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## Local lawyer offers free legal advice

Story & photo Victoria Cosford

Free legal one-on-one conferences are currently being offered by a local solicitor. Eureka-based Jonathon de Vere Tyndall is making himself available at Newrybar's Harvest Cafe for a series of Monday morning sessions to people who are experiencing serious problems such as bankruptcy or loss of home.

With the recent release of figures on unemployment – the rate has risen again for the second month in a row, and is expected to keep rising – this immensely noble offer could not have come at a better time. Nor to a better place than the Far North Coast, with its dangerously high levels of single mothers and poverty in general.

It is Jonathon's ethos that 'all clients, regardless of their background, activities or circumstances are entitled to fair treatment before the law.'

'There are people out there,' he told *The Echo*, 'with severe problems who might not real-



ise there's a solution.' He went on to talk about 'a climate of fear [whereby] people are making decisions based on fear.:'; it is these people he is anxious to assist in whatever way he deems appropriate.

Prior to becoming a solicitor, Jonathon was a practising barrister for 16 years, both in the Hunter Valley (from whence he comes) and in Sydney. Over many years he has contributed to pro bono causes and to isolated or socially disadvantaged people who lack economic resources.

He moved to Eureka three

years ago – 'to take it a bit easier and to get into organic farming' – the latter in which he had been involved in the Hunter. And yet the solicitor in him felt that there was more he could be doing and more he could give – and that he could create a sort of bridge over the gap between legal aid and the standard costly services of the average lawyer.

Hence the idea of the pro bono, or free, legal conferences. And so, in the bucolic, unthreatening and private space which is the Harvest Café, he will conduct consultations with people who may have persuaded themselves that they are beyond help. The sessions commence at 10am and there are no appointments: it's a mere matter of turning up.

Jonathon told *The Echo* that he is very open to the notion of other professionals 'coming on board' – offering a hand in this venture. He can be contacted on 6688 2492 or 0439 651 813. His website is [www.tyndall.net.au](http://www.tyndall.net.au).

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