

migrantvoice

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Edition 20



Global Grooves a multicultural success

Mackay Filipino Australia Society members were out in force!

*More than 8000 people went to Queens Park on Saturday, October 24 to experience the many cultures represented in Mackay's local community at Global Grooves, our biggest multicultural event.... **Read more page 3***



**Have stories or events to contribute to Migrant Voice?
Contact council's Community Development Officer at
Alison.McRaeFearnley@mackay.qld.gov.au or 4961 9596.**

Council has an ongoing responsibility to provide communications suitable to the needs of all residents. If you wish to receive information in an alternative format or require an interpreter contact 1300 MACKAY (1300 622 529).



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A message from our Mayor Deirdre Comerford

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the latest edition of Migrant Voice.

The end of 2015 has seen a whole host of exciting activities happening to celebrate and support our local multicultural community.

The region's largest multicultural event, Global Grooves at Queens Park, was a great success. With more than 8000 attendees, it was a wonderful chance for the community to showcase and celebrate the many cultures who call the Mackay region home. A special thanks to all in the community who volunteered time to run the stalls and put on performances and other activities.

I would also like to congratulate the Fijian Association on their Fiji Day celebrations – I was honoured to join you as Chief Guest for the day and it was wonderful to see your community's culture on show.

I am grateful to live in a community that supports multicultural events such as these.

Shortly the Christmas season will be upon us. May the peace, joy and love that the Christmas message brings, be with you all throughout the coming year.



Fiji Day Celebrations

The Fijian Community hosted a wonderful celebration for Fiji Day on Saturday, October 10 at Queens Park.

A strong crowd came along for food, song, dance, and to experience the Bula smile and spirit. A range of Fijian cuisines were available to taste, including an underground earth oven (lovo), delicious curries and fish dishes and traditional Indian sweets.

Mackay Mayor Deirdre Comerford was the Chief Guest and a traditional kava ceremony was held.

Dance groups performed "meke" (traditional style of dance) for entertainment along with guest performances from the Samoan Community and the Cook Island Community.

A special thankyou to the elders of the community who were in attendance and to the hardworking members of the Fiji Association Mackay Region for organising the day.

The Association also received a Mackay Regional Council Community Grant to help them put on the day.



Brown Sugar Festival

Brown Sugar Festival was held on Sunday, September 27 where the Mackay Australian South Sea Islander community shared their history and culture with the wider community.

The festival began with a street parade from the car park in Wood Street to the Showgrounds where people attending could sample the delicious food and home baked goodies, as well as arts, crafts and clothing. They were also treated to cultural performances. Overall, approximately 800 people attended the event and a great afternoon was had by all!



United Nations Day

Zonta and George Street Neighbourhood Centre's annual United Nations Day celebrations were held at Mackay Regional Council on Monday, October 26.

Georgine Pradhan spoke about the history and spirit of UN Day, Vivien Hanrahan spoke about her own migrant experience and Marie Cameron spoke about Zonta's involvement with women and families in underprivileged countries. The Indonesian singers also presented three items. Many thanks to everyone who came and supported the day!

Sounds, tastes, colours and rhythm!



Global Grooves

Organised by Mackay Regional Council with the support of many local multicultural groups, there were performances from dance and music groups, food from all over the world and a wonderful atmosphere.

Council also received funding from Multicultural Affairs Qld to provide interactive workshops where you could try your hand at Italian and Indian cooking, Fijian weaving and coconut husking, Chinese paper folding, Muay Thai martial arts and more, which proved very popular.

Wandering through the Global Village, visitors experienced the culture, food and traditions of many countries thanks to local cultural groups including the Fijian, Samoan, Pacific Islander, PNG, Thai, Filipino, Maltese, Italian, Falun Dafa Chinese, Australian South Sea Islander and Torres Strait Islander community members and more.

Italian Update

The Association's last Luncheon for 2015, held November 8, was a huge success with over 200 people attending. You can also listen in to our radio programme on 4CRM every Saturday morning from 11am to noon.



On the road

A big congratulations to the 29 people who gained their Learner Driver's Licence thanks to George Street Neighbourhood Centre's free five week Migrant Driver Education program in November. The course includes two hours of activities each week to assist migrants with Queensland road rules and becoming competent learner drivers. Special mention to Michelle Handley from Michelle's Driving School, Karen Cantoni from the Dept of Transport and Main Roads and Lindsay Birch from the Road Accident Action Group for their support in delivering the sessions. Many thanks from George Street to the 22 community volunteers who assisted with child-minding, translating and learning.

The next program should start in late February 2016. Please register your interest ASAP, as spaces are very limited. Phone George Street on 4957 7222.

Free English Classes

Did you know CQU's Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) provides up to 510 hours of free English language tuition to eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants?

Contact Alex at CQU on a.page@cqu.edu.au or phone 4940 3380 for more information about the course and eligibility requirements.



Happy Diwali 2015!

Diwali (or Deepavali, the "festival of lights") is an ancient Hindu festival and is one of the largest and brightest festivals in the Hindu calendar, this year falling on Wednesday, November 11. The Mackay Fijian Hindu community celebrated with prayers and lighting diyas (lamps), dinner with friends and family, and sharing traditional sweets with friends.

What's on in Mackay?

World Cafe

Do you want to meet people make new friends while practicing your English and learning about different cultures? Come along to this free group where we do lots of activities like conversational games, cooking, craft and learning about the community.

When: Every Tuesday from 10.30am-12pm

Where: George Street Neighbourhood Centre Shed

Contact: 4957 2626

Migrant Settlement Program

George Street Neighbourhood Centre offers free support to eligible migrants who have arrived in the last five years. This includes information about making appointments, English classes, driving, health services, schools, childcare, renting and more.

Contact: 4957 7222

Multicultural Playgroup

When: Fridays from 9.30am to 11.30am

Where: Shakespeare Child and Family Centre,

43 Shakespeare St. Cost: \$3 Contact: 4957 7222

United Women's Cultural Group Craft Mornings

When: Every Monday 9am - 12pm

Where: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (ATSICHS),
31 Victoria St Mackay

Info: Newcomers of all ages / cultural backgrounds welcome. **Cost:** \$2.00 p. week. Bring a plate of food to share. **RSVP:** Leslie 0413 438 779

Italian Association Chat & Coffee

When: 5:30pm every second Friday of every month.

Where: Coco Cubano, Wood Street.

Practice your language skills in a relaxed environment over a cuppa. All levels of Italian welcome.

Helpful Links

For a full list of local Migration Agents and English Language Services visit the Settling in Mackay page at www.mackay.qld.gov.au - or contact council's Multicultural Community Development Officer on 4961 9596.