

TERM FOUR • 2024

COMMUNITY VOICES



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LODDON CAMPASPE





MESSAGE FROM DIMITY FIFER

September 21 is the UN declared International Day of Peace, and this year's theme is *Cultivating a Culture of Peace*.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of the [Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace](#).

The declaration recognised that peace “not only is the absence of conflict, but also requires a positive, dynamic participatory process where dialogue is encouraged, and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation.”

The United Nations reminds us that “in a world with rising geopolitical tensions and protracted conflicts, there has never been a better time to remember the values needed for a culture of peace. These include respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; the promotion of non-violence through education, dialogue, and cooperation; commitment to solidarity, cooperation, cultural diversity and understanding at all levels of society and among nations.

“The International Day of Peace has always been a time to lay down weapons and observe ceasefires. But it now must also be a time for people to see each other's humanity. Our survival as a global community depends on that.

“The ideas of peace, the culture of peace, need to be cultivated in the minds of children and communities through formal and informal education, across countries and generations.”

This understanding and these values are fundamental to the work of LCMS and underpin everything that we do as we walk with, and alongside, multicultural communities, particularly newly arrived and emerging communities, across the Loddon Campaspe region.

This edition of Community Voices is our third for the year and I want to thank everyone who answered our call for feedback on how you are finding the shift from newsletter to our short magazine format. You said that you loved the e-mag style, that it was about the right size and easy to read and that you particularly enjoyed reading stories about community members – in fact you wanted to hear even more!

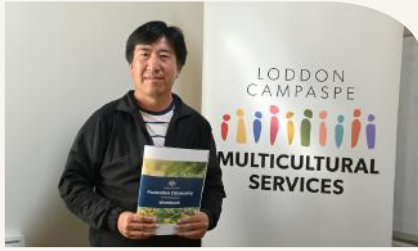
As well as being always open for community members, we often host our partners at the LCMS office in Bendigo and it was a pleasure in the last few weeks to sit in the spring sunshine under the trees on Hargreaves Street with the wonderful Bendigo Community Health Service team, with Sandy Joffe from the Intercultural Ambassador Program at the City of Greater Bendigo as we celebrated *Are U OK Day*, and as the LCMS team celebrating the *International Day of Tolerance for LGBTQI+ community members*.

I so look forward to seeing you at *Zinda* on Saturday 12th October at the Garden for the Future, White Hills in Bendigo. This year we have access to lots of free parking, so we can't wait to welcome everyone to our annual festival celebrating cultural diversity.



TERM FOUR CLASSES

WEDNESDAY



CITIZENSHIP STUDIES (KAREN BILINGUAL SUPPORT)

Time: 4pm - 6pm
Location: LCMS Office
(437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)

“
Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today - Malcolm X
”

THURSDAY



WOMEN'S ENGLISH

Time: 10am - 12pm
Location: Seventh Day Adventist Church
(27 Bay St, Golden Square)



DIGITAL LITERACY - LEVEL 2 (EXISTING STUDENTS ONLY)

Time: 1:30pm - 3pm
Location: LCMS Office
(437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)



INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH

Time: 5pm - 6:30pm
Location: LCMS Office
(437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)

FRIDAY



STARTING WORK IN RETAIL

Time: 9:15am - 11:30am
Location: LCMS Office
(437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)



DIGITAL LITERACY - LEVEL 1 (BEGINNER LEVEL)

Time: 1:30pm - 4:30pm
Location: LCMS Office
(437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)



HOW TO SAVE MONEY

Time: 3:30pm - 5:30pm
Location: LCMS Office
(437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)

EDUCATION TEAM CONTACTS

Please contact Robyn or Vanessa if you have an enquiry regarding the classes.

Robyn Matthews
E: r.matthews@lcms.org.au
P: 0482 175 965

Vanessa Feeney
E: v.feeney@lcms.org.au
P: 0403 556 726

Office
437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo
T: (03) 5441 6644

REGULAR WEEKLY PROGRAMS

MONDAY



HOMEWORK CLUB (12-18 YEARS OLD)

Time: 3:45pm - 5pm
Location: Bendigo Library
(259 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)

“
*If you want to go
fast, go alone. If
you want to go
far, go together*
— African
Proverb

”

TUESDAY



LA PA TEA

Time: 10am - 11am
Location: Salvation Army
(65-71 Mundy St, Bendigo)



MULTICULTURAL CARE & FOOD

Time: 10:30am - 12:30pm
Location: Salvation Army
(65-71 Mundy St, Bendigo)



MULTICULTURAL STORY (DARI/HAZARAGHI)

DARI SESSION
Time: 4pm - 5pm

Location: Bendigo Library (259
Hargreaves St, Bendigo)

THURSDAY



MULTICULTURAL PLAYGROUP

Time: 10am - 11am
Location: Long Gully
Neighbourhood Centre
(52-54 Derwent Dr, Long Gully)



TAX RETURN SUPPORT (STARTING FROM 27TH JULY)

Time: by appointment
Location: LCMS Office
(437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)
Contact: 03 5441 6644



ZINDA FESTIVAL 2024

Zinda Festival - a feast for the senses!

Zinda is Bendigo's largest annual celebration of cultural diversity, and it is lining up to be another full day of delicious authentic cuisines, traditional performances, interactive activities for the kids, dance workshops and more! And it is FREE.

Presented by Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services, the event kicks off at **11am on Saturday 12th October at Garden for the Future, White Hills** and will feature a sea of colour and costumes with a long list of performers, from local community groups, bringing the stage alive.

Be sure to bring your dancing shoes as we celebrate. Our K-Pop and Bollywood dance workshops will put a spring in your step and the African drumming ensemble will have the crowd moving its hips. The henna art, hair braiding and face painting activities will have everyone looking great and feeling rich with culture.

This year, we have teamed up with the City of Greater Bendigo and the team from the Bendigo Lions Club to offer free parking. If you make your way to the corner of Kennewell street & Hamelin street, White Hills, (GPS coordinates: 36°43'26.8"S 144°18'16.8"E) you will be guided to your space by the lovely group of volunteers. It is then a short 150m walk, or skip, across the foot bridge (wheelchair friendly) where you will be greeted with delicious smells, sights and sounds as you start your Zinda journey.

None of this would be possible without the continued support from the Victorian State Government and major sponsorship from the City of Greater Bendigo, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, Bendigo Tafe, Bendigo Market Place, Wise Employment/Access Skills Training and Win Network.

Zinda truly comes alive because of our heart-warming list of sponsors, partners, volunteers, community groups, performers, businesses & organisations and most importantly, you! We thank you from the bottom of our hearts and look forward to seeing you there!

For more information, follow our socials or jump onto the website:

Website: <https://zinda.org.au/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ZindaFestival/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/zindafestival/>

LODDON CAMPASPE MULTICULTURAL SERVICES PRESENTS:

ZINDA
MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL

SAT 12TH OCT 2024
11AM - 5PM

**GARDEN FOR THE FUTURE,
BOSQUET ST WHITE HILLS**

FREE EVENT

LIVE MUSIC • FOOD • CULTURAL PERFORMANCES
• KIDS' ACTIVITIES • ARTS & CRAFTS

ZINDA.ORG.AU

LODDON CAMPASPE MULTICULTURAL SERVICES | Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation | BENDIGO | BENDIGO TAPE | Access Skills Training | VICTORIA State Government | WIN | BENDIGO MARKETPLACE | LA TROBE UNIVERSITY | Bendigo TAFE

FREE PARKING
HAMELIN ST & KENNEWELL ST
WHITE HILLS
GPS COORDINATES: 36°43'26.8"S 144°18'16.8"E

SCAN FOR DIRECTIONS



ZINDA FESTIVAL 2024

Immerse Your Kids in Multicultural Magic at Bendigo Marketplace!

Looking for an enriching and entertaining way to engage your children these school holidays? Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS) is excited to present Story Time in Language & English, right here at the Bendigo Marketplace Book Nook!

Join us for an inspiring storytelling session featuring captivating tales told in English and a variety of multicultural languages. This unique, free event is part of the vibrant Zinda Multicultural Festival, celebrating the richness of diverse cultures through the power of storytelling.

Dates to Remember

Monday, 23rd September 2024: English & Karen
10:30 am - 11:30 am

Monday, 30th September 2024: English & Dari
10:30 am - 11:30 am

Location: Bendigo Marketplace Book Nook, 16-120 Mitchell St, Bendigo

Don't miss this opportunity to broaden your children's horizons through the beauty of multicultural stories. Come along and watch their imaginations soar!

For more information, visit zinda.org.au.

Volunteer at Zinda Multicultural Festival 2024!

Celebrate cultural diversity and make an impact by volunteering at the Zinda Multicultural Festival! We're looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help make this vibrant event a success.

Why Volunteer?

Be part of an exciting festival filled with music, food, performances, and workshops. You'll gain valuable experience, meet new people, and help bring the community together.

Volunteer Roles

- Event setup & logistics
- Performance support
- Guest services
- Stall assistance
- Workshop support

Event Details

Date: Saturday, 12th October 2024
Location: Garden for the Future, White Hills

How to Apply

Interested? Sign up at zinda.org.au/volunteer.

For more info, email zinda@lcms.org.au.

LODDON CAMPASPE
MULTICULTURAL SERVICES

STORY TIME AT MARKETPLACE IN LANGUAGE & ENGLISH

Join LCMS at the Bendigo Marketplace Book Nook for an enriching Story Time experience featuring captivating tales in language and English. Immerse yourself in a world of diversity and imagination as we bring these vibrant cultures to life through storytelling. This event is brought to you by the Zinda Festival. Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity during the school holidays!

STORY TIME IN ENGLISH & DARI
Monday, 30th September 2024
10:30am - 11:30am
Bendigo Marketplace: Book Nook
16-120 Mitchell St, Bendigo 3550

STORY TIME IN ENGLISH & KAREN
Monday, 23rd September 2024
10:30am - 11:30am
Bendigo Marketplace: Book Nook
16-120 Mitchell St, Bendigo 3550

BENDIGO MARKETPLACE SHOPPING CENTRE
Goldfields Libraries

ZINDA MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL | ZINDA.ORG.AU

ZINDA FESTIVAL

VOLUNTEERS
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST OPEN

Benefits:

- Community engagement
- Event organisation skills
- Free Zinda T-shirt
- Fun Time

JOIN US
12TH OCTOBER

(03) 5441 6644 | <https://zinda.org.au> | zinda@lcms.org.au



DEBORAH CHIAM: CHAMPIONING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Deborah Chiam, currently in her final years of high school, has taken on the role of Youth Ambassador for Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS), and is driven by her passion for promoting diversity and inclusion. This role has given her a platform to advocate for a more inclusive society, celebrate diverse cultures, and strengthen community unity.

One of her most rewarding experiences as a volunteer has been tutoring students in the weekly LCMS Homework Club. Deborah has made a tangible impact on students' academic journeys by helping them better understand their subjects, which boosts their confidence and equips them to overcome challenges. "Seeing how my small contributions can enhance a student's learning experience is incredibly fulfilling," she says.

Deborah also emphasises the importance of supporting multicultural services in fostering social cohesion. When people from diverse backgrounds have access to services that reflect their cultural needs, they feel valued and included. "This sense of belonging strengthens communities and breaks down social divisions," she explains. Additionally, she highlights how multicultural services celebrate diversity by encouraging sharing of traditions, languages, and perspectives, which enriches and broadens the community's thinking.

Deborah believes young people are vital in promoting diversity and inclusion, often leading to social change. "With their energy and creativity, young people drive dialogue and challenge stereotypes," she says. "By embracing diversity, youth help create more open-minded and inclusive environments, laying the foundation for a fairer and more unified future."

Through her work with LCMS, Deborah continues to inspire others, showing the profound impact young people can have on fostering inclusivity in their communities.



LOVELY SOE: PROMOTING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURAL INCLUSION

Lovely Soe, a proud member of the Karen community, is driven by a passion for fostering inclusivity and cultural connection. As a Youth Ambassador for Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS), she was motivated by the opportunity to share her ideas and create spaces where young people from different cultures can come together. “I wanted to help people my age participate in activities, meet new people, learn new skills, and most importantly, have fun,” she explains.

Throughout her time with LCMS, Lovely has been critical in organising and supporting various community events, including movie nights, the Zinda Festival, Cafe for a Day, and Public Speaking and Face Painting workshops. She also completed her work placement at LCMS, further deepening her commitment to the organisation and its mission.

Lovely supports multicultural services to ensure that newcomers to Australia, especially those with limited English, feel supported and welcomed. “It’s about helping people feel like they belong,” she says. For her, promoting diversity and inclusion as a young person is vital to inspiring others. By leading the way, she hopes to encourage more youth to get involved and sees her work as an opportunity to spark interest in older generations, who may inspire their children to participate.

Through her efforts with LCMS, Lovely Soe is making a meaningful impact, helping to create a more welcoming, inclusive, and vibrant community for all.

“

“The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow.” — Nelson Mandela

”

P R O G R A M

EDUCATION: 'LET'S TALK' TRAINING SESSIONS

Enhance your cultural competence with **'Let's Talk'**, a series of 30-minute online workshops from Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services. These sessions offer valuable insights into language barriers, cultural sensitivity, and unconscious biases tailored to various sectors.

Duration: 30 minutes | **Cost:** \$55 per Session

Delivery: Online

Upcoming Sessions:

- **Housing:**
 - Cross-cultural communication strategies: Sep 23, 2024
 - Unconscious biases: Nov 25, 2024
- **Community Services:**
 - Language barriers: Sep 23, 2024
 - Unconscious biases: Dec 9, 2024
- **Employment:**
 - Language barriers & misunderstandings: Sep 30, 2024
 - Unconscious biases: Nov 25, 2024
- **Legal & Justice:**
 - Language barriers & misunderstandings: Oct 3, 2024
 - Unconscious biases: Dec 5, 2024
- **Health:**
 - Language barriers & interpreter services: Oct 7, 2024
- **Police:**
 - Language barriers & misunderstandings: Oct 14, 2024
 - Unconscious biases: Dec 16, 2024
- **Emergency Services:**
 - Language barriers & misunderstandings: Oct 21, 2024
 - Unconscious biases: Dec 16, 2024
- **Trauma-Informed Training:**
 - Creating safe, healing environments: Dec 10, 2024

BOOK NOW



WOMEN'S NETWORK

Our Multicultural Women's Network recently hosted a series of informative and engaging sessions on Breast, Bowel, and Cervical Cancer screenings.

These sessions, facilitated by LCMS and supported by Women's Health Loddon Mallee, aimed to break down barriers and dispel fears surrounding cancer screening. Participants were encouraged to share their concerns openly, receiving expert guidance on how and where to access screening services. The atmosphere was relaxed and nurturing, with attendees enjoying the comfort of good food and the calming practice of yoga.

These sessions not only provided valuable information but also fostered a sense of community and empowerment, allowing women to take proactive steps in caring for their health.

MULTICULTURAL ASSISTED PLAYGROUP AND STORY TIME

Our Multicultural Assisted Playgroup and Story Time sessions have become a cherished fixture within the community, providing a welcoming space for families to connect, learn, and play.

These Thursday morning gatherings, made possible by the dedication of our volunteers and partners, offer a unique blend of fun and educational activities for children and their caregivers. From storytelling that sparks imagination to interactive play that encourages social development, these sessions have truly become a hub for cultural exchange and communal support.

Each week, we witness the magic of friendships forming, children growing, and families finding a sense of belonging. We are immensely grateful to everyone who helps make these mornings so special!



UPDATE

MULTICULTURAL CARE AND FOOD

Every Tuesday, LCMS proudly hosts its Multicultural Care and Food program, a vital food relief initiative that supports approximately 50 families in our community. From 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM, dedicated volunteers and LCMS staff come together at Bendigo Salvation Army, located at 65-71 Mundy St, to prepare individual food bags for each family. The atmosphere is both busy and joyful, marked by a spirit of camaraderie and numerous friendly conversations.

Generously supplied by Bendigo Foodshare and Foodbank Victoria, the program's offerings vary each week. Despite the variability in contents and quantities, the families consistently express their gratitude and satisfaction with the food provided. The generosity extends beyond just the food banks, as we also receive weekly donations of fresh, locally-grown vegetables from the community.

The success of the Multicultural Care and Food program is a testament to the unwavering support of our volunteers and community donors. LCMS extends its heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributes to making this program a reality. In addition to our regular services, we are actively collecting donations and food items. If you are interested in contributing or learning more about how you can help, please contact the LCMS Office on (03) 5441 6644 or drop in by on 437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo.

We would like to remind everyone that the Multicultural Care and Food program continues through the school holidays, and we encourage all who are in need or wish to support this initiative to join us.



MALO LEE LEY HOMEWORK CLUB

LCMS hosts our award winning Homework Club for students from multicultural backgrounds every Monday in Bendigo Library. It is held during the school term only. Term 4 is scheduled to start on **Monday 7th October**.

There are currently 12 registered students, run by five volunteer teachers and LCMS staff. Students read books, discuss the content, and do maths work with the volunteer teachers. Each session sees serious faces engaged in learning, and much joy as they chat with the volunteer teachers.

The Homework Club is looking for volunteer teachers. No qualifications are required. The focus is to read books with the children and have them do maths work. Work will be provided by us. If you are interested in this activity and would be willing to sign up as a volunteer, please contact the LCMS.

We are proud to be able to support the learning of children who are the future. We look forward to meeting as many of you as possible.

LCMS Multicultural Homework Club

Time: Every Monday from 3:45pm to 5pm

Where: Bendigo Library (259 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)

Target: Year 5 to Year 12

Subjects: English support for all year groups, maths support up to Year 10.

*Children from Year 4 and below are also welcome if they are accompanied by a parent or guardian.

If you are interested in volunteering in LCMS homework club, please put in an expression of interest, by contact Yoko at y.vigor@lcms.org.au or call (03) 5441 6644



MULTICULTURAL YOUTH NETWORK

This semester, the LCMS Youth Network has been abuzz with activities designed to unite young people from diverse backgrounds and foster community and personal growth.

Volleyball: Every Friday, the La Trobe University Sports Centre is transformed into a lively hub with our volleyball sessions. Open to players of all levels, these sessions created a welcoming and energetic atmosphere. With enthusiastic participation and positive feedback from parents, the event has been a hit. Additionally, with a badminton court available, participants enjoyed even more recreational options. We're thrilled to announce more activities starting this October—stay tuned for details!

Movie Night: Our Movie Night has been a standout event this semester, drawing around 50 young people to enjoy a film in a relaxed setting, complete with popcorn and good company. This event continues to be a cherished opportunity to unwind and socialise after school.

Public Speaking Workshop: Led by LCMS staff member Dulce, our Public Speaking Workshop was a great success. Ten participants engaged in this enriching experience, focusing on communication skills, self-confidence, and celebrating personal strengths. The workshop offered a valuable platform for young people to share their stories and develop their voices.

Youth Ambassadors: The LCMS Youth Network proudly supports five dedicated Youth Ambassadors who are instrumental in shaping our events, including the upcoming Zinda festival. This year, one of our ambassadors will be featured on the Zinda poster and serve as the event's MC, while others will participate in on-stage activities and assist with running a marquee.

Looking ahead, we're excited to continue our mission and offer more opportunities for engagement and growth. To stay updated on our latest news and events, follow us on social media, particularly our LCMS Facebook page.

For any inquiries, please contact Yoko Vigor:
Email: y.vigor@lcms.org.au



WHAT'S NEW AT LCMS: UPCOMING SESSIONS TO EMPOWER OUR COMMUNITY

As we look ahead, we are thrilled to unveil a series of new sessions designed to meet the diverse needs of our community. Here's what you can look forward to:

Summer Preparedness Sessions: With warmer months ahead, we are planning sessions to provide crucial information on staying safe and healthy during the summer season. These sessions will offer valuable guidance on summer safety and fire preparedness, addressing the diverse needs of our community.

Care Finder Awareness Sessions: These sessions aim to raise awareness about services available to those who may need assistance in navigating the health and social care systems, ensuring our community knows where to turn for support.

How to Vote in Local Government Elections: Empowering our community to participate in local government elections is a key focus. Our sessions will cover everything you need to know about the voting process, from registering to vote to understanding the mechanics of local elections. Equip yourself with the knowledge to make your voice heard.

Stay tuned and keep an eye on our socials for more details and updates. We are committed to keeping you informed and engaged with all the exciting developments and opportunities ahead.





FROM LANGUAGE TEACHER TO YOUTH WORKER: YOKO VIGOR'S JOURNEY WITH MALO LEE LEY HOMEWORK CLUB

Before moving to Australia in 2019, Yoko Vigor was a language teacher in Japan. When she arrived, she knew little about the country and its systems. By chance, she joined the Youth Network and began working with young people from overseas facing language barriers. Yoko reflects, "In Japan, there's no direct equivalent to a 'community services' qualification, so I wasn't sure what the role entailed. But I've realised how rewarding this work is."

Her teaching background helped her connect with students, and she became deeply involved in running the Malo Lee Ley Homework Club, which offers a safe space for students, especially those from overseas, to get help with their studies. Yoko shares, "It's hard for children from overseas. They're in a new school, surrounded by people they can't understand. I can't change everything, but I can help a little."

The sense of accomplishment when students succeed motivates her. Yoko explains that what makes the club special is the safety and understanding it offers: "No one judges them. They don't have to compare themselves to others." Recently, the club was nominated for an award, and Yoko received the Highly Commended Outstanding New Learning Support Program Award. She expressed happiness at the recognition and the chance to promote the club further, saying, "This award motivates us to grow the program and support more young people."

However, the club faces challenges, particularly in recruiting enough volunteer teachers. Currently, 12 students attend, but with more volunteers, it could help many more. Yoko envisions expanding the program and hopes to see more Homework Clubs in communities, where students can easily access support. She adds, "We can all learn from the children who are striving despite challenges. I hope to see more spaces where we can support and learn from one another."

THE NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME

Navigating the Path to Healing: The Importance of Redress Support at LCMS

At the Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS), we understand that the journey toward healing from past traumas is deeply personal and often challenging. The National Redress Scheme offers a critical pathway for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse to seek justice and support, but we recognize that applying for redress can be a complex and emotional process, particularly for members of our multicultural community.

LCMS is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all individuals seeking to apply for the Redress Scheme. Our trauma-safe practice ensures that everyone, regardless of their background or cultural identity, feels welcome and respected. We believe that a multicultural and cross-cultural approach is essential in addressing the diverse needs of our community.

The Role of Cultural Sensitivity in Redress Support

Cultural sensitivity is at the heart of our approach. We know that the impact of trauma can vary widely across different cultures, and the experience of seeking redress can be influenced by various factors, including language barriers, cultural stigmas, and differing understandings of justice and healing. At LCMS, we work closely with individuals to ensure that their cultural identities are acknowledged and respected throughout the redress process.

Our team is trained in trauma-informed care and is equipped to provide culturally appropriate support to survivors. We understand the importance of listening to and honouring each person's story and experience. Our multicultural focus allows us to connect with individuals in a way that respects their unique cultural backgrounds and promotes healing and empowerment.

“
True reconciliation does not consist in merely forgetting the past. It demands the confrontation of injustice, the making of reparation, and the healing of wounds - Nelson Mandela

”

Collaborating with Mental Health Providers

In addition to our in-house support, LCMS collaborates with mental health providers who are also committed to trauma-informed and culturally sensitive care. We recognize that applying for redress can bring up a range of emotions and memories, and having the right mental health support can make a significant difference in a person's healing journey.

By working alongside mental health providers, we can offer comprehensive support that addresses both the legal and emotional aspects of the redress process. This collaboration ensures that individuals receive the holistic care they need to navigate their journey toward justice and healing with confidence and hope.

A Safe Space for All

At LCMS, we believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to heal from past traumas in a supportive and respectful environment. We are here to guide individuals through the redress process, providing a safe space where they can feel heard, valued, and understood. Our commitment to a multicultural and cross-cultural approach ensures that every person who walks through our doors is welcomed with open arms and treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

If you or someone you know is considering applying for the National Redress Scheme and would like more information or support, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at LCMS. We are here to help, and together, we can navigate the path to healing.

Dulce Munoz

Email: d.munoz@lcms.org.au

Eh K'Paw Htoo Dinyinla

Email: e.dinyinla@lcms.org.au

“
At LCMS, we strive to create a safe and welcoming space for all survivors, where their stories are honoured, and their cultural identities are respected. We believe in walking alongside our community members on their journey to healing, providing the support they need with compassion and understanding.

”



CELEBRATING UNITY AND SPORTSMANSHIP: BENDIGO KAREN FUTSAL TOURNAMENT AND WRIST-TYING CEREMONY

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS) was thrilled to support the Bendigo Karen Futsal Tournament on August 10th. The event brought together 160 players from 16 teams, along with hundreds of enthusiastic fans. The tournament was a day full of action and excitement, showcasing not only the skills of the players but also the spirit of teamwork and friendly competition. It was a joyous occasion that highlighted the strength and unity within the community.

The celebration continued with the Karen Wrist-Tying Ceremony on August 24th, a significant cultural event for the Karen community. This traditional ceremony, where participants tie white cotton strings around each other's wrists, symbolises unity, well-being, and good fortune. It was a heartfelt reminder of the deep connections and shared values within the community.

LCMS had the honour of presenting the medals and trophies from the futsal tournament during this ceremony. Vitor Rocha, a dedicated LCMS board member, proudly awarded the prizes to the winning and runner-up teams. His presence underscored the importance of recognising and celebrating the hard work and sportsmanship of all the participants.

Reflecting on the events, Vitor remarked, "Seeing the blend of sportsmanship and cultural tradition was truly inspiring. It reminded us of the strength we find in our diversity and the importance of coming together to celebrate each other."

The futsal tournament and Wrist-Tying Ceremony exemplified LCMS's values of respect, inclusiveness, integrity, collaboration, authenticity, and reliability. These events not only celebrated athletic achievements but also honoured the rich cultural traditions that bring people together.

LCMS is proud to have played a role in these wonderful celebrations and looks forward to many more opportunities to support events that foster community spirit and celebrate our diverse backgrounds!



JOURNEYS OF CONNECTION: STORIES OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND LEGACY AT LCMS

By the time this issue hits readers' inboxes, several weeks will have passed since I left LCMS. As the Operations Manager for three years and Acting CEO for part of that time, my work was very desk-tied and screen-focused, with refreshing interludes managing the team leaders and engaging with staff, community and partner organisations. It probably comes as no surprise to those who know of my community development background my interest and work in the visual arts, that the highlights for me at LCMS were about the people from the communities that we placed at the centre of our work.

There are many stories that will stay with me from my time at LCMS. One such story is from a family camp activity that we held in Maldon, which is a small town I know well as it's only about 10min from where I live. A beautiful thing happened at the camp held with the South Sudanese community.

A Welcome To Country was performed by local Elder, Aunty Kerri Douglas whom I know and is a local member of Dja Dja Wurrung, the local First Nations Clan. The ceremony was performed on the grassy lawns of the campsite to an audience of extremely attentive South Sudanese women who themselves are also First Nations people from the homelands from which they were displaced. Aunty Kerri was sharing traditional knowledge about the plants she had prepared for the smoking ceremony, including the multiple uses of the leaves, fruits and berries.

Suddenly one of the women exclaimed, we have this tree in our country. It was Rebecca, who recognized not the name of the plant that Aunty Kerri had presented, but the similar uses for medicine in both of their traditional cultures; so far apart yet so close in tradition, practice, and memory.

The women continued to speak about their common practices and knowledge well into the morning and shared stories and learnings between them in ways that grew and showcased the value and respect that exists for all nations.

I have admired the artist, Peter Drew since 2016 when I read that he had travelled around Australia to ambitiously stick up 1,000 of his "What is a real AUSSIE?" posters as a reminder of the diversity and historical significance that migration has had in Australia. When I started at LCMS I bought three posters to adorn my office wall (as featured in my photo).

A story I will remember comes from the display of my three AUSSIE posters.

Drew created the works from images recorded in the archives of thousands of photographs of immigrants taken over 100 years ago in Australia. They had either arrived or were born in Australia prior to the introduction of the Immigration Act, better known as the White Australia Policy (1901 to 1973), which was a set of now defunct historical legislative policies that aimed to restrict non-white people of non-European ethnic origin, particularly Asians and Pacific Islanders from immigrating to Australia. The control mechanism used was a dictation test that required a person seeking entry into Australia to write out a passage of fifty words dictated to them in any European language, not necessarily English, at the discretion of the immigration officer. Primarily, these tests were designed to fail the applicants of several targeted origins.

As well as installing the posters in my office I produced a summary description and displayed it outside of my office, explaining the origins of the posters and the profiles of the AUSSIES featured - Dorothy Sym Choon, Amy Lee Gow and Monga Khan.

Some weeks later, a new Afghan Hazara group came into the LCMS office. Whilst waiting, one of the group asked our colleague, Laila about the posters in my office. With Laila's bicultural language assistance we discussed with the group the circumstances of the posters and the biographies. Suddenly one of the group scanned the full text I'd written with his phone interpreter App and read the whole descriptive content of the summary description using the App.

This experience moved me. Of the immigrants featured in the artist's posters - and there are thousands - many will have been the first generation of their Australians families' multiple generations to have settled in Australia, long before most of us including my family's mere seven generations. AUSSIE AUSSIE AUSSIE

Another feature of my office, which I've left behind is the word 'WELCOME' that I'd written in many different languages on my office glass wall in full view of the seating area. I created the language wall to reduce the sense of the overwhelming use of English in society; that LCMS should and does have most of the information on display in languages other than English. The cultural artworks on display around the office are also there for this purpose; to have a predominant feature of cultural diversity and familiarity; a sense of belonging and a sense of place.

Recently I learned from one of my colleagues, Winne Paw that someone from the Karen community who called in, noted the accuracy of the signage and asked if I could speak all of the languages on my wall!!! I thought this was one of the loveliest things to come from my creative efforts, because the truth is I copied it all from other reliable sources! Despite my limited efforts, there is no way I will ever have any level of skill in these or any other languages other than English, especially in written form! The irony of the question goes deeper - most of the communities that come to LCMS hold with them many languages, including mother tongue regional dialects, traditional languages of elders, those of neighbouring provinces or countries, in-country languages of oppressors, inter-cultural languages and for some the new languages of places of refuge, settlement, migration, visits. Through those journeys - varied, abrupt, disrupted, short, forever and oftentimes new - comes a transformation of languages that emerge again and forge into renewed communities; together again, familiar but different, voicing different dialects, a varied understanding, some with written form or limited or disrupted learned language skill, but still a voice.

I love that there is always, without exception at LCMS and particularly within communities a desire to endorse, support, provide, afford and enable language to be owned, valued, supported, cherished and loved.

These are some stories from my time at LCMS that speak my language. I'm humbled by the journeys shared by the communities and staff who have stepped through the doors at LCMS, coming and going in the time I was there but always leaving a footprint, a sense of purpose and a voice.

Deanna Neville, Operations Manager, LCMS 2021 - 2024

OKRA CURRY WITH ASIDA

SUBMITTED BY REBECCA WOUR

INGREDIENTS:

CURRY:

- 10 brown onion
- 1 1/2kg Okra
- 1 red capsicum
- 1 bulb garlic
- 200g fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoon cooking oil
- 2 tablespoon turmeric powder
- 1 tablespoon vegata
- 140g tomato paste
- 1.5ltr water
- 1 cup cooking oil

ASIDA:

- 650ml water
- 1 cup fine semolina



METHOD:

CURRY:

1. Peel, wash and slice onions.
2. Top and tail okra, wash and slice thin
3. Wash capsicum, discard seeds and dice
4. Peel garlic and ginger and wash. Roughly chop and place in blender with 2 tablespoon oil and blend to a paste.
5. In a medium pot heat 1 cup oil and add onions. Cook on medium heat for about 10mins or until starting to brown. Stir regularly.
6. Add tomato paste and turmeric and cook for 5mins.
7. Add turmeric and vegata and stir through.
8. Add okra and capsicum. Stir through. Add enough water to cover (approx 1.5ltr)
9. Cook for 30mins regularly stirring. Okra should be soft and starting to break down to sauce consistency.
10. Add 2 tablespoon garlic and ginger paste. Cook for a further 5mins. Serve with Asida.

ASIDA:

1. In a pot, bring water to a simmer.
2. Slowly add semolina, stirring continuously to prevent any lumps.
3. Cook on medium for 15mins constantly stirring so it doesn't stick to the pot. It will thicken to a firm porridge consistency. Serve with curry or stew.

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR REBECCA'S COOKING DEMONSTRATION







Multicultural Playgroup & Story Time

LCMS supports people from multicultural communities to participate and belong in our community and exercise their human rights across the breadth of social, cultural, economic and civic life.

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