

NEWS

Northern Rivers councils launch education campaign to control wild dogs

SEVEN Northern Rivers councils, including Byron Shire, have joined with National Parks and Wildlife, the Livestock Health and Pest Authority and the Invasive Animals Co-operative

Research Centre to implement a dog education campaign to reduce the negative impact dogs are having on wildlife and livestock in the region.

The main aims of the project are to improve the level of responsible pet ownership and to boost the management of wild dogs.

Councils in the Northern Rivers so it was important they were managed responsibly.

Dog owners should ensure their dogs are always under control or contained in a secure run, she said.

It was also important that dogs were microchipped and desexed.

If you see or hear wild dogs, call the Livestock Health and Pest Authority at Lismore on 6621 2317.

Uplift puts Byron on new-age map

By DIGBY HILDRETH

THE Uplift Festival held in Byron Bay on the weekend before Christmas delivered what it promised on the label – to help participants feel joyful and optimistic.

Some festival-goers also believed that it had secured the shire's position as a global centre of new-age consciousness.

Byron is already on the map as an alternative lifestyle region, with a background of hippie (and sometimes dippy) pastimes, but the event's smooth running and high standards could add to the shire's attraction for upmarket yet alternative tourists from around the world, said local real estate professional Michael Murray.

Mr Murray said participants and councillors had talked about how the shire should encourage the kind of "new-age consciousness clientele" and the accommodation to cater for them.

He said the festival had "exceeded everyone's expectations, especially with the quality of the speakers, who were very strong".

The speakers came from a variety of disciplines, including science, wellness, art, ecology, new economics and indigenous culture.

Music and meditation sessions were also available, as well as workshops and panels and also a large kids' village.

Up to 1500 people gathered to welcome the sun at Main Beach on the



POPULAR: The Uplift Festival Sunrise Ceremony at Main Beach. PHOTO: MIREILLE MERLET-SHAW

Saturday morning, and to watch Aboriginal elders perform ceremonies and speak about the importance of people coming together to create change. Elder Uncle Bob Randall said people needed to decide: "Am I going to live for my need or for my greed?"

Mr Murray said he had been particularly impressed by stem cell biologist Bruce Lipton's outline of "the whole scientific background

of how we are affected by our thoughts and programming".

And the information given by Dr Paul Stamets – a dedicated mycologist, or mushroom expert – on the benefits of edible and medicinal mushrooms had been "stunning", Mr Murray said.

Other participants reported being moved to laughter – and tears – by clown doctor Patch Adams's stories of attempting to distract war-wounded Afghani children while they were being treated without anaesthetic.

Councillor Rose Wanchop said she thought the event marked the baptism of the Regional Sports Centre, which had hosted the many hundreds of people attending without a hitch.

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