

## Burning off outdated

As I write this, two helicopters and two planes circle an out of control fire near my farm in desperate futile attempts to keep it from spreading even further.

This fire was originally started by one guy burning off his block for 20 head of cattle. His fire has cost the tax payer god knows how much, it has smoked out his neighbours and surrounding town and the cost to the environment goes unnoticed as usual. Do these ends really justify the means?

Excess CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, flash droughts, and flash floods render this long-time farming practice stone age. As the globe reaches more than 400ppm, adding even more unnecessary CO<sub>2</sub> by burning off negates the alleged benefits.

There are now far better ways to gain the so-desired green pick, ie: regenerative agriculture, rotational grazing, etc. We've all heard of flash floods, but now we are starting to hear about, and experience, flash droughts. These intense weather events are all caused by a heating planet.

Yes "experts" argue that we need to introduce more fire to some areas in the National Parks for habitat conservation or weed control, but my answer is simply there soon won't be any habitat if we keep pumping emissions into the atmosphere.

We are living in the Anthropocene and all assumptions, practices, and farming methods must be reassessed and re-evaluated with this critical fact in mind.

As part of the need to transition to a carbon neutral existence, there must be a complete fire ban. Farmers must band together to support each other to farm regeneratively and create a culture of land stewardship, rather than a culture of rape and pillage, slash and burn.

Rhys Minton  
Kyogle

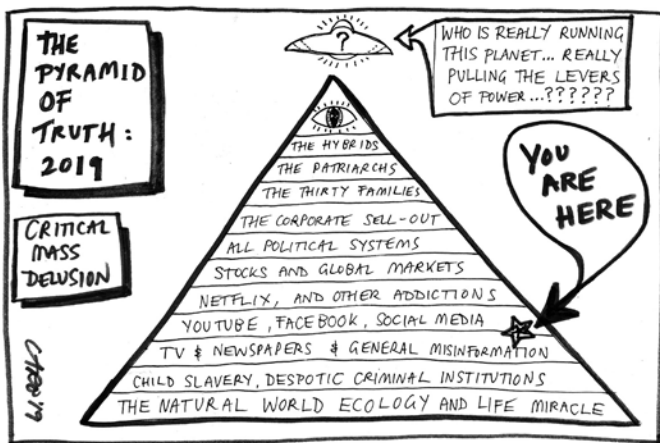
## Rail corridor

It's been a long debate on our Northern Rivers branch line rail corridor.

Before the train was taken off the Casino to Murwillumbah line in 2004, this branch line was used regularly by commuters to and from Sydney and Brisbane, but because this line was run down by about three or four state regimes with little funding for infrastructure, no wonder the bridges became dangerous.

So Bob Carr, Premier and Michael Costa, Transport Minister, decided to cut so-called costs and stop the train at Casino.

The claim that train costs are too expensive, and repairing or building rail from



scratch as well, is simply not true because the economic studies I saw concluded that rail infrastructure is cheaper per km than to build super highways like Woolgoolga to Ballina.

Price Waterhouse Cooper did an economic study and came up with \$30 million, not the \$180 million per year that the NSW Carr and Costa regime lied about before 2004 when we lost our train.

\$30 million would have fixed the bridges and some infrastructure for the rail line. The Carr-Costa regime lied to the public who used the train service. Shame on you both.

It's time to think about sharing the corridor. All bike people want a bike track, but not at the expense of the rail line, and the future return of a light rail on our Northern Rivers branch line.

Sooner rather than later.

Paul Brecht  
Evans Head

## Rates up, services down

It is public knowledge that the current Lismore council inherited a \$3 million debt caused by the Global Financial Crisis. However, apparently insufficient action was taken to address this issue and during the years since then the debt doubled.

Surely this is negligent financial oversight of the highest order. The newly-elected council of the time was surely obliged to make sure the debt which already existed was carefully managed with a view to decreasing the amount.

According to Vanessa Ekins, councillors put in many hours of work – and hence deserve the pay rise they recently voted to give themselves. Did not one of the councillors think to ask during the many hours of work they put in about how management of the \$3 million debt was progressing?

For a small regional city like Lismore, \$3 million is a significant amount, let alone the \$6 million which the debt increased to under the watch of our illustrious council.

Despite all this, our councillors appear proud of the fact that by cutting services to ratepayers they have finally addressed the black hole of a \$6 million deficit which they formerly mismanaged. Pay rise for

them, rate rise for us – including rent rises for others as investment owners are not likely to want to carry the extra costs.

And there is still more to come! We are now being asked to comment on plans to bring in (another) Special Rate Variation for future years so that the services we already pay our rates for can be reinstated. These compulsory SRV imposts are just a way of getting around the government limit as to how much councils may charge ratepayers. Another rate rise by stealth.

As well, the concession rate granted to pensioners and others on welfare payments has effectively and significantly diminished in real terms. The concession amount has slightly increased for the first time in many years, but in no way makes up for the losses caused by exponentially rising council imposts.

Roll on the next council elections and let's have some caring, compassionate and competent people voted onto council.

One of Lismore Council's cash cows, i.e. ratepayer,  
Patricia Files  
Lismore

## War posturing

The financial world is teetering. Gold is rising fast in price, and the Dow Jones stock exchange magic number has just dropped severely, partly as a response to Trump's ludicrous China trade war.

Whereas Trump was elected on a platform of repairing international relations, he is now playing the warmonger card. One wonders if Mueller's semi-exoneration of Trump at the end of Mueller's investigation resulted in Trump's peaceful intentions being brought to heel. A nasty deal.

The warmongers in Washington seem hell-bent on strangling any country formerly listed as a target. Remember the list? Libya, Iraq, Syria, Venezuela, Iran, Russia... all countries which had independent banking policies and oil.

Oil, the addiction and money, the power tool.

In particular, the USA wields its SWIFT interbank transfer system to sanction

NGT welcomes letters and other contributions received by email or post prior to deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be edited for length, and articles for accuracy. Please include your full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

and penalise countries which don't agree with the USA world domination aim.

Trump called President Xi his enemy last week, and is now sending warships to Iran's ports. All the better to cause a false flag disaster and thus start spending more on arms, which might just help stave off the recession the IMF says is inevitable.

A war with Iran would be a nuclear war, with Russia and China backing up Iran.

It is astonishing to me, that most of the world goes along with the US' warlike behavior and endless propaganda. Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and Libya lie bleeding and impoverished by US wars that were based on false claims.

Yet the world seems to accept a new round of false claims, vicious sanctions and war posturing, a populace more abjectly docile than ever. So sad.

Dr Liz Elliott  
Billinudgel

## Clearing 5G confusion

Three letters in August's NGT attempted to refute my claims that 5G EMR is harmless.

First let's get things in perspective. The energy of a 5G 100GHz photon is equivalent to the thermal energy of a molecule at a temperature of 4.7K whereas our bodies operate at 310K. Thus any putative effects from 5G would be wiped out 64 times over by our body temperature, so you would have to cool people down to below liquid helium temperatures to observe any 5G effects.

Secondly, the chemistry of life is basically similar and robust to the extent that genes from ancestors of the first archeobacteria are currently used to multiply human DNA. So Sapoty Brook's quaint notion that small animals and insects, that have evolved for the same 3.8 billion years as us, with the same chemistry as us, are in any way more fragile because of size, is nonsense.

Thirdly despite Menkit's claim to the contrary, we are not electrical/magnetic beings. True, electric potentials travel from our brain (or spinal cord) to muscles etc, or back to our brain from sensors on nerve endings, but those voltage signals are created by sodium

and potassium ion gate pumps in the nerve cell walls which are insulated from the body by a myelin sheath. In contrast, every cell in our bodies (except red blood cells) have protein structures threaded through the cell wall with a molecular receptor outside the cell ending with, typically, enzyme activators inside the cell.

This allows a three-tiered signalling system for our bodies. The first tier is chemical signals from adjacent cells with touching walls. The second tier is molecules recognised by the receptor which diffuse from the source to nearby cells and for which the receptor is sensitive to the molecular concentration and so cuts off with distance. The third tier of receptors is sensitive to whole body signals via molecules released into the blood supply that then activate selectively the cells which are sensitive to that molecule. So we are best described as chemical beings. Apart from our hair standing on end, there is no evidence that we have biological structures to detect external electric fields, nor EMR at radio frequencies or ELF.

Replying to Sapoty, because the misinformers show pictures of fragmented DNA clouds claimed to be the result

of 5G EMR, I showed that 5G was incapable of breaking even the weakest bonds in DNA and also was incapable of disrupting the sulphur-sulphur and hydrogen-hydrogen bonds in folded proteins with the implication that all the stronger bonds are safe too.

But in Sapoty's list of "sub-bond" energies are molecular rotation which takes 50 times more energy to rotate than the bond energies I described (see for instance: <https://socratic.org/organic-chemistry-1>). You will also see there that electrons do not have what could be described as a "position" on a molecule but instead have a wave function which when solved for that molecule gives a probability density for the electron. Ion gates use significant biochemical energy to operate. Can you tell me what you mean by "energy resonances" in this context?

In reply to Tanina, I hope it's clear that I do not promote the implementation of 5G, nor the erosion of our right to privacy – a right we have to assert, but which can hardly be made much worse than now by 5G. What I am saying is that an increase in EMR via 5G is not a physiological problem and I am saying there is not any reproducible

# Notices

## Markets at Rock Valley Hall

Sunday 22nd September, 8am – midday. Breakfast by Cawongla Preschool, plus Alfred's coffee cart. Craft items, books, plants, clothes and lots more. Stalls \$10. Enquiries 6629-3329 or Rock Valley Hall on Facebook

## Car boot sale

Nimbin Central School Car Boot Sale, Sunday 27th October, 8am-1pm. Stalls \$10 each, all fees go to NCS's new solar panels. Call Fiona on 0414-623-603 to book.

## CWA Raffle

The CWA Raffle will be drawn at the Nimbin Show on 22nd September. A range of local gifts and vouchers from generous individuals and businesses. First prize includes a large, beautifully-crafted basket by Moksha. We will have a stall at the Show in Sustainability Alley and be selling tickets at the Wednesday market and on the street. Stop and have a yarn with us and buy a ticket.

## Annual General Meeting

Nimbin Organic Food Co-op AGM, Monday 7th October, 6pm in the Green Room, Nimbin Community Centre. All members welcome

## Trash and Treasure

The Blue Knob Market will hold its annual Trash and Treasure this Saturday, the 7th of September between 9am and 1pm. Bric-a-brac, second hand building materials and books, fabulous clothing, many surprises, a plant stand by Lisa Lucken and music by Andy Walker. Come and visit the market, the gallery and Café every Saturday from 8.30am to noon, featuring local produce, ferments, seedlings, and artisan crafts.

## Wanted: BackYarders

Opportunity for one or more persons to help out at the BackYarders. This would be only an occasional job, but is an excellent chance to connect with your local growers, learn about our seasonal produce, and become a vital part of the community's food system. Come by the Blue Knob Market and ask at the BackYarders stall for more information.





## Rebecca Hamlyn

17/12/1964 – 23/7/2019

It is sad news that our Rebecca has passed away at 5.20pm on 23rd July in Lismore Hospital. She battled with illness for some time, but to no avail in the end. She was a true loving spirit who gave well to life and lived it well – a Bohemian in parts.

Her early life started in Australia and in her late teens moved to London where she worked for some time, then did a fine arts degree with honours and had many successful showings of her sculpture and painting.

Rebecca always had a love of animals and the top were horses. She moved back to Australia and soon after got involved in horse rescue groups and helped to save many badly treated horses and other animals.

She moved around for a while before settling in Nimbin and found 30 acres and made it a horse healing farm along with her own horses, Billy Strider, Blue Hero, and many more. She was a real trooper for the horses and was respected dearly.

The thought of her will always brighten up our dark days with her green-eyed smile.

I would like to thank all the people for their love and help on her send-off day.

– Vic Florey

evidence (and I have looked at it) showing biological effects of 5G frequencies other than thermal effects. Yes, there's good evidence showing some animals navigate by magnetoreception, but no evidence to my knowledge that EMR frequencies can disrupt this. Can you tell me of any?

Within days of the claim that pigeons, insects and other birds had fled the Mt Nardi tower region I went up there and found Brown pigeons close by, calling from three different directions, butterflies flitting about and small insectivorous birds feeding. Though that rumour, a classic example of confirmation bias, of life deserting the phone towers atop Mt Nardi (but ignoring the far more powerful TV EMR), a rumour so easily debunked, peculiarly remains, to this day, refractory.

As regards ARPANSA and ICNIRP regulations, my approach is independent. I am showing that not one photon at 5G frequencies can make any changes they unfairly get blamed for, whereas the regulations are for thermal effects at radio frequencies and are very conservative.

I've dealt with some of Menkit's misconceptions of

how living beings operate and come now to Martin Pall whose claims are devoid of even a basic understanding of Quantum Physics (eg the photo-electric effect) and even lack a comprehension of arithmetic when discussing voltage gated calcium ion channels in cell walls. I can go through the detail if needed, but anyone who gives him credibility needs protection against scammers.

If you have a look at the Schumann Resonance signal generated by about 200 uncorrelated lightning strikes per second anywhere around the planet which are then reflected between the ground and ionosphere to get to you, it looks like an incomprehensible series of noisy spikes. It takes a digital signal processor to pick out fundamentals and harmonics.

We don't have the means of detection for the 300 microvolt Schumann signal and our encephalograph signals range from 2Hz to 100Hz. Considering that, is the Schumann 7.83Hz-Brain frequency link anything but conceit? NB not Schumann himself, he's innocent. The 5G tree chopping myth is another that lives on without evidence – is there some?

Have I missed anything?

Alan Roberts  
Bentley

## One less smile at Blue Knob

by Eric Smith

Those who frequent the BackYarders stall at Blue Knob Farmers Market (and many others, no doubt) will remember Guenther Grangl, who provided eggs, honey, bananas both fresh and dried, and many other products from his farm on Stony Chute, and took over the stall when needed.

A few Saturdays ago, he dropped off stock for the market, went home to tackle a fence job on the property that he shared with his partner Marg, and then went to bed and died in his sleep.

He had a passion for farming and biodynamics, and was always willing to



share information. He was always willing to help, and he was always there with a smile. He was involved in his local fire brigade, and also the A&I committee running the Nimbin Show. He was born in an old stone-walled city in Austria, but was an Aussie through and through, moving here as an electrical apprentice at the age of 19.

He will be missed by us all.



## Stephen John Smith

29/11/1962 - 20/7/2019

Memorial Service: Saturday 7th September,  
12pm at Nimbin Bush Theatre

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NNIC is seeking casual staff for our Vacation Care program (5-12 year olds) which runs during school holidays.

**Assistant Coordinator** – must have Primary School teacher or other relevant qualifications. Max 15 days' employment per year. To assist our program coordinator with program supervision.

**Casual child care staff** – must have Cert 2 or higher children's services qualifications, or be in the process of obtaining min Cert 2.

For a copy of the Job Kit or for more info, contact NNIC on 6689-1692 or email: [admin@nnic.org.au](mailto:admin@nnic.org.au)



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Rainbow Ridge School for Steiner Education  
279 Lillian Rock Road, Phone: 02-66897033  
Email: [admin@rainbowridge.nsw.edu.au](mailto:admin@rainbowridge.nsw.edu.au)

## COMMUNITY CENTRE ROOM FOR LEASE



Available for lease is a small (7.98m<sup>2</sup>) self-contained room suitable for an office or studio space, in the Figtree building behind the market stage at the Nimbin Community Centre. (Entry in forefront of image.) Rent from \$116.47/month (net GST) for non-profit. Commercial rates available on application. Call: 6689-0000  
Email: [ncci@nimbincommunity.org.au](mailto:ncci@nimbincommunity.org.au)

## About us

Managing editor Bob Dooley

Assistant editor Sue Stock

Layout Peter Chaplin, Andy

Gough, Bob Dooley

Photographers Sue Stock, Bob

Dooley, Omega Breakspear

Distribution Peter, Coralie,

Sue, Bob, Rob and Lisa, Daniel,

Dominique, Aengus, Rosie,

Trevor and Dave, and Soul

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The Nimbin GoodTimes acknowledges the Bundjalung people, the traditional owners of the land and waters on which we work and live, and pay our respects to the Elders both past and present.

Bookkeeper Martha Paitson  
Web [www.nimbingoodtimes.com](http://www.nimbingoodtimes.com)  
And find us on Facebook

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## NEXT DEADLINE:

Wednesday 25th September

Email [nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com](mailto:nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com) or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.



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Kevin Hogan and Paul Le Bars at the Nimbin District Memorial



by Janelle Saffin  
Member for Lismore

Minor Premiers: Lismore MP Janelle Saffin and grandson Gabriel pictured with Nimbin Headers' Division 2 men's squad before their game against Richmond Rovers, which they won 6-2.

Nimbin Headers Sports Club has played an important role in developing football and tennis skills, together with promoting social cohesion in the local community since it was established in 1985.

I took my grandson Gabriel, who has just taken up football, to two of the Headers' Division 2 men's matches, one at home and the other at Richmond Rovers' ground in East Lismore.

At time of writing this column, the Division 2 men were minor premiers, looking the goods for a grand final berth and virtually guaranteed of promotion to Division 1 of the Football Far North Coast competition next season.

Nimbin Headers Sports Club has 187 players and many more supporters, a long-time major sponsor in the Nimbin Hotel and a hard-working committee of 18 volunteers, including President Fabien Provost and Vice-President Uri Ross.

Uri, who is a local real estate agent and fundraising manager for the club, took up football at the age of eight, has represented Far North Coast and still loves the game, lacing up for Division 2 every

Saturday.

Nimbin Headers is a privately-owned sports club, boasting two football fields off Cecil Street with the most picturesque backdrop of the Nightcap Ranges and social tennis courts in Cullen Street.

Uri tells me the club been running raffles at the Nimbin Hotel, around town and at the grounds to raise funds for its long-term plans to upgrade with match lighting, drainage of the second field, a new clubhouse and carpark. I was glad to recently support the club in its endeavours.

Uri says the club is considering selling its Cullen Street tennis courts in order to build a multi-purpose surface at Cecil Street which would accommodate futsal, volleyball, netball, basketball and tennis.

Being the only sporting club in Nimbin, the Headers field football teams in the following divisions.

Division 2: Men, Boys 16s, 14s and 12s  
Division 3: Women  
Division 4: Women  
Division 7: Men  
14s: All Blacks girls  
Under-12s Miniros: Grades 6, 8, 9 and 11  
Football Far North

by Kevin Hogan MP  
Member for Page

It was great to catch up with Paul Le Bars recently. He needed a new Australian flag.

Paul is the caretaker of the Nimbin District Memorial and is the organiser of ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day Services.

He is a member of the Nimbin Neighbourhood & Information Centre, life member of 2Nim-FM Community Radio and the flag marshal within the Commonwealth Flag Network.

Thanks Paul for the wonderful work you do for our community.

The Agriculture Minister Senator Bridget McKenzie was in our community recently.

We met with Norco to discuss its \$30 million expansion, the co-operative Farming Together program at SCU, local dairy farmers,

beef producers, chicken farmers, pork producers and macadamia growers.

Good discussions about ensuring agricultural sustainability in our region.

We are continuing to make more medicines cheaper for more people.

This month we have invested \$56 million to subsidise four medicines to help patients living with debilitating and often life threatening conditions.

Under the PBS, treatments for brain tumours, leukaemia and inflammatory disease of the large blood vessels will be available for just \$40.30 per script, or \$6.50 with a concession card.

Since 2013, we have listed over 2,000 new or amended items on the PBS. This represents an average of around 31 listings per month – or one each day – at an overall cost of around \$10.6 billion.





## From the mayor's desk

By the time you read this the Nimbin Performance Poetry World Cup will probably be done and dusted. The losing orators cast aside and the winners held aloft by the cheers and adulation of the masses.

Sadly the days of challenging public orators and thought provoking rhetoric seem far behind us. But this competition goes from strength to strength and the crowds are sure to be moved, blessed, confronted and amused by each turn of phrase.

As a student of philosophy, I love the chance to hear a speaker at their best. Really listening to original ideas and expression in the form of poetry can be a mind blowing experience. It can lift us out of the ordinary and place us deeply in a greater shared truth. You never quite understand how and why you got there, as you only know it happened as the feeling leaves you. This is the power of the sublime.

Elsewhere it is good to see the emerging sustainable food culture continues to grow and

find expression. Nose to tail, paddock to plate, leaf to root, top to bottom, beginning to end. No matter how you slice it, life as we know it now and into the future needs to be about sustaining life and reducing waste.

It was great to be in Casino at the start of this week for the opening of the New Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange. For Lismore to thrive and grow, we need focus. That means not doing things the same way we used to. It also means not doing everything.

Over the past few decades we have seen our passengers go to Ballina and our cattle go to Casino and that is OK. There are better ways to grow an economy than making everything a competition between the towns that are 30 minutes away from us. We can focus on what Lismore does well and grow businesses that compliment and support the region.

My week is ending at the Sample Food Festival, hence the introduction. So I will be looking at the food from all angles this week. It is again

by Cr Isaac Smith,  
Lismore City Council

reinforcing the feedback and information we are getting about agriculture and our future success as a region. Farming and tourists is a real win and that's great for Lismore.

This year's Sample food festival in Bangalow is bigger than ever with more primary producers, restaurants and food entrepreneurs. Not to mention some great shows and entertainment. It is the perfect foil to Lismore's award-winning Eat the Street, held six months ago, which brings tens of thousands into the heart of the region.

Working with these big events will strengthen our own, just like working with producers helps with food sustainability. Lismore, in the heart of our region, needs to be at the heart of agribusiness solutions. We need to set ourselves the ambitious target of leading the world of sustainable agriculture in the next ten years.

And I don't think there is a thing that can stop us.

# Thursday vigils for refugees

by Brigid Carr

For four years, a small dedicated group of people have been gathering on the footpath outside Kevin Hogan's office.

They come from as far afield as Casino, Kyogle and Ballina and from all walks of life.

We gather under the auspices of Amnesty International to protest against our government's policy of indefinite detention of refugees who arrived by boat six years ago and were thus deemed illegal immigrants by the Australian government.

They were put in detention centres, about two-thirds offshore on Manus Island and Nauru and one-third in Australia.

Over 70 per cent of the people on Manus Island and 83% of those on Nauru have been found to be genuine refugees.

The split was arbitrary, families were split up indiscriminately and to date, have not been reunited.

The Australian tax payers have paid in excess of \$12 billion to keep roughly 2000 refugees from being settled in Australia.

We want to keep this issue in the public eye, as it is all too easy to forget the plight of people kept out of sight and subject to incorrect propaganda by the government and sections of the media.

Although about half the refugees in offshore detention have gone to America under a deal forged between Malcolm Turnbull and Barack



Photo: Tony Batchelor

Obama, the remaining refugees have little hope of reasonable re-settlement options.

Most of them are now mentally ill from the stress of their situation and a lot are also physically ill.

There have been numerous instances of self-harm and

suicide attempts since the re-election of the LNP government.

We would welcome more people to join us between 4 and 5pm any Thursday afternoon outside Kevin Hogan's office in Molesworth Street, next to the Westpac bank.

## Building community resilience

At our August meeting, my Climate Emergency motion was successfully adopted and Lismore City Council became the 33rd Australian Council to declare a Climate Emergency.

As part of the motion, as well as making that declaration, Council reaffirms our commitment to our Renewable Energy Master Plan; will engage in consultation with the community about Climate Change and Emergency Preparedness; and will work to build community resilience by strengthening our relationships with local Emergency Services.

I have just returned from Melbourne where I attended the Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience Conference. The opening keynote of that Conference was given by Dr Robert Glasser, who is the former head of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

The presentation was incredibly sobering and quite scary. His message to the conference was very clear – we are already seeing more

**Word of the Bird**  
by Cr Elly Bird

disasters, and they are likely to increase exponentially as we head towards 2°C and beyond.

Given the prominence of his keynote which was delivered to three thousand people from across Australia's emergency services sector it's abundantly clear that response agencies across the country are working as fast as they can to get ready.

But, given the scale of what might lie ahead of us, if there is one clear message I can give to you out of that conference, and from all the work I have been doing since the floods in 2017, it is this – you cannot rely on the Emergency Services to save you if you are caught in a bushfire, a flood or any other emergency.

They are incredibly skilled and do a fantastic job, but you must be prepared and ready to act for yourself.

This is particularly important as we head into spring. The bushfire

season is well upon us with a number of serious local fires already and I urge you to think about what you will do if a fire happens near you.

If you don't already have it on your phone, you should install the RFS 'Fires Near Me' app which is the best source of up-to-date fire information, and there are also links within the app to help you prepare your bushfire survival plan.

And, even though it's incredibly dry at the moment, if you live anywhere on the flood plain, you should prepare a flood plan as well.

The SES have good resources and the Red Cross 'Get Prepared' App is another useful planning tool.

Of course, one of the best things you can do to prepare yourself is to get connected to your community.

It's community connections and relationships that are the key to resilience, if you know your neighbours and you know your community, there will always be people to help if things go sideways.

So, on that note, I'd like to give a



Planning Riverfest with the SES are (l-r) Paul VonBratt, John Ludlow, Janet Petit, Elly Bird, Corinne Tait and Aliison Kelly.

little plug to a community event I've been working on that is happening this weekend in Lismore.

'Riverfest – Our River, Our Community' is happening on Saturday 7th September from 10am to 4pm at Riverside Park, underneath the Ballina Street bridge.

It's going to be a great day out and a good opportunity to have a chat

with the SES, hear from a great range of speakers talking about River Health, and enjoy some great music in a beautiful park by the river.

I hope to see you there – more information at: [facebook.com/resilientlismore](https://facebook.com/resilientlismore)

As always I can be contacted at: [elly.bird@lismore.nsw.gov.au](mailto:elly.bird@lismore.nsw.gov.au) or on 0418-639-927.



# Climate chaos not climate change

by Bernadine Schwartz

If you're fully aware that global warming has the potential to end all our days, you are probably beginning to panic like myself, while the rest of the population seems to think that what you don't know won't hurt you.

July was the hottest month in history for the whole world and according to climate models, the temperatures and climatic conditions experienced in the northern hemisphere were 50 years ahead of schedule.

So brace yourself because Mother Earth is in the driver's seat now, with or without our consent and all of us are on the cusp of a momentous change.

The heatwave, that English weather forecasters called a danger to life, was 3,215 kilometres wide and extended all the way from the Mediterranean to Scandinavia and didn't only cause unbearable temperatures but held deadly levels of nitrous oxide and volatile organic

compounds that are harmful to all ecosystems and all that live in them.

This heatwave was the cause of cracks forming on Germany's autobahns as well as cruises along the Danube that had to be cancelled due to extremely low water levels. While in France, the heatwave left beekeepers with the task of feeding their starving bees syrup in an attempt to keep them alive.

In Paris, it became necessary to shutdown two nuclear reactors in an effort to limit the heating of water used to cool them and all these episodes clearly demonstrate how vulnerable we, and our entire infrastructure really are.

Orchards across Europe have also paid dearly with the loss of many trees, including some a century old and the forests are faring no better, with trees either suffering severely or dying.

Across to America, lakes in the Pacific north west and the entire Mississippi coast were forced to ban all aquatic activities due to unprecedented blooms of deadly Cyanobacteria,



caused by the oppressive heat and in Northern California mussels actually cooked in their shells, leaving every mussel bed completely dead.

Greenland is home to the second largest ice sheet on the planet and is living proof that something is seriously wrong, when 197 billion tons of ice melted and flooded the Atlantic Ocean in a single month and it's expected to lose 440 billion tons by the end of summer, enough to flood all of Greece by 30 centimetres.

A state of emergency was declared in Russia, where wildfires are still burning and caused 11 of 49 regions to be engulfed in flames, including Siberia where they are burning uncontrollably because of the melting permafrost, with grave concerns that they could burn throughout the winter.

Up to now, Siberia has lost 4.3 million hectares of taiga forests, releasing tons of methane and carbon that created a cloud covering 4.5 million square kilometres

over north Central Asia, affecting the air quality in many cities and gradually crossed the Pacific Ocean to the US.

Spain is also struggling to control raging wildfires and even the Canary Islands, where 8,000 people had to flee their homes, and in Alaska 682 wildfires have consumed a total of 2.5 million acres.

A new study, completed by the International Labour Organisation, has shown that heat stress alone is

having a severe impact on productivity and in the near future climate change will have a disastrous effect on all the world's economies with the loss of millions of jobs.

California is a glimpse into what the future holds for many regions of the world, especially Australia.

Since 2012, they have not had a single month without a wildfire burning, leaving no time for nature to recover and because these fires create extreme temperatures they consume not only the vegetation but the vital nutrients in the ground.

In previous reports from the IPCC, the emphasis for Australia has always been droughts and wildfires and already here in the Northern Rivers we have had a taste of things to come.

Society has got to stop clinging onto the system as if it were its life raft and be brave enough to step outside of its comfort zone and replace subservience with courage and conviction.

If we don't, our children are destined to have no future and we will surely become the last of our species.

# Morrison government explores nuclear option

by Ken Jones, Rainbow Power Company

As recently put by a well-read commentator, we live in the Age of Mumpsimus, that is, an age characterised by clinging to traditional customs or notions although shown to be unreasonable.

But the subject here is not dangerous nuclear power or dangerous climate change. It is dangerous economics.

On 2nd August 2019, Federal Energy Minister, Angus Taylor, asked the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy to investigate the nuclear fuel cycle.

As if we needed more proof that the loudest voices in this federal government are the least aware of the technology and economics of energy production and distribution in the 21st century, but more of that soon. First a quick recap on how we got to this point.

The economic arguments for transition to a carbon neutral economy have been made for over 10 years. The impetus was the threat of catastrophic climate change. The economists' mission was to avoid the dire economic consequences of climate change at least cost to the economy.

They advised an early start to replacing fossil fuels with safe low-cost renewable energy sources to achieve this at least cost to the economy but not all governments listened.

The Australian experience is that, in spite of inconsistent and, at times destructive government policy and mistakes, the renewables market has developed to the degree that solar power combined with battery storage is cheaper than coal fired power, even at the level of the individual household.

And nuclear power is vastly more expensive than coal fired power even without counting the cost of safe storage of nuclear waste for a thousand years.

The extreme right wing of the Federal Coalition Government just doesn't get the economic facts. But they are not alone. This denial of the bleeding obvious is symptomatic of a malaise that is far more widespread.



Bodies such as the Minerals Council of Australia, the nuclear lobby, right wing think tanks and shock jocks, even the union funded peak body Industry Super Australia produce position papers, reports, commentary and 'news' articles that deny the demonstrable economic facts.

On the other hand, informed economic bodies are producing reports that clearly show the economic advantages of renewables right now.

The Australian Energy Market Operator has produced a 20 year transition plan which could see 85% of electricity coming from renewable sources by 2040. This is a conservative plan designed to utilize current assets and guarantee energy security.

BNP Paribas (the world's 8th largest bank, operating in 77 countries) produced a report for professional investors in August 2019 stating that, over the next 25 years, it will cost five times as much to produce power for petrol vehicles compared to electric vehicles powered by renewable energy.

Research organisations such as BloombergNEF and others continue to present the facts clearly and big investors are taking note. Even the International Energy Agency, a proponent of nuclear power, admits that nuclear plants cost four times more to build now than 15 years ago.

NewEconomy editor Giles Parkinson points

out that "While the cost of solar has fallen 95 per cent over the past decade, and the cost of battery storage by some 70 per cent, the cost of nuclear has more than trebled upwards."

The purely economic facts are self evident at a glance:

- nuclear power is extremely expensive now and in the future, it will take 20 years to build a plant if we start tomorrow and it's dangerous for 1,000 years;
- fossil fuel based power is expensive and it produces pollution that is dangerous to health as well as carbon dioxide which is dangerous to the entire planet;
- renewable energy is already the cheapest and getting cheaper, it is safe, non-polluting and it will not run out.

Unlike King Canute who tried to stop the incoming tide by decree, both large and small players in the market, can see the incoming tide of renewable energy clearly and are voting with their wallets.

This is in spite of a federal policy vacuum, myriad uncoordinated state energy policies and well intentioned government subsidy schemes that distort the market, at times to crisis point (the current crisis in the Victorian solar installation market is a prime example).

Investment in renewables is in the billions of dollars nationally on an annual basis and is growing rapidly. People are investing in renewables regardless of their position on



manmade dangerous climate change because renewable energy is already cheaper and every rigorous analysis points to costs dropping even further.

So this begs the question: Why are so many, for whom economics is usually dear to the heart, denying the economic facts? This is likely for a variety of reasons: refusal to believe technological changes; vested interests of various kinds, blind ideology; perhaps simply mumpsimus of unknown origin.

Whatever the reason, it is one thing to deny the overwhelming body of peer reviewed scientific evidence of dangerous climate change but it is another, entirely, to expend hard to come by dollars and cents irrationally.

That might have some rationality if the reason is vested interest but it is far from serving the public interest.

It is dangerous for any government to leave a tossup between vested interest and mumpsimus on its part to the electorate, especially in this era when the fragile fabric of democracy is fraying before our very eyes.

The Australian people deserve a common sense energy policy and should demand one from the federal government: a policy based on sensible economics as well as a prudent approach to dangerous climate change.

Only a policy based on rapidly transitioning to energy obtained from renewable sources can deliver Australia both.



# Economic growth Ponzi scheme

There is so much one could write about at the moment. We are living in a 'pick your own apocalypse' kind of theme park. What will it be, global fascism, nuclear war, economic and social collapse or climate catastrophe? Well my bet is that the major economic collapse is going to rearrange our lives much sooner than expected, and it may not be such a bad thing for the planet either. We are living in mad and dangerous times.

At the very time that we need to be selecting national and international leaders that take a rational, science-based and constructive approach to the not-insurmountable challenges that surround us, there has instead been a retreat into denial, and maladaptive political responses such as conservatism and its violent big brother fascism.

At the heart of the panic and denial feeding the lies and scapegoating is the sheer illogic of our global economic system. Climate change is only one of the symptoms of an economic system that has invented its own rules and cut itself adrift from the reality of the physical life-world.

The perpetual economic growth algorithm that modern capitalism (and not traditional capitalism) has grown to depend upon defies physics. It is a giant Ponzi scheme in which wealth, and the value of stock exchanges and just about everything else (house prices) has to continually expand constantly and forever.

In order to keep this Ponzi scheme afloat we have progressively cut the bonds between our economic system and physical reality. Every time the Ponzi scheme starts to approach its critical limits, new and more imaginary ways of increasing the slew of money in the system are adopted, because like the addiction that it has become it seems simply too big to be allowed to fail.

Once upon a time, countries needed to hold a gold reserve to underwrite the money they printed and distributed. But we threw that away, another step into economic fantasy land. Once upon a time banks needed to hold deposits to cover the money they could lend out, but we threw that sensible limit away.

For decades now, banks have been able to simply lend money to anyone they think can repay it into the future. Debt rather than real wealth has become the life blood of the Ponzi scheme, and it is skyrocketing around the globe, sovereign debt, personal debt, all of it.

The 2008 GFC was a mere shudder in the Ponzi scheme, and it was responded to by more 'quantitative easing' which means more slushing the system with debt-fuelled play money. This has been mostly accomplished by endlessly reducing interest rates ever closer to the baseline of zero.

So get the picture, banks invent money on paper and then

offer you a loan to repay money that never actually existed, and it looks attractive to you because the interest rate is so low.

Debt is a charge on the future. What is being charged? your future labour, and the planet's resources. Quite literally there is not enough planet left to satisfy the trillions of dollars in debt that is expected to be repaid so there's a big problem on the way.

Seemingly unrelated, the Federal Government now wants to criminalise cash transactions over \$10,000. To manage the black economy, we are told. Never mind the tax havens revealed in the Panama papers where the elites launder their digital wealth, it's way more important to chase down the tradies and drug dealers for the cash.

Well that would all seem a bit reasonable until you realise the implications of banning cash.

As interest rates approach zero, the Ponzi scheme is running out of 'levers' to stimulate economic growth. Bizarrely, the world is now crossing the barrier into negative interest rates. In a number of countries, government bonds are now being sold at negative rates.

Think about this, serious investors are deciding that they are safer spending \$1000 now to get \$900 back in a decades time than investing it anywhere else. What does that tell you about what those investors are expecting?

Ok so you have some savings do you? But what when the bank refuses to pay you interest but instead wants to charge you negative interest to hold your money for you? You might refuse, you might stuff it in your mattress instead.

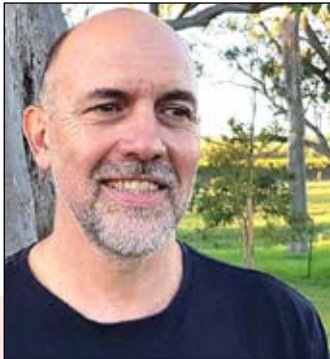
The cash ban is there to support the advent of negative interest rates. Forget whether its \$10,000 today, it could be as low as \$1000 in a few years' time.

I'm no mattress stuffer, but plenty of people who witnessed the banks take people's savings in the last great depression don't trust banks. The cash ban effectively makes it compulsory to put any savings you have into the bank and to have to pay for the privilege.

OK, so I hear you, you don't have any savings, like most people you have either almost no money at all or you have a big debt, probably for your house. Well that too is exactly how its been engineered.

Savings have been discouraged for a long time now, the scheme requires all the money to be in circulation. Noticed how the banks want to push credit cards onto you? And how the mantra of the era is always spend-borrow-spend?

Your personal debt and your personal obligation to repay it into the future with your sweat and tears is how the ever increasing amounts of cash are being injected to keep the perpetual growth algorithm alive. You and I owe the money,



by Aidan Ricketts

our governments owe the money and it's our burden to keep the stock markets growing.

So first there was science denial when the evidence of the physical limits of the earth's capacity to support endless growth became too inconvenient. Now we are witnessing the beginning of maths denial.

Negative interest rates don't make sense, they never have and they never could. The fact that our economy is resorting to an even more ridiculous fiction to stave off economic collapse should serve as a very loud alarm to us all.

My advice, DO NOT get fooled into the euphoria of borrowing more money because it is so cheap to do so. Negative interest rates mean you are virtually being paid to borrow money, but don't forget it still puts you in debt. It's your back that is going to be holding up the Ponzi scheme.

Back away now, just slowly and quietly in whatever way you can, back away. If you can close off any debts you have, get it done as soon as you can. If you own land debt-free, that is called real estate because well, it's actually real. Keep it, and start to work out how to grow food on it.

We are blessed in the Northern Rivers with the regenerative vision of our new settlers, the multiple occupancies have secured low cost housing and farmland that can be turned to food production. Our collective communities mostly don't belong to banks, we are lucky, they refused to lend for MO shares.

There were so many things I could have written about this month, the QLD Labor government's anti-protest laws, the deliberate burning of the Amazon, the need to get into the local forests to halt the habitat loss and extinction of koalas (yes do this too), but watching the world lurch toward negative interest rates and compulsory banking is a sign of impending economic collapse.

It may not be all bad, business as usual is the problem for this planet, it is driving extinction. An economic reckoning is long overdue. We simply cannot continue to have an economic system that defies physics, and even less so one that now defies maths.

In the words of someone from the past it may just be "the recession we had to have".

# Debt shakedown

by Dr Liz Elliott

The financial world is teetering. Gold is climbing fast and the US stock exchange has lost value. Perhaps this is the beginning of the major depression the International Monetary fund, the infamous IMF, has warned us about all year.

There are great solutions to our unsustainable economy, but the IMF won't let on!

A major crash is inevitable soon, because the conditions which gave us the 2008 Global Financial Crisis are worse than ever; massive derivative holdings, poor real production, jobs in non-productive 'lifestyle' sectors and huge debts. No-one went to gaol for the cruelties of the 2008 recession, except in Iceland. No-one got personally blamed for the toxic financial culture, the corrupt accounting systems, the lies. Meanwhile, worldwide, millions lost homes and jobs.

In fact, the banks got bailed out and ordinary people suffered with austerity measures. Wall Street helped themselves to bail-ins, as much as 17 trillion dollars of debt, according to Bernie Sanders, while Main Street, small businesses, went broke. Those bailout monies did not go to productive investment, but to mergers and CEO rewards, whereas taxpayers still carry the debt. Worldwide, debt is 360% of world income.

Australia, co-dependent on China, which is outside the Central Bank system, was buffered by China's ability to ride out the storm in 2008. Australia is now more deeply in household debt than Ireland or Argentina just before their crashes, 120% times household income.

Half of renters say they are worried about homelessness, and shanty villages are popping up near towns in Western Australia, where mortgage stress now affects 30% plus of people. Such stress leads to social breakdown and illness.

If there is a crisis, there will be a credit contraction and small business will have trouble employing people, there will be difficulties paying for imports and even for welfare payments. Social unrest is likely.

The banks, sensing another crisis, but much worse this time, are setting up schemes to prop themselves up when a credit crisis arrives. Through the influence of the Bank of International Settlements (BIS) and the Central Banks of the world, 'bail-in' laws have been enacted. Australia's was passed in February 2018, and allows for deposits to be stolen by the banks in the case of a credit meltdown.

A new law likely to be passed in early September 2019, bans cash transactions over \$10,000, but already the financiers are asking for a two thousand limit. This is to herd small business' assets into the digital economy where banks can suck it out if needed. Negative interest on savings is another likely move, which will precipitate a run on cash, crypto currencies and gold.

What could trigger another crisis? Australian mortgage debt is one possibility, Italian business debt another, General Electric fraudulent accounting, Baoshang bank collapse and Deutsche Bank derivative exposure...the list goes on. Like a row of dominoes, one default could drag down the whole crazy edifice.

Another big factor is war, long a profitable exercise for big corporations, it results in suffering to the victims, usually brown people, and loss of infrastructure at home. Currently Trump is being aggressive towards Iran, Venezuela and China, using SWIFT international transfer system to penalize countries with inability to use credit cards ability and vicious sanctions.

On top of this we have major climate chaos and food production losses happening now and exponentially

declining in the next five years.

Both major Australian political parties dance to the tune of the Big Banks. The extraordinary thing is that the Labor Party supports the Central Bank dictates. The Liberal party knows the situation is unstable and unsustainable, but opts for more debt as an answer. Kicking the can down the road!

More immigration, more construction, first home buyers' carrots, reduced lending standards and so more debt. No-one wants to face the difficult restructure of the economy to a sustainable future where we are not servants of the Big Banks.

### Solutions

Firstly, stay informed and study the causes of financial crises. When we have one, the Murdoch propaganda machine will blame the poor, the foreigners, debtors; one needs to be ready to explain to neighbours the true cause; bank speculation and political mismanagement. Once the causes are understood people can demand true solutions.

We need a new Bretton Woods international conference to change the rules of banking so that the US does not have an unfair advantage. At home, we need a Glass Steagall Law to protect homeowners from having their homes absorbed by failing banks as they try to plug the derivative hole. Glass Steagall means separating gambling banking from boring banking which helps homeowners and farmers.

The major solution is a new Public Bank. This would fund infrastructure, smaller farms and small business. Such a bank operated in Australia, Canada and New Zealand for the beginning part of the last century and created a huge boom in the countries it served. 40% of the world still banks with such institutions, they are easily set up, proven and basically recycle interest monies to the good of the nation, not the hyper-wealthy.

Ellen Brown has written clear straightforward blogs and books on Public Banking. 13 U.S. States have or are in the process of setting up such bank. In Australia, the CEC website defends better banking. Bob Katter, Pauline Hanson, the Greens and other minor parties support a New Common Wealth Bank.

There are other options for financing, too. Small and local banks and credit unions need supporting. In Germany these banks are the norm and have inspired much innovation and wealth. Local currencies are also great. They tend to arise when there is a credit crunch, as in Greece. The rules for these are available on the net at Community Forge. Cryptocurrencies may be part of the solution but have problems including huge greenhouse emissions.

Gold is worth buying now before it skyrockets. Australia should demand its 80 tonnes of gold back from the UK where it is 'stored'. The British Empire, Brexit and the London City Banking system is responsible for much suffering and financial centralization. We need an independent foreign policy and more self-reliance on Australian manufacture.

In your personal life, try to avoid and pay off debt, co-operate with others to utilise real estate fully and encourage local food, energy and water suppliers. Health and friendship circles are crucial, also local media and ancient methods to stabilise personal sanity to ride out upcoming crises.

As a group, we can achieve lots. The key thing we need to share with friends and younger persons is that we can turn this ship around, we can prosper when Big Banks do not call the tune. We can repair our environment, create part-time work for all, have a Universal Basic Income and heal our communities.

There is a clear path to sustainability.