

migrantvoice

MARCH 2012 - A quarterly newsletter published by Mackay Regional Council

Edition 5



Connect with the community at Multicultural playgroup

The Mackay Multicultural Playgroup

The Mackay Multicultural Playgroup welcomes parents with children under the age of five. Playgroups are wonderful in helping to further develop a child's physical and social skills.

The group meets every Friday from 9.30am to 11.30am at the Shakespeare Child and Family Centre, 43 Shakespeare Street, Mackay. Families who are new to the region are more than welcome to come along and meet new people, share experiences and ideas - for further details phone 4957 7222.



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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).



Message from Mayor Col Meng

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the March edition of Migrant Voice. Migrant Voice is the only newsletter of its kind in the Mackay region and provides a voice for ethnic communities, as well as promoting multicultural issues, events and activities.

As this is my last column as Mayor of the Mackay region, I hope you that you have found this newsletter to be of value. The information in the newsletter is an important link between council and community services and the Mackay region migrant community.

An important event to look forward to in March is Harmony Day which is celebrated on 21 March each year. Harmony Day is about bringing people together to promote Australian values and to celebrate community participation.

We are all very lucky to live in Australia, a country that nurtures the common values of respect, fairness, participation, acceptance and a fair go for all.

Harmony Day provides an opportunity for Mackay to celebrate our successes as a culturally diverse community and re-commit ourselves to harmony and mutual respect.

On this day, council will also welcome over 30 new Aussies at a special Citizenship Ceremony at the MECC.

Celebrate Mackay 150^o 1862-2012

In 2012, Mackay celebrates its sesquicentennial (pronounced sess-kwee-cen-ten-el) where we as a region commemorate our achievements over the past 150 years. It's a chance to reflect on our people, places and stories and what we can do to make our region an even better place for the future.

The anniversary remembers the establishment of Captain John Mackay's camp at Greenmount in January 1862 and the arrival of first settlers in September 1862. Key events that occurred over the past century and a half:

- 1871** - First public school opened for the town
- 1872** - First Mackay District Hospital opened
- 1885** - First railway in the district was built to Eton
- 1888** - First Central Mill in Queensland opened at North Eton
- 1918** - Mackay experienced a terrible cyclone in January (20-21)
- 1958** - Foulden and Cremorne, north of the Pioneer River were hit with a huge flood
- 1971** - The coal revolution begins with Hay Point Coal loading facility and Goonyella Mine opening
- 1994** - Mackay City and Pioneer Shire councils combine
- 2008** - Mackay City, Mirani Shire and Sarina Shire councils combine to form Mackay Regional Council
- 2008** - Thousands of homes flooded as over 625mm of rain is dumped on the region in six hours

Lamp update ▪ Lamp update ▪ Lamp update



Hello and welcome to a brand new year that is sure to be busy and eventful for the multicultural sector. Happy Chinese New Year also!

Congratulations to the cultural community groups who received funding this year from the Multicultural Assistance program to run community projects and events. Well done to the Fiji Association of Mackay Region and the Islamic Society of Mackay and good luck in developing your projects.

The council was also successful in this funding program with grant money received which will allow us to run community welcome functions this year and include a strong South Sea Islander connection at our annual Global Grooves multicultural festival later in the year. If any cultural group or association would like to apply for funding to run community projects, Lara and I are more than happy to assist in any way we can.

Harmony Day is coming up and is held annually on the 21 March each year. Harmony Day is about celebrating the diversity that exists from people living in Australia who all contribute different ideas, religions, languages and customs to our country. We encourage everybody to get involved this year. More information can be found at www.harmony.gov.au.



New friends coffee morning!

New to Mackay? Not feeling connected?

We would love to meet you over a get-to-know you morning tea every Friday.

The venue will be at the Gordon White Library, Phillip Street, Mount Pleasant (as you enter the library immediately on your left).

Every Friday at 9.30am to 11am.

Tea, Coffee and biscuits are supplied. Please come and make new friends! For details contact Toni Woolcock on 0403 499 454 or Sug Mogg on 0422 238 077.

Looking for employment...

Coal to Coast Jobs is a FREE job website for the Mackay Whitsunday Isaac region. You can browse positions vacant in the region and by registering you can build a guided online resume and use it to submit to apply for positions and set up 'job alerts' so positions that suit your skills will be sent to you directly. There are currently over 250 local employers advertising their positions vacant on the site and over 2500 job seekers using the site to look for work. The site also has information on living and working in the region.

All kinds of jobs from driving dump trucks in the mines, to serving coffee in a river side restaurant are on the site ready for you to register your interest! So head to www.coaltocoastjobs.com.au or 'like' us on facebook at www.facebook.com/coaltocoastjobswebsite.



After hours English Course on offer

The Mackay Language College (MLC) has received a lot of interest in the English courses being offered this term which covers IELTS Test preparation.

IELTS stands for International English Language Testing System.

These courses are for people who want to get permanent residency in Australia.

The MLC offers the English courses after work hours to suit those preparing for the test.

All activities are relevant to the test and if required specific aspects of the test will be covered.

For more information about the English Classes please contact the college on 4951 1300 or email info@mlcql.com.au

A free service for separated parents

The Post Separation Cooperative Parenting (PSCP) Program is based in Mackay and also provides a service to Sarina, Whitsundays, Moranbah, Glendon and Bowen. The PSCP service is provided by UnitingCare Community. The aim of the program is to assist separated parents to manage their communication with the other parent in the children's best interests.

This free service provides counselling, resources, support and a three hour educational seminar. The PSCP program can assist separated parents to focus on their children's needs

instead of their conflict, and will also help separated parents develop ways of dealing more constructively with each other. The PSCP service can be helpful for a family even if only one parent attends the program.

Post Separation Cooperative Parenting Contact Details - Phone 49442300.

The Post Separation Cooperative Parenting service is funded by the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.



Giesela Cardenas (pictured above) recently completed the IELTS test.

A Prayer for A Happy Mackay Life

By Gigi Ramos

Dear God, please bless my fiancé Graham Brake and I, with a long, productive and happy marriage. Though I know it won't be easy to

move to a place that's worlds apart from the Philippines that I have known and loved for 53 years, this is still the best decision that I have ever made in my life. Just as love is what made me decide to move here with G, it is also the moving force behind the people Graham and I would want to be as a future loving couple. Amen.



World Cafe

English Conversation Group



If you are interested in improving your English conversation skills and meet other people, you should join our group. Each week, we talk about different topics such as living in Mackay, preparing for a natural disaster and health care. We have monthly cooking sessions too. We are currently working on developing and publishing a cookbook with recipes that have been shared by people in the group.

When - Every Tuesday

Where - George St Neighbourhood Centre

Time - 10.30am to 12 noon

Please call before coming, contact Linda Brown 4957 2626.

GOOD NEWS for people with chronic illness and their family

Do you come or identify with a culture other than Anglo-Australian? Do you have a disability, mental illness, chronic medical condition, or frail-aged?

If you answered YES to all these questions, GOOD NEWS! You are eligible for Carers QLD Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Program. It is a free service that will assist you and the family member looking after you get all the services you require that will meet your health, mental, emotional, cultural and spiritual needs.

For more details, please contact Deb Parker at Carers QLD on 49440544, mob 0457740107 or email dparker@carersqld.asn.au.

Migrant Settlement Program

Migrant Settlement Program at the George Street Neighbourhood Centre - this is a free service to help eligible migrants who have arrived in the last five (5) years. We provide: Information about driving, health services, public transport, schools and child care, renting, staying safe and making friends.

Access to services in the community - employment, English classes, Centrelink, housing and volunteering. Help making appointments eg Doctors and government departments. For more details or to make an appointment phone the Migrant Settlement Worker on 4957 2626.

Become a volunteer home tutor today...

Mackay Institute of TAFE offers a FREE home tutor course. Learn the skills needed to assist migrants with low literacy to improve their English language and literacy skills in a one-to-one environment, within the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)* Home Tutor Scheme. You may also assist teachers in the classroom.

Duration: Ongoing

Location: Mackay and surrounding regional districts

Volunteer tutors make a valuable contribution to the community. Please contact peta.hill@det.qld.gov.au or more details. The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship.



Training and career information available for resident migrants

Newly arrived and resident skilled migrants are able to obtain information on Australian recognition of their overseas qualifications from Skilling Solutions Queensland.

The service can also assist resident skilled migrants to gain formal recognition of their workplace skills and experience towards an Australian qualification or to identify career pathway options.

Contact Skilling Solutions Queensland on 1300 654 687 to make an appointment with a specially trained consultant to open up your career options today or visit: www.skillsolutions.qld.gov.au for more information.

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Subscribe online at council's website to receive regular e-news updates that interest you.

www.mackay.qld.gov.au/about_council/newsletters

Useful Contacts

- > Migrant Settlement Program
Phone: 4957 2626
- > Local Area Multicultural Partnership Program
Phone: 4961 9596
Email: lamp@mackay.qld.gov.au
- > Migration Agent Listing
www.mackay.qld.gov.au/community/are_you_new_to_mackay