

Eacham TIMES

Trading Hours: **WEDNESDAY** and **THURSDAY** 9:00 am - 12:00 noon
Closing time for advertisements - 12 noon **THURSDAY**

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LETS Bartle



Hooking into a tasty spud after your market shop is a great way to enjoy a weekend morning. But my potato is no ordinary tuber, as fifty percent of it can be repaid in-kind. The Mobile Spud business is a LETS member. This Local Exchange Trading system, which originated in Canada in the 80s, started here in the Tablelands in 1991. Lou and Lyn, the spudsters, are great advocates of the no or low cash scheme, "An excess of chickens can be turned into an accountant helping you with your GST", says Lyn, handing me a bio-degradable fork to accompany my hot snack at the Atherton Easter markets. Louise Cross, who Lyn assures me 'is not angry at all', chips in, "LETS also has environmental benefits as it reduces waste by trading excess produce". Both, a little reluctant, prepare for their shot for the Eacham Times. "Lean forward, no chins" laughs Lou, apparently an Elizabeth Taylor photo tip.

LETS currently has 56 members and several businesses signed up including

Spiral Garden Natural Toys and Shady Grove Oils. The membership is a \$20, one-off fee to cover admin., and each member can opt whether to sell entirely for 'Bartles' the LETS currency, or choose 50% cash or simply enter 'negotiable' or 'quote' if you are unsure. One Bartle seems to be the equivalent of \$1. There is an online noticeboard with 'offerings' and 'wants', which can be automatically emailed once a week.

Goods offerings this month include a 5 burner gas BBQ, TV, arthritis grips, Tofu recipe book, double doona cover and bread-maker. Service offerings include; handyman services at 15B, Italian lessons at 20B and \$20, earthmoving at 75B, treelopping and typesetting and graphic design. Some 'Goods and Services' categories are 'Advice and Tuition', Computer/IT, Clothing and Apparel, Animals and Pets, Labour and Assistance and Motor Vehicle and members advertise here at no extra cost with the option of adding

Story and photo by Deanna Maich a photo.

One wanted announcement for busy bee workers recently posted, offers 15 Bartles to people interested in spending the day clearing their yard – and smaller Bartles for smaller people. This announcement goes further to suggest people who rock up for the day, also bring along trade items to exchange.

For those not plugged into the net, there is also the opportunity to be involved in Trade Days which move between Atherton, Wondecla, Malanda, Yungaburra and Peermon and Trade Nights at a member's place in Tarzali, where people share a meal and bring items to trade, once a month.

Have excess produce, skills or unwanted items? Contact Belinda Moore on 40 966 972 or if you are connected, bel@spiralgarden.com.au and the website is <http://lets.clearwater.com.au> so don't be a couch potato, get involved and turn your spuds into treasure!