Janet Cavanaugh and myself joined conservationists from the North East Forest Alliance to inspect the damage at Double Duke.

There has been collateral damage to other trees and shrubs when trees have been (illegally) logged with heavy equipment. NEFA identified that in compartment 145, 46 species were logged in

the Endangered Ecological Community (EEC), and 1387 other trees and shrubs had been bulldozed out of the ground, trampled by machinery or had trees dropped on them.

These activities in the EEC have exposed Forests NSW to a maximum fine of at least \$16,203,000 – if it is ever prosecuted. Endangered Ecological Communities are excluded from Forests NSW’s licence and it is an offence to pick or harm endangered ecological communities.

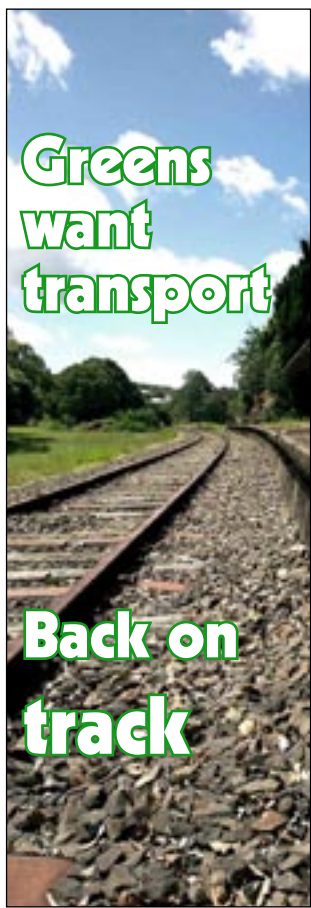
We saw areas that were clear-felled. We saw

areas of great destruction showing little respect for the ‘ecologically endangered community’. We sadly saw evidence of scratch marks from Yellow Bellied Gliders on trees on the ground.

Exclusion zones should be marked off and there was little evidence of this, except in a desultory fashion along the track. Machinery was driven across a wetland area with endangered flora, at two localities, for no apparent reason other than to get to the other side. Trees were also dropped into this wetland. There is supposed to be a 10-metre buffer zone around these wetlands.

Waste material was left behind, not five metres away from other trees as required by law. All this waste is burnt and other trees would likely get burnt. One red mahogany in danger was habitat to small bats and squirrel gliders. This was another breach of the Threatened Species Conservation Act.

It is obvious from the inspection that we did that our forests are not in safe hands. Please contact your local National Party MPs (Thomas George in Lismore, Don Page in Ballina, Geoff Provest in Tweed) and ask them their position on logging in national parks.



The Greens will this week meet with local transport campaigners to renew their call for the reopening of the Casino-Murwillumbah railway and its connection to Coolangatta Airport.

David Shoebridge, Greens NSW Upper House MLC, and Susan Stock, Greens Candidate for Lismore will be speaking at the meeting at Lismore Railway Station this Friday, February 4, from 10am.

Susan said the reopening

of the rail line was more important than ever. “As petrol prices inevitably rise as Peak Oil approaches, we need to provide good public transport links particularly for the elderly, the young and the less well-off in our community, and to service our region’s tourism industry,” she said.

“A rail link to the Gold Coast is widely supported in the community and is a vital infrastructure project for the Northern Rivers, with many benefits socially, economically and environmentally.”

The Greens candidate for Clarence, Janet Cavanaugh, says the lack of a rail service has limited transport options in the region.

“The recent school holidays have reminded residents of Casino just how bad public transport is,” Janet said.

“Throughout the school holidays, Kirklands does not run a morning commuter bus service between Casino and Lismore, and it is almost impossible to use public transport to go to the beach for the day in summer.

“The earliest bus arrives from Casino in Lismore at 10:15am, and the only morning bus service to Ballina leaves Lismore at 10:15am. A commuter rail service, running throughout the year, could fill these gaps and provide a direct service from Casino to Byron Bay.”

GoodTimes girl Sue stands for Greens

Nimbin GoodTimes assistant editor Susan Stock has been selected as Greens candidate for the state seat of Lismore.

The seat reaches north of Murwillumbah to the Queensland border, taking in Lismore and Kyogle and stretching west to Tabulam and Drake. It is currently held by the National Party’s Thomas George.

Sue believes that climate change is the central issue in this election.

“It’s the biggest challenge of all,” she said. “We must all work together towards reducing our carbon emissions to avoid more

extreme weather events and to pass on a safe climate to our children.

“Urgent action on reducing carbon emissions drastically is cheaper than delaying action and will provide green jobs for the future.”

Sue is campaigning for the increased use of renewable energy sources, and for an end to plans to build new coal-fired power stations in NSW. She also wants an end to coal mining in agricultural areas, a moratorium on coal seam gas exploration and is opposed to the privatisation of the electricity industry.

She is especially concerned at the exploration of coal seam gas in the Northern

Rivers and the danger to human health, rivers and aquifers from associated pollution.

Public transport is another of issue in her sights. “We need the Murwillumbah-Casino rail link brought back into operation as a priority, and we need to see more freight off the roads and onto rail.

“We live in one of the most beautiful parts of the world. I am passionate about the natural world and committed to environmental sustainability and to changing the ways in which we do things to make our region more resilient in the face of huge climate



Sue Stock at Mt Nardi

challenges.”

Other issues include: Supporting local government to put planning back in local hands, and repeal Part 3A of the NSW planning legislation which hands decision-making

on major projects to the State government rather than local councils and their communities. State government also needs to provide more secure financial support to local government;

as a former teacher, Susan is committed to increasing long-term investment in public schools and TAFEs; Public health facilities, including Lismore Base Hospital, also need increased investment upgrades.

Sue lives in the hills near World Heritage Mt Nardi and has been a member of Northern Rivers Greens since 2002. She was a local

government councillor in Sydney from 1990 to 1999.

She holds degrees in town planning, education, visual arts and librarianship. She has worked as a librarian at North Coast Institute of TAFE and has been a high school teacher-librarian in the Sydney and the Northern Rivers areas.

Meet your Greens

The Northern Rivers Greens are meeting in Nimbin this month.

The meeting will be held at Djanbung Gardens, Cecil Street, at 5.30 pm on Monday 14th February.

All interested visitors welcome.

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In your neighbourhood...

News from the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre



Nimbin Community Solar Farm Update

Unbelievable but TRUE! We can now report that all the arrays are fully installed and connected! You will soon see the signage going up at each site and the farm will soon be viewable live in real time via the web.

The whole farm will benefit from the NSW Solar Bonus Scheme as we got it all signed up and connected in time. Watch this space and our website www.nnic.org.au for further info. We will be holding an event to celebrate the considerable achievements of this project (in spite of more barriers than we could throw a stick at!) sometime in March.

Many thanks to Rainbow Power Co as well as our funding body, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Training for their tireless support, flexibility and for generally hanging in there!

And thanks too of course, to the Host organisations, Blue Knob Gallery, Nimbin Bowlo, Nimbin Community School, Nimbin School of Arts and the Nimbin Headers. Great job team!

Nimbin Food Security Project

Floods in Queensland and the damage caused to fruit, vegetable and grain crops highlight the importance of local food security. We're very excited about our Food Security Project, and its potential to bring together local food producers and consumers.

Our purpose built grain mill has been ordered from the manufacturers in Germany. The grain mill will help protect the local community from spikes in



40-panel solar array on the roof of the Nimbin Community School's property in Cullen Street

grain and flour prices on account of natural disasters and other events beyond our control.

Guy, our Food Security Project Coordinator, has started to pull together our Local Food Day planned for October. Anyone interested in contributing ideas for the day (food producers in particular) are encouraged to contact Guy at food@nnic.org.au

Aboriginal Support Worker

Some of our staff joined a sausage sizzle in Allsopp's Park recently to welcome Nimbin's new Aboriginal Aged Care Support Worker, Amber. Amber can be contacted on 6689-1799, or by calling into the Nimbin Aged Care building.

Social Inclusion Day 2011

NNIC is looking for interested people to join a subcommittee to help organise the Nimbin Social Inclusion Day event in 2011. Anyone interested in helping us build on the great success which was our 2010 Social Inclusion Day event should contact nimbinnic@yahoo.com.au or call in and leave your details at the front desk.

NNIC website

We're keen for the NNIC web site to become a hub for local information, and a resource for the Nimbin community. The site is updated weekly and we try and put up all the latest Nimbin goings-on.

We've made some recent improvements to the on-line Community Calendar, and the Car Pool Forum is now up and running.

If you are looking for more convenient travel options or to share the costs of your travel to and from Nimbin for work, you should check out the Car Pool Forum linked on our web page. It's free to register, so get on-line and check it out.

Desk Volunteers Needed

We're always looking for dedicated volunteers willing to commit to one full day per week as well as to attending bi-monthly staff meetings. People with administrative skills are preferred, but you definitely need good people and front of house skills. If you think you've got what it takes to be an NNIC volunteer please speak with Venessa, our Relief Volunteer Manager.

Izzi Goes to the Pub

It seems our newest staff member, Izzi (Rat Project Manager), is taking her community liaison role rather seriously and has even been spotted at the Pub!

Opening Hours

The Centrelink Agency is open 10am to 2.30pm, and the NNIC is open 10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. NNIC can be contacted on 6689-1692, or the Centrelink Agency on 6689-1965.

Brave Nimbin protesters fined



Five protesters from the Nimbin Environment Centre have been fined \$250 each for blocking a rail line in an action against global warming.

Sapote Hudd, Mahalia Jackson, Rebecca Johnson, Shanti Kenny and Alan Roberts appeared in the Muswellbrook magistrates' court on 31st January for blocking the rail line into Bayswater power station.

Lawyer Sue Higginson, of the Lismore Environmental Defenders Office, gave an eloquent defence of



the group's actions. The defendants faced fines of \$5,500, but Ms Higginson pushed for a lower penalty.

After deliberating, the magistrate fined the protesters \$250 each. "While this was on the

lower end of the scale, it still makes protecting the planet a criminal offence," said Mr Roberts.

Benny Zable pleaded not guilty to the charges. His case has been deferred until 3rd May.

Bullying in focus

On the Freedom from Bullying Day held recently in Lismore, Interrelate counselors and group facilitators Lane and Tondi presented two workshops to enhance well-being, self esteem and to build community resilience.

Bullying and harassment often occur on the grounds of difference – culture, gender, sexual orientation, race, age, ability or disability, body size or socio-economic status.

The workshop explored through experiential learning how it feels to be different, how to cope with difference and how to understand and respond to difference as a positive life experience.

Practical tips were provided, and strategies to stop bullying were presented.

Research suggests that



Lane, Tondi and Jenny Dowell at the Interrelate stall at the Freedom from Bullying Day in Lismore.

when schools are places where the basic human needs for support, respect and belonging are met, motivation for learning is fostered.

Interrelate is committed to

building resilience in children and helping shape the community into a partnership involving kids, parents and schools to embrace our diversities.

POSITION VACANT

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NNIC seeks a suitably qualified and experienced person to become our bookkeeper. The position involves managing the books including Payroll and Salary Sacrifice.

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Applicants MUST address the essential/desirable criteria as set out in the Job Kit, available from: Nimbin Neighbourhood and Info Centre at 71 Cullen Street, PO Box 20168, NIMBIN, nimbinnic@yahoo.com.au, (02) 6689 1692 from 10-00 am to 4-00 pm Monday to Friday.

Applications close: Friday 18th February 2011. Only those applications which address the selection criteria will be considered.

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Coal seam gas a hazardous venture

by Susan Stock

Mining on the Keerong floodplain by Arrow Energy began in April 2010, as reported in *Nimbin GoodTimes*, when Arrow conducted test drilling in the area without consulting local residents.

Arrow is wholly owned by Shell and PetroChina and is already one of the biggest companies in coal seam gas in Queensland. Arrow said the drilling was done to “meet activity requirements” on its mining lease – and that it was not planning on drilling in the near future.

Greens Upper House MLC Cate Faehrmann and I met with concerned residents of Keerrong last Friday to hear their particular concerns about coal seam gas mining.

Local resident Janine O’Brien said that she was skeptical about Arrow’s statement, as the company had spent so much money on an all-weather road and fencing and gates. Janine is part of the Keerrong Anti Gas Squad.

The effects of coal seam mining on water is the main concern for the residents.

They say coal seam gas mining is a very water-hungry process. In one mine near Gladstone, 90 million litres of waste water are created each day – water which is too toxic to be released into the environment.

Mining literature calls it “produced water”, which is pumped back underground where it remains unusable and forms a hazardous waste – with no guarantees that it doesn’t turn up downstream or pollute aquifers such as the Great Artesian Basin.

In Keerong, this poses risks for Rous Water – the water supplier for Lismore, Byron and Ballina.

Cate Faehrmann spoke and said that an independent inquiry is needed to decide whether mining companies can safely drill without putting water supplies at risk.

Cate is the NSW Greens’ mining spokesperson, and said that from the documents she had received it was clear that the State government did not fully understand how this new mining practice worked.

She said it appears the government was relying on the industry to decide what constitutes safe practice. Cate recognises that gas is a transitional fuel, with less carbon emissions than coal, but the Greens want a moratorium on drilling, and an inquiry on its social, environmental and agricultural impact.

Residents are still very concerned and upset about the issue. They have many concerns, including how waste water will be disposed of, what would happen if the rig area flooded and possible impacts on Terania Creek, and truck movements along narrow rural roads.

This company has not indicated what it would do with any gas produced, should a commercially viable deposit be found in any



of the wells tested in the Northern Rivers. The options include building a power station near the production wells, piping it to a power station further afield, or building a plant to turn it into liquified natural gas.

The Keerrong Anti Gas Squad members say that methane can be generated above ground using pig, chicken or vegetable waste. Village scale biodigesters are already in use across India and China.

Since 2008 in the US, large-scale biodigesters now harvest methane from sewage and garbage. The need for seam mining is redundant, with modern methane harvesting methods using the natural waste cycle.

There are also other forms of alternative energy which deserve the backing that the mining industry already gets from government, including solar thermal power generation and renewables.

Meanwhile, Metgasco has indicated on its website that it will construct the Lions Way pipeline to pump gas from Casino through Kyogle to Ipswich. They are exploring Lynch’s Creek north of Kyogle, and will be drilling a pair of two-kilometre-deep exploratory shafts at a cost of \$8million.

In Queensland there has been some good news where the State Government is shutting down a trial underground coal gasification (UCG) plant, citing unacceptable environmental risks.

Cougar Energy’s plant near Kingaroy in the South Burnett region was temporarily shut down last year when traces of cancer-causing chemicals were found in water bores at the site.

The State Government has conducted a thorough investigation and Sustainability Minister Kate Jones says the company has not been able to show that it can operate without posing an “unacceptable risk of harm to the environment”.

The Department of Environment and Resource Management also says it is not satisfied with two of three environmental reports provided by Cougar Energy, particularly in relation to future risk management.

The company is now required to rehabilitate the site.

Woodstock Council’s letter to Nimbin

Dear Nimbin followers of peace, On behalf of the Woodstock Council for World Peace, we send warm greetings and wonderful news. But first of all, we here are very sensitive to the tragedy befalling Australia via flooding and keep you folks close to our hearts in the coming days and weeks. As we had mentioned to Benny, it is hard to comprehend the terrible effects of all of this, but again, we here in Woodstock are fully with you in the spirit of rebuilding and regeneration, PEACE BE TO ALL OF YOU.

Nimbin... we are on the verge of potentially the greatest moment in music and creativity the world has ever known. On the 6 August 2011, Hiroshima will be the site of a sunrise ceremony which revolves around the anniversary of the World War II bombing. There will be a global concert by the name of LIVE PEACE.

We soon depart to Japan to organise with Hiroshima and Nagasaki a combined program of music, art, dance and tradition. The aim is to assemble the flags of every nation and have the entire world watching through satellite transmission, as peace through music is used as our own Woodstock/ Nimbin secret weapon. There will be many details to the opening stages of this global program, which we can share once the final touches have been arranged with the Japanese towns.

It is the intent of organisers to follow the rotation of the earth as we simulcast over the weekend. It all comes down to International date lines and time zones. We would like you to be right up front with your own LIVE PEACE NIMBIN Australia, as you are in a similar time zone. It would be very simple to cut from Japan to Australia We have t-shirts and banners that can be customized on computer to fit your needs if you like.

With Nimbin as a sister town to Woodstock, we would be able to weave the two communities together in a peaceful world statement of once again, music and customs. Vast amounts of money are not needed; cell phones and small digital cameras will do the job, as we upload those to YouTube. Of course to have a live video feed there would be great.

The aim of this entire weekend is to combine as many as we can to send out the strongest message ever

communicated at this level, and that would be, we want peace now. All this being done in a totally non governmental, non-religious, pro-active, pro-peace through affirmative action like unto Gandhi and Martin Luther and countless others to this point.

We estimate an audience of between 2-3 billion souls, and as many as 10,000 locations. We are starting talks with the global mayors for peace, who total nearly 5000. Imagine our dream of peace being seen by every nation on earth. We are doing this with all the hope we can imagine, and yes it does have the blessings of thousands already.

Music will naturally bring all the special interest groups together around the world for one common weekend of peace and Love. Greenpeace, We the World, Medecins sans Frontiers, and so on, so that on these days we will have a chance to combine our voices around the world for the formation of a global congress for World Peace.

Now is our time to use our secret weapon of peace through music to help change the lives of so very many. Soldiers, doctors, nurses, carpenters, miners, policemen, politicians in particular. No one is immune to the sound of unity among nations.

Every one who knows people in other countries, contact them and get them informed that LIVE PEACE IS COMING TO PLANET EARTH, being brought to you by all of us. Let us all work together to bring this into reality.

I wish when I was in Japan I could travel to see you, but it is all about plane fare. I am a poor man, but rich in spirit. Our collective goal is to broadcast from over 150 countries in some capacity and we will when we all join forces for peace.

LET’S DO THIS NIMBIN. May all of us be ONE.

John Nelson, co-councillor.

LETTER FROM WOODSTOCK CONNECTION

A letter has been sent to us Nimbinites from Woodstock to participate in this year’s planned LIVE PEACE on Hiroshima Day, Saturday August 6th, 2011.

So far the Nimbin Environment Centre has agreed on helping with this. Anyone interested, please contact me or the Nimbin Environment Centre.

Benny Zable

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Jude fills principal's role



2011 Kindergarten students Ruby, Hudson and Jasper with Ms Jude Voisey (principal).

The new school year has already begun for students at Tuntable Creek Public School, and with it, confirmation that Jude Voisey has been appointed to the permanent position of principal.

Jude was previously appointed to the relieving principal's position at Tuntable Creek during 2010 and has continued to strive for the individualising of student learning. She looks forward to working closely with the community to achieve great things.

During January, Jude attended the three-day Principal's Induction Conference in Sydney. This was a great opportunity to

refocus on the core work of all public schools – meeting the educational needs of all students – and to meet the other 74 new principals recently appointed to NSW public schools.

Tuntable Creek Public School provides specialist programs in all key learning areas for all students and is very proud of its tradition of catering to students' needs.

The school is welcoming enrolments in all year groups, with three new kindergarten students for 2011 (pictured) starting the year enthusiastically and full of energy.

Parents are invited to visit and see the benefits of a small school learning environment.

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Central staff and students hit the ground running

Nimbin Central School is off to a flying start to the 2011 academic year.

Our new kindergarten cohort has joined Year 1 to Year 6 students, who started on Monday and have settled in very well. So far they appear to be thoroughly enjoying the "big school" experience with the very capable Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 teacher in Gail Pierce, who creates a quiet, reassuring class atmosphere and provides an exemplary academic program.

Our Year 7 intake has been the largest for many years, and the 25 very excited young people who make up that year group have already begun to make their mark, for all the right reasons. They have proven themselves to be happy, fun-loving and hard-working students taking the challenges of high school in their stride.

The compressed curriculum offered to the Year 11 students continues to draw interest. The idea of studying only three subjects per year at preliminary and HSC levels is proving attractive to a range of students. This ground-breaking program is not being offered in any other school in the Wilson Education area; call the school for details.

Some excellent new teachers have joined the Nimbin Central School staff. Rosa Fox has been appointed to the permanent maths position. Rosa held



the position in a temporary capacity a few years back and her return is a welcome one.

Tiffany McGann has been appointed to the permanent English position and has taken on the challenges of the senior compressed curriculum. Tiffany is also a teacher of Japanese (among other subjects) and brings a combination of youthful energy and a significant breadth of knowledge and experience. Tiffany will also be Year Advisor to Year 8.

Our library position has been filled in a serendipitous mix of subject areas which allowed us to simultaneously fill our music position. Maz Webb, a fully qualified teacher-librarian and an

experienced music teacher, has joined us this year. This year is the first year for many years we have offered elective music.

We are lucky to have Jane Mari rejoin us for the year teaching English on a part-time basis and acting as Year Advisor for Year 11, and our other new(ish) face is Brad Clarke, who is teaching PE, Health and Personal Development. We welcome all new staff and I believe we have an outstanding teaching team.

Nimbin Central School can look forward to an outstanding year, full of happy, engaged local students who are all working towards one thing: reaching their academic and social potential.

Tuntable school's thirty years

Tuntable Falls Community Primary School turns 30 in March, and the community invites present and past members of the school community, as well as the wider community, to join them for a celebration.

The celebration takes place on the weekend of the 19 and 20 March at Tuntable Falls Community.

A story-sharing day for past school members will be held on the Saturday, where a light lunch and afternoon tea will be provided. Visitors will be able to view and access some of the archival material that chronicles the growth and history of the school, and photographs will be available for purchase.



Some students testing the new entrance to the school.

A Cabaret Concert will be held on Saturday evening in the Tuntable Community hall, showcasing some of the talented people who have been a part of the community over the years.

On Sunday a bushwalk will be held through the community, with a picnic lunch at the North End waterhole.

This event will show off the completion of the National Stimulus Building Package which was completed at the end of last year. It includes the re-roofing, renovation and repainting of the existing school, the addition of disabled parking and access and a new office and entrance for the school.

Anyone who would like to help organise this event or who would like to attend should contact the school via email at tunfalls@australis.net

Steiner school a reality



Teachers Greg Behrend and Stuart Baker

It has been a year since the idea of a Steiner high school for the region was discussed at the Sphinx Rock Café, and that idea is now a reality.

The Mount Warning College for Steiner Education has the Education Department's approval and rented premises at Rainbow Ridge School in Lillian Rock.

The school's doors and hearts are open to receive our pioneering students in Classes 7 through 10 from the 7th February.

With outdoor education, performing arts and hand crafts on the curriculum, as well as the core subjects, the school looks forward to providing an enriching educational experience.

New and interested families are urged to make contact with Helen Lynne (6689-0056) or Leanne Logan (6689-7007), if possible before Term begins.



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Don't pooh-pooh the goo from the loo

by Stuart McConville

In one auspicious moment many moons ago, I captured a glimpse of my future.

I was enjoying my morning obligation to the earth, depositing a nugget of fertility, literally becoming en-lightened. The unimpeded view was that of the Sleeping Lady, goddess of the east, my silent, distant and somewhat cold morning bedfellow – Blue Knob and Sphinx Rock.

I was contemplating the future, and how I would have it be. Around me my 40 acres was a blank slate, only my Minimus composting loo stood testimony to the permanence of structure.

It was an icon of the future, a shrine to the beginning of a sustainable, evolved path. I saw a future where everyone dealt in a personal and responsible manner with their own shit, on every level.

If we could do it with our shit – that highly reviled and usually sanitised stuff that marks our very physical existence – how easy would it be to look within and keep on dealing with it. Start with the simple stuff and get a whiff of what it means to be healthy.

So I did, and it smelled good! Like the earth after a storm, a healthy finished humanure can be sweet and strangely alluring.

The more I probed and explored, the more obvious it became that the current model of “waste” treatment was outdated. For a start, I couldn't conceive of valuable nutrients and carbon as waste.

Our centralised treatment systems are at the core of our inability to further evolve, and strip us of our right to harvest our own by-products. The poorly educated populations of the past for which these systems were (rightly) designed and built are just that; things of the past.

We are fast approaching a point in our spiritual evolution where we must take responsibility for our own by-product and reclaim its potential for our society. Phosphorus, the most highly valued nutrient for plant growth, mined from rock and guano deposits, is the only reason our current model of agriculture can feed the world. It will not last forever.

Peak phosphorus is expected to occur in the next 40 years. Our urine alone contains a perfect balance of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium for plant growth. One person's urine in a year can grow 250kg of wheat. What can you grow with yours?

Unfortunately, to date the innovations in waste water (that's what you get when you mix our by-products with drinking water) treatment systems have been for the most part over complicated and too highly dependent on technology and electricity. Wasteful waste treatment!

Authorities still deem us all as untrustworthy morons at best, evil subversives at worst, so we cannot legally reclaim what is rightfully ours and use it to best effect.



The way forward is to look to the past. In our time on earth, it was long ago realised that human by-products were a valuable asset to agriculture.

We now understand the processes of aerobic decomposition and can incorporate carbon and airflows into our toilet designs, making them user friendly and much more efficient. Urine separation is an ancient practice too. Romans used urine pots around their cities to collect and refine urine to perform a number of vital functions, one of which was to produce ammonia bleach so their togas could be cleaned to perfect white.

I don't hesitate to use my humanure on food crops, after it has been re-composted in a thermal phase heap and rendered free of possible pathogens. I don't hesitate to fertigate with a diluted solution of urine, as long as the irrigation is under mulch or covered and has no access to the leafy areas of my crops. My gardens flourish under this regime and I rarely need to add extra fertilisers.

Since my epiphany, my passion for composting toilets has grown and 12 years later my business, Pooh Solutions, revolves around designing human by-product treatment systems for domestic clients and building concrete dry composting toilets.

We make pre-cast concrete composting toilets along the lines of the two most successful designs that we have seen as owner-built loos in this region. The Thunderloo, which is similar to the Minimus with a few design improvements, and the Herculet, which is the Farralones Institute design, again with some improvements.

Pooh Solutions also offers a complete system design and approval service to clients that are building or need to upgrade their current systems. Our website has a stack of free info for those who want to build themselves a loo or grey water treatment.

I'm always happy to chat to people on the phone about their problems or their system woes, so call me if you need help dealing with yours.

Stuart will be presenting a talk on composting toilets at the Blue Knob Farmer's Market on Saturday 5th February starting at 10^{am}. Contact Pooh Solutions on 6689-7496 or 0427-897-496, www.poohsolutions.com

Farmers Market talks at Blue Knob

“They're like babies. Seedlings need feeding and water every day.”

This was the start of Greg James's talk at Blue Knob Farmer's Market on raising vegetable seedlings. Everyone in the audience took careful note as Greg and partner Vanessa produce 20,000 seedlings by hand every week for sale at eight markets and 14 retail outlets – the skill and knowledge to do this were obvious in Greg's presentation.

Greg's talk was the start of a new project by the Market for 2011. “Sharing Local Knowledge” is bringing local farmers, food producers and people promoting sustainability into contact with people wanting more skills and knowledge in food production and self-sufficiency. This, in turn, promotes self-sufficiency in the local area and reduces dependency on interstate and imported food.

Everyone will have noticed the price and scarcity of fresh food since the Queensland floods. The bare supermarket shelves and \$9.50/kg broccoli can serve as a wake-up call to the precarious nature of our current food production systems.

Another new project at the Market with a focus on local food production is the Backyard Grower's table. Do you have some surplus fruit or veggies? Some bay leaves, parsley, ginger root or too many beans? Bring them in to the Backyard Growers table and we'll sell them on your behalf.

Great if you have just a small amount of produce but haven't got three hours to spend at the market trying to sell nine lemons.

“Sharing Local Knowledge” Speakers for February

5th Feb. Build Your Own Composting Toilet for under \$100

Stuart McConville from Pooh Solutions will be giving a presentation on dry composting toilets and in particular, how to build your own simple sawdust toilet for under \$100. During his talk Stuart is happy to respond to all enquiries and questions



Klara Marosszeky speaking at the hemp building workshop.

regarding the health and operation of composting toilets. Pooh Solutions, founded by Stuart, specialises in waterless toilets with a focus on best practice, sustainable solutions using proven, low-tech designs.

12th Feb. Raising Chooks with Rita Oort

Rita will guide us through the successful practises and pitfalls of running your own flock of laying hens. Imagine being self-sufficient in farm-fresh eggs! Rita has been a registered Organic market gardener for more than 25 years. She also raises, and lovingly cares for, more than 100 productive hens and sells around 200 to 300 eggs per week. Rita has developed a unique integrated system where her hens fertilize and cultivate successive vegetable garden beds on a yearly rotation.

19th Feb. Harvesting Bushfood from the streets

Peter Hardwick is a well-known pioneer and visionary in the development of bushfoods in Australia. The recognition of sub-tropical bushfoods, such as Davidson plum, Dorriggo pepper, lemon myrtle and ribberries is due largely to his initial work in

the 1980's. Very recently, Peter has made a significant departure from his previous work.

He used to see street harvesting more as a back-up or a supplement to farmed food, but now a new vision sees great potential in street and park plants becoming a main source of food.

With increased action to plant public commons with a rich variety of edible plants and to restore bushfoods to regenerated forests he believes amazing new, sustainable sources of food can be realised.

All talks are at Blue Knob Farmer's Market, corner of Blue Knob and Lillian Rock Roads, 8km from Nimbin. They start at 10am sharp and run for 40–60 minutes. Seating is first come, first served. If you'd like to be notified of forthcoming talks and Market news send your name and email to Jim at uloborid8@gmail.com



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