

News and Views



Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc

Welcome to the Thirteenth Edition of the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 13
Nov/Dec 2009

"T'is the Season of Peace and Joy ..! News and Views from the Director

As we approach the conclusion of yet another year I would like to express my gratitude to our funding bodies, private donors, the Board of Management, the staff and our many volunteers at the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka who have worked tirelessly throughout 2009 to bring about change for the better in lives of many people.

As I reflect back over the year that was, I know that I too have been changed by the experience of encountering new people from new places and not so new places, including my own indigenous brothers and sisters, and while the year has been very busy with many achievements, it also has been personally enriching.

So for me the message we can take from the Christmas Season is the fact that our world - locally, internationally and environmentally, - craves for understanding and compassion. This starts with each of us. It is only then that we can all fully enjoy this "season of peace and joy....!"

Driver Education Success!

We have had a very successful term. SIX people have passed their practical Driving Test, - three men and one woman from the Mauritanian Community and two ladies from the Sudanese Community. It is very satisfying to witness the joy and excitement that comes with each success. Three other participants attempted the test, but failed; however, after reading their reports from the examiners, their errors were minor, and hopefully, all will be successful soon.

The numbers attending the Drive Safe classes are steadily increasing and now Vicki is regularly utilising the computer lab where she is integrating scenarios and multiple-choice quizzes into the program which the students are enjoying and gaining a different perspective from this method. I was very happy to receive the proceeds from the "Taste of Sudan" Night to be able to assist a few more applicants on the long waiting list.

Christina Ward - Coordinator

Settlement Grants Program

On 27 November 2009, an information session on "Family Relationships and Family Law" was provided by the Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre. This session was well attended by women from different ethnic backgrounds and should prove extremely beneficial. Many of the women asked the lawyer a lot of relevant questions and were happy to have them answered clearly.

Most of the 65 clients who were supported and assisted this term (including 13 new applicants mainly from Sudan, Somalia and Burma), were referred to Financial Counsellors for Emergency Relief to pay utility bills, or needed assistance with reading and completing documents due to their lack of literary skills. Increased numbers of clients have presented with problems with various utility accounts. Priority Housing applicants now have to wait more than two years to be accommodated.

Marika & Dolly - Generalists

Inside this issue:

- CBERS Redress Service
- Computer Studies Program
- Driver Education Program
- Language for Living in Australia Program
- Lifeskills for Living in Australia Program
- Moorditj Koolangka Indigenous Children's Program
- Multicultural Sports & Recreation Program
- Settlement Grants Program
- "Women Together" Program
- Youth Leadership Program

Special Points of Interest

- ⇒ "A Taste of Sudan"
- ⇒ Driver Ed Success
- ⇒ Joe's Games
- ⇒ Jungle Drums

A Taste of Sudan



On Friday 27 November 2009, the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka held a Fund Raiser entitled "A Taste of Sudan" which included a sumptuous Sudanese banquet, drinks, and exciting, upbeat, Sudanese entertainment. Throughout the evening, sixty guests, very generously paying \$60 each, enjoyed the excellent food, (catered for by our 'Master Chef', Mashair, who very efficiently runs her own catering service), the drinks catering for all tastes, and, above all, the music and entertainment provided by the Great Nile Band. These gentlemen not only provided the music for the clapping, dancing and singing where all could happily join in, but they provided their services for free. They stayed for over two hours, when they had been engaged for only half an hour, and each member of the band said the group's response was the best they had ever experienced!

Congratulations to the chief organiser, Christina Ward and her band of helpers, and to Kevin Bowman whose 'brain-child' the whole function was. The Members of the ERCM Committee of Management were the chief promoters of the function (Thank you to all your generous friends), while Steve made a great impression with his 'pseudo-Sudanese' shirt!

Special grateful thanks go to the volunteer helpers who set up, cleaned up, washed up, put away, served, washed up again, cleaned up again and put away again throughout the evening, and to Joe and his Youth Leaders who came back from their Beatball Competition to do the heavy lifting.

Altogether, one-and-all voted this evening - "A Very Successful Night"!



Steve in his pseudo-Sudanese shirt.



Mashair



News Snippets from our Program Coordinators

Women Together

As part of WA Week, ERISJ in Fremantle arranged an event 'Unity in Diversity' and asked our 'Women Together' group to provide a multi-cultural lunch and for the women to dress in national dress and share their culture. The women who participated were from Australia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Sudan and Italy. Joe, Pashtana, Achech and Elizabeth Lang were also invited to talk about themselves and their experiences as young refugees and working with multicultural youth. The event was attended by 150 boys from CBC Fremantle and their teachers, local service providers and ERISJ staff.

Sally Hertzfeld - Coordinator

Page 2



"Unity in Diversity"

Lifeskills for Living in Australia

We had planned to go to Clarkson Reserve in Trigg but due to cool, showery weather we continued driving along the coast

enjoying the beauty of the northern beaches. After a little while the weather cleared so we drove back to Mawson Park in Hillarys to enjoy morning tea while learning a little about the area, the flora and the role of the Local Council.

One of the women loved the chance to have a swing.

"I haven't done that since I left my country!"

Ros Frestrail - Coordinator



News and Views

News Snippets from our Program Coordinators

DSR Harmony Game

At the end of each term, our Refugee and Indigenous Youth Program participants compete in a combined team Harmony Game. On 3 December, at the Herb Graham Centre, 15 indigenous and 9 refugee young people were drawn up into mixed teams to compete in a game of indoor soccer. Mel and Tahlia from the Department of Sport & Recreation (DSR) coached one team while two of our Youth Leaders, Atot and Paulino, coached the other. After leading 1-0 for most of the game, the DSR team conceded two goals and after a last-minute goal was ruled illegal by the referee, Br Jim, the Leaders' team ended up prevailing 2-1. After it was all over, Br Jim was not the most popular man from one side, while the players from the other



Coach Atot in action.

team loved him!

Joe Moniodis - Coordinator

A Drumming Experience from Moorditj Koolangka Program

One activity in November was very popular and proved to be one of the best for the year. Alistair, a gentleman from one of the African countries, gave the children a drumming lesson. Each child was provided with a drum! The children were so fascinated by the exercise that all remained focused and by the end of the session, the

children had learned five different rhythms, and were playing the five rhythms in unison making 'beautiful music' like professionals! It has been suggested that Alistair be invited back next year every term.

The final activity for the month was a cooking lesson conducted by our multi-tasking Director who stressed the importance of healthy eating and all agreed that the end



product was most delectable, - a pizza using square buns halved with all the healthy 'goodies' baked on top. Yum!

Br Phil O' Foghlen - Coordinator

Koondoola Integrated Services

In November, there were 34 sessions attending to 16 clients. At the end of the six sessions of the program *Bending Like a River*, the women were delighted to be presented with a certificate of attendance and a group photo plus a canvas bag with books and items from Playgroups WA. A group of Burundi women have continued to be engaged in a special weekly Lifeskills session run by the ERCM in partnership with the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre. This special session involves several interpreters plus advisers and crèche assistants as well as our own Lifeskills staff members.

Mandy Whitton - Multicultural Community Liaison Officer

CBERS Redress Service

CBERS Redress Service swung into 'support group' mode this month, and Wednesday morning groups commenced in the premises of the Edmund Rice Institute of Social Justice in Fremantle. Attendance was fairly low at first, but increased after some publicity. We are now registering people for

Wednesday afternoon groups. We plan to collate the considerable volume of statistical data collected during the applications phase so it can be used to inform further service provision in this area.

Thanks to Steve Bowman and his staff for their continuing support, and congratulations on the wonderful Sudanese banquet hosted at the Centre on 27th November.

Dr Philippa White - Coordinator

Computer Studies

Now that we have been awarded funding for the First & Second Click Programs, we are now able to offer Seniors classes once again, and of course, continue with the ESL ones which have

(It should be noted that when the computer classes no longer received funding for this last term, the computer teachers continued teaching the ESL classes as volunteers, receiving no pay! Thank you, All!

been very well supported this term. Next term, we will be running 6x3hr classes for each group.

Foin Quigley - Coordinator

Language for Living in Australia

We have been organising for the New Year. Our enrolment forms have been changed to accommodate the need for certain statistical information required by the Office of Multicultural Interests who fund this program. We have been fortunate enough to acquire two new volunteer teachers, Richard and Vivien, who have agreed to take a Basic Level class each enabling our classes to be smaller and more manageable. The Program writers are busy creating and hoping to trial their efforts in the New Year. We cater for 262 students each week, some of whom attend two or more classes.

Angela Broderick - Coordinator



**Edmund Rice Centre
Mirrabooka Inc**

Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc
18 Brewer Place
Mirrabooka WA 6061
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 613
Mirrabooka WA 6941
Phone: (08) 9440 0625
(08) 9440 1920
Fax: (08) 9207 1178
Email: ercmwa@westnet.com.au

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*For unto us a child is born... and he shall be called "Emmanuel" -
"God with us".*



Season's

Greetings

Peace and Joy during this festive season

From all of us at the

Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka

Thank you to our Sponsors



Forthcoming Events of Interest

- ⇒ Classes for 2009 finish on Friday 11 December
- ⇒ The ERCM office will be closed from Thursday 24 December 2009 and re-opens on Tuesday 5 January 2010



If you would like to support the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc, your donation will be most gratefully accepted. Your donation will enable people from Refugee and Indigenous backgrounds, including youth, to continue to gain benefits from our educational programs.

I enclose a donation to assist the work of the Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc:

\$20 \$50 \$100 \$500 Other

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Donations can be made by cheque or by direct deposit.

Please make cheques payable to "Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc" or deposit directly into

"Edmund Rice Centre Mirrabooka Inc", Account BSB 066 183, Account No: 1009 1408.

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