



# Newtown Neighbourhood Centre Newsletter

## Centre News

December 2009 / January 2010

Hi All

Thank you and thank you again to the wonderful people who supported the Newtown Festival. The weather was not as kind to us this year, rain came down throughout the Festival but still the bands played on, the people danced and of course shopped.

There are many people I would like to thank for making the Newtown Festival an enormous success. Firstly, the biggest thank you must go to our wonderful and dedicated volunteer team. I would like to thank every one of you from the bucket collectors, traffic marshals, stagehands, Emcees through to the admin support workers.

I would like to thank our wonderful festival staff team Sue, Tina, Jacqui and Cathy. I would also like to give a special thanks to our volunteer assistant Amber and to James who is on the Newtown Festival steering subcommittee. Your special commitment and enthusiasm are greatly appreciated and your hard work and dedication always make the Newtown Festival a major success. I don't know how they do it but I think every year the Festival improves that little bit more. I would like to thank the Hon. Carmel Tebbutt for her continued support and her assistance to the Newtown Festival.

I would also like to thank the local community who, for one day a year, accommodate the massive crowds and general influx of people that come hand-in-hand with a large community festival like ours.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the people who so generously donated to the Centre. Don't forget all the money raised at the Newtown Festival goes back to the community via the services we offer.

As you might be aware the Centre held a "*Building Resilience and Well Being Forum*" during Mental Health Week. The forum showcased many different support services and demonstrations were also held by local groups. Entertainment was provided by the amazing local band the Off-cuts as well as many activities for the children. It was a true community forum and we would like to thank all of our volunteers, other service providers and The Off-Cuts for their contributions. Many thanks as well to the Mental Health Association of NSW for funding the forum.

At the forum we also launched our report into the needs of people living with a mental illness. The report canvassed the opinions of people with a mental illness, their families and carers as well as those of service providers. The report points the way forward on crucial issues facing people with mental illness, basic issues such as employment, housing, health, lifestyle/wellbeing, recovery and community acceptance. The report will provide a basis for a community strategy to better respond to the needs of people living with mental illness. If you would like a copy of the report, visit our website <http://www.newtowncentre.org/campaigns.html> or call me on 9516 4755.



As a result of this project NNC launched its first ever educational video. We ask **you all** to check out our 5 minute YouTube video. Please share it with friends and family so they have a better understanding of the work we do at NNC. See page 3 of this newsletter for more info about this video.

As another year draws to a close the staff and Management Committee would like to thank you all for your support throughout the year and wish you a peaceful and happy New Year.

NNC will be closed from the 24th December and will reopen on the 4th January 2010. We will also be holding a Christmas BBQ on 17<sup>th</sup> December so come along and help us celebrate. We will also be holding a volunteer celebration on the 9th December. I look forward to seeing all our volunteers and thanking them for their support and dedication.

Most projects will be hosting their own Christmas parties so talk to our staff for details on your party and what dates your service will be resuming.

Have a happy and healthy festive season and see you all in 2010!

*Lisa Burns*  
Executive Officer

## THANK YOU ZANZIBAR NEWTOWN

Many thanks to the ZanziBar Newtown for another generous donation.

With their much appreciated support NNC will be able to provide further services to the local community.

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*a just community that includes and acts*

## ***NNC Mental Health Video***

As part of Mental Health Week, the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre launched its report into the community needs of people living with a mental illness. Along with this report NNC launched an educational video that highlights the issues faced by many residents of our local community.

The video was developed by local people and points the way forward on crucial issues facing people with mental illness, such as employment, housing, health, lifestyle/wellbeing, recovery and community acceptance.

So please watch this video by visiting:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2OP\\_BjAMBA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2OP_BjAMBA)

or via the link on [www.newtowncentre.org](http://www.newtowncentre.org)

Please pass it on to your colleagues, friends and family and help our community get a better understanding of mental health issues facing our community and learn a little more about what we do here at NNC.

**1 in 5 people will  
experience a mental  
illness at some stage  
in their lives**

## **Music and fun promotes wellbeing and good mental health at: NNC Mental Health Week Festival**

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, during Mental Health Week, NNC hosted a mental health and well-being festival. A large number of people attended despite very inclement weather, dark clouds and winds. As the afternoon progressed the number of people rose as did the spirits, which were helped along by talented local band the 'Off-cuts', who warmed up everybody with a mixture of Celtic music. The band members were all local students from the Newtown School for Performing Arts.



*The Off-cuts*

As at all festivals, the children's activities and face painting were popular and the adults enjoyed the bubble machine more than the kids. To keep warm everybody tucked in to some sausages from the BBQ and washed them down with some cake and hot cups of tea and coffee.

The event was attended by a number of mental health support providers who set-up information stalls. These included The Black Dog Institute, Compeer, New Horizons, Neami, GROW, The Cancer Council, Community Support Network/ACON, Head Space and NNC. The event had a public education purpose to make the general public more aware of the mental health services available in the area.

Several of NNC's social support and wellbeing groups (e.g. Tai Chi, Gentle Exercise, the Wrap with Love Knitting group, Meditation) put on demonstrations for the crowd. The aim being to encourage people to participate in their local community groups which can help reduce isolation and build connections and friendships. The event was followed up with a week of free entry to all NNC activities. Information and DVDs from the event were promoted at our CALD Groups.



The Andrew Denton DVD 'Angels & Demons' was also shown on the day. The event culminated with the launch of the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre's "One in Five" report and video on the needs of people in the local area affected by mental health issues.

Highly changeable weather affected the event with it moving indoors, outdoors and indoors again with the coming and going of the rain clouds. Nonetheless, the crowd estimated at 180-200 showed true community spirit and helped to carry tables, chairs, equipment and information back inside when the rain was coming down hard. Despite being slightly soggy, everyone wanted the party to continue and the band obliged and played on amid cries of encore, encore!

The event could not have been a success without the marvellous efforts of our volunteers and NNC staff on the day so thank you very very much.

## Movember

There has been a lot more facial hair around NNC this month! Some of the guys have formed an *NNC Movember Team* to join in the fun and raise awareness of men's health issues.

Movember is an annual, month-long celebration of the moustache, highlighting men's health issues, specifically prostate cancer and depression in men. It started in 2003 and continues to grow each year. In its first year, 30 Mo Bros took part and last year, in Australia alone, 125,000 Mo Bros & Sistas got on board, raising more than \$8 million for each of Movember's men's health partners.

Now, Movember takes place around the world. Motivated by what was happening in Australia, a further five countries embrace the Mo each November - New Zealand, US, Canada, UK and Ireland are all helping Movember to achieve its ultimate goal - to change the face of men's health globally.

To date, Movember has raised AUS\$60 million globally for the fight against prostate cancer and depression in men. More importantly, male awareness of health issues has improved as Movember helps to spread health messages directly to millions of Mo Bros & Sistas around the world.

Movember works toward changing established habits and attitudes and make men aware of the risks they face, thereby increasing early detection, diagnosis and effective treatment. For more info visit [www.movember.com](http://www.movember.com)

Better yet, if you'd like to make a donation, log in and check out the NNC team. All of us are getting pretty itchy and scratchy and your donations would make it all worthwhile!



*NNC Mo Bros- Joel, Paul, Shashanka and Trent*

## Child-Proof your Apartment for Safety

Each day in Australia, 5,000 children require medical attention; 170 are admitted to hospital and one child dies all as a result of unintentional injury. Most of these injuries occur at home and at school. In recent months there have been many incidents relating to children falling from apartment windows or balconies. These are not the only dangers facing children who live or visit apartments. It is time for everyone who lives with a child in an apartment to child-proof for safety. Below are some useful tips on things you can do to make your apartment safer for children.

- Place child guards on all windows above the first floor. The day will come when you will want air circulation in the room and the window be opened. It only takes a moment for an accident to happen! If window guards are out of reach financially, sturdy sliding screens are an alternative that is better than open space!
- Install safety gates to keep the toddler out of rooms that may be hazardous to curious children. Safety gates are a must in any home with stairs. Special baby gates are also available for sliding glass doors.
- Place covers on door and cupboard handles to keep little ones out of chemicals and unwatched rooms. They can also be purchased for drawers holding knives, small items, medicines and more. Know your child's capabilities and match it with the proper product.
- Plug up open outlets with child-resistant outlet covers. They are inexpensive and readily available. Every home with a young, curious child should have them in place.
- Use corner guards for sharp furniture such as coffee and end tables. Should your child trip and fall, the damage will be lessened with corner guards in place.
- Check out the window coverings in your home. Make sure window blind cords are not too long, and do not loop. Children can get tangled in them. Cribs should be placed away from windows or anything that could constitute a danger.
- Consider your balcony. If your apartment is on the first floor or above, use a cover for the slats on your balcony if they are more than a few inches apart. You can use deck netting, fencing or shade cloths by securing them to the wood to create a safer atmosphere for your child. A child should never be left on the balcony alone for even one minute.
- Bundles of computer cords, sharp pencils, safety pins and paper clips can constitute a danger. Keep them out of reach of children. Fridge magnets are also a choking hazard for little ones so keep them up high.
- Store medications, chemicals, bleach and other cleaning products out of the reach of children. Never use the cabinet under the sink to store cleaning solutions. Convenience for you may mean danger to a small child. Store these chemicals out of reach of children and put safety locks on the drawers and cabinets. Toddlers and small children can climb. Lock the cabinets and the drawers even if the cabinets are taller than the child or toddler.
- Move through your house regularly looking for any dangers you may have missed. When you are done, remember that you are the child's greatest defence for safety. Nothing protects a child like the careful eyes of a loving parent or guardian.

The above information was taken from the following sources:

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4877827\\_childproof-apartment-safety.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_4877827_childproof-apartment-safety.html)

[http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/topics/Child\\_Safety](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/topics/Child_Safety)

## Personal Helpers and Mentors Program (PHaMS)

The Personal Helpers and Mentors Program will assist people aged 16 years and over whose ability to manage their daily activities and to live independently in the community is severely impacted as a result of a mental illness. A person does not need to have a formalised clinical diagnosis to initially access the program.

Personal Helpers and Mentors will support program participants in their recovery journey, building long-term relationships and providing holistic support.

A Personal Helper and Mentor will:

- Help participants to better manage their daily activities and reconnect to their community
- Provide direct personalised assistance through outreach services
- Provide referrals and links with appropriate services such as drug and alcohol and accommodation services
- Work with participants in the development and progress of Individual Recovery Plans which focus on participants goals and recovery journey
- Engage and support family, carers and other relationships

Referrals to PHaMS can be made by an agency, relative of self-referral.

**Local PHaMS agencies are:**

***\*Neami Central Sydney***

**Address:** Suite 1C/206-208 Liverpool Rd  
Ashfield NSW 2131

**Phone:** 02 9798 2111

**Fax:** 02 9798 3604

**Email:** [centralsydney@neami.org.au](mailto:centralsydney@neami.org.au)

***\*New Horizons PHaMS - Marrickville***

**Phone:** 02 8755 4700

**Fax:** 02 9573 0598

## Vampire Power

Not exactly what you might think given the current context of vampire fascination; vampire power doesn't refer to the strengths of the Cullen's but rather is the energy used by appliances when they're plugged in but not turned on – like your TV in stand-by mode or chargers left on even when your device is fully charged.

Devices include TV's, VCR's, DVD players, answering machines, iPods, cell phones, stereos, laptops, and desktops, anything with a remote, anything with a charger, anything with a clock display.

Recent studies estimate that one per cent of carbon dioxide emissions emitted each year come from devices left on stand-by and appliances on stand-by add around 10 per cent to your electricity bill.

### Some easy ways to fight vampires

- Unplug your devices. Pull TV / computer / stereo power cords out of the outlet. If they're not in use, or are unnecessary, unplug.
- Reduce your demand. Sure, gizmos are fun. But if you don't really need them don't get them.
- Plug your devices and chargers into a power strip. And when you're not using those devices, turn off your power strip.
- Remove chargers from the wall when not charging. Your cell phone charger, iPod charger, laptop charger, etc. keeps drawing electricity even if it isn't charging. So if your phone says "charge complete" or isn't even attached to your charger, pull out the charger.

So be brave and fight some vampires in your home.

The above article was sourced from:

City of Sydney's Live Green e-newsletter and <http://www.ecohuddle.com/wiki/how-to-reduce-vampire-power>

# Social Justice Conversations

## **Asylum is a Human Right – Article 14 of UN Declaration of Human Rights**

Asylum seekers have been a major focus in the media and in politics in recent weeks, so much so that it may seem as if Australia is in the grip of a 'refugee crisis'. In fact, there is no crisis, or rather; it is a crisis of political perception only.

Take the recent statements by Kevin Rudd and Shadow Immigration Minister Sharman Stone about the asylum seekers on board the *Oceanic Viking*, which painted the asylum seekers as acting wrongfully by attempting to seek protection in Australia, and as undeserving of even the chance to apply for our protection. Stone has claimed that Australia should be helping other, 'much worthier' refugees, and she has tried to build the impression that asylum seekers pose problems for Australia. Rudd has squandered the opportunity to reframe the asylum seeker debate and to steer it away from scaremongering and racial discrimination and thus played into Opposition tactics.

It's high time to challenge the rhetoric of fear with a rational debate based on facts and so here is a brief run-down of some of the key facts in the Australian context:

**Seeking asylum from persecution is a human right.** Asylum seekers have legal status under Australian and international law. Asylum seekers have not broken any law by coming here to request our protection. It is then up to Australia to fairly assess their need for protection, and to provide that protection if they are proven to be refugees.

**Most asylum seekers come to Australia by plane, not by boat.** Last year, more than 96 per cent of asylum seekers arrived by plane, hardly the kind

of statistic to justify the current histrionic focus on boat arrivals.

**Asylum seeker levels in Australia are nothing out of the ordinary.** Historically, Australia's asylum seeker numbers closely follow worldwide trends, and in the last two years, the number of asylum seekers worldwide has risen sharply. Countries such as Italy and Norway saw increases of over 120% in 2008 compared to 2007. In the same period, Australia only saw a 19% increase – roughly the same as the global average.

Our numbers are small in absolute terms too. Australia has received around 1,800 (approx.) boat arrivals this year. Italy, however, received 36,000 boat arrivals in 2008, and Yemen 50,000. Overall, most asylum seekers go to the United States (49,000 in 2008), Canada (36,900), France (35,200), and Britain (30,500).

**Asylum seeker numbers are determined by 'push' factors.** Deadly violence in countries like Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Iraq has forced millions of people from their homes. According to UN reports, all three countries experienced a significant escalation of violence in 2008. Just look at the number of people seeking asylum in Syria (1.4 million), Pakistan (Over 1 million), Iran 9000,000 and Jordan 8000,000 for example.

**There is no 'queue'.** The idea of a 'queue' and 'queue-jumpers' is a favoured tactic to generate resentment against asylum seekers in Australia. We would all like to believe that there is an orderly, global system for refugee resettlement, because that accords with our idea of fairness. Unfortunately, there is no such system. There is no global database from which refugees can be systematically picked. There is no network of integrated, coherent regional frameworks. Millions of refugees around the world do not have access to UNHCR

or to official methods of registration. Even when refugees are able to register, evidence shows that resettlement is often *ad hoc* and subject to the whims of domestic politics. If anything, refugee resettlement is a lottery, not a queue. The term 'queue' suggests there is order and that anyone can join – but this is not true.

**Most other countries in our region do not offer real protection to refugees.**

This means that refugees from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Iraq must travel long distances – all the way to Australia, in fact - before they have reached a country that can offer any level of true protection. There have been numerous credible reports of human rights abuses of even registered refugees. For example, refugees were reportedly sold by corrupt Thai officials to human traffickers for prostitution and labour. Refugees in Malaysia have been detained in extremely cramped and unhygienic conditions for long periods, sometimes years. Refugees in Indonesia are not permitted to work, send their children to school, apply for family reunion or obtain residency.

**The myth of 'worthy' and 'unworthy' refugees is just that – a myth.** Some politicians and commentators have tried to paint boat arrivals as unworthy of our help because they have the funds and ability to make their own way here. One politician even claimed that a recent group of boat arrivals could not be refugees because they seemed 'health conscious'. But refugee status has nothing to do with a person's material assets or appearance. It has everything to do with a person's need for protection and the risks they face if returned home. The idea that a refugee must be poor, starving, unhealthy and uneducated is incorrect.

**Australia's recent reforms to asylum policy were desperately needed in order to respect our international**

**human rights obligations** and to return us to a situation where our values of decency and integrity were evident in our policies. Former policies such as Temporary Protection Visas and detention debts were in breach of our international obligations and some of our current policies, such as excision, mandatory detention and the detention of children in immigration facilities, are still in breach of these obligations. Such shameful policies inflict damage not only on vulnerable refugees, but also on our national psyche and international reputation.

**The number of asylum seekers to Australia is vastly outnumbered** by the number of people entering as part of our annual migration intake (over 171,000 in 2008-09) or the number of people illegally overstaying their visas (48,500 in 2008, many of them from wealthy countries).

**Every member of the public can speak up in support of fair, humane refugee policies.** Our country's policies represent us, the people of Australia. If you want refugee policies that are fair, humane and in line with international human rights standards, write to or tell your local MP, the media, your family, friends and colleagues.

If you believe that Australia should treat refugees and asylum seekers with humanity and fairness, and that our policies should be in line with our international human rights obligations, then please speak up (if you haven't already!). Speak up for a just Australia.

Please see our Myths and Facts about Asylum Seekers sheet, included as an insert with this newsletter, for more information.

Zhi Yan – National Coordinator for A Just Australia [www.ajustaustralia.com](http://www.ajustaustralia.com)

## Update from Honduras

*Rosie Wong, previously an NNC volunteer, wrote about her experience in Honduras in our last newsletter. She recently returned from Honduras where a military coup has overthrown the democratically elected president. Rosie was acting as a human rights monitor. The following is her update.*

While I was there President Zelaya returned and was given sanctuary in the Brazilian Embassy. The embassy has been put under siege by the military. The human rights abuses in Honduras have gotten progressively worse. As masses celebrated joyfully the surprise return of President Zelaya, the military regime stepped up repression with countless brutalities; to name just some examples, one curfew that lasted 40 hours followed by 2 weeks of nightly curfews, suspension of 5 constitutional rights and close-down of alternative media stations for 22 days, and more murders by gases and bullets.

The 40-hour curfew was imposed. It was numbing. I felt very restricted and worried. I was safe myself but I knew lots of people were in danger, and the people who live on the streets that I spoke to told me they had to hide in corners. Communication was difficult as there was interference with phone, Internet and media by the military. The anti-coup news sources frequently went blank.

We lived in a neighbourhood on a hill and I heard people marching 9pm at night during the curfew, from inside, and then we heard police talking about chasing after them. The following night we heard a lot of screaming on our street and found out that it was a mother screaming at the police for capturing her son, they pushed her to the ground and beat her other son. This was pretty common and frightening as people were being thrown into sports stadiums for detention and there were reports of torture. Equally we shared heated moments, and lighter humorous moments.

The peaceful resistance movement bravely defies attempts to suppress and silence them. Along with the constituent assembly, they are calling for an international boycott of the November 29 elections. The

elections would only legalise and legitimise the regime under current repressive and unconstitutional conditions. Zelaya has been democratically elected by the people to make change in this rich oligarchy dominated country. He should be allowed to serve his democratically elected office.

To learn more about the situation email: [latinamerica.emergency@gmail.com](mailto:latinamerica.emergency@gmail.com)

## Poetry & Literary Corner

At last an Australian poem and one from a Newtown-Enmore resident, Karen Adler, about Newtown-Enmore no less!! We hope you enjoy it!!



### Where I Live

*Where watching puppies play  
in the window of the Pet Palace  
is a spectator sport -  
a child's favourite outing for the day  
and an adult's reminder of  
once having been  
just like that child  
where watching puppies  
wrestle with each other  
is heaps better than TV.*

*Where a government's apology,  
long-needed, long-overdue,  
is accepted with grace  
and Sorry is scrawled  
on footpaths and displayed  
in shop windows  
and welcomed  
and discussed between strangers  
and reminds you of when  
you were proud to be Australian.*

*Where Council signs  
threaten fines  
of up to a million dollars -  
and why not a gazillion dollars? I wonder*

*for dumping things  
in the street  
but still the residents  
leave their no-longer-needed things  
for others to collect  
and take home  
like a continuous Christmas Day  
gift-giving.*

*Where Herbie the inventor  
wears a white coat –  
quite similar to Dr Frankenfurter's -  
as he bolts  
up the street  
to direct a truckload of  
strange and new parts  
from which to concoct  
strange and new things.*

*Where vacant lots  
with grass grown waist high  
and morning glories  
trailing up rusted wire fencing  
take me out of the city  
and back to my childhood  
of open spaces and exploration  
of the little country town  
where everyone  
knew everyone.*

*Where possibly the only  
tuba-playing busker  
in the world  
sits on a milk crate  
on Saturday mornings  
and oom-pah-pah's  
reverberate off the asphalt  
as you walk towards him  
with a smile  
at the strange loveliness  
of it all  
on your face.*

*I quite like  
where I live  
these days ...*

*Copyright: Karen Adler, 2008.*

To submit your poem please contact Cyril  
at [community@newtowncentre.org](mailto:community@newtowncentre.org) or come  
to the front counter and we will see if we  
can print it here.

## Potato Rice Soup

This is relatively cheap soup to make that  
is a favourite of one of our staff members.

The recipe has been handed down the  
generations and was developed during  
the Depression.

### Ingredients:

3 tablespoons olive oil  
½ teaspoon minced garlic  
4 cups chicken broth  
2 cups water  
1 cup raw long grain white rice  
1 medium size potato, peeled and diced  
1 medium size onion, chopped coarse  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley  
Grated parmesan cheese

### Directions:

Heat oil in large pot over medium heat.

Add garlic and cook until golden brown,  
stirring 2 or 3 times.

Add remaining ingredients except  
parmesan cheese.

Bring to a boil.

Cover and simmer for 40-50 minutes,  
stirring occasionally until rice and  
potatoes are tender.

Serve immediately with parmesan cheese  
sprinkled on top.

Makes 4 servings.



# Community Development Update

## **Centrelink Outreach begins at NNC**

Centrelink have begun a Thursday afternoon Outreach at NNC. So if you have a query or need help with paper work or just some advice, why not pop in and meet their team. This outreach will run in conjunction with the Housing NSW Outreach on the same afternoon.

Both the Centrelink Outreach and Housing NSW Outreach run from 2.00pm – 4.00pm every Thursday at NNC.

## **Meditation & Arabic Classes come to an end at NNC**

The Beginners Meditation is run by one of our volunteers Bee Meng Soh or Meng, who also participates in our Wrap With Love Group who knit blankets for refugees and victims of trauma. His class has proved very successful and has a number of regular attendees as well as a few visitors who dropped in including a guest teacher, Gus, who did walking meditation.

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November was the last class but a new Ten Week course for beginners will start in mid- January. This will cover techniques, learning and practice in Relaxation, Love and Kindness, Awareness and Healing meditation.

Arabic Classes has completed its 12-week cycle and had a number for regular enthusiasts who stuck with the tricky task of learning a new language. It is currently being reviewed to see if there is sufficient interest in running a second course.

## **Free Tenancy Advice @ NNC**

Our partnership with Marrickville Legal Centre Tenancy Team has completed its 3-month trial period and the tenancy outreach will continue at NNC. It is a great free advice service from well-

trained and experienced staff in tenancy issues. It runs fortnightly on Monday mornings (the next session will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> December) so if you have an issue with a landlord, another tenant or a Housing Service provider then why not pop in and get some advice and support.

Tenancy Advice Outreach Monday Mornings every fortnight  
10.00am – 12.00 noon.

## **Counselling & Career Counselling Services**

Tuesdays 1pm – 4pm  
(male counsellor)

Wednesdays 2pm – 5pm  
(female counsellor & career counsellor)

Counselling and Career Advice sessions are proving very popular and useful for the community with both Janet and Darren being booked out. Darren has changed his times from Monday mornings to Tuesday afternoons for the next 3-4 weeks so please call the Front Counter team to check times.

Counselling is by appointment only and there is a small set fee. There is a pre-counselling telephone discussion for all new appointments. The duration of the counselling session is 50 minutes.

## **Our Groups will be taking a break over Christmas**

Most of our groups and services will be finishing up during the week 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> December. A few might run over to the beginning of the next week. Services and Groups will resume again in mid to late January. Please call Cyril at the Centre For further details on times and dates, please call Cyril at the Centre on 9516 4755.

*Cyril O'Connor*  
*Community Development Worker*

## Multicultural Neighbour Aid

### \*Communities from Former Yugoslavia

MNA Communities from Former Yugoslavia would like to wish our day care centre members a Merry Christmas and happy New Year. We hope to see you all in 2010, ready to participate and have fun doing the program activities.

- **Day Care Centre**  
Restarts Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010
- **“Wrap with Love” Monday group**  
Restarts Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010
- **Multicultural Seniors Fitness Classes**  
Restarts Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010

### \*Greek Neighbour Aid

The Greek MNA Project will have a break during the Christmas period and New Year.

#### **Tuesday Day Care and Activities:**

- **Tuesday HACC Group**  
Restarts Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2010
- **Home Library Service**  
Restarts 19<sup>th</sup> January 2010
- **Door-to-door Transport**  
Restarts 20<sup>th</sup> January 2010
- **Recreational outings (members only)**  
Restarts 9<sup>th</sup> February 2010

#### **Thursday Day Care and Activities:**

- **Thursday HACC Group**  
Restarts 21<sup>st</sup> January 2010
- **Door-to-door Transport**  
Restarts 21<sup>st</sup> January 2010
- **Men’s Support Group**  
Restarts 21<sup>st</sup> January 2010
- **Home Library Service**  
Restarts 21<sup>st</sup> January 2010
- **Recreational outings (members only)**  
Restart 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Please note a waiting list applies to some services. People must register prior to attending any group or class. Registration is free although a small contribution is requested towards some services.

## Shopping Service News

The following is a list of products you may like to purchase on your next shopping trip. Happy Cooking!

### Pantry Basics

Stock up on these inexpensive items to keep in the cupboard to make your meals varied and interesting:

- Spaghetti, macaroni and noodles - different shapes
- Rice - different types (basmati, Arborio, brown etc)
- Potatoes - unwashed ones are the cheapest
- Canned sardines and tuna
- Breakfast cereals - plain breakfast cereals (Weet-Bix, Vita-Brits, Weeties) are good buys and make a healthy breakfast and an easy snack with milk
- Rolled oats
- Dried lentils/split peas - great for soups and casseroles
- Canned beans/lentils/chick peas (same as above)
- Canned soups/canned vegetables - tomatoes, corn, beetroot - reduced salt is best
- Frozen peas, frozen peas & corn, frozen spinach
- Canned fruit - in juice, not syrup
- Stock - cubes are cheaper than liquid but have more salt
- Dried herbs/spices
- Oil

*Pantry basics was gathered from:  
<http://foodwatch.com.au/hot-issues/healthy-eating-in-tough-times.html>*



## Merry Christmas from the Shopping Service Team

It is that time of the year again, Christmas and the New Year are looming which means it is a time to reflect on the year and to catch up with family and friends.

The year has passed quickly and many shopping trips have come and gone but we are looking forward to the year ahead and hoping to see you all again in 2010 the Chinese year of the Tiger.



**Please keep a note that there are no shopping trips between Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2009 and Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010.**

Also please look out in the post for more details and your shopping calendar for 2010.

The staff of the Shopping Service would like to wish you all the best for Christmas and the New Year. See you all next year.



*Kerry, Robin, Trent and Mirjana*

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

*Kerry, Mirjana, Robin and Trent  
Shopping Service Staff*

## Housing News



## Common Ground

Common Ground is coming to Sydney soon. Common Ground is a housing model that originated in New York in 1991. It aims to provide permanent long-term housing with support. It is different from other models in that it not only targets chronically homeless, but also targets key workers and people on low incomes so that there is a mixture of tenants across a range of backgrounds. A further positive aspect of the model is that the support services are within the accommodation facility.

The Common Ground scheme in Sydney is going to be located in the Camperdown area of Sydney. This will be the first of its kind in NSW and it is anticipated that it will be the first of a number to be established across Australia. It is expected to be operational around mid 2011.

The project will include a 24-hour concierge service, which will provide controlled access to the building, and ensure the safety and security of all residents. Housing NSW have undertaken to keep people informed of the development and it is hoped that disruption will be kept to a minimum. It is expected that a community housing provider will have the housing management responsibility for the scheme.

The project is a great stride forward in addressing issues of chronic homelessness and enabling previously homeless people to improve their well being and quality of life.

For more information on this project please visit the Housing NSW website [www.housing.nsw.gov.au](http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au)

## Support for ROOMIES Artspace

### Art on King

Newtown's premier art studio & shop "Art on King" introduced a charity wall at their recent annual student exhibition. A range of students and artists provided artworks on small canvas that sold for a very affordable \$25 each. Art on King owner Joni Butler wanted to make a contribution to her community and saw ROOMIES artspace as a worthy cause. This venture raised over \$1,000 for ROOMIES that will go towards keeping the studio doors of this unfunded project open. Many thanks to Joni, Art on King students and contributing artists.

### Festival of Soul

The 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Festival of Soul; a week of music, performance, photography and family events raising awareness about mental illness and well being. ROOMIES artspace was the beneficiary of sales of the "what touched my soul" photography competition held at the Chauvel Cinema Paddington. The Highly Commended award for the competition went to ROOMIES mentor artist Denise Litchfield with her delightful photo of a ROOMIES artist. Well done Denise.

### ROOMIES Artist at AARTBOX 2009

3 ROOMIES artists had artworks accepted for the 2009 AARTBOX exhibition at the Mori Gallery. The artists also accepted an invitation to participate in an artist talk session to the public. Well done to ROOMIES worker Natalie for supporting the residents in their artistic development and acceptance in the arts community.



Roomies artists Phyllis, David & Clarrice with Art on King owner Joni



8<sup>th</sup> November 9.30am – 6pm

8 hours of free entertainment, arts, kids activities, environmental workshops and literary discussion!

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre's 31<sup>st</sup> Newtown Festival. A gala celebration, hugely entertaining, a bit drizzly and a chilled atmosphere...that was the 2009 Newtown Festival.

Despite the drizzly weather, at least 60,000 people across the day flocked to the grassy slopes of Camperdown Memorial Rest Park to show their support of the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre and to celebrate Newtown's day of days.



The historic park was once again transformed into a dynamic hub of arts, music, colour and cultural diversity across 5 areas. There was plenty of opportunity for punters to shop till they dropped at the 260 colourful market stalls and to satisfy their taste buds at the international food areas within the festival.

Firmly established as Sydney's premier community festival, Newtown Festival is a fine example of a true community spirited event. A diverse mix of individuals, the young and young at heart, community groups, environmental and political groups, local residents and the broader public all came together to celebrate Newtown's unequalled diversity. Many residents and businesses joined the

festivities by hosting parties within their own houses or premises.

The festival continues to receive a huge amount of goodwill from all sectors of the community and from local residents. Over 200 performers supported NNC by donating their time and talents to play for free on the festival day. Over 150 volunteers gave invaluable support as traffic and stall marshals, gold coin collectors and stage supervisors.



The Newtown Festival prides itself on providing an opportunity for Australian artists to gain exposure at one of Sydney's biggest free community events and this year was no exception. The Festival hosted non-stop live music across 4 stages. Bands played a diverse mix of sounds from rock, indie, funk, soul, blues, jazz alternate, hip-hop and reggae.



The ever-so-popular Newtown Dog Show kicked off at 9.30am in front of the main stage. In true Newtown fashion both dog and owner got into the true spirit of the event. Up to 100 dogs and owners turned out in some wild and wacky costumes to participate in the doggie dashes and fun

competitions such as the 'dog and owner look alike' and the 'best trick'. As always the dog show proved to be a highly entertaining and well-attended event with a local drag queen hosting the show.



Local and nationally acclaimed bands played on the Essential, Main and Vocal Local stages. Bands included:

- Ghoul
- Seekae
- Deep Sea Arcade
- The Crayon Fields
- Barons of Tang
- Dead Letter Chorus
- Kingfisha
- Chase the Sun
- Parades
- The Crooked Fiddle Band
- Rumpunch
- Hermitude and loads more of our finest favourites.



All artists performed brilliantly, entertaining the enthusiastic crowds that flocked to the stages to dance to the eclectic rhythms being played on the day.

The Vocal Local Village, which showcased the creative local talent of Newtonians and Roomies Artspace, was a highly creative, colourful, entertaining, slightly kooky, and blissful space of co-creation. There were people knitting on giant wooden knitting needles, solar powered sound rigs, colourful roving theatrical performers, live art installations and so much more. The Vocal Local stage was once again produced by local contingent Figure8 and High and Dry. Roomies Artspace is a project of NNC.

The Newtown Festival's Writers Stage, presented by local bookstore Better Read Than Dead, has become an integral part of the Newtown Festival. Now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year, the program included a mega line-up with the delights of authors such as Australian literary icon Tom Keneally, The Mentals Reg Mombassa, ex Go Between's Robert Foster, Alex Miller and Richard Glover. The stellar program attracted capacity crowds all day.



The Kids Zone was also an area of the festival that was enjoyed by many throughout the day. The stage program proved highly popular for the littlies and the not so little. Not only was the stage a focus but also the kite making and craft workshops. The wandering animated baby dinosaurs and giant T-Rex provided

many with an interactive experience as did the cupcake creations and boomerang painting activities. Jumping castles, rides, animal petting farm and pony rides were also very popular.



Newtown Festival continued its strong environmental focus this year and is committed to reducing its ecological footprint. With a long-term vision of becoming a waste free event, the short-term goal is to be a waste-wise event. The key sustainable features of Newtown Festival include: solar generator, recycling stations, biodegradable packaging, creative workshops and information re-using materials diverted from landfill and a worm farm. Stallholders are only permitted to use recyclable utensils, containers and cups.

Newtown's own The Watershed, presented a tremendous program of informative workshops offering a truckload of practical advice on how to reduce your ecological footprint, with a local relevance. Planet Ark and The Watershed hosted 'The Big Aussie Swap Party' which was a tremendous success.

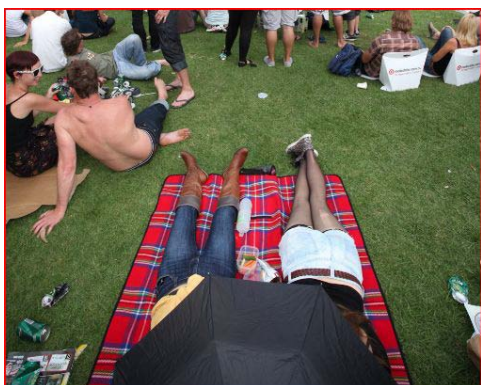


As in previous years festival patrons were asked to give a gold coin or note donation at the entry points to the festival and NNC raised a good amount of money considering the reduced crowds due to weather. All the funds raised at the festival go directly back into NNC's activities and programs for the disadvantaged people in our community. Thanks to all those that donated a gold coin or two!



It was definitely another great and hugely successful Newtown Festival. A very BIG thank you to everyone who participated in the day – bands, volunteers, NNC staff and Management Committee members.

A special BIG thank you also to everyone who came to the festival, gave a donation at the gates, embraced the ethos of the festival and helped create a positive and relaxed vibe on the day.



See you next year, second Sunday in November for our 32<sup>nd</sup> celebration!

**Thanks must also go to our wonderful Sponsors – please support the people who support NNC and the Newtown Festival:**

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Constant Security

Tina Demetriou or Sue Andersen  
Festival Co-Directors  
02 9516 4755  
email: [festival@newtowncentre.org](mailto:festival@newtowncentre.org)  
or email: [festival2@newtowncentre.org](mailto:festival2@newtowncentre.org)

*Photos above by Brent Winstone*

## Volunteers and Students



NNC relies on the good work of volunteers and students and without their generous time and effort we could not provide all the services we do.

If you are interested in volunteering with us please contact Cyril on 9516 4755 or [community@newtowncentre.org](mailto:community@newtowncentre.org).

### Who's New

We would like to welcome the following new volunteers and students:

- Nicky (a student on placement) and Majella who are helping out at Front Counter
- Diane (a regular Wrap with love volunteer) and Kath who are helping out with some admin work.
- Connie, Viriay, Paru and Sunita who all help with, and enjoy, fortnightly Bingo.

### Who's Leaving

We said a sad goodbye to Angela and Sweta, Bev and Kosi who were all here on student placements and have to get their heads back into the books again. Good luck to Jane, another front counter volunteer, who is on a two-month work placement with community housing.

### Would you like to Volunteer?

We regularly look for volunteers and we currently need volunteers to assist with the following NNC projects:

#### **The Front Counter Team**

We are looking for volunteers to:

- Help set-up and support our Bingo (fortnightly) and Wrap with Love (weekly) Groups.
- Help out at our monthly BBQ's
- Be part of a panel of volunteers that are interested and active in running Quarterly Social Justice

forums of a local, national or international dimension.

- Be a research assistant to do survey analysis and research info on community service providers.

For any of the above please contact Cyril at the Front Counter or on 9516 4755.

### **The Shopping Service**

We are currently looking for:

- A volunteer who speaks both Greek & English for Tuesday shopping service (fortnightly). The client would prefer a female volunteer.
- A volunteer for Friday shopping service (fortnightly). The client would prefer a female volunteer.

We need these volunteers to commit to 6 months or more. For more info on the shopping service volunteer roles call Kerry on 9516 4755.

### **The Boarding House Project**

We are looking for people to assist with:

- A small group day care program every Wednesday 10am –2pm.
- The Thursday shopping service group including shopping support, and social conversation.

For more info on the BHP volunteering roles call Leigh on 9516 4755.

### **Festival Volunteers**

A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped out at the Newtown Festival and to the regular volunteers (Chris, Paru, Ghilaine, Angela, Nicky, Jane, Tom, Majella and Mei) who helped run the NNC Information & Membership Stall and pass out lots of info about NNC to festival goers.

### **Volunteer Christmas Thank you Dinner**

A lunch-time celebration on *December 9<sup>th</sup>*. We hope all our volunteers can make it and meet other volunteers who help make NNC what it is. Thank you so much for your goodwill and efforts!

## Meet our Volunteer Tom



### **How long have you been volunteering with the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre?**

I have been here over six months. I joined NNC as a volunteer shortly after I retired.

### **What do you do as a volunteer at the centre?**

I help out with setting up bingo, getting prizes together and enjoying the games with the clients. I also do some general admin work from time to time.

### **What do you like about volunteering for the centre?**

The interaction with a lot of diverse and lovely people. I also volunteer as a helper and coordinator for CRC at the Local Courts in Sutherland.

### **If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?**

The beautiful West Coast of Australia. I haven't managed to make it there yet.

### **What do you like to do in your spare time?**

I read a lot, go for trips around Sydney on the Seniors ticket...great value!!

### **What is your favourite food?**

Any type of Chinese dish.

### **Where did you go for your last holiday?**

Adelaide.

## Room and Hall Hire

NNC has meeting rooms and a large hall rooms available at reasonable rates for self-help groups, social justice organisations, classes, public meetings, employment groups, fundraisers, etc.

We have three rooms available for hire:

- **Main Hall - 150 people capacity**
- **Meeting Room - 25 people capacity**
- **Upstairs Room - 60 people capacity**



Main Hall / Meeting Room / Upstairs Room

Please note that the flooring of this building is not 'sprung' and as a result we are unable to hire out or host events or activities that present a heavy impact on the floor. This includes, but is not restricted to activities/events that involve martial arts, dancing, jumping, running.

Please note that we do not currently have disability access at this centre.

### **Groups & Individuals Hiring Any Space at NNC Must Have Their Own Public Liability Insurance!!**

If you are interested in room hire or would like further information please contact Shashanka on 9516 4755 or Email: [accounts@newtowncentre.org](mailto:accounts@newtowncentre.org).

Please note that application forms, terms of condition and further information for room hirers is available on our website [www.newtowncentre.org](http://www.newtowncentre.org).

# NNC Programs, Services & Groups

## **NSW Housing Outreach**

Thursdays 2pm – 4pm

## **Centrelink Outreach**

Thursdays 2pm – 4pm

## **Front Counter Info & Referral Service**

Mon – Fri (10am – 1pm & 2pm – 5pm)

## **Low Cost Counselling service**

Tuesdays 1pm – 4pm

Male Counsellor

There is a small fee for this service

## **Low Cost & Career Counselling**

Wednesdays 2pm – 5pm

Female counselor

There is a small fee for this service

## **Tai Chi**

Tuesdays 1-2pm

\$2.50 unwaged and \$5 waged

## **Community Bingo**

Fortnightly Fridays 10am – 1pm

\$2.50 ticket

## **Beginners Meditation**

Wednesdays 1pm – 2pm

## **Wrap With Love Thursday Group**

Thursdays 10:45am to 12noon.

## **Gentle Exercise Classes**

Thursdays 10am – 11am

\$3 per session regulars

\$4 per session casual

## **Marrickville Legal Tenancy Outreach**

Fortnightly Mondays 10am – 12noon

## **Homeless Persons Legal Service (HPLS)**

Fridays 1.30pm – 2.30pm

Newtown Mission Church

## **Newtown Kites**

Wednesdays 10am-2pm

## **Roomies Art Group**

Tuesdays

Hut 43 Addison Road

## **Boarders and Lodgers Outreach**

Thursdays 11am – 12noon

Crystal Street Community Shop

## **Boarding House Project Choir**

Thursdays 1:30-3:30pm

## **Active Linking Initiative (ALI)**

### **Indoor Bowling**

Monday fortnightly 10am-12noon

Debbie & Abbey Borgia Rec Centre

## **ALI Taekwondo**

Wednesdays 2-3pm

Studio 35 Addison Road

## **ALI Women's Group**

Fridays fortnightly

10am – 3pm

## **Street Soccer**

Wednesdays

Debbie & Abbey Borgia Rec Centre

## **Shopping Bus Service**

Tuesdays, Thursdays Fridays

9am-2pm

## **Assisted Shopping Service**

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays

9am-2pm

## **Communities from Former Yugoslavia Day Care**

Mondays 9:30am – 1pm

## **Greek Speaking HACC Group**

Tuesdays & Thursdays

Herbert Greedy Hall

For more info on any of these services please call 9516 4755, go to [www.newtowncentre.org](http://www.newtowncentre.org) or pop into NNC.