

migrantvoice

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Edition 21



City Centre Celebrates Chinese New Year

The colourful Chinese Lion Dancers were a hit with crowds in the City Centre.

Mackay City Centre welcomed the Year of the Monkey with an exciting Chinese New Year celebration at the Victoria Street Markets in February.

More than 6000 people joined the festivities, which included Asian cuisine food stalls, Chinese Lion Dancers, local Chinese dance groups and singers, Kung Fu and Table Tennis demonstrations, a Fire Show and fun for the kids including arts and crafts activities...

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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).



A message from our Mayor Deirdre Comerford

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the first edition of Migrant Voice for 2016. This is the only newsletter of its kind in the Mackay region and provides a voice for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, as well as promoting events, activities and issues.

It has been a very busy start to the year, with an Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony held on January 26 where I had the honour of welcoming 94 new citizens to our country and to their new home here in the Mackay region.

I continue to be amazed by the diverse number of countries that make up our community. Since 2013 we have welcomed over 2477 people from 68 different countries.

One of the highlights from the past few months was the Chinese New Year festivities in the Mackay City Centre. Attracting over 6000 people to Victoria Street, it was a wonderful celebration of our local community members who celebrate the Lunar New Year, including my children who are Taiwanese. I was very proud to see the creativity and talent of the performers, retailers and stall holders represented on the day.

March also sees International Women's Day and Harmony Day activities occurring throughout the region and I encourage you all to get involved.

Until next time,
Mayor Deirdre Comerford



City Centre Celebrates Chinese New Year

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Many of the performers are also students with CQU's Adult Migrant English Program and participants in George Street Neighbourhood Centre activities. It was wonderful to see the talent of our local community members on show.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to make the day such a success.

Chinese New Year marks the first day of the New Year in the Chinese calendar, which differs from the Gregorian calendar. It is also known as the Spring Festival or the Lunar New Year.

Australian Census - August 9, 2016

What is the census and who needs to do it?

The census is a compulsory, anonymous and confidential survey about your living situation. Everyone in Australia on August 9, including tourists, people on working visas, visitors etc, is legally required to complete a Census form. The Census provides an important snapshot of Australia's people and their housing. It helps estimate Australia's population, which is used to distribute government funds and plan services for your community, including housing, transport, education, industry, hospitals and the environment. It is particularly important for multicultural communities to complete these forms so funding for multicultural services can be correctly shared throughout Australia.

How do I complete the census form?

The 2016 Census will be Australia's first Census where more than two thirds of Australia's population (more than 15 million people) are expected to complete the Census online.

In the lead up to August 9, households will receive a letter from the ABS, addressed 'To the Resident', including a unique login and instructions on how to complete the Census online. Completing the Census online will be fast, easy, secure, environmentally friendly, and helps reduce the cost of the Census to the community. If you can't complete it online, paper forms can be requested.

Will my answers be confidential?

The personal information you provide in your Census form remains strictly confidential. No information will be released in a way that would enable identification of any particular individual or household. The ABS destroys all name-identified Census information after processing has been completed. By law, organisations like government departments and direct marketing companies cannot have access to personal information from the Census.



Celebrate Harmony Day & Raise Money for Fiji

Free Kids Outdoor Movie & Fun Cultural Activities

**Saturday, March 19,
5.30pm - 8pm
Town Hall Park -
63 Sydney Street**

Mackay Regional Council is lighting Town Hall orange and providing a free screening of children's movie Lilo & Stitch to celebrate Harmony Day. Cultural workshops, singing from George Street Neighbourhood Centre's under fives reading group and Chinese red ribbon dancers will also be there to entertain the family, followed by an outdoor screening of the movie. The Fiji Association Mackay Region are selling BBQ food and drinks - with proceeds going towards Cyclone Winston Recovery. Bring your picnic blanket / camping chairs to sit on to watch the movie!



Fiji Cyclone Winston Aid Relief Effort

The most powerful storm ever to hit Fiji, Cyclone Winston, has left a terrible trail of destruction in its wake and created a need that is great and urgent. The death toll from the category 5 storm stands at more than 40 and the nation faces a long and difficult recovery.

Follow the Fiji Association Mackay Region's Facebook page to keep track of fundraising efforts or contact them at fjmackayregion@gmail.com



HARMONY DAY 21 MARCH

Our diversity is our strength



What Is Harmony Day?

Harmony Day celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. It's about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. It is a day for all Australians to embrace cultural diversity and to share what we have in common.

The central message for Harmony Day is that 'everyone belongs', reinforcing the importance of inclusiveness to all Australians.

Italian AGM

The 2016 year has kicked off for the Mackay and District Italian Association at their AGM held in February. Only in its third year, the association currently has over 80 financial members and is growing from strength to strength. This is shaping up to be the most exciting year yet, with activities including the finalisation of their local history book, luncheons, coffee and chat groups and a radio show on 4CRM.

Events and Activities:

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.

United Women's Cultural Group Craft Mornings

When: Every Monday 9am - 12pm
Where: ATSICHS, 31 Victoria St Mackay
Info: Newcomers of all ages / cultural backgrounds welcome. \$2 per week. Bring a plate of food to share. Call Leslie on 0413 438 779

Italian Association Chat & Coffee

When: 5:30pm 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.

4CRM Multicultural Radio Shows

Hosted by local community members
Listen by tuning in to 107.5FM or online at 4crm.com.au
Tuesdays 7-8pm – Radio Filipino
Saturdays 11am-12pm – Ma Che Dici (Italian)
Sundays 6-7pm – Fiji Hour

Filipino Komedi Bar 2016

D'Voice & D'Gays Mackay Show – artists from the Philippines

When: Monday April 25, doors open 4.30pm, show starts 5pm
Where: New Life Centre, 75 Evans Ave, North Mackay
Cost: VIP \$70, General Admission \$55
Tickets & Info Enquiries:
Vicky 0447 849 623, Edwin 0427 144 4481
Presented by Mackay Filipino Australian Society Inc

Many Cultures Story Time

First Friday of Every Month from 10.30-11am at the Mackay City Library.

This is an innovative program of stories, songs and rhymes. Sessions are specifically targeted at children aged two to five from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Phone 4961 9387 for more information.

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.

Maltese Movie



The Mackay Maltese Club is proud to bring the highly acclaimed Maltese movie 'Simshar' to Mackay.

Simshar is based on the true story of the Marsaxlokk fishing family which shocked the island of Malta in 2008. The film was

shot in 21 locations around the Maltese islands and showcases a lot of Maltese customs. The movie is mostly in Maltese and has English subtitles.

Where: City Cinema in Gordon St.

When: 2.00pm Sunday, April 10

Cost: \$10 (includes afternoon tea)

Please note tickets must be pre-purchased - contact Donna Sumpter 4942 5881 or 0409 492 084 or email: sumpter.donna@gmail.com

What's on at George Street Neighbourhood Centre?



World Cafe

Do you want to meet people and 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 11am – 12.30pm

Where: Call George St Neighbourhood Centre for latest meeting place on 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

Time to Read

A program for under fives encouraging parents to read to their children. The program helps under fives be Prep-ready by teaching them to read, write and improve their gross and fine motors skills through a range of fun and educational activities. Held at these school libraries:

West Mackay Primary: Mondays 9:45 – 10:45am

Victoria Park Primary: Wednesdays 9:00 – 10:00am