

**The passing of inspirational leaders**

Two of the most amazing women in our country have passed on, Rhoda Roberts on 21st March and Jenny Dowell on 24th March. Both died from cancer.

I am so sad and yet so grateful for their being with us and giving just so much of themselves to their community and country.

I couldn't begin to tell of their two stories of attending events, supporting artists and art societies, groups, causes, of telling us of their history and family, and of their feelings and reflections. Of being advocates, visionaries, creatives. Of their wise, positive, inclusive, inspirational, enquiring, honest, expansive, hardworking natures.

If our aim in life is to reach our full potential and do what we can to help us all through life together with joy, Rhoda and Jenny got there surrounded by golden stardust. So much they have both given us and with such wide smiles.

How sorely they will be missed, but what an inspiration they have given us all – especially women. What legacies we have been generously given to inspire us all! Special love to their families.

Jeni Kendell  
Nimbin

**Giant Devils Figs**

Regarding Michael Balderstone's letter (NGT March 26) about the devil's figs: I have a feasible solution.

I have been pulling devil's figs for a living the last two years, with great success (and good leather gloves). My system is simple: pull up the small ones, chop the big ones to the ground, and pile burn the lot.

Return after three months to knock off regrowth and pull seedlings. That's it – job done for the year. Do it outside of seed season (spring) for best results.

To solve the problem once and for all, firstly, as a community, we obtain biodiversity funding, either as grants or from organisations/businesses



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willing to contribute to bush regen in our area.

We put that funding into a centralised system, which anyone willing to pull weeds for a few hours – or a few months – can connect with.

We grid the public space of our entire area into 10x10m blocks, which are then assigned to four-person work teams led by experienced regen practitioners. Each grid block only takes one to two work hours to clean up.

At the end of each week, everyone's hours are counted, and each person who helped gets paid accordingly. Private land could be negotiated also, if the landholders are agreeable.

I would be out in the creek pulling figs every day, given the option. However, in our current reality, I am in a position where I must earn money to feed my family. I don't often get a chance to spend time with the creek anymore. I'm sure many others feel the same.

There are millions of dollars available every year in biodiversity funding, at both state and federal level. At standard labour pay rates, rather than overpriced commercial contracts and expensive, toxic chemicals,

a small fragment of that funding would make a massive impact in our area.

Not only would it bring back our beautiful creeks and forests, but it would also help support our community through these uncertain times in a very physical way.

Kat Coe  
Nimbin

**Mothers maligned**

John Adams in his article (NGT March 26), alleges that when fathers contest parenting matters, "the mother's allegations start with domestic violence, move through coercive control and end up, in the more extreme cases with our client having touched the child inappropriately."

He then goes on to claim that someone told him that there are women who are advising other women of what to do when they want the child full-time and all the child support.

I feel this article is inappropriate to publish in our local magazine. It's mostly hearsay, and paints a very inaccurate and, quite frankly, bizarre picture of mothers who are just out to get their exes.

As a single mother and part of a community of single mothers, I can tell you that: 1. Almost none of the separated dads in this area

**Notices**

**Annual General Meetings**

• **Nimbin Environment Centre** AGM will be held on Wednesday 13th May, 6pm at the Comskool Room, Nimbin Community Centre, 81 Cullen Street. All welcome. Nominations for executive and committee members will be accepted from the floor. Must be a financial member to vote.

• **Tuntabul Falls Early Learning Centre** AGM will be held at the Tuntabul Falls Community Hall on Wednesday 27th May at 12.30pm.

**Nimbin Rideshare expressions of interest**

Do you travel the same route to work / school each week? Do you have room for extra passengers? Seeking drivers to link up with others in your area who travel the same route. For more information or to register your expression of interest, contact: [nimbinrideshare@gmail.com](mailto:nimbinrideshare@gmail.com)

pay child support at all. It's not a motivation to "keep the children full-time."

2. We all want a break.

The only reason we don't is because the fathers are either uninterested or unsafe. It's very unlikely that any single mother would refuse to share custody with a safe father.

3. Domestic violence and coercive control are incredibly common, and women lose their lives at the hands of their intimate partners with frightening regularity all around the world.

To imply that this is just something mothers make up for the dubious benefit of child support and full custody is not only statistically incorrect, it's sexist and harmful. I'm disappointed that this article has been published. Surely there are more interesting, accurate and wholesome articles for us to read in the local paper?

Hannah Pearl  
Nimbin

**Community consults**

Abbey Hodson's article (NGT February 26) about The Channon community and council working together really made me stop and think.

It highlighted many important points about how the process of community consultation can work well. Thank you!

Alison Blatcher  
Murwillumbah

**Jewish identity**

The complexity and ambiguity of Jewish identity is evidenced by the internal conflicts and controversies

**Snubbed by Trump**

I have listened to the ranting of the low IQ, paedophile protecting, pathological liar complaining about the 'Allies' not joining an unplanned illegal war he alone started.

Worse, he has no idea why he started it or how to end it. An illegal war that has caused major global problems, great stress and cost thousands of lives.

Let's just take a moment to think about this. Trump accused ally forces of cowardice, applied tariffs including some on uninhabited islands, based those figures on trade deficits incorrectly thinking they were tariffs imposed on America and not realising his own people would be paying them.

Now let's consider wars. America made vast profits from WW1 and WW2. France was at war from August 3rd 1914, and Britain and Commonwealth countries from August 4th, 1914. America joined the allies in WW1 on April 6th 1917 and only after their ships were being attacked, violating the Sussex pledge of May 4th 1916, the emergence of the Zimmerman telegraph, suggesting Germany and Mexico would join forces and attack America, and the fear the Allies would lose the war and America would lose billions of dollars in investments.

This was approximately two years and eight months after the war began. WW2 began on September 1st, 1939, again involving the allies and once again America made lots of money before being forced to join the conflict when Japan attacked them on December 8th, 1941, two years three months and seven days after the allies had been at war.

Since the end of WW2, the allies have dutifully and blindly followed America into numerous wars, all of which we have lost. I think it deeply insulting that the idiot in the White House, responsible for the current chaos, demeans the allies who will not join his failed illegal war and that we should hereby put sanctions on America and Israel.

Peter Brooker  
Nimbin

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**Right wing 'populism' – it's all a scam**

This is my first column for a while, and while I have been busy relocating our home out of the flood zone these past few months, it has also been a time of standing back and trying to understand WTF is happening to our world.

Watching the insane dissembling of democracy, the rule of law, rationality, compassion and civility into a mass madness of racism, intolerance, hatred, genocide, the abandonment of even the pretence of truth, and a frighteningly unconscious embrace of emergent tyranny is truly crazy-making in itself, which is part of the problem. No-one feels like they have a handle on the world around them anymore.

As I have observed before, the onset of fascism is a mass mental disorder, but what is astounding is just how viral and massive it has become. Obviously, the rise of social media and its algorithmic tendencies to amplify outrage and assign users to echo chambers has a huge amount to answer for in this regard, but it cannot be the whole story.

While right wing 'populism' should be an oxymoron, (like why would pro-billionaire authoritarianism ever be popular) sadly it has ways of harvesting grievance that defies rational analysis. We should understand that proto-fascists (right wing populists) have an advantage that no democratic political movement has ever had; it doesn't need to build enduring support, from election to election, from generation to generation.

Precisely because it is anti-democratic, it only needs to ever win one election then its intention is always to abuse every lever of power to cement itself in place. For this reason, it can indeed be 'populist' because it can offer everybody and every grievance the relief it seeks without ever having to come up with the goods.

Right wing populism is a gift from beginning to end. Take the money and influence that comes with doing the bidding of billionaires, but wrap yourself in a flag and pretend to be a champion of the common people. Promise to liberate the common folks from the grip of the terrible 'elites' who can be blamed for every grievance from the cost of living to personal sexual

frustration and everything else in between.

Let's be clear, democracy has had its flaws, the rule of law has had its flaws, the way our economy is managed has more than flaws. But if we drill down we find that the main problem with democracy is not having enough of it; the main problem with the rule of law is the way that the super-privileged can often avoid its reach; and the real problem with our economy is that it has for too long been managed to suit the investor class while taxing the exertion of workers.

Neo-liberalism, the Reagan/Thatcher grift that lied to us about trickle-down economics, pretending that ordinary people would somehow benefit from the wealthy paying less tax and accumulating a greater share of global wealth was always a grift. John Howard was its salesman in Australia.

Sales, elites may be responsible for the terrible housing crisis, the flattening of wage growth, the perverse inversion of the tax system, but which elites? The actual economic elites, not university professors, scientists, feminists, intellectuals and latte-sipping lefties, not green-haired social movement activists.

As annoying as you may have found any of these people at times, the real elites that have ripped us all off are obvious by the obscene wealth they have accumulated and the cynical ways in which they manipulate media, information and technology to get us to blame the wrong people. The Ginas, the Elons, the Murdochs, these are the real elites and the John Howards and the Pauline Hansons are merely their puppets.

The past golden era of life in the USA or Australia where a single-income family could buy a home and raise a family were the result of post-war socialist policies, and trade union activism that involved the taxing of wealth and its redistribution into government services to produce a fairer society. The golden era was a capitalist economy very strongly modified by democratic socialism.

And ironically it is that very era of democratic socialism that our right wingers cynically remind you



by Aidan Ricketts

of while encouraging you to blame migrants, unionists, feminists, academics, greens, indigenous people, LGBTIQ people or anyone other than the real architects of poverty, the billionaires and their puppets.

Pauline Hanson is a great example, wrapped in the Australian flag as a cover for grift, she whinges and whines in an affected strine, while being feted and funded by Gina, and if you look at her parliamentary voting record, she has opposed every wage increase, Centrelink adjustments, HECS relief, cost of living support, and attempt to tax the investor class that has come across her table. A handmaiden of wealth pretending to be a champion of the Aussie battler. That's populism, tell whatever lie will get you votes.

Trump used the same formula, the former 'great' America was the one that was the outcome of Roosevelt's post war 'new deal', a largely democratic socialist program to redistribute wealth and use tax to create a fairer society. The very thing the right-wing populist is committed to destroying is exactly what they pretend they will resurrect.

We don't need any more tax cuts in this country, we need more taxation of the investor class (less taxation of exertion income: labour) and renewed spending on health education, community facilities, welfare and wealth redistribution. In short, we need more Whitlam and less Howard and definitely no Pauline.

It's sad to see how social media and populist grifters can turn genuine social problems into potent hate bombs deliberately targeting people who are also suffering and who are in no way responsible for the decline of equality. Migrants are more likely to

be taking care of your aging parents in low-paid aged care roles, or nursing you in what's left of our fantastic taxpayer-funded public health system, than showing up to deprive you of a home at an auction; that's the investor class that does that to you.

Economic inequality is one of the grievances that is cynically exploited by the right, but more viscerally they also exploit two other grievances, one is lost privilege and the other is sexual frustration.

Lost privilege, what is this? It's the sensation of loss that comes from seeing unconscious privilege questioned. In that great society of the past we remember, there was lots of privilege there for the victor nations of World War two. We got to set up global financial systems that were great for the global north and pretty impossibly challenging for the global south.

Loss of privilege can generate an unconscious rage of great intensity, and certainly this is one of the other breeding grounds we are seeing for grifter fascism.

The combination of changing gender dynamics, on-line dating maths for younger people and economic pressures are spawning a very angry frustrated cohort amongst young men, and visceral misogyny being deliberately exploited by grifters in the manosphere like Andrew Tate.

The very real demographic link between Trumpian dystopian politics and sexually frustrated young men having their rage harvested by grifters is delivering a potentially dangerous cocktail of anger, misogyny and celebration of cruelty.

What can we do? As always, my best advice for everyone is stay embodied and touch grass. Fascism is a cult of performative cruelty, it destroys the societies it infects very quickly, it often takes a huge toll in bloodshed and collapse, but it is a system built on lies and distorted mental states.

It doesn't last and we need to stay grounded, stay embodied, hold our lived communities together and be able to both resist (as Minneapolis has been doing) and rebuild, as inevitably we will need to.

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# Gratitude for the lives of two pillars of the community



From the mayor's desk  
by Cr Steve Krieg  
Lismore City Council

forms, their passing has been felt deeply across this community and beyond, with many reflecting on their lasting legacy.

## Boil water alert

The recent boil water alert in Nimbin village was an important reminder that while our water systems are closely monitored, clear communication during unexpected events matters just as much as the technical response.

The alert followed a problem with the water treatment system, and was lifted once the issue was resolved, with support from NSW Health.

Council understands this was unusual for many village residents, as boil water alerts are more commonly associated with rural supply areas than within the village itself.

Feedback from the community, including local businesses, has highlighted the value of clearer advice in future about why an alert has been issued, how long it may last, and how updates will be provided.

That feedback is appreciated and will help strengthen future



Rhoda Roberts AO

communication. Rural customers connected to the on-going Nimbin rural supply remain under separate boil water advice.

Council officers will continue meeting with the Nimbin Chamber so local business concerns are heard early, particularly where issues like water interruptions may affect hospitality and daily trade. Businesses experience these events



Jenny Dowell OAM

differently to households, and that local perspective is important in improving our response.

## Landslip repairs

There is steady progress on landslip repairs around Nimbin and the villages. Three damaged sites on Stony Chute Road have now been restored, with more continuing as part of the broader Landslip

## Restoration Program.

Across the region, this work is about more than road repairs – it's about reconnecting communities and improving resilience after the damage caused by the 2022 natural disasters. More details can be found on council's on-line Project Schedule and Map.

## Bellevue Park

At Council's recent March meeting, Councillors also resolved to begin consultation on the future use of Bellevue Park and engage with the Nimbin A&L Society regarding potential interest in the land.

This is an important local conversation and one where community input will matter.

## Local events

As always, Nimbin's social calendar remains active, with local events continuing to bring people together.

These activities support the village economy and contribute to the community life that makes Nimbin a great place to live, work and visit.

Council values that energy and the strong community voice that continues to shape conversations locally.

# Green wave in the face of hate, war and division

The politics, perversities and pains of late stage capitalism and all of its violent exploits are upon us. Trump and Netanyahu are playing their evil murderous self-serving violent war games in real time.

For Trump, his attacks on Iran will forever be known as the Epstein war, and for Netanyahu it's just another of his bloody opportune continuing expanding racist colonial project.

The two men have completely disrupted the rules based international order that has long been shaped and deployed by western powers. Yes, it's been done before by the US in the Middle East, but this time even the thin veil of pretence has evaporated.

I still can't believe Labor Prime Minister Albanese was the first to jump up and subscribe to the necessity of Trump's attack plan, at the same time international legal experts were calling it what it is – armed force for preventative disarmament, counter-terrorism and regime change which constitutes the international crime of aggression.

Legally, Australia is now party to this unlawful crime of aggression and ties Australia closer to the US and Israel.

This barbaric display of aggression has murdered innocent lives and is unravelling in ways that are increasingly setting continents against one another, creating instability and carrying deep ramifications for all of us who are simply trying to live,



by Sue Higginson  
NSW Greens MLC

create, care and love in our world.

This "war" won't hurt the rich elites. Here, outside the direct conflict zone, it's everyday people who will feel the pain. Already here in our region single mums trying to get their kids to school and go to work can't afford to put fuel in their car and we're told soon food will become more expensive and less available.

People have had enough. In the shadow of Trump's and Netanyahu's violence, the "No Kings" rallies over the last weekend in March saw hundreds of individual rallies in cities across the United States – where hundreds of thousands of people opposed the Trump Doctrine of chaos and hate.

At the same time half a million people marched through London against the hate fuelled agenda of the far right. As authoritarian tactics are rising globally, the counter anti-fascists are rising against them.

It was a breath of fresh air to

glimpse the UK Green Party's Hannah Spencer and Zack Polanski at Trafalgar Square being cheered by a crowd of half a million at 'House Against Hate', a concert aimed at opposing racism and far-right ideology.

The Greens in the UK, like here in Oz, are continuing to build a movement that is speaking directly to people who are searching for a politics grounded in peace, love, justice and community wellbeing.

We are embracing a broader shift in political consciousness that is beginning to take place, even as far right movements such as Reform UK and One Nation continue to find support through the politics of hate and division, spinning racist narratives of fear and exclusion, that are gaining traction now in the throes of late stage capitalism.

The Greens have always stood for peace, hope, justice, love, and community, and in this moment those values carry a particular significance, because they speak directly to the kind of future that people are searching for, one that is grounded in fairness, environmental responsibility and a commitment to collective wellbeing rather than individual gain.

If we want to join the Green wave that is rising across the world, where we finally put people and the planet before needless and blood thirsty profit, where love hope and justice triumph over hate, division and violence we are going to have to fight for it together.

# The One Nation vote

Revenge of the Loon  
by Laurie Axtens

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you collectively for voting for our system of universal health care. The system has spent the best part of a million dollars raiding my vascular system for spare parts and replumbing my now Frankin-heart to keep me in this world a few years longer.

As you can imagine I feel deeply indebted, and I'll be scouring my imagination to discover how I can best level the ledger.

Now, what's all this 15% increase in One Nation voting all about?

Pretty spooky, but no need to wet the bed about it. Pauline will never be the PM, barring the US Marines invading and installing her into that position.

Our system of compulsory and preferential voting lends itself to the election of centrist governments; indeed, the recent surge in far-right votes will only lock Labor into power for the foreseeable future.

Alas modern Labor is a very conservative party, and what progressive changes they will bring will only be incremental, as their compliance with far-right US foreign policy and our continued role as a free resource dump for transnational corporations is a given.

As for One Nation itself, as you may recall, when Pauline first put aside the deep fryer to take up the dog whistle of semi-literate racism, her party gained a few seats in the Queensland Parliament.

Whereupon they almost immediately dissolved into a foul traitorous gravy of internal disputes – as most of them went independent and lost their seats at the following election.

They're a party of projectionists and blamers – and their policies are the policies of division; where they blame the victims, project their own guilt onto the safest target and deny the hard science of climate change – and so their failure

in the long term is virtually assured. The problem is the damage they do in the meantime.

How do their politics gain any credence in first place?

Their voters are a heady mix of disaffected working and lower middle-class people thriving on super-charged disinformation funded by self-serving billionaire mining backers.

Their numbers grow at the edges of our society where government services are thin and overcrowded, where unemployment is large and in communities where migrants, due to their lower socio-economic status, have taken up residence.

These depressed socioeconomic regions are a perfect petri dish to grow One Nation's message of anti-intellectualism, racial intolerance and climate change denialism. A message whose impact is funded by billionaire mining magnates like Gina Rinehart and given potency through the use of individually tailored disinformation packages provided by Palantir on social media.

Please note – regional NSW fits this description. Nimbin is far from immune, as several conversations with locals has shockingly informed me.

How do we oppose it? Just keep telling the truth. Cats are the biggest killer of birds – hundreds of times more than wind turbines. One Nation aren't going to take back our resources or tax the people stealing those resources – quite the opposite.

Migrants and Muslims are not the reason why you can't buy a home... tax policy and negative gearing is the problem. We're one of the richest countries on earth, but it's all held by the personal friends of One Nation politicians.

Do you think they're going to get them to share that wealth? Hardly... Please wake up now rather than waiting for the inevitable disappointment of their policy vacuum. Pretty please.

# On disaster preparedness

by Janelle Saffin MP  
Member for Lismore

I am a Lismore local, and like everyone in my community, I know floods and bushfires. We've lived with them for generations. We understood the risks, knew how to prepare, how to respond, how to recover – or so we thought.

The 2019-2020 bushfires changed that. The 2022 floods changed it again, utterly and forever. They rocked us to our core. Lives were lost, communities were broken open, and with the floods, there was no early warning.

Three thousand SES calls went unanswered or were not patched through. There were few rescue boats. Instead, it was locals – the Tinny Army – who became heroes and saved thousands.

Government was not ready. NSW had no plan and no clear pathway for recovery, let alone how to respond to thousands of displaced, traumatised people. We were even told Resilience NSW was a nine to five agency.

February 28th was a night of horror, and its impact



Janelle Saffin and NSW Premier Chris Minns visited Friends of the Koala.

still lingers in our streets, conversations, and silences. Fast forward to 2026.

We began the year with fires, floods, drought and heatwaves – hotter than anything we have experienced.

These events are no longer exceptional. This is our new normal. And with it comes an obligation to step up our efforts to build a safer, more secure society.

Preparation costs money, but over time, saves far more money than it spends. Recovery without planning

is vastly more expensive economically, socially and emotionally.

For decades, about 97% of disaster funding has gone to recovery, and just 3% to preparedness. We are starting to shift that, but the trajectory is unsustainable.

NSW disaster recovery spending has risen from \$154 million in 2019 to around \$9.9 billion today, trending toward \$14 billion.

We need serious investment in preparedness and the money has to come from somewhere. After the

2011 Queensland floods, a national levy raised \$1.8 billion in one year.

The 2022 floods should have been our moment for real change, but progress was slow. Now we have the NSW Reconstruction Authority, still young but rapidly evolving to meet its purpose.

Federally, the establishment of NEMA and the Disaster Ready Fund are major steps forward – but structures alone are not enough.

I am often told, "Janelle, I don't believe in climate change." Sometimes this is said while we are knee-deep in mud, or looking at burnt paddocks or in front of destroyed homes and businesses.

I say, belief systems are not the issue. I deal in facts. Temperatures are higher, oceans warmer, extreme events more frequent and destructive. Lives and livelihoods are being lost.

The choice is stark. We can continue to pay more and more for recovery, or we can invest now in preparedness, resilience and risk reduction.

This is our new normal. How we respond will define us.

# SCU Lismore's new veterinary science precinct



Kevin Hogan with the veterinary science faculty.

## On the same Page

by Kevin Hogan MP

It was great to officially open the new Southern Cross University's Lismore campus Veterinary Science Precinct.

The new facilities will offer two new veterinary courses, vet medicine and vet technology, providing opportunities for students from across Australia to study and live regionally.

It was great to join SCU staff, students, local veterinarians, wildlife carers and industry partners to celebrate this fantastic achievement.

I would like to recognise and congratulate SCU's Vice-chancellor Tyrone Carlin, executive director Chris Ashton, and executive dean Jon Hill for their commitment to making this project happen.

# Lismore Council issues

We have recently lost two extraordinary women, Rhoda Roberts AO and Jenny Dowell OAM, trailblazers and deeply respected community leaders who shaped Lismore in profound ways.

Rhoda, an incredible Widjabal Wiabal woman, carried culture, story and truth in community and a national stage. Jenny, our former mayor of Lismore, led with heart, integrity and an unwavering commitment to people, and continued to give so much to community well beyond her time in the role, always making others feel seen and included.

I am so grateful to have had such leaders to look to and learn from.

## Nimbin water

The water turbidity issue that led to the recent boil water alert in Nimbin has now been resolved.

Council is progressing a permanent solution through a new Nimbin Water Treatment Plant, funded under the state's flood recovery program. The project is on track for

completion by December 2027.

In addition, Council has secured funding to undertake a Nimbin Water Supply Options Assessment, due for completion in June. This will provide further information and inform future decisions. I will continue to keep the community updated as more detail becomes available.

## Strategic planning

Council is also about to release the draft Lismore Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and supporting strategies for public feedback. This is a significant piece of work that will shape the future of our LGA.

At the councillors initial workshop, I raised concerns particularly around a proposed new zoning – RU4 zone for small lot farming. While it's presented as supporting agriculture, there is currently no clear mechanism to ensure land is actually farmed.

My concern is that this could lead to de facto rural residential subdivisions in areas without appropriate infrastructure, raising



Council notebook  
by Cr Virginia Waters  
Lismore City Council

serious questions around water, sewer and long-term sustainability. This is a new zoning and will need state approval.

In regard to rural land sharing, this will still be allowable within the LSPS. I know this has been a concern for many, but I have advocated for its importance. However do dig in and provide feedback.

There is planning for this LSPS for a population of 60,000 people. At present, we simply do not have the infrastructure to support that scale of growth. This is where community voice is critical.

You don't need to be a planner to have a say. You already understand your place, where you live,

what works, what doesn't. I strongly encourage everyone to look at the Lismore Strategic Planning Statement when it goes on exhibition and make a submission. We need growth that is thoughtful, sustainable, and grounded in the realities of our landscape and community.

## Regional waste facility

Coming up is a series of community information sessions for the proposed regional waste facility at Blakebrook Quarry. This is a significant proposal with long term impacts.

There are concerns about this site, particularly as it would operate alongside the existing quarry and asphalt plant, with a substantial increase in truck movements as a regional facility.

I'm still forming my view and waiting for the environmental reports and encourage locals to attend a session, get informed and ask questions. They will be held on Wednesday 22nd April, 2-8pm and Thursday 23rd April, 9am-12pm at Goolmangar School of Arts Hall.

## Council meeting

March's Council meeting

was a tough one. I was particularly disappointed that Council did not support my motion to advocate for a Richmond River Commissioner and join Rous, Ballina and Byron in showing regional consensus. Our river is in serious decline and we need co-ordinated, whole of catchment action from source to sea.

A foreshadowed motion was successful to wait for the CSIRO report, which is focused on flood mitigation, but this is not the same as addressing river health. We must start with the health of the river and if mitigation measures risk harming that, they should not proceed. Without a healthy, living river, we have nothing. It is our lifeblood.

I am concerned that decisions and positions, at this time, are increasing risk to council, including a decision on our investment profile, where the vote was to increase the risk profile of our investments at this time of such instability.

Some motions feel more like posturing and dog whistling around koalas and logging, when what is needed is care, balance and long-term thinking.

We need to hold all the elements that support our community environment, housing, business and social wellbeing in balance. Sustainability isn't a slogan, it's the work we must commit to every day.

However, it was heartening to stand alongside around 1500 people in the Lismore Quad calling for an end to native forest logging. There is something powerful in gathering with others who understand that forests are not just resources they are living ecosystems, cultural landscapes, and part of our collective future.

The transition away from native forest logging is coming. The focus now must be on supporting workers and communities into sustainable industries not clinging to the past.

Please reach out if you'd like to discuss anything I've written. Stay well as we move through the season change and I hope folk are enjoying preparing winter gardens. Be well.

Please note, the opinions expressed here are my own and not those of Lismore City Council. Feel free to contact me at: [Virginia.Waters@lismore.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Virginia.Waters@lismore.nsw.gov.au)



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**Phone 6689 1769**

**In your neighbourhood...**  
Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre News

In March we sadly lost two of our strongest women elders and leaders – Jenny Dowell and proud Widjabin woman, Rhoda Roberts.

Both of them had strong ties with the Nimbin community and each of them were incredible community leaders in their own ways, and will be greatly missed.

Jenny as Mayor of Lismore for eight years (among many other contributions), communicator extraordinaire, who authentically engaged with and listened to everyone in the community, and Rhoda as cultural warrior who tirelessly worked to ensure First Nations peoples' art and culture was acknowledged, nurtured and supported.

Vale Jenny Dowell. Vale Rhoda Roberts. May they both Rest in Peace and Power.

Thanks to Care and Alex and crew for the yummy dinner, Rachelle for the lights, Sheila from Chatterbox for the sound. Pauline for the fabulous banners. School of Arts for the use of the Hall (with brand new air conditioning). Rachel, Steph and Gillian for the bar. Cath, Jo, Sally, Elke, Alison, Mandy, Chiara, Pauline, Aline and Jacqueline for help with set up, door, raffle tickets and everything else. Magali, Steph, Sally and Chiara for wrangling tea coffee and cakes. Chris, Tash, Bev, Kaye and Magali for making said cakes. Leanne and Aline for rustling up all the raffle prizes. Nicole for setting up Humanix. Josh for managing ticket sales at NNIC's front desk. To everyone who stayed behind to help us pack



Legends of Nimbin: NNIC were winners of the Golden Gumboot for its outstanding team of volunteers. Natalie and Tash accepted the award presented by Cr Virginia Waters.

up. And to all the women who came along to celebrate IWD 2026 with us!

Thanks also to the following people and businesses who so generously donated prizes for this year's WD Raffle (in no particular order): Magali Dufes, Amulet, Nimbin Food Coop, Russell Nell, Rain Wickham, Forest Miles, Courtney Willard, Soshin Topp, Chi Acupuncturist, Jaz E Who, Sally Adriane, David Graham, Wesley Savins, Phillippe Binetruy, Amandine Schneider, White Feathers Holistic Therapies, Ali Walker, The Green Bank, The Candle Factory, Spirit Burrows, OM Alchemy, Deb – Kantankerouswoman Shop, Chrissy Schyff, Pauline Ahern, Mandy, Venu Cameron, CMC, Nimbin Emporium, Miki Kobayashi, Phil Brommers, Care Debus, Richard Laing, Nimbin Herbs, Nimbin Pharmacy, NR Hemp, Nimbin Apothecary, Fashionating, Nimbin Newsagency and Nimbin Unicorn.

household expenses including electricity bill relief, food or other material aid.

We may also be able to assist with negotiating unpaid fines and debts. We make no judgements and all services are confidential. We can also provide mental health support and referrals.

Call us on 6689-1692 to make an appointment with our community worker (available Wednesdays-Fridays).

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**Work experience**  
Are you looking for work experience, or just to get involved in the community? We have lots of different roles at NNIC and right now are looking for front desk support volunteers.

Certificate qualifications in community services or similar an advantage. IT skills also helpful.

We have so many different things to do – there is sure to be something that you will enjoy. Contact us at: [admin@nmc.org.au](mailto:admin@nmc.org.au) or drop by and chat to our front desk staff.

**Donate to support us**  
NNIC is a registered DGR charity. If you would like to donate, drop into NNIC OR deposit directly into our Gift Fund account: Summerland Bank, BSB 728 728, Nimbin Neighbourhood and Info Centre – Gift Fund a/c no. 22205341 Ref: your name plus DON. Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Email us at: [admin@nmc.org.au](mailto:admin@nmc.org.au) or drop in to ask for a tax receipt.

**Nimbin Aged Care & Respite Services**  
We assist frail aged people and their carers remain living at home and staying connected

**Home & Community Care** – our friendly, local support workers are qualified, certified, experienced, police checked, insured

**SOCIAL CENTRE with air-con and Veranda:** Mon-Fri 10am-2pm drop in for a cuppa, info on support services, computers, air-con

**DEVICE ADVICE:** Weds 9.30am-12.30pm, seniors can book for assistance with phone, tablet or laptop issues

**SENIORS SOCIAL GROUPS** – booking and fees apply  
Nimbin Tuesday Morning Tea at centre  
Garrima Café Group twice monthly Thursdays, 11-2  
Wise Ones, Koonorigan Hall 4th Mon, bring plate to share  
Bus Outings: 2nd & 4th Tues, scenic drives, cafes & site-seeing

All NACRS aged care activities and services require MyAgedCare registration and assessment – [myagedcare.gov.au](http://myagedcare.gov.au) 1800 200 422

Trustworthy Respectful kind Reliable Healthy  
responsive Competent Boundaries  
Empathic personalised authentic  
Sensitive adaptive Supportive

Contact NACRS: 6689 1709 enquiries@nacrs.com.au  
or visit NACRS at Bottlebrush Studio, rainbow building at Nimbin Community Centre, 81 Cullen St  
[www.nacrs.com.au](http://www.nacrs.com.au)

**Nimbin Hospital information**

**Child immunisation**  
By appointment, phone 6630-0400.

**Early childhood nurse**  
Every Tuesday. Baby checks, weights, post-natal support. For appointments, phone 6630-0400.

**Women's health nurse services**  
Third Thursday of the month, next is 17th April. Phone 6688-1400 for an appointment.

**Wound clinic**  
Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8am. For self-referral, phone 6688-1433. Referrals also from Nimbin Hospital and GP clinic.

**Drug and alcohol counselling services available**  
For an appointment, please contact 6620-7600. A trained professional will ask you a few confidential questions and will provide you with an appointment time.

**Nurse practitioner clinic**  
Diabetes clinics: Third Thursday of the month, next is 17th April.

**Community Registered Nurse**  
Monday to Friday, 8am-4.30pm. Assessments, wound care, referrals, advocacy, provision of palliative care in the home, medication support. Phone 6688-1433 – leave a message, will return call swiftly.

**Nimbin NSP**  
Needle and syringe program open Monday to Thursday. Arrangements can be made to see a community Registered Nurse.

**Health advice line**  
Phone 1800-022-222 if you have a health issue. 24-hour, seven days a week, free service. A registered nurse will assess whether you need to go to an emergency department.

**Nimbin Hospital Auxiliary**  
Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month, 9.30am in the conference room of the Nimbin MPS. New members always welcome.

**NIMBIN ENVIRONMENT CENTRE NEWS**

by Scott Sledge

**Action for forests**  
This past month has been remarkable for the energy going towards protection of native forests as refugia for our unique Australian flora and fauna. The trees are worth more standing, by any measure! Trees are our best defence against climate change disasters.

**Cherry Tree lock-on**  
Ahead of the advertised events in Lismore, a group from NorthEast Forest Alliance (NEFA) interrupted timber harvesting at Cherry Tree State Forest south of Casino. One woman locked herself onto machinery, preventing logging for most of the day. TV news covered the action in the evening.

**Forest Frontline Forum**  
Forest activist group Richmond River Koala Parks organised a gathering at Southern Cross University on Saturday 21st March to hear experts share information about the conservation values of state forests in the southern catchment of the Richmond River, proposed to become the Richmond River Koala Parks.

**Demand forest protection**  
On Wednesday 25th March, thousands of residents contacted NSW decision-makers by phone and email to demand they honour a commitment to protect 30% of land by 2030.

**AI and the proliferation of data centres**

AI itself is an industry that is already prone to hyperbole and exaggeration, so it's wise to take some claims with a grain of salt, but its relentless demand for energy is not one of them and is supercharging our existing global climate crisis.

One search on Google uses as much electricity as is required to power a lightbulb for two minutes. One query to ChatGPT is 25 times more costly. You could light a lightbulb for 50 minutes. Kemp writes that if all our digital technology was a single country, it would be the third highest consumer of electricity behind the US and China.

And yes, while AI might help in the progress of some areas of science, it's hard to see this outbalancing its uses as an enabler of technofascism that Silicon Valley is supercharging. AI accelerates the creation of global catastrophic risk, arms races and military operations, and allows more and more data for mass surveillance while at the same time guzzling huge amounts of power and water.

Let's bring this back to the state of NSW. Australia is among the top regions in the world for data centre developments, and NSW, particularly Sydney, sits in the middle. This looming overdevelopment isn't the only thing eroding the achievement of climate goals, the massive expansion of coal mines comes to the fore, but this is not helped by national data from the Clean Energy Regulator showing that the total emissions from data centre operators have doubled over the past four years.

Ketan Joshi, an author and energy analyst, notes that Australia's data centre lobby group is stumbling in its dance to avoid real regulation. Data Centres Australia is framing their narrative that AI data centres are somehow part of the energy transition, signing power purchases with renewable energy developers. Not so, says Joshi.

because they move around, especially the males.

commitment. Koalas are still being pushed towards extinction. The koalas in the Northern Rivers are genetically unique, thus different from koalas that may survive elsewhere.

Critical habitat is still being logged. The timber industry needs to stop destroying wildlife habitat – at public expense – and commit to harvesting only plantation trees. NSW Forestry Corporation needs to be curtailed.

In addition to an average annual top-up of around \$22M public money to keep operating, the NSW Forestry Corp regularly gets fined for breaches of sustainable forestry codes. Last year Forestry Corp lost \$32 million on its hardwood division, costing \$4,330 to log every hectare of native forest.

To rub salt into the wound, the Forestry Corp regularly gets fined for breaches of sustainable forestry codes which the public then has to pay. In March the Land & Environment Court imposed a huge penalty of \$450,000 on Forestry Corp for illegal logging in the promised Great Koala National Park, which brought their losses on the case to \$1.2 million, without accounting for Forestry's own court costs.

The 'restorative justice actions', ordered in its decision, have been welcomed as 'game changers' by Bellingen Environment Centre. President, Cath Eaglesham said, "This is a landmark decision because for the first time the penalties applied to Forestry Corporation have included more than a fine for their criminally incompetent forestry operations, in 2020, in Wild Catte Creek State Forest, inside the area Labor promised to protect as the



NEC volunteers at the March for Forests

Great Koala National Park." The restorative justice action ordered by the Court on 13th March stated that the \$450,000 be paid to the local Yurruungga Aboriginal Corporation (YAC).

Time is running out. It took 10 years for the Great Koala National Park to be declared, and the ALP has yet to finalise the gazettal of these public lands for protection. We spoke out to get the state government to commence the process for a Northern Rivers version we are calling the Richmond River Koala Parks.

The public must stand up to protect our natural heritage. The state forests are not the preserve of any one sector of the commercial world, though Forestry Corp currently have a legal obligation to manage NSW forests. The evidence shows that ever-smaller trees are taken, and much of that is too small for sawmilling is simply ground up for sale as woodchips!

NEFA president Dailan Pugh, OAM said: "NSW loggers are ramping up their campaign to both extend Wood Supply Agreements indefinitely and remove the requirements of a few councils for DAs for logging. (If they complied it would mean they would actually have to look for threatened species and ecosystems before they logged)."

"With the looming threat of the government extending Wood Supply Agreements indefinitely, time is running out for us to progress our campaigns to protect public native forests. Decisions are likely to be locked in before NSW goes into full-on election mode in September, so the next three to six months are critical for our forests' future."

**Volunteer network initiative**  
The Nimbin Chamber of Commerce together with Nimbin Community Centre has initiated gatherings for representatives of the many organisations that have volunteers playing a major role for the benefit of our community. Nimbin probably has at least as great a reliance on volunteers as any other community.

NEC is pleased to be participating in the Nimbin Community Organisations Interagency (NCOI) and we welcome the opportunity to build connections and communication with other community groups in Nimbin to promote volunteerism. NEC is totally volunteer with no-one paid for working in our main street shop, or for any other function.

Volunteers are the backbone of this community. Together we are strong. NEC has made a financial contribution to support this initiative. Please visit the NEC shop at the centre of our village for a range of local products, gifts and information. Our friendly volunteers welcome visitors and long-time locals alike.

While a coalition of environmental and advocacy groups earlier this month called for mandatory 100% non-fossil fuel energy procurement for all new data centre projects, Data Centres Australia shot back, saying it does not need to be compelled to act, even though it says it is committed to net zero by 2030 targets.

In other words, big tech has to eat up billions of dollars' worth of clean tech just to be neutral, and this is as good as it gets!

The industry itself is defining its data centres as "critical infrastructure" – something akin to a hospital or a dam. That doesn't take into account the growing global scream of discontent about AI generative slop and deep fakes, and how it enables Techno Fascism and Enshittification of social media platforms.

As the ABC's Alan Kohler recently said, "Social media is dead". You don't know what to trust on it, hence it has no real value. He had the experience of being the subject of a completely fake interview online where the head of the Commonwealth Bank Matt Comyn walked out on him during a 7:30 interview. It never happened.

This brings me to Guenther's The Language of Climate Politics. Fossil fuel ideology is rampant throughout the internet, and especially on platforms such as X and Facebook where it contributes to its own echo chamber of a conspiratorial world view where science and facts are hijacked and selectively cherry-picked, to present an argument that the continued burning of fossil fuels somehow sits comfortably within the sphere of techno optimism.

Those who say that global warming is a subject of physics and engineering are banished from debate as being alarmist. Never mind the fact that, with truly staggering speed, the planet has revealed