

Declaring a climate emergency

US Journalist Greenwald facing cybercrime charges

I'm proud to say that Ballina Shire Council joined over 1300 jurisdictions from around the world (including most Northern Rivers Councils) in declaring a climate emergency towards the end of last year.

It was great to see that nine out of 10 councillors supported the declaration. Unfortunately, one Councillor thought the declaration was a "Greens campaign strategy" and couldn't bring himself to support the motion; this is in spite of numerous rural and regional Councils already supporting the 'strategy'.

In proposing the motion to Ballina Shire Council, I did so in part due to the terrible scenes that we've all witnessed over the last four or five months, in particular the burning of rainforest in SE Queensland that has never burned before and was once part of the Gondwana rainforest, dating back millions of years.

In order to increase the likelihood of gaining consensus for the declaration and take the 'left or right' out of the issue, I only quoted conservative institutions such as the CSIRO, the Bureau of Meteorology, the Reserve Bank of Australia and the Australian Insurance

Institute (hardly your stereotypical green activists). The CSIRO and the BOM have both acknowledged that Australia's temperature has already increased by more than one degree Celsius and that we are likely to reach the 1.5 degrees 'limit' in the next 10-30 years. This is quite confronting, as it highlights the urgency of the situation.

At the global Paris Climate Summit (2016) consensus was reached 'to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C in order to reduce the devastating impacts of climate change that will occur beyond this level.

In March last year, the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia, Guy Debelle, stated "1 degree of warming has already occurred from pre-industrial levels as a result of human activities" in his speech titled 'Climate Change and the Economy'.

For the vast majority of people, the debate about whether human induced Climate Change is real has long been decided.

Given that, the debate then shifts to the level of impact and the rate of change that must be achieved to prevent the global temperature from rising above 1.5° (the maximum increase agreed to at the Paris Agreement).



by Cr. Jeff Johnson
Ballina Shire Council

For too long the debate, particularly from the conservative side of politics has focused on one-line catch-phrases, seeking to make climate change a wedge issue by associating a rapid increase in renewable energy (and a phase out of coal) as "increasing electricity prices" and "costing jobs and export dollars".

Coal has no long-term future as an energy source and the sooner our parliaments can reach consensus on this the better. A huge milestone was achieved recently when the wholesale cost of renewables (large scale solar) in India fell below coal, resulting in the government cancelling the building of 14 gigawatts of proposed new coal fired

electricity generation. India has shelved or cancelled nearly 550 thermal coal projects in the past seven years with more projects likely to be cancelled as the price of renewables continues to fall.

A recent report by Bloomberg's New Energy Finance estimated the cost of solar and wind in India was now 50% cheaper than coal. Does this mean that Adani's main customer is no longer there?

Germany, one of the world's biggest consumers of coal, will shut down all 84 of its coal-fired power plants over the next 18 years to meet its international commitments in the fight against climate change.

This policy also has provisions for the retraining of affected workers and communities, which is something that Australia needs to work towards asap.

Hopefully the devastating bush fires that continue to rage in SE Australia are the final wake up call for coal wielding politicians and privately owned media organisations who continue to be beholden to the old guard (fossil fools) to the detriment of our environment and economy

After all, you can't have one without the other.

Glenn Greenwald (pictured) is a US investigative reporter, now living in Brazil, who won a Pulitzer Prize and several other major journalism awards for his revelations about the US and British global surveillance systems in his book, *No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA and the US Surveillance State*, based on classified documents released by Snowden.

On 21st January this year, Brazilian prosecutors charged Greenwald with cybercrimes, alleging he was part of a 'criminal organisation' that hacked the cellphones of prosecutors and other officials.

This was in response to an article he wrote based on emails that detail the judicial abuses that led to the jailing of Lula da Silva, the popular Workers Party candidate for president before the 2018 Brazil election, which greatly aided the election of the far right Bolsonaro government.

Greenwald called the charges an obvious attempt to attack a free press in retaliation for the revelations about Sergio Moro, the judge who imprisoned Lula da



Silva, and who was rewarded by Bolsonaro who appointed him Justice Minister.

As in the Assange case, a journalist is being subjected to the misuse of the legal system as a punishment for exposing corruption.

This is part of a disturbing trend: investigative journalists like Greenwald and Assange are under increasing attack from authoritarian governments.

The US government has rearrested whistleblower Chelsea Manning, while Edward Snowden is safe only because he is in exile from his own country.

Meanwhile in Australia, the AFP have carried out a raid on the ABC over a report on Afghan war crimes, and another whistleblower is prosecuted for exposing the Australian government's illegal spying on East Timor.

Nimbin Community Centre News

by Teresa Biscoe, Co-ordinator

The new year has started at a gallop with the RFS fundraiser, and it looks like we will have another busy and engaged year for 2020.

Last year we completed a project with the Nimbin Aged Care and Respite Service to install an outside table and bench seating in front of the Bottle Brush building. This is getting great use from the community and is being fully utilised.

This year the service is adding an indigenous elders room next to the main entrance of the building. They are just getting through the last of the approval processes and then work will begin.

The Community Centre is committed to working with community to support youth engagement. We will be consulting with the youth, the NNIC, the central school, local youth events like the Nimbin Youth Film Festival and local community to see how we can better support the young people of our community.

They are our future, and it is they who will be left with the legacy we create in our community.

We are working with the Aboriginal Cultural Centre to support First Nations cultural events and activities. Currently we are liaising with Darren McElroy, the Indigenous worker from the NH&W service, Gilbert Laurie from the Nimbin Aboriginal Cultural Centre, and Lou Bradley from the Nimbin Roots Festival to



develop an Indigenous performance program for the festival to showcase Indigenous performers. We are currently looking for funding sources to help stage and develop this as part of the festival.

This year we will also be continuing with our Sticks and Stones sculpture exhibition, now

in its third year. Last year we reviewed the program, recognising its potential to be a showcase for concepts of sustainability, celebration of nature and community art and culture as it develops as an event.

We felt that we would like to work collaboratively with the

community to grow this event, and decided it was appropriate to support an established art event, and run the event alongside the School of Arts Spring show, 26th September to 11th October.

Last year we had a lovely performance of a Maypole dance from the students from Rainbow Ridge Steiner School for the opening of the exhibit. We would like to engage with the local schools to contribute to the exhibition and are seeking sponsorship for a schools prize to encourage participation.

We welcome the Nimbin branch of the CWA as new tenants to the Community Centre. They are moving into the big space in the building behind the Market Stage. It is wonderful to be able to include and support another great community not-for-profit organisation, and we look forward to working with them and seeing the activities and community contribution that they will bring to the centre.

Our casual hire calendar for the dance studio and the Birth and Beyond meeting room is filling up quickly with classes, meetings and events. There are some great activities and interesting community groups on offer, so if you're feeling like engaging in community, joining the Open Learning courses run by the Nimbin Community School, or improving your flexibility or fitness check out our online calendar. We are also very happy to assist in booking a space if you decide

you want to do something. Just email or phone the centre and the coordinators will help.

The big issues we are grappling with of course are centred around climate chaos and what we can do to protect and serve the tenants and the centre infrastructure into the future. Energy use, waste disposal, water storage and use, drought proofing gardens, temperature control inside buildings and in the grounds etc.

This will involve consultation and planning and we are currently identifying the issues and defining the scope. We will need some expert advice on the best way to move forward. Thank goodness the community via the Nimbin Sustainability Plan has already begun to identify and address some of these issues.

As recent events have shown, it will be communities and grass roots support working together, that have the understanding and political will to help themselves, that have any power to affect change and change outcomes.

The centre looks forward to working with the community to do what we do best in this village, let's find our own solutions, work with each other to find the way forward to sustain and support our community.

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Dave Rawlins: People need to feel it if they're going to protect it

by Greg Bork

“Right now, if you just stop, then you can feel it. If you’re walking, or working, or talking, when you stop you actually hear all the life; the creek’s flowing, the birds are calling, and for me there’s a complete sense of calmness about it. (Although there’s probably individual struggles with plants competing with each other and all other stuff going on!)

“For me, nature, not just the rainforest, but different forest types or anywhere in nature, is like the metaphor of the stable rock you can come back to and know it’s there. No matter what happens in your life, there’s always places like this that change your whole perspective of time.

“Concerns and stress and worries, you only have to come to a place like this and all that stuff gets washed away. In the bigger picture of my life, just knowing that places like this exist is important.”

Ecologist Dave Rawlins restores rainforest on a large property



bordering Inner Pocket Nature Reserve, near Main Arm.

“The fantastic thing about this property, and it’s a privilege to work here, is that it bounces back so quickly. After clearing the lantana a few years ago, you’re already walking beneath pencil cedars and bleeding hearts, and you know then that your job’s done basically, it’s working its way

back. It gives me great satisfaction knowing that.”

“I feel like a worker for the rainforest, indebted to work for it, almost out of gratitude and awe for what’s there, a responsibility, and it doesn’t even feel like work. There’s this sense of peace or of knowing that’s where to spend my time, or how to spend my life.

“You can intellectualise this

stuff and go, ‘You have to protect rainforest because of the amount of carbon it stores’, but people need to feel it if they’re going to protect it, that’s what it comes down to. In our culture, it’s considered weak or negative, feeling too much, or being connected, which comes through from the mainstream.”

“I went on a fundraising trip for Rainforest Rescue to Sumatra several years ago to meet and work with the local people trying to protect their environment, and they have problems so much bigger than we can imagine, dealing with the corrupt government, threats of violence, and the amount of money in these palm oil corporations that seem completely unstoppable.

“Yet these guys are out there planting trees, talking to their community, getting people together, even just to write songs about protecting their environment.

“For them it’s a livelihood. If they lose that there is nowhere for them to live and their environment is destroyed. In Australia we can sort of escape that, we can destroy

our environment and somehow it doesn’t physically impact us directly, we don’t have a loss of food or suddenly our safety is compromised.

“We fundraised for two of the guys to come to Australia in 2010 and work with some of us here, to share knowledge and learn from each other. They felt rewarded and like they were worthy. When they doubt themselves they feel, ‘No, I’m doing one right thing.’

“When they went back to their community, here were two blokes that were always looked down upon as half crazy for protecting the forest, but because they had gone to Australia, they were respected. They were suddenly well travelled, and it’s only rich people who get to leave the community. We never predicted that actually empowered them the most.”

Listen to the full ninety-minute interview with Dave at Inner Pocket at: reciprocalrestoration.org where he reflects further on activism and protecting the environment by being an informed consumer.

Taking the piss

My wonderful eight-year old nieces came walking with me in the Victorian bush yesterday.

We explored some old mine shafts and caught tadpoles in what was left of a creek.

I stopped to pee on the way back and both exclaimed that I had to wait until I got to a loo because my pee was “gross”.

I am not sure when kids start to get this impression, but it happens very early and most parents re-enforce it.

I am pretty sure they think I am a bit strange. When I told them I used my wee as fertiliser to grow asparagus, they were truly shocked and I think maybe they will never accept food from me again.

Humans are gifted with liquid by-products that have the perfect combination of plant nutrients in a sterile solution. Our bodies’ alchemy takes what it needs and leaves the rest for us to produce more food. All we need to do is dilute the urine to prevent the salts from becoming too concentrated and toxic to plants.

We excrete just enough nutrients to grow our own yearly supply of grain to produce our bread.

Apparently we are also blessed with just enough grey matter to tan our hides with. For all the good it has done lately we may as well!

Urine-separating toilets are not something that have been perfected. The notion of separating the by-products at the source is the

problem. One child with diarrhea and all your stored sterile urine is contaminated with bacteria. It is more efficient to separate the receptacles themselves. I achieve this in three ways.

1. Simply by peeing into a 20L white bucket ¾ filled with sawdust. The bucket is placed under a wooden box pedestal with a toilet seat. As the level of urine increases, no trace of odour can be detected until it pools on top. At this point I seal the lid, take it outside, empty the entire contents under a citrus tree and start again. This way has the advantage that you can have the piss-pot right next to your bed.

The sawdust is activated by the urine and starts to break down quickly once exposed to the elements. My citrus trees don’t seem to mind this sawdust diluted form of urine.

2. I also have a flushable bidet that everyone can pee in anytime. It gets flushed into a pickle barrel with spring water at about 3 parts water: 1 part urine, where it is stored until I decide to fertilise my garden.

The diluted urine then further mixes with treated grey water from my wetland cell and ends up being evenly distributed sub-surface along a twelve metre bed of pumping asparagus.

3. I have a dry composting loo which handles all the solid stuff with the exception of the small volume of the “involuntary” liquid contribution.

The reduced volume of urine-derived nutrients means that fungi are the driving decomposition force in the chamber, but over time I get a very consistent well-composted end product, which also goes to the fruit trees.



View from the loo
by Stuart McConville

Stuart runs Pooh Solutions Compost Toilets and Consultancy Services, 0427-897-496 www.poohsolutions.com

Air conditioning for stand-alone solar-powered homes

by D Gosper and A Winkler
Rainbow Power Company

It’s summer, it’s hot and muggy and you want your home to be as comfortable as the local shopping mall, but you are either too far from the power grid or you need reliable ongoing solutions in times of a blackout. Well, there is good news for you.

Generating excess power? If you have excess power and your batteries are full by 10am, you can put that excess power to use with an efficient air-conditioner (if you have a big enough inverter).

Able to monitor and regulate your system? With a little shrewd monitoring and regulating, you can have an efficient aircon unit (provided you have sufficient PV input and an inverter of at least 3kW).

Let’s say you only have a 3000w inverter and a smaller system – you could still run an efficient AC; you would just have to watch what else is on, and learn how to drive your AC controls and other items to reduce the load.

A recommended model

Recommended is the Panasonic CS/CU-Z50TKR reverse cycle split system (must be

installed by a licensed professional) which also has an inverter control to vary the rotation speed of the compressor for higher energy savings.

This 5kw unit rarely draws the full amount of 2.65kW. You can operate it a bit more wisely than others that are on the market.

Instead of keeping it at the recommended setting, you’ll be adjusting the fan control and the quiet mode, which helps you to regulate how much power it is drawing (low fan speed and quiet mode = lower power consumption).

If you are low on power and want to get the best efficiency from this air conditioner, you would buy the smaller model, as they are more efficient.

Install a display for your ‘big loads’

Usually, the first ten minutes while your aircon is working at its hardest, is the time when you would hold off on doing the ironing, straightening your hair or boiling the kettle etc.

But if you have a meter that tells you how much power is going out, you can keep using all the power you like until you hit your inverter’s load limit (including having the AC on full).

A standard BMV (battery monitor) will display the overall net load, but it is also possible to get a separate display (a plug in watt meter) just for load items (toaster, iron, washing machine, aircon, kettle etc).

You can simply rely on a BMV, but it will only display your entire load going out – it won’t separate which item is drawing how much.

Product example of meter/gauge (separate display for load items)

A power meter is available from Reduction Revolution; you can connect it solely to your aircon and it will tell you how much power the AC is drawing (installed in the switchboard).

You would still always need the



state of charge displayed (BMV) to show you how low your batteries are going at any given time and how much you have left.

To sum up: when choosing an AC unit be sure to get one of the models that has a ‘quiet’ mode, an adjustable fan speed, and a display of some sort. Also recommended is a separate display for ‘big loads’.

We usually do not recommend items that can’t be sourced locally, but for the sake of the article, included are a couple of product recommendations.

Speak with a solar power expert before considering your options for air-conditioning; contact Rainbow Power Company on (02) 6689-1430 for a free individually-customised quote.



Get amongst the tunes, talks, walks, dances, shows, stretches and more, for the fourth Lismore Women's Festival, presented by YWCA Australia, on 6th-8th March.

This year the Lismore City Hall will be the festival hub, with almost all events in that venue.

International Women's Day on Sunday 8th March will be a big gathering, with our beautiful signature ritual to accompany the Welcome.

Check the facebook or go to: www.lismorewomensfestival.org for program updates. Volunteers welcome!

Roar Women's Festival of Music will be held on Friday 6th March at Mary G's (cnr of Woodlark and Keen Streets) in Lismore. Essie Thomas is headlining the many acts.

There will also be a panel of female professionals in the music and entertainment industry. Everyone is welcome.



According to the United Nations, one in every three women will be physically or sexually abused in her lifetime – that's one billion women across the world.

One Billion Rising is the biggest mass action to end violence against women and children in human history. Every February, women and others rise in countries across the world to show their local communities and the world what a billion people looks like.

Through dance, the one billion celebrate that they have not been defeated by this increasing violence and are determined to create a new consciousness where violence will be resisted, and eventually defeated.

Since 1998, the V-Day movement has raised over US\$100 million.

V-Day activists donate to groups in their communities which do anti-violence work at rape crisis centres and domestic violence shelters, and to groups working with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women, and to refugee women and with women affected by climate catastrophe.

In Byron Bay, women, men and children will gather at dawn on Main Beach to dance on V-Day, Friday 14th February. The 'V' stands for Victory, Valentine and Vagina.

The beach dance will be followed by evening performances of *The Vagina ConVersations* #5 at the Byron Community Centre, on Friday and Saturday, 14th and 15th February, at 7.30pm.

Some of Byron Shire's powerful, creative women and non-binary people with vaginas will inspire and educate, empower and support with theatrical pieces that are funny, sad, courageous, challenging and celebratory.

Proceeds from the shows go to Women's Resource Service – Byron Escape Fund, supporting Byron Shire women escaping intimate partner and family violence.

Tickets are \$30/24 and available from Byron Community Centre. The show is suitable for people 14 years and older.

For more information, visit: www.onebillionrising.org and: www.vday.org

The boss is having nightmares

Scomo is having nightmares and all the CBD in the world ain't helping, he complains to me. "Well, THC is legal down there now prime minister," I say to him. "You can try that now, bro." He winces every time I play that card, but it's irresistible. Bridget Mackenzie was in one of the dreams with a shotgun in each hand, surrounded by cow turds bursting into flames.

"Yes, the National Party is one big nightmare for you, I have to agree sir." He still struggles with thinking weed is the devil's work, but when I ask him how come God made such a mistake he gets all flustered and flares up quickly. "You have no idea. How long since you went to church?" is pretty much his standard reply, which makes no sense to me at all.

I convinced him when I was down there last time to watch *The Loudest Voice* on Stan, and if that wasn't enough to terrify him into really seeing who's running the show, he then organised a private screening of *Bombshell*.

The outcome was, he tells me, that he's invited Trumpy to Australia later this year, as well as Jerry Hall, I mean Murdoch, to come with him. As if she will, the man's losing the plot, and Dutts appears in nearly every nightmare, he says.

"He just grins at me in an all-knowing way with one hand behind his back. I can't see it, but I know he's holding a massive knife."

He was phoning me every second night for a while, often waking me in the early hours. I was tired one night after a big day helping Pipe pull out males, and got short with him.

"I can't just drop everything and come down whenever you want," I said, irritated. "And my boss here keeps hassling me for more info on the Coles delivery trucks which are all over the hills now every day. He's sure they're involved in the dope trade, somehow."

"I keep telling him it's because



STREET SHUFFLE

Journal of the North Coast's longest serving covert

everyone's scared to drive, but he just can't fathom it. Or believe it."

"I won't hear another negative word about our police," ScoMo says. "You know my father just died and there was never a better man walking this earth. He never missed a Sunday church service and he was much respected in the force you know. Years of service as the fairest cop you could ever meet."

I had no idea his old man was a cop and it threw me for a second, but I edited the thoughts in my head. "My condolences sir, I know how you feel, my own father died some years back, not that I was so close to him, like you were to yours."

He softened immediately and we changed the subject.

"Do you really think I should try the THC?"

"Why not sir? Just a little, it may help you sleep. Though it keeps some people awake with their imagination soaring. You just have to try it, everybody reacts differently."

Back home, sick to death of hiding in the bushes counting Coles deliveries, the boss got me to plant

tracking devices on the trucks, and he's got a map on the wall in the office plotting their movements like an army general. I have to admit the hippy communes are gathering a lot of pins.

It freed me up to help Pipe pull out males. "Just like I read even American presidents did, back in the day when they weren't afraid of pot," he says. "The *Reefer Madness* propaganda campaign sure did a job on the general population didn't it?"

I know he's right with people like the boss who's been thoroughly conditioned into pot being the devil's weed. But more I think people are just scared of change, it might turn them into hippies, or worse, turn their children into hippies.

The faeries are cooking the males into medicine which they claim is quite different to cooking the girls. Not so much THC but plenty of the other cannabinoids and different Terpenes.

They giggled a lot while they were cooking, about how boys always smell so different to girls.

I'll take a bottle down to smelly ScoMo next time I go.

The right to silence (especially when guilty)

by John Adams

Working in a town without a Legal Aid office, I was on the duty panel. You got used to the 2am call: "Bloke here needs legal advice."

"I'll give him the usual," I say. "Pass him the phone." Then I provide the usual: "Here you go, mate, legal advice. Name, address, date of birth. Then shut up. Say nothing. Sign nothing. Got it? OK, see you later." Job done, back to sleep. Bail Court in the morning.

Agreeing to an interview without a lawyer, and saying 'no comment' to selected questions, is not clever. Police are expert at questioning. No adverse inference can be drawn from silence. Except, now, since 2013, and it's a serious indictable offence. Then I have to get out of bed and get down there.

A friend who was away from town rang me to say he'd been asked to give an interview when he got back. Three plants had been found at his shared house. He said the cop sounded like a really good bloke, and had told him it was "just a storm in a teacup".

Perhaps believing that honesty was the best policy, he wanted to admit to just one of the plants. The other occupants had admitted nothing. His silence meant

that police had no evidence connecting anyone to the crime. The old "mull bowl on the communal kitchen table defence".

Terminological interlude. People like small talk and often ask silly questions. One that's not silly is, "Where's the gavel?"

"In civilised common law countries," I pompously opine, "gavels are wielded by auctioneers, not judicial officers."

A more annoying question, asked often, is "What are you called?" I now take this opportunity to resolve the confusion. Sometimes we're called 'advocates' and other less attractive names, but we're all 'lawyers'; clerks, solicitors, barristers, magistrates and judges. Police prosecutors are called 'Sergeant'.

I call myself a solicitor, having been admitted as a 'Legal Practitioner of the Supreme Court of New South Wales'. Now, under the uniform legislation, I'm also an 'Australian Legal Practitioner'.

I usually explain the difference between solicitors and barristers as follows: we do the paperwork and deal with Local and Children's Court matters while barristers read cases and do the talking job. They take over in the District and higher courts.

If, for instance, the communal mull bowl defence doesn't work, and the

evidence is strong, and you're looking at doing time, a solicitor might write 'representations' to the police seeking, for instance, to have a charge withdrawn or replaced by a lesser charge.

Or we might advise you to enter an early guilty plea, which gets you 25% discount on sentence, and a better chance of hanging onto precious freedom, even if supervised.

Idiots and rich people in this situation are sometimes persuaded to take a chance with a jury.

Given the punishment factor, this is understandable, particularly given subsection 25(4) of the Victims Rights and Support Act 2013, which says that (unless you're a fine defaulter), if you're raped or beaten while in custody, you can't get victim's compensation. It's all part of the punishment.

I say idiots because, as a clerk, instructing experienced counsel in jury trials, we lost 12 out of 12 in one year.

Magistrates and judges don't enjoy locking people up. It costs \$110,000 a year and is cruel. They know that. They love positive reports from counsellors and support services, which happen to be thick on the ground round here.

A guilty plea is therefore the best chance you'll ever get to finally get your life together.

by Michael Balderstone

If you live in Canberra, you can carry 50 grams of weed in your pocket now, and grow two plants, four if you live with someone. There's a few other strange rules, but those are the two that stick out like big ripe colas. Of course, you're still not allowed to drive.

Meanwhile the word is the fires have wiped out much of the south coast crop and the drought will no doubt have severely limited any outdoor growing across the rest of the state. Hydro is of course always available.

The government keeps insisting we can only have overseas produced mediweed which is at least double the price for buds (\$20 gram) and way more for other products. Canada is winning that game by a mile with \$15 billion in exports last year.

Some CBD prices are ridiculous, but it's not stopping more and more people going legal here, and hopefully prices will start dropping soon. It's all grown indoors under strict conditions of course, and by giant corporations mostly linked to pharmaceutical companies.

However, the "green rush" as it has been often called, is unravelling both here and overseas and many players are pulling out or going broke. Weed world is moving fast these days, like pretty much everything else. Pressure is growing on Trump to legalise federally as restrictions on research and banking remain serious hindrances. Legalising the herb promises to be a 2020 major election issue over there.

CBD taken as a daily stress release option is booming overseas and catching on here also. Still many are afraid to even try it as the tiny amount of THC needed to make it effective, the entourage effect, could possibly come up in a saliva driving swipe as we are tested down to such a miniscule amount, ten nanograms, ten parts per billion.

People are much more afraid of losing their licence than getting busted with the actual medicine. I hear Aussie police have already been over to NZ to convince their counterparts about saliva testing ahead of their referendum to legalise weed in November.

More good results from



A purple glow in Snowflake, Arizona, the result of UV lights from a nearby medical marijuana farm and the snow clouds overhead. Photo: courtesy www.ganjapreneur.com

cannabis research are coming in on migraines, weight loss, Parkinsons, PTSD and chronic pain. "Early studies suggest the endocannabinoid system contributes significantly to both obesity and metabolic disorders."

Trump's new trade agreement requires China to import more American grown hemp, wtf! China never stopped growing masses of hemp and America has just started, so who knows what's going on there.

Elsewhere there are big debates about weed in the workplace and workers are wanting to now join unions.

The January Nimbin Medican was as good as any we have done, despite pouring rain. Many people took advantage of being able to talk to and listen to doctors without paying a consultant fee, and all those doctors and more are coming to MardiGrass this year.

An exciting guest at this year's event is Dr Jeffrey Hergenrather, a Californian doctor with decades of experience. He was the original doc on The Farm, a famous early hippie community in Tennessee founded in 1971 by Stephen and Ina May Gaskin, and still home to some 200 residents.

MardiGrass is on the first three days of May this year and anyone wanting to perform, or have a stall, or sponsor and support us in any way is urged to get in touch sooner rather than later. We're paring it back this year with no community market and focussing on events being in Plantem Park.

The MOB, MardiGrass Organising Body meetings are now on every Friday from 4.20pm in the Embassy.

Embassy fights for medicinal cannabis

by S. Sorrensen

The Nimbin Hemp Embassy has made a submission to the Senate Inquiry into 'Current barriers to patient access to medicinal cannabis in Australia'.

The Embassy believes that removal of barriers to patient access to medicinal cannabis requires legislation that is equitable, just and repairs the damage done by prohibition. They also believe that the community must say no to Big Cannabis and yes to community-based co-operatives, and other non-profit modes of cannabis growing, manufacturing and dispensing.

Established nearly 30 years ago after the Nimbin community was driven to despair by constant police raids on their village, the Nimbin Hemp Embassy educates about cannabis, helps people in legal trouble and guides those looking to access cannabis for medical reasons.

New cannabis laws, the Embassy says, must allow home growing, facilitate micro and community business opportunity, expunge past cannabis convictions, incorporate a more diverse representation of stakeholders in formulating regulation, establish education programs, and increase diversity in ownership of legal licences.

In its submission, the Hemp Embassy systematically addresses barriers to accessing medicinal cannabis – staying within the Inquiry's terms of reference – and offers solutions.

When it comes to the cumbersome and obstructive bureaucracy surrounding medicinal cannabis, the Embassy solution is that medicinal cannabis should be available for all ailments identified by scientific research, and not solely limiting access to a few arbitrarily determined illnesses, as determined by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Cannabis is a safe herbal product.

The medical profession still has much to learn about cannabis. Successful international medical cannabis jurisdictions treat cannabis as herbal



The AMA president addresses the Senators

medicine, and one of the most effective ways to educate about cannabis is to provide expert advice via dedicated cannabis clinics or dispensaries.

The Embassy emphasises that drug use is a health issue and that Australia, ignoring effective international models, continues to create tragic outcomes for its citizens in the War on Drugs – a war which has led to an unnecessary rise in police powers.

Instead of integrating and including Australia's existing underground cannabis industry for immediate and affordable supply, the government has opted to import expensive cannabis medicines from Big Cannabis companies like Tilray, handing over the industry to Big Canna from Canada.

Every legislative measure should include domestic regulations for production, rather than be limited to the importation of products.

Perhaps the biggest loss in the current program, the Embassy says in its submission, is how the massive knowledge bank in Australia's cannabis culture has been ignored and kept out of the new system. For 50 years Australians who love cannabis as their medicine have been growing and breeding plants and extracting medicine. A huge amount of experience and knowledge has been left out of the discussion on the regulatory framework of cannabis.

Inclusion, not exclusion, of Australia's

existing expertise in cannabis, and acknowledgement of the injustice, by expungement of previous cannabis convictions, is the solution.

Australian citizens are being persecuted by increased police powers over drug use. Police have no tolerance to any homegrown cannabis, even if the person is trying to help themselves.

And cannabis is the only prescription medication that excludes people 100% from driving. New laws must focus on impairment, not on the presence of the THC metabolite in a driver's saliva alone, the Embassy states.

Another barrier to patient access to medicinal cannabis is the high cost of legal cannabis. The prices of legal medical cannabis are exorbitant compared to the black market.

Australia is handing over mega bucks to international corporations instead of seriously supporting local businesses.

Citizens being allowed to grow their own plants is the most critical of any law changes, the submission states. In most legal medical cannabis jurisdictions in North America, self-cultivation is allowed so long as it does not exceed six plants and use can be justified.

Despite cannabis users in Australia being still considered criminals by the law, many thousands of people access black market medical cannabis in Australia.

The submission is in. The battle continues.

Help change the drug dog and strip search laws

Strip searches for illegal drugs are increasing in number. Drug-dog searches and strip searches fail to find drugs the majority of times. There has been a strong push within the community and in the media to change the laws governing these programs.

The Greens have drafted legislation that would prevent the police from using drug dogs without a warrant, and significantly wind back the power of individual police to conduct strip searches.

The draft bill proposed by The Greens has five main changes to the current laws:

1. It changes when strip searches can be carried out to limit these to circumstances where there is an immediate and serious risk to the life and safety of any person;
2. It determines clearly what constitutes a strip search;
3. It expressly prohibits police requiring people to engage in degrading and humiliating conduct such as 'cough and squat' during a strip search;
4. It prohibits police strip-searching young people aged 10-16

who are not under arrest; and

5. It limits the use of general drug detection dogs to those circumstances where police have a warrant.

The Greens are calling for your feedback on the draft changes. The feedback should include: whether you agree there are problems with the current drug-dog and strip-search programs; whether you agree that law changes are the appropriate response; and comments on the specifics of the model the Greens are proposing.

Detailed written submissions can be sent by email (preferred) to: kym.chapple@parliament.nsw.gov.au or by post to office of David Shoebridge, Parliament of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000.

Your input will then feed into a final version of the bill which will be presented to the NSW Parliament this year. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, contact The Greens on (02) 9230-3030 or email: david.shoebridge@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Submissions close on 17th February.

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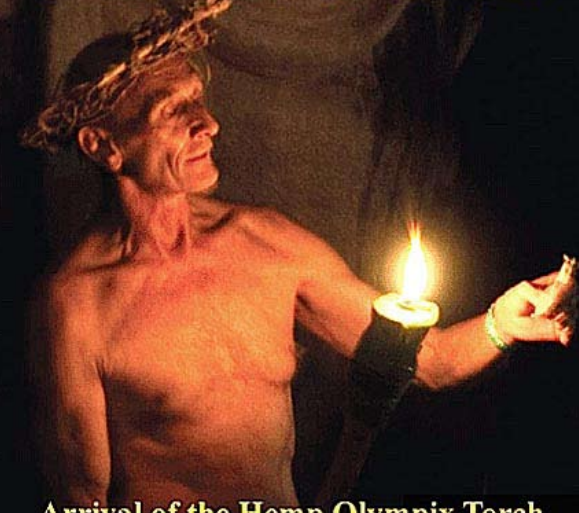
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Arrival of the Hemp Olympix Torch (25th Year running) carrying the Eternal Flame for the Victims of Prohibition! Sunset, 1st of May, Allsop Park, Nimbin

Rory McLeod Gusto tour

Rhythmic storyteller and multi-instrumentalist Rory McLeod (UK) is a travelling troubadour toting stories and songs that are bold, percussive, lyrical and deeply personal.

Broken hearts, unpalatable truths and tales of social injustice are all expressed with an unexpected edge.

Having collaborated with some of the world's best including Ani Di Franco, Michelle Shocked, Towns Van Zandt and Ali Farke Toure to name but a few, Rory McLeod is a performer who is at the peak of his game, described as "one of the folk circuit's greatest live performers" (Venue UK).

Orkeztar Lizmore will be supporting, with high-energy world music as played by a 20-piece group with fiddles, guitars, flutes, mandolins, squeezeboxes, saxes, clarinets and more.



\$25/\$20 Concession/children under 12 free.
Bookings: www.trybooking.com/590389

Up first for the evening will be Jatika, a vocal and rhythm-based trio who draw on the influences of folk, blues and country.

Before interval the musicians will be coming together for a rousing tribute to celebrate 100 years since folk singer Pete Seeger was born, and the power of his folk music to change the world.

Catch these concerts at:

• Lismore City Bowling Club on Tuesday 11th February, 7pm. Doors open at 6.30pm. Tickets: \$25/\$20 concession/children under 12 free. Bookings: www.trybooking.com/590391
• Nimbin School of Arts on Wednesday 12th February, 7pm. Doors open at 6.30pm. Tickets:

Proudly supported by the Nimbin School of Arts.

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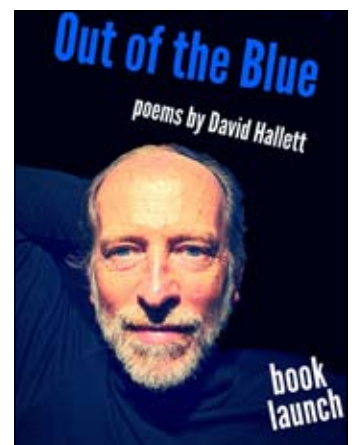
Nimbin poems out of the blue

Nimbin's award-winning poet laureate David Hallett will be launching *Out of the Blue*, his first collection of poems in ten years, at the Nimbin Poets gathering at Nimbin Bowlo on Thursday 5th March.

Winner of the 2019 Reciter of the Year award in Canberra last Easter, and twice winner of the Poetry Olympics at the Sydney Writers Festival, David has been writing and performing poetry since the mid '70s, as well as hosting poetry events in Byron Bay and Lismore for nearly 30 years.

His latest collection traces war and peaces, the whirlwind of climate chaos, and the spin of markets, shopping malls, digital devices and love.

Show starts at 7.30pm with open readings, book launch around 8. Entry is free, and a good range of food and drinks is available.



Book early for the Blue Moon

For its first Blue Moon Cabaret for 2020 on Saturday 21st March, Nimbin School of Arts will be presenting a fantastic programme of performers.

Included are stand-up comedian Akmal Saleh and the Hussy Hicks, together with the Pitts Family Circus, S Sorrensen, the Miss Renee Simone trio, Jex Lopez, Andrea Soler, Christine Strelan, Vasudha Harte, the Veil of Thrones dancers and poet/host David Hallett.

This major fundraising event for the School of Arts is a popular sell-out show, so book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets are \$35/\$30 concession, and table reservations and tickets will be available at Perceptio (phone 6689-1766) in early February.

The show is fully catered and there is the NSA bar (no BYO).

Two other Blue Moon Cabarets will be held this year, on 15th August and 7th November.



NIMBIN BOWLO

25 Sibley Street Nimbin. Phone 6689-1250



BISTRO LOUNGE

25 Sibley Street Nimbin. Phone 6689-1473

What's On in February?

- Thursday 6th – Poetry Night – First Thursdays
- Sunday 23rd – Visiting Club: Geebung
- Open Mic Night – Weds 19th, 7pm
- Social Bowls – Sundays, 9am
- 2020 Membership now due
- Courtesy Bus – Enquire at bar



First-timers and novice bowlers welcome

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT THIS MONTH

- Friday 7th, 6pm Brodie Button
- Friday 14th, 6pm The Groove
- Friday 21st, 6pm Cass Eleven
- Friday 28th, 6pm Brommers



**Lunch & Dinner Wed – Sat
Sunday lunch specials**

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Nimbin Flix goes dark

by Teresa Biscoe

At the end of last year I sent an email to the Flix group, as the number of volunteers had dropped and the Community Centre co-ordinators were being asked to take on more of the organising work.

We asked for more volunteers to keep it going, but only got a response from a couple of people.

The NCCI committee discussed the response and decided that Flix screenings would be postponed for the time being.

The Flix equipment will be

retained for community use, so if anyone wants to screen a film in the space we are open to screenings.

If we can get a consolidated and committed crew for Flix again, of course we will resume the regular monthly screenings, but for now we will have a bit of a break and see what develops.

Thanks to those Flix volunteers who kept the screenings going for all those years.

Remember, we are resting not gone, and can resume anytime or even for a special event.

Blush Cabaret Bowlesque

by Theresa Biscoe

12 fabulous acts from around the Rainbow region performed at Nimbin Bowlo in January, superbly compered by Byron comedian Lisa Sharpe.

It was a night of variety, with belly dancers from the Nimbin Nomads and Coalescence troupe showing off their sinuous moves, and hoopers from Hoop High with a great little piece about waste.

Three fabulous drag artists were featured: the sweet-faced Jessie Bell; the power moves of Foxy Brown-eye; and the dark edge of the iconic performer Lytex.

Divas Monalizard and Peter Lehner sang up a storm, and burlesque dancers Phoebe Joy, the Violettas and the Bowlesque Babes wowed the audience on the chair and pole.

I know the performers who are not from the village loved the warm reception they had from the audience.

Cancelled last minute in November last year due to the fire emergency, we are stoked that the performers and crew agreed to restage the event. We were really lucky to have such superb lighting and sound crew



Finale of the Hoop High performance with Rachel Garland, Jesse Bodegraven and Phoebe Joy. Photo: Shannon Lee

(thanks Timmy Tonkin and Phil Brommers) who provided us with a really professional staging for the performances.

Thanks also to the stage manager Sam Burcher (organiser of the Nimbin Fashion Parade), an island of calm in a sea of tizz. Thanks to our door girls and the staff from the Greenkeepers Bistro and the Nimbin Bowling Club.

Thanks especially to all who supported us. This was a great night of fun and frivolity, and we appreciated that the community came out for a sell-out show.

We all agreed to donate 25% of the show tickets take to the local Nimbin RFS brigade in gratitude for their efforts to keep us safe, and we are proud to announce that we will be donating \$555 to them from the event.

We are inspired by the great support we had for the show. We learned a lot from this event and the next time we stage another, we will take on board the issues identified and feedback we have received from those who attended.

We will consider coming back with a new show later on this year and hope the community will continue to support us.

Mullum Music Fest takes a break

For the past 12 years, Mullum Music Festival has taken place over four days in November throughout venues in Mullumbimby, and has become known and loved for its diverse programming of international, Australian and local acts, and its friendly, inclusive atmosphere.

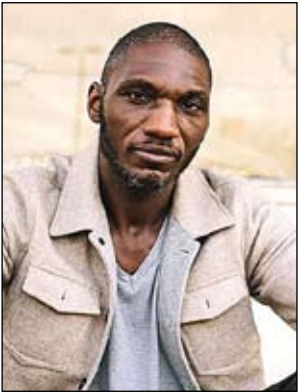
Organisers have announced that the popular festival will take a break for 2020 and will return in November 2021.

“We’re a very small team with families and numerous other commitments, so we’ve decided to catch our breath for 2020,” festival director Glenn Wright said. “We look forward to bringing Mullum Music Festival back to our wonderful community in 2021.

“Our popular Mother’s Day tree planting mini-festival will still take place on Sunday 10th May, and we will continue to present concerts in Mullumbimby throughout the year, including Cedric Burnside on 12th March and Eilen Jewell on 27th March.”



Photo: Evan Malcolm



Eilen Jewell and Cedric Burnside, both coming from the US.

Check: www.redsquaremusic.com.au for details.

Dates for the 2021 Mullum Music Festival will be announced later this year.

Bello Winter Music, Mullum’s sister festival in Bellingen, will take place this year from 9th to 12th

July, and will then take a year off in 2021 while the main venue, the Bellingen Memorial Hall, undergoes renovations.

Early bird tickets for Bello Winter Music 2020 are available, and artist applications are open now at: www.bellowintermusic.com



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TUESDAY- TRIVIA & RAFFLES FROM 7PM

WEDNESDAY-POKER NIGHT FROM 6.30PM

THURSDAY- JOKER POKER & RAFFLES FROM 6.30PM

FRIDAY- RAFFLES & MEMBER DRAW FROM 7PM

SATURDAY- PUNTERS DAY

SUNDAY- POOL COMP FROM 5.30PM



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THURSDAY & FRIDAY
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THURSDAY 13/02 – CASS ELEVEN

FRIDAY 14/02 – THE ANTIBODIES

THURSDAY 20/02 – MITCH LANCASTER

FRIDAY 21/02 – KIARA JACK

SATURDAY 22/02 – LARRY LAUGHS LOUD PRESENTS COMEDY NIGHT

THURSDAY 27/02 – Q

FRIDAY 28/02 – DREAMS OF INDIGO

CONTACT

53 Cullen St, Nimbin NSW
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