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Hemp silk fashions

JR Weaving Pty Ltd has launched its unique handwoven hemp fabric outside Nimbin's HEMP Embassy.

"I believe we are the only company on Earth hand weaving hemp fabrics," says creator Gerald Taylor, who is well known locally as the author of *Jesus Weed*.

"With an old Cambodian friend, we have trained silk weavers on an island in the Mekong River to use hemp on their traditional silk looms. Fifty people are now working full time washing, dying, weaving and sewing



hemp fabric and clothes," Gerald said.

A range of clothing made from this unique new superfine hemp material is available from the Nimbin Hemp Embassy, the only outlet for the material in Australia.

For further info contact Gerald Taylor on 0432-811-136, or the Nimbin HEMP Embassy on 6689-1842.



Nimbin pool news



by Sue Edmonds for Friends of the Nimbin Pool

Last year one of the shade covers was blown to pieces and the others were falling apart, so it's great to see they have been replaced. The necessary work in the pump house has been completed, so now John can do the daily measuring of chlorine in a safer environment.

The old tables and bench seats in the BBQ area had rotted out, and new ones have been supplied by the Lismore Council, painted in bright colours by the busy and industrious Caravan Park managers.

There was a meeting of pool staff and LCC officers with two experts on pool surface maintenance and treatments, and various repaired parts of the pool floor were inspected.

All work, except for the proposed new paint job (deemed to be "entirely aesthetic" and too costly), should be complete in time for the grand re-opening of the pool on 19th September.

Responsible pet ownership

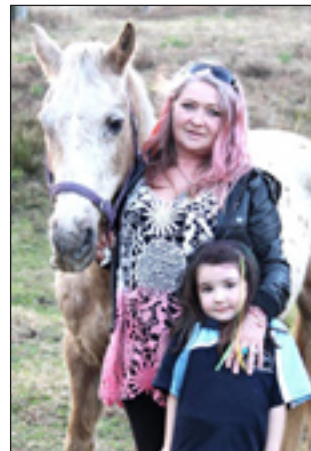
by Krista Matthews

I feel the need to write, to again make people aware of the responsibilities we have for our pets. It is a privilege to have a pet or pets in our world, and just too often I see people abusing this privilege.

Last month I got a call from concerned citizens at Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre who had two 4-week old kittens that had been rescued from inside a plastic bag next to a bin on Crofton Road.

These little guys were lucky that they were found and are now in care, as they were too young to be away from mum. The mum needs desexing and were there any more kittens? Only the low-life that did this knows!

A week ago, I got a call from another caring citizen about a pup tied up to the fence at the Nimbin Servo at 7am. This



pup's owner was found.

If you can't be responsible, desexing your pet and giving them the love they deserve, then please don't throw them away. Call your local Rescue Group, which can advise on the best way to re-home and discount desex your pet.

I urge anyone who is needing assistance to please call Krista on 6689-1707.



In the Hot Seat

On Friday 1st August, Bec Davies from Nimbin Tattoo Studio featured on Channel 9's *Million Dollar Hot Seat*.

The question she got was about courier services. Eddy McGuire asked her, "Do you have any courier services in Nimbin?"

She replied, "Not that I would be able to speak about." Overall, she did well on the show.

Nimbin's optometrist moves uptown



by Tina Fuller

By the time this goes to print, I should be settled in the new premises next door to Nimbin Real Estate. This is my second move since taking a gamble on buying the equipment and opening Nimbin Optical five years ago.

Back then I wondered whether Nimbin needed an optometrist. I wondered if a small practice could survive amongst the giant optometry chains and their advertising budgets. Would people around here fall for the slogans and "reel them in" price advertising, or would they see through the gimmicks and choose to support the local small business?

I hoped that my patients would value the time I can spend with them, the honest advice, and 20 years of experience in detecting eye disease and solving vision problems. I hoped they would realise that I can do the same tests as the big guys, and will always have good options for those on a budget.

And they have, with incredible support right from the start. It is testament to the word of mouth and the *Nimbin GoodTimes* that over 1000 people have managed to find me so far, despite being tucked away in a train

carriage, and then at the Community Centre.

By being more central I'd like to get even more people, including the procrastinators, to have a regular eye check. It's no use discovering an eye problem once it's too late to treat it, and there's no reason to put it off. The consultation is bulk-billed, it can be as long or as brief as you like, and there is no pressure to buy glasses at the end.

For those who do want new specs, I have brought in a new range of frames, sunglasses and good quality readers. The local lab I use can supply any type of lens available on the market.

Most of my products are sourced through Australian-owned small businesses.

For the rest, I have chosen overseas suppliers who use sustainable materials including bamboo, and recycled metals and plastics. They also support worthwhile causes like "Trees for the Future" and "Buy a Pair - Give a Pair".

I'm really looking forward to seeing my old patients, as well as new faces (and eyes), at the new shop.

To make an appointment, drop into the shop or give me a call on 6689-0081. This number will be available any time, even for emergencies. The practice will be open for eye testing on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Zombies take over Nimbin – again!

In the Nimbin Youth Film Competition 2013, a film that surprised the judges and its audience with its original spin on the zombie genre, ended with the leering face of a zombie radio announcer, gloating about his takeover of Nimbin.

This year the zombies are back. *My Bride is a Zombie* goes as hard out into zombie territory as you possibly can.

This terrifying collection of zombies are the stuff of nightmares, and will be seen on the big screen at the awards and screening at the Nimbin Town Hall on Saturday 16th August, 2pm at Nimbin Town Hall. Entry is free.

Now in its fifth year, the number of entries and the standard is growing and with the addition of the Best SK8 film section, the prize pool and prizes now exceed



\$1000, due to the generous sponsorship from the Nimbin School of Arts, Nimbin Pizza and Trattoria and the Nimbin Emporium. The SK8 film section has a first prize of \$300 and is sponsored by FONSK8 (Friends of the Nimbin Skate Park), Treefellas of Blue Knob,

Water Ox Carpenters and Artistree Arborist services. Mayor of Lismore, Jenny Dowell will hand out the awards and offer encouragement to our talented young people. The winners of the main film comp section receive a uniquely designed trophy to put on

the mantelpiece. Many other awards are given out to highlight outstanding aspects of each entry in the comp.

Judges of the main comp are Paul Tait and Jeni Kendall of Gaia films and for the SK8 film section are Gabe Roxburgh of Nan and Pop Skate Boutique at Evans Head and photographer Sean Spain. The judges agonise over picking the top entry, luckily they have a firm set of criteria that makes it easier to whittle down all the entries to the top three.

If you have never been to a screening then get along as it is well worth the effort. The films are an insight into the minds of our young people and for adults and children alike they can be educational, poignant or just plain fun. Last year the Nimbin Town Hall was packed to the rafters!

Nimbin Youth Club closes its doors

Youth Connections North Coast Inc. (YCNC) is sad to announce that Nimbin Youth Club will be closing.

Over the last three years, the 'Our Village Rocks' program has provided Nimbin, Billen and Tuntable youth with a great range of afternoon, weekend and school holiday activities. The program was funded by Family and Community Services and run by Youth Connections North Coast. Unfortunately, with no new funding coming forth in the near future, YCNC has had to make the difficult decision to close the Nimbin Youth Space.

Youth Connections will still be working in Nimbin at the school, running Links to Learning in Term 4 and facilitating TAFE tasters in Term 3, providing housing support for young people at risk of homelessness, and counselling and psychological support through the Healthy Minds Program. Phone 6622-3143 if you need support.

Youth Connections would like to thank the community,

families and young people for their support and passionate enthusiasm and for engaging and inspiring some awesome activities over the last three years. We have loved having all of you a part of this fantastic program. Youth Connections would also like to thank our dedicated youth workers Lisa Doherty and India Morris, without whom none of this would have been possible.

The 'Our Village Rocks' program had many special moments and events to celebrate. Here are a few highlights:

- Youth Week in March 2012 Nimbin Skate Clinic had 160 young people attend with parents and community members;
- We also supported FONS to run the skate competitions in 2013 and over Mardi Grass in 2014;
- The Nimbin Young Women's dinner was a successful collaboration with other services such as Women's Health, Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre, Lismore City

- Council, North Coast Community Housing and Needle Exchange program;
- Cringe The Binge Cabaret December 2012 with many young people attending to dance and enjoy a safe under 18s event in town.
- Young people from Nimbin being supported to attend the annual Crankfest youth festival in Evans Head, as well as going on a 'skate safari' to skate parks in the region.
- A partnership with ABC Open culminated in a video workshop to produce a short documentary on a local young person who skateboards.
- Each year we have run film workshops during the school holidays with up to 80 young people attending.
- The after school program at Youth Club saw up to 25 young people at a time attending youth club to cook a meal, play some pool, use the computers, talk to staff about what was going on for them and learn about services available to support

- them, and do programs such as hip hop dancing, filming, graffiti art, badge making, and drama.
 - In 2014, several activities and events saw young people given the opportunity to learn new skills and develop confidence and talents, these included barista courses at Nimbin's Capers Café and Billen Cliffs coffee club.
 - Search YouTube for 'Nimbin hip-hop filmclip' to see the production developed in partnership with Mark Roberts from One Vision, who worked with youth club participants to write their own songs, record and film what it means to be growing up in Nimbin.
- The inspiring chorus sung by Ella sums it all up:
"Here in this little town we all call home
We've got the passion, can you hear our voices
'Cos it's deep inside our bones.
Now we've got the power to move minds
We'll make our mark
We'll change the world
One word at a time!"

In gratitude...

by Amber Seccombe

Nimbin celebrated NAIDOC this year with colour, good vibes and plenty of great tucker. It was a joy to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in all its diversity and once again, this event affirmed the connectedness and openhearted nature of the Nimbin community.

A big thanks to Paul Le Bars who respectfully continued to raise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags over the week following NAIDOC day in commemoration of Indigenous servicewomen and men and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have fought to maintain and renew pride, dignity and culture since colonisation.

Much gratitude to Gail and her volunteers for organising the soup kitchen to provide nourishment for the crowd, to Shane from 'Twisted Tucker'



for providing some inspiring and tasty bushfood creations and of course to the Cultural Centre 'kitchen fairies', including Jacquie Welch and family, who provided fire-cooked damper and other treats for lunch on the day.

All NAIDOC performers were talented and fantastic, contributing great cultural vibrancy to the celebration. Much thanks to Steve Didge, Lewis Walker, Gilbert Laurie, Cecil Roberts, community Elders and mob, for generously sharing their cultural knowledge and experience and creating a respectful space for all present.

Special thanks also to local community

members and groups who contributed their time and energy on the day, in particular Adrienne Watt, fabulous local photographer, Lynne Oldfield, who captured much of the event on film, and the Jungle Patrol for supporting the newly re-established NAIDOC Day street march. This day was made possible through successful grant applications by NACRS and the Community Centre to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Also, much respect and gratitude to NCCI's Nina Boddenberg for her support and commitment, the staff of NACRS, in particular Jeddah Bayles for her hard work including posters, flyers and the beautiful NAIDOC banner, Darren McElroy, for organising entertainment and more, Rose Cubis, for being her beautiful self and, once again, to the Nimbin community for your heartfelt support.

Finally, an acknowledgement to this country, the ancestors and spirits and also Elders both past and present.



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Back in New York

by Benny Zable

It has been a little over a week now since I left Nimbin for the Big Apple. The initial reason for coming back here is to help (my host) Nanci Callahan, founder and director of the West Side Cultural Center, prepare for ECOFEST 26th annual.

First night out, Nanci Callahan treated me to this most funniest Shakespearian Muppet style adaption of Titus Andronicus in Times Square, at The Beckett Theatre Theatre Row.

One of the funniest, most inspiring bit of theatre I have seen. Just imagine we get this sort of theatre happening at actions. The mind boggles. Puppet Shakespeare productions are on You Tube. Check them out.

This year's ECOFEST will be honouring the legacy of Pete Seeger, who passed away earlier this year. Last year ECOFEST was at the Cross Roads of the World site in Times Square, and



People's Climate March press conference in Times Square

dedicated it to the passing of Toshi Seeger, Pete Seeger's life-long partner and friend. He came out and performed for us, aided by the Rivertown Kids and family of friends.

This year's event will be held on Sunday, 10th August in Time Square from 42nd to 44th street, with the stage set up outside of the ABC studios. Check us out on: <http://ecofest.com/home.htm>

I have been invited to perform at the

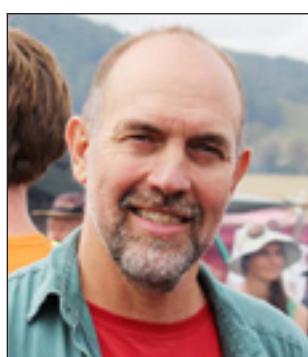
Kingston Festival of Arts and a taste of Kingston, a multi arts and culinary festival throughout the City of Kingston. See: www.KingstonFestival.org

Woodstock is related to Kingston like Nimbin is to Lismore. I will be visiting our sister village Woodstock, as Nimbin's Ambassador of Peace, to attend the Woodstock Museum free film festival over the Labor Day weekend, also taking place at the end of the month.

Region leads way to gasfield free future

The historic and empowering Bentley effect is still being felt as our regional community prepares for the challenges ahead. In social change work, there is no such thing as winning or losing. You haven't lost until you give up and when you win, you simply get to move up a level and play on. So it is with the legacy of Bentley.

As I said at the time, the success at Bentley represented the first really significant democratic breakthrough in challenging the stranglehold that the mining and petroleum industry has over Australia's parliaments. It was a first crack in the wall and what we need to do is get in there and elbow that crack ever wider until the current policy of "Mining Uber Alles"



by Aidan Ricketts

(mining above everything) can be brought within sensible limits.

Communities around Australia and the world have been inspired by the people power success at Bentley, and right now the gas industry, the state government and all of their fellow travellers

are working on their next fall-back position in their determination to impose a dirty dangerous industry upon an unwilling population.

Metgasco would rather sue the state government than reflect upon their abject failure to obtain a social licence, the industry lobby group APPEA continues its misleading campaign about gas prices and supply and politicians are running in all directions as they hedge their bets for the coming state election.

There remains plenty of important work to be done. For a start, the petroleum exploration licences (PELS) in the Northern Rivers have not gone away, and we need to mobilise strongly over coming months to push for full cancellation of all PELS in the Northern Rivers. This is now a realistic campaign aim. Those polities who can't or won't support this position deserve to be removed from office, it's that simple.

Fortunately there is growing support as polities see the writing on the wall. Of course the Greens have been supportive all along and have a proven track record, but the idea is catching on. The ALP voted at the NSW party conference last week to support a policy of cancelling the licences and working for a gasfield-free Northern Rivers, and even the Clarence National Party MP has been heard to support license cancellations.

Of course we need more than words and soft support, we need to judge political parties by their state-wide platforms and by their history, and in the case of the major parties, that's not a pretty story. We need to make every effort to make this issue a make or break issue in all local contests for the coming state election. If as expected, the LNP are returned with a reduced majority, we can expect the gas industry machine

to fire up again following the election, so the coming months are a vital window of opportunity.

But it's not all about elections either – our power as a community lies in our ability to make our voices heard, whoever is in government, and that needs to continue. Future battles could be further away from population areas than Bentley was, and so we need to be prepared to travel if required.

Above all, we need to be aware that the Northern Rivers is not an island, and that other communities need our support and encouragement to take a stand. Rampant coal mining and gas exploration is an issue all over Australia, and we need to give as much support as we possibly can to the campaigns being run by Lock the Gate and other state and national environmental groups to continue to fight for "Our Land, Our Water", The Great Barrier Reef and the planet. With the Abbott government going backwards on climate policy, and pressuring any civil society organisations, media or public servants that dare to criticise the government, the battle lines are clear.

Activists and social movements are the immune system of human culture, and for this reason there will always be plenty of work to be done. There is no end point to history, we will always be facing challenges as we try to move humanity forward from short sightedness, greed, ignorance and violence. We should never expect our work as activists to end, but instead we should ensure we build around us and in our communities a sustainable culture of social activism.

Ultimately, as we learned at Bentley, real fulfillment comes from being part of something bigger than ourselves. Our planet needs plenty of help. There's a lifetime of fulfilling work out there for us all.

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NORTHERN RIVERS & THE GOLD COAST

Community engagement? In your dreams, Metgasco

A senior expert in community engagement, Dr Wendy Sarkissian PhD (pictured), has analysed Metgasco's community engagement policy and come to the conclusion that it is severely flawed and insufficient for Metgasco gaining a social licence to operate in the Northern Rivers.

"As a senior expert experienced in community engagement, I find Metgasco's Community Relations Policy severely lacking in the fundamentals for successful community engagement. It is laughable that Metgasco's 'Community Consultative' policy was removed from its website a few days after I advised that it was written in Latin," said community engagement expert, Dr Wendy Sarkissian.

"The field of community engagement is well developed, so it is appalling to think that

as an ASX listed company, Metgasco is trying to pass off its policy as world's best practice. While it may be comparable to other gas company's engagement policies, it is a damning indictment of industry practices if Metgasco thinks providing one-way information and ignoring community concerns amounts to world's best practice,"

"Marketing and providing information by itself does not amount to community consultation. Community consultation is a two way street that actually involves a dialogue with the community. This involves listening to the community and responding to concerns, clearly something Metgasco has failed to do,"

"Metgasco's narrow approach to only notify stakeholders living within 2 km of the proposed Rosella drill site ignores the wider



impacts invasive gas drilling has on communities and the environment. This unsophisticated and misguided engagement process attempts to 'contain' the discussion which means those outside the 2 km are not deemed worthy of consideration. This is a damning indictment of Metgasco's attitude to the broader community and environment,"

"Metgasco's CEO Peter Henderson has said

previously that it needs a 'social licence' to operate and that it would not go where it has no community support. The thousands of people who attended the Bentley Blockade, as well as previous blockades at Glenugie and Doubtful Creek, clearly demonstrate that Metgasco has no social licence. The fact that Metgasco's licence to drill at Bentley was suspended by the government on the grounds of 'inadequate community consultation' attests to this fact,"

"I'd be delighted to speak to the Metgasco board and explain what authentic community engagement looks like. As an expert in this field, I can only reiterate that Metgasco's dreaming if it thinks it can force itself into the Northern Rivers without genuinely engaging with the community," concluded Dr Sarkissian.

Support needed for the EDO

by Yagia Gentle

The Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) has been around for nearly 30 years. The EDO is a community legal centre specialising in public interest environmental law. It helps people who want to protect the environment through law. It has a Northern Rivers outreach office in Lismore which opened nearly 10 years ago.

The EDO was set up to provide free legal advice for environmental protection in the same way that legal aid was set up to provide poor people access to justice. EDO has provided expert legal advice to the community in its fight to keep the Northern Rivers Gas Field Free. It helped behind the scenes at Bentley.

EDO has been winning in the courts for communities against mining companies. It recently won in court for the second



time against the mighty Rio Tinto mining company. The mining companies talked to their friends in Federal Parliament and now the Government is withdrawing its funding of the EDO in the hope that it closes down.

This means that now EDO must be funded, and belong, to the people of Australia. This is a golden opportunity to support an organisation that really

makes a positive difference in the world, this means that the people, not the government, must move in to support it. Community support came in a big way last month in the form of a concert at the Star Court Theatre, Lismore, by the famous singer/songwriter, Toni Childs and her support acts. Local legends of the law, Aiden Ricketts and EDO principal solicitor, Sue Higginson (pictured left), gave impassioned speeches about the history of the Bentley blockade and the EDO, its future and what to do next.

A big part of the ongoing struggle to save our land and wildlife from the scourge of greedy companies is to lend a hand to such organisations. Go to the website (just google 'edo'), get in touch, make a regular donation, put your name down for volunteering to help win a case. Get involved. It's an organisation worth saving.

Acclaim for Cootamundra Girls film screenings

by Jeni Kendell

We have now finished the roadshow showing our documentaries, *All One – the Girls* and the *Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls' Training Home Centenary Commemoration 1912-2012*, to largely Aboriginal audiences in Coffs Harbour, Kempsey, East Gosford, Sydney, Cootamundra, Junee Women's Prison, Wagga Wagga, Aboriginal Health Service Wagga, Bathurst, Dubbo, Lismore and Blue Knob at Nimbin.

The documentaries are the collective story of what happened to some of the Aboriginal girls and babies who were removed from their families and placed into the Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls' Training Home. The second film covers the special weekend of the Centenary of the Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls' Training Home in August 2012.

There were many moving moments, with many of the former Coota women including Aunty Oom, Aunty Elaine, Aunty Val, Aunty Fay, Aunty Isabel, Aunty June and others coming to welcome the audiences and share experiences over cups of tea and sandwiches, nearly always provided by helpful and supportive local councils. Many Mayors came along and also welcomed us all to their cities and towns. Mayor Jenny Dowell came to the Lismore Council screening and made the



following comments on her Facebook page that night:

"What a moving experience! Thank you Jeni Kendell and Paul Tait for coming to Council to screen *All One – the Girls*. The quotes that stay with me are: "We were told we were going to the circus"; "I was told we were going for an ice-cream"; "I didn't see my mother again"; "After I came to Coota, no-one ever told me they loved me"; "We weren't even allowed to hug each other"; "What did the words mum or dad mean – they were just words"; "I had no childhood"; "My childhood disappeared when I went through the gates of Coota".

The stories of punishment, cruelty and hardship were rife, but there were stories of laughter and the closest of friendships between the "sisters". What

an afternoon." Two beautiful experiences stand out – one near Sydney when an Aboriginal couple came and the man said his mother had been a Coota girl and had never ever spoken to him about it. Even on her deathbed she refused.

He saw the films and wept and at the screening was our dear friend Oomera Edwards who was able to hug him and say she knew his mother very well from her 16-year experience at the Cootamundra Home. It was truly a healing moment that we also treasure.

The second was a group of elders who came to the screening at the University in Bathurst. Elder Joylene Simpson kindly organised the day for us with the Mayor welcoming us and saying he wanted Bathurst to be a totally inclusive city for all.

Afterwards Jim Beale, Bill Allen and Joey Hull came up to us and gave us a huge hug, looked into our eyes and said, "You are both great friends to the Aboriginal people." We cried.

At Cootamundra itself, the Council booked the Town Hall and 410 people, mostly schoolchildren, came along. We thought this was quite scary and they would probably walk out or cough or chat all the way through it. But no, you could have heard a pin drop. I asked one girl after what she thought – she said, "It was so sad."

Nimbin Fun Run

Sunday 31st August, 11.30am
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Letters

On frugality

Your columnist Anastasia Guise struck a chord within me (NGT July 14, p. 20): "I am not even a good recycler. That is, I prefer to not consume rather than to consume copiously".

When we hear or read the economy grew by so and so percent – what does that really mean? What can you envisage? What extra volume of plastic does that mean for the waste stream? Indeed, why not report the actual volume of plastic in the waste stream each year? Let alone CO2. Why is it never reported like that in the mainstream press?

Conventional economics accounts for only one side of the ledger, and the only attempt to price pollution so far, aka a price on carbon, is being abolished. Nuff said, I am preaching to the converted. Please keep up the good work, especially the permaculture column.

I am a former Northern Rivers boy who has spent far too long now living in Sydney.

John Macleay
Rozelle NSW

Electromagnetic Radiation

A letter entitled 'Twin Obsessions' (NGT July 14) sought to trivialise public concern about electromagnetic radiation. It seems its author has a gripe with a community group that is devoting attention to this issue. He is also so misinformed as to base his argument upon the crude thermal damage model, and equate man-made EMR with solar energy, when the harmful part of the latter is largely absorbed by the upper atmosphere.

Hundreds of reputable studies have documented the adverse biological effects of radio frequencies such as emitted by mobile phones and wi-fi, which are also physiologically addictive and impair the cognitive abilities of the user. Governments and health organisations worldwide are actively imposing bans and warnings. Telstra and other major players now advise customers to reduce their exposure.

It's looking a bit like tobacco all over again. As corporate profits and State-sponsored wireless surveillance escalate, what damage is being done to our bodies before observable symptoms appear? Can we trust official regulatory agencies to protect us when

Australian EMR "safety" standards are up to 100 times less stringent than in other countries?

Without dedicated community opposition, microwave "smart meters" will eventually be installed on every grid-powered home in our region. Get the full story and reject any technology that is not proven absolutely safe. Start by visiting our locally-produced selection of web links: www.mullumwifi.com/emr_bookmarks.html

Peter Nielsen
Electronics Engineer
Byron Bay

Fawly Towers?

It was truly refreshing to read Alan Roberts' letter (NGT July 14). At last someone with some knowledge about electromagnetic radiation (EMR) emissions from broadband towers, and the facts regarding vapour trails!

It's been a pain for my partner Harry, a qualified Radio Communications Technician and Systems Designer, to listen to the hysteria surrounding these issues for a long time now. Alan's information was spot on according to Harry and I don't doubt it.

The Nimbin Environment Centre has a history of getting it wrong regarding some of the committed souls who have worked there in the past, and now look set to make the same mistake again. By talking of sacking Alan Roberts, for being brave enough to come out with the truth regarding these installations, and that 'Chem Trails' are nothing more than a scare campaign that disempowers people, they're once again showing their ignorance!

The truth is out there in all forms of decent literature (not comic books): please do what you can to educate yourself on these matters. It behoves the members of an Environment Centre to know what they are talking about. The radiation that should be concerning people is of the low frequency kind as emitted by high voltage power lines. This is far more dangerous.

Alan was indeed brave to confront ignorance head-on, and we thank him for doing so. These type of nonsense issues have to be dispelled – there are far more important things going on in our world. Our Earth is really suffering, and collectively there is much to do, especially for an Environment Centre!

The Nimbin Environment

Letters to the editor

NGT welcomes letters by email or post by deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be cut. Letters already published elsewhere will usually not be considered. Include full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

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NEXT DEADLINE:
Wednesday 27th August

Email nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

Centre came into being as the result of some genuine action regarding local issues which eventually led to the declaration of 186,000 hectares of rainforest as National Park. So remember... ACT LOCALLY.... and forget the nonsense!

Sophia Hoeben,
Nimbin

NEC obligations

I share Alan Roberts' concern that the current campaign by the Nimbin Environment Centre against the NBN Wireless Broadband Towers/Mobile Phone Technology and so called 'Chemtrails' may cause unwarranted fear, stress and anxiety in our community.

Pamphlets and DVDs distributed by the NEC claim that the NBN Wireless Broadband Towers to be constructed in our area will cause myriad health problems ranging in severity from nausea to cancer and birth defects. These claims are simply not borne out by the hundreds of studies done worldwide.

I refer readers to the World Health Organization's 2013 article 'What are the health risks associated with mobile phones and their base stations?' See: <http://www.who.int/features/qa/30/en/> for further information.

I believe that the NEC have an obligation to ensure their campaigns are made using a critical thinking process that is rational and is backed by empirical evidence. Campaigns based primarily on fear, hearsay, pseudo-science, and laced with conspiracy theory psychosis and will only serve to diminish the NEC's credibility and support in the community.

Mark Palmer,
Stony Chute

Open letter to Richmond Valley Council

I would like to congratulate Councillor Robert Mustow on his successful motion on CSG, with particular emphasis on fracking, at the last Richmond Valley council meeting. I would also like to congratulate Deputy Mayor Sandra Humphrys for her courageous stand against unconventional gas, in the same meeting. These are

very real steps in the right direction. Thank you.

Now, for the 'however's'.

A common substrate from which gas exploration and production is proposed in the Northern Rivers, including Richmond Valley, is tight sand, with low permeability. The troublesome Kingfisher and also the proposed, controversial, Rosella wells are of this type. Therefore, any Positioning Statement needs to address unconventional gas generally, not just CSG.

While fracking, which is very common in tight sand development, IS of major concern, it would be very shortsighted to focus exclusively on this issue. Even the most superficial scan of current research material, which I have already sent to RV Councillors, indicates that the dangers of unconventional gas activities are multiple and severe. As renowned, local toxicology spokesperson, Dr Mariann Lloyd-Smith contends "You can't regulate this industry into safety...." It is inherently dangerous.

Last time the RV Council devised a Positioning Statement on this industry, it was developed and presented as a fait accompli, with absolutely no community consultation, and worse, no opportunity for community comment. I know, I was at the particular council meeting when this occurred.

This type of behavior from a council reputedly representing community concerns, is totally unconscionable. We expect much better this time around. As yet, I am unaware of any approach by RV Council to any group who has thorough knowledge of the risks of the unconventional gas industry, and of community attitudes concerning these risks. Real community consultation is necessary if the new Positioning Statement is not to be a travesty of ethical council procedure.

We all look forward to further heroic acts from our elected representatives on council.

Beverley Crossley,
Tatham

Night of shame

At the July Council meeting in Kyogle, we in the gallery

were treated to a display of Judas dimensional thinking.

Mayor Mullholland had put a motion before Council which she wanted passed for her to take to the forthcoming NOROC meeting so that a united front of all local councils could be presented to Government to have the Northern Rivers declared Gasfield Free.

The Mayor's motion was "1. That all petroleum licenses in the Northern Rivers be revoked. 2. To declare the Northern Rivers gasfield free. 3. Amend the onshore petroleum act, 1999 to make risk or harm to prime agricultural farm land and rural residential areas, grounds for suspension or cancellation of the petroleum title."

One poor old ill informed troglodite councillor stated that "if we ban gas drilling, that would automatically end water drilling." He obviously doesn't know that water drilling goes to the aquifer, gas drilling goes through the aquifer. He doesn't know that it is no use drilling for water in a gasfield as it is contaminated and poisonous. He is definitely well past his use by date and should get his affairs in order before it is too late. Then we had Councillor Boss Clown waffling on at length to defeat the motion.

In an amendment, Maggie Greedie moved not to ban fracking in Kyogle LGA. This despite her pledge before the last election that she would oppose all gas mining in this beautiful Northern Rivers if elected. Chris Simpson also voted against Danielle's motion, though he is on record before the election saying, "I will do everything in my power to stop gas mining in the shire if elected".

When the motion was put to the vote, the Gang of Six, councillors Brown, McGreedie, Passfield, Simpson, Riordan, and Dwyer in a shameful display of treachery voted the motion down. Only Mayor Mullholland, and councillors Wilson and Burley honoured their word given to the voters before the last election to protect our land and all who live here from this destructive, toxic insidious industry.

We, the people have long memories, and will remember that they have betrayed us. Just over a year ago, thousands of residents voted 94% for a gas free LGA. Our leaders have let us down. They have nothing to gain by this – well, I hope not.

Don Durrant,
Afterlee

Pottsville koalas

Our Pottsville wetlands koalas may have lost a unique opportunity to survive the relentless stressors which

David Norris,
Pottsville



have put them on the brink of extinction.

At the July council meeting, Tweed Councillors voted in favour of supporting the construction and operation of a men's shed on the Black Rocks sports field, which is surrounded by primary koala habitat, at the junction of three koala/wildlife corridors, is a recognised koala breeding hub, and is one of three koala hotspots on the Coast.

I commend the invaluable service that men's sheds provide to the community, but believe that it is not appropriate to have a mini-workshop in the middle of such an environmentally sensitive area. One of the activities proposed is metalwork. This requires the use and storage of such flammable materials as oxy acetylene and LP gas.

The Black Rocks sports field and infrastructure has an established history of vandalism, break and enter, and fire-lighting. As the sports field is situated 300 metres inside bushland in an isolated location, the men's shed would be an easy target for vandals, with a high risk of fire, explosion and subsequent harm to people, the bushland and the koalas.

I believe that a men's shed belongs within a community hub, similar to Tweed Heads, where a men's shed is currently under construction in close proximity to the PCYC, a child care centre and a bridge club, with a shared security regime in place to protect all facilities.

Let's hope that commonsense prevails, and the Pottsville Men's Shed pursue a more suitable site in the best interests of their members and the koalas (I have identified four possible alternative locations). Such a decision could pave the way for revegetation of the Black Rocks sports field with koala habitat trees, as recommended by four renowned ecologists.

Sabre rattling

Wars are begun by political leaders who are themselves safely distanced from the threat of physical harm.

Neither they nor their families are likely to take part in any fighting.

A very long time ago, a king or queen would at least have the courage to lead their troops into battle – but not anymore!

Australia's federal government was not elected to incite a war with anyone.

Yet recent sabre-rattling by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister Julie Bishop have inflamed our relations with China.

By praising Japan's wartime aggression as an honourable example of their 'fighting prowess', Tony Abbott is attempting to encourage Japan's re-entry into a militaristic frame of mind.

He has also insulted millions of people, including many Australians who suffered as a result of this needless aggression.

Australia's hosting of US military and intelligence gathering bases has firmly established us as an outpost of the American Empire.

We are seen globally as an extension of US military power, because on numerous occasions over the last sixty years we have actively partaken in foreign wars of aggression.

This means any military exchange between the world's two largest nuclear powers would inevitable involve Australia.

Former Liberal Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser is amongst those who have warned about this outcome – an outcome that can only end in disaster for all sides.

I solemnly urge anyone who cares about this matter to speak out and make your feelings known.

Please don't let Australia be drawn into a nuclear holocaust made in China!

R J Poole
Lismore

Rethinking the basics

Geoff Dawe is peddling a debunked theory when he says "the economic system of civilisation has mostly been based on exploitation." ('Rethinking the basics', NGT July 14).

Exploitation Theory is mostly associated with Marxists and was popular in the 19th Century before being roundly debunked in the early 20th century. For such an assertion to hold, Dawe must first assume that wages are the primary form of income in production, which is just not true – profits are. If profits were a deduction from wages, then Dawe and the Marxists would be right, but the plain truth is, it is the other way round: wages and other money costs are a deduction from profits.

Capitalists thus do not impoverish wage earners (as Marxism asserts), but make it possible for people to be wage earners. Without capitalists, the only way in which one could survive would be to produce and sell one's own products (i.e. as a profit earner). This would require however that everyone own their own land or to have produced or inherited their own tools and materials, which is improbable. Relatively few people would prosper or even survive if such a situation persisted.

Further, Dawe attempts to juxtapose competition and cooperation, as if the two ideals were mutually exclusive and yet the reality is that competition and cooperation go hand in hand. Markets generate cooperation by harnessing the power of competition as it unfolds in the context of private property, sound money and the rule of law.

This is the invisible hand, or spontaneous order – people pursuing their own self-interest will satisfy the desires of others. Even though most cooperation is anonymous and unintended, it creates the same sort of interdependence that intentional cooperation

Notices

Therapy room available

Therapist wanted for well-established clinic in Nimbin, from September. Rental: \$32 one day; \$55 two days. Phone Tonia 02 6689-0240.

Woodstock 45th anniversary party

To celebrate with our Sister Village Woodstock, on Saturday 16th August, 6pm in Nimbin Town Hall. Wear colourful clothes. Bring your instrument, put your name on the list to sing your favourite song/s, and join the grand finale for the BIG JAM. Light show by Kaleidoscope Chris, multi-media surprises by Omega. Entry by donation, raffles and yummy food will be on sale. (See: www.yasgurroadproductions.com)

Nimbin Flix Movie Night

Saturday August 16th at 6.30pm (doors open 6pm) at Birth & Beyond. Food and drinks available by donation.

Rage Against Abbott

Saturday 23rd August, 5pm – 11.55pm at Italo Club, Lismore. Seven bands headlined by The New Christs and MC'ed by S Sorrenson with acrobats, lightshow and more. \$20 at door. Proceeds to Northern Rivers Greens. See Rage Against Abbott FaceBook page for more details.

Library Lovers Luncheon

Bring a plate and have a farewell lunch with Michael Riddle, Nimbin's mobile librarian since 1982, who is retiring at the end of August, in appreciation of everything he has done for the village's many bibliophiles. Michael's last trip to Nimbin will be on Thursday 28th August, and his always strictly observed lunch hour is 12.30-1.30pm.

Tunable School Fete

Tunable Falls Community School and Preschool is holding its annual fete on Saturday 6th September, 10am-3pm. Phone 6689-1423 for more info

Astrology Workshop

'Igniting the Fires of Consciousness'. Re-awakening Creativity, Vitality, Joy and Passion. A Jupiter in Leo Astrology Workshop at the Lillifield Community Centre, Thursday 11th September, 10am-4pm. \$80 / \$70 concession. Contact Tina 0457-903-957, email: starloom@hotmail.com or Maggie 0755-945-959, email: mggiekerr@universalastrology.com.au

Play Reading

Seven people (three women, four men) wanted to do a public reading of Daniel Soler's play, To Catch A Snail, in mid-late September. Anyone interested can call Daniel on 0439-754-456 or email: danielsoler@gmail.com

Nimbin Equinox Celebration Sale

Expressions of interest are sought for a village-wide Sale on the weekend of 20th & 21st September, the same time as the Spring Art Exhibition and the Nimbin Country Show. If you are interested, please leave your details at OzKat Clothing.

Embroiderers' group

Meetings are 9.30am-2.30pm every 1st and 3rd Wednesday and every 3rd Saturday of each month in the function room at the rear of the Red Dove Centre, Keen Street, Lismore. Contact 0423-337-872.

Free listings

Keep it brief and to the point and if we think it's of interest to our readers, we'll run your community notice for free!

creates. The more we each rely on others to produce what we wish to consume, the more interdependent we become and the more interdependent we are, the more likely we are to behave civilly and peacefully towards each other.

Scott Barlow
Uki

Philanthropist Wanted

Any baby boomers out there inherited well or had a good year?

The Nimbin Museum now pays \$3149 rent per month,

which the donations mostly cover, so long as we hustle out the front every day. Apologies if you have been hustled!

Now the land and building in the middle of the village, which houses the Museum, as well as the Bringabong and Tribal Magic shops, is for sale for about a million bucks.

For a big chunk of Nimbin's heart, it should be a great future investment, and the Museum might get a sympathetic landlord!

Michael Balderstone
Curator, Nimbin Museum