TERM TWO • 2024

COMMUNITY VOICES



In this Community Voices magazine:

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- Term Two Classes
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- Elisangela Couto's Story
- LCMS program updates
- Upcoming events/activities
- Get involved
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WELCOME FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Welcome to LCMS's second edition of Community Voices and thank you to everyone who gave us such wonderful feedback on our inaugural e-magazine. We are very happy to receive your thoughts on how we can make Community Voices even better. What else would you like to see in our quarterly magazine? Don't hesitate to email myself on d.fifer@lcms.org.au or Maha Sein on m.sein@lcms.org.au

We plan to email Community Voices to you at the beginning of each school holidays so that you can check out, and book into, our exciting school holiday activities.

I love turning the pages of the beautiful Multicultural Calendar 2024 put out by the City of Greater Bendigo and have been looking at the important dates across April, May, and June. These days celebrate the many festivals, ceremonies and important events observed by the diverse community groups who have made our beautiful region home.

World Refugee Day and Refugee Week are coming up in this period. World Refugee Day on June 20 is an international day designated by the United Nations to honour people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict or persecution. It celebrates the strength and courage of those who have faced such hardships. By shining a light on the rights, needs and dreams of refugees, the day helps to focus global attention on the plight of refugees, mobilising political will and resources to ensure their well-being.

At LCMS we honour *National Sorry Day* on 26th May and *Reconciliation Week* from 27th May – 3rd June every year. Across the region we pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the lands where we work: the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung, Yorta Yorta, Wurindjeri, Woi Wurrung and Barapa Barapa Peoples. We thank and stand in solidarity with First Nations Peoples who welcome those who have had to flee or were compelled to flee or leave our own homelands and those of us who have chosen to make Australia home. We promise to care for Country which continues to care for us, and we hope to walk together with the Traditional Owners in the spirit of healing.

In this spirit, Elisangela's Community Development team have organised a *Bushwalk for Multicultural Communities* on 5th April, from 10am - 12.30pm (arrive at 9.3-am). DJARRA will be welcoming us to Country and leading a cultural awareness session and we will also be joined by Friends of Crusoe Reservoir to learn more about their work. RSVP by 4th April to Laila Hashimi on 0482 176 455 or email l.hashimi@lcms.org.au.

I look forward to seeing you there!



FRONT COVER PHOTO

LCMS STAFF

Front row: Deanna Neville, Elisangela Couto,

Yoko Vigor, Dimity Fifer

Middle row: Say Nay Htoo Moo, Winne Htoo,

Pinar Teker, Lar Ka Paw Moo Pe

Back row: Maha Htoo Sein, Robyn Matthew,

Amanda Sam, Jason Newton, Karl Schaffarczyk, Bu Gay Pah Thei, Alison

Chapman

TERM TWO CLASSES

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY



DIGITAL LITERACY - LEVEL 1 (EXISTING STUDENT ONLY)

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



Education is one of the blessings of life - and one of its necessities Malala Yousafzai



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



WOMEN'S ENGLISH

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



DIGITAL LITERACY - LEVEL 3 (INTERMEDIATE LEVEL)

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



DIGITAL LITERACY - LEVEL 1/2 (BEGINNER LEVEL)

Time: 3pm - 4:30pm Location: LCMS Office (437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)



INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH

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



STARTING WORK IN CHILDCARE (TASTER COURSE)

Time: 9:15am - 12pm Location: Bendigo TAFE (27 Bay St, Golden Square)



IELTS STUDY CLASS

Time: 10am - 12pm Location: LCMS Office (437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)



DIGITAL LITERACY EMPLOYMENT READY!

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



HOW TO SAVE MONEY!

Time: 4pm - 5:30pm Location: LCMS Office (437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo)

REGULAR WEEKLY PROGRAMS

MONDAY

TUESDAY

THURSDAY



HOMEWORK CLUB (12-18 YEARS OLD)

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



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)



WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SESSION (FORTNIGHTLY)

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



WOMEN'S DANCING & WELLBEING

Time: 1:15am - 3pm Location: TBC

Call Laila for details: 0482 176 455



MULTICULTURAL PLAYGROUP

Time: 10am - 12pm Location: Long Gully Neighbourhood Centre (52-54 Derwent Dr., Long Gully)



VOLLEYBALL FOR YOUTH 12-25 YEAR OLD

Time: 4pm - 5:30pm **Location:** Bendigo Sports Centre, La Trobe University (Edward Road, Flora Hill)



ELISANGELA COUTO'S STORY

I was born in Mozambique, in a small country town called Tete. I grew up in a traditional African family with three siblings, me being the youngest so I was very spoilt. During elementary school, I remember being picked up from school by my elder brother who would carry my school bag and sometimes even piggy back me! Growing up in Mozambique was very simple, small houses and a lot of free time and space to run and have fun.

Like any small town in a big country, we were lower class moving to the middle class in a very small economy. Growing up I remember being very close to my paternal grandmother, she was a typical African women and loved telling stories about her culture and ancestors, she would gather all the children in a circle and engage them with family stories. Activities like storytelling instilled me with pride in my family, culture, and community. My grandmother ensured that I knew how to speak our native language, Nhungue. She pretended not to know how to speak Portuguse (official language in Mozambique) so we could use our dialect. I obviously did not appreciate her efforts at that time, but now I'm so grateful. While my family spoke Nhungue at home we used Portuguese at school.

I lost my parents when I was 11 years old, and my middle sister and I went to live with my grandmother. My grandmother was muslim, and a great mentor, however she belived that woman's role was to get married and bring up a large family, she taught me how to take care of the house, today, I am grateful for that. Considering my grandmother's cultural beliefs, it was hard for me to study and to convince her to let me get a degree. But after a lot of discussions, I managed to convince her to let me persue a university degree. At 19 years old I started a degree in International Relations, which for my traditional grandmother wasn't too bad, considering that I would became a diplomate and travel the world. However, a year later I cancelled my course and I applied for a scholarship in Tourism Planing, which I got!

My grandmother didn't agree with my second choice because she thought that I would spend my time "In beaches and wearing swimming suits". But I managed, once again, to convince her, and eventually she came to agree that Tourism was as good as Diplomacy.

After receiving my Diploma in Tourism Planning, I was sent on a month-long internship at Gorangosa National Park, where I worked with small communities in developing business plans for community tourism. While doing this work, I found myself passionate about working with the community so not long after that I start working as a university teacher for Ecoturism and Wildlife management.

I spent eight years working in the Tourism and Community AID, where I had the opportunity to visit amazing places, including Brasil, China and Botswana. After this period, I received a scholarship from the Australian Government to complete a Masters Degree in Community Planning and Development in 2015, which marked the beginning of my journey to Australia.

I really wanted to get more education. Australia had always been the primary option for me, and for many (other) Mozambicans, going to Australia was a popular choice so, I was lucky to be granted the scholarship. I studied at La Tobe University, earning a Masters of Community Planning and Development in 2017. As a student, my visa allowed me to bring my family to join me in Australia. For all of us this was an opportunity, but above all a great adventure! Before coming to Australia, I tried to prepare myself, by doing extensive research about the culture and I took intensive English classes. Like many other migrants I thought I was ready! But the reality was so different. When I got here, I felt a bit lost and out of my environment.

Settling into a new country was not easy, we had to adapt to an unfamiliar environment and lifestyle, while trying to maintain our former culture and way of life. Of all the struggles, language was the main one. Luckily, we could access local agencies for support, and LCMS was one of them. Through LCMS, my husband managed to secure a management position and get a sponsor visa that allowed us to stay and live here, in Australia, permanently. After years of living here, we are still adjusting, but we absolutely love the journey.

I can't speak about my Australian journey without mentioning LCMS, which was part of it since the beginning. First, as a newly arrived International student, seeking English Language and Employment support for me and my husband. Secondly, as a volunteer on the Welcome Dinners Project and Multicultural Festival (Zinda). Thirdly, as a researcher writing about motivations and expectation of volunteers in social initiatives. And lately, as an employee, starting in 2020.

My work with LCMS started in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic as a social worker to provide extensive support to multicultural communities during that time. After a few months, I applied for the Team Leader position for Community Development and Capacity Building. For me, this was an act of courage, as I wasn't very confident, considering that I had a great deal of experience elsewhere but little experience in Australia. However, with the organisation's support, I found myself striving.

During the three yeas that I have been with LCMS, I have learnt more than all of my work career. My current work is a perfect match for my passion, the very reason that brought me from the other side of the world.



PROGRAM UPDATES

EDUCATION

In term one, 30 students completed our LCMS Starting Work in Australia Essentials short course.

This two-day course equips students with knowledge and understanding around tax, superannuation and workplace rights and responsibilities.

This course is great for people already working, looking for work or wanting to know more about things like tax and superannuation.

Classes are very informative, and language support is provided! We will be running this course again next term! Contact Robyn – r.matthews@lcms.org.au for more information!

CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS TRAINING (CCAT)

Our Cross-Cultural Awareness Training program (CCAT) has commenced, and we presented two training sessions this term, one to the City of Greater Bendigo teram and one for Headspace Bendigo.

CCAT training offers opportunities for organisations and individuals to learn about local multicultural communities, cultural safety, and useful tools for working cross-culturally. The feedback from the participants has been very positive, and we have more sessions booked for next term.

"Very engaging and informative. Great space to speak openly and learn from others."

"Helps to reach common goals, create better community awareness"

Please contact us if you would like to organise a session for your organisation, we have limited spots available.



WOMEN DANCING AND WELLBEING

Following the success of our women's dance session in term one, we're thrilled to announce its return in term two by popular demand! With a new location on the horizon, stay tuned for updates. Join us for a journey of movement, joy, and wellness as we dance towards improved wellbeing and community connection. Embrace the transformative power of dance to nurture your mind, body and spirit. Let's keep the momentum going and grove through term two with renewed energy and enthusiasm!

WOMEN NETWORK: CONCESSION BENEFITS INFORMATION SESSION

On February 27th, Arc Justice came to LCMS and provided an information session for concession card holders participating in LCMS programs. The session focused on accessing benefits, updating contact information, and managing household bills efficiently. Attendees learned how to optimise available benefits, maintain accurate records, and access support services efficiently, empowering them to handle expenses and household responsibilities with confidence.

WOMEN SOCIAL SWIMMING

Our Women Social Swimming came to a close with a celebratory event on March 29th, featuring a guest from Ambulance Victoria who led an informative session on open water safety. The community actively engaged, seeking answers to their questions and satisfying their curiosity about water safety. It was heartening to see everyone's participation.

The sessions have been a success, providing valuable insights and knowledge that will benefit all participants as they enjoy water activities in the future.



LA PA TEA AND MULTICULTURAL CARE AND FOOD

Every Tuesday from 10am to 11am, we gather for 'La Pa Tea', meaning morning tea in the Karen language. This is followed by the Multicultural Care and Food Program from 10:30am to 12:30pm at the Salvation Army.

La Pa Tea typically sees an average of 13 participants, while the Multicultural Care and Food program currently supports 50 families, a number that continues to rise.

With the increasing demand for assistance, we are reaching out for donation and food items to meet the growing needs of thses families. Your support can make a significant diffence. If you are willing to help us in this endeavor, please don't hesitate to contact the LCMS office. Together, we can provide vital assistance to those in our community who need it most.

MULTICULTURAL PLAYGROUP

As part of our assisted Playgroup activities, we organised a special event that featured participation in Play in the Garden and a visit to the Bendigo Art Gallery.

On March 19th, at Play in the Garden, we set up an Art and Craft stall that attracted over 100 people, including multicultural and local communities. The City of Greater Bendigo supported this program.

Families with young children had the opportunity to visit the art gallery on the 21st March to explore children's activities and services. The day at the gallery was a vibrant mix of stories, art, and culminated in a picnic in the park. It provided an enriching experience for families to immerse themselves in the local art scene, engage in creative activities and enjoy quality time together. The event successfully highlighted the cultural and artistic offerings available in the community.



YOUTH NETWORK

LCMS welcomes and congratulates our new group of Youth Ambassadors, who will play a pivotal role in shaping youth activities and setting goals for the year. You can meet the Youth Ambassadors at the Easter Celebration in Rosiland Park, Bendigo, where they will be hosting a Global Photobooth & Cultural Wardrobe, allowing you to try on traditional clothing and take a home a Polaroid memory.

Additionally, LCMS, in collaboration with Catholic Care Victoria, is organising an oncountry youth excursion to explore Leanganook's ecology, learn survival skills, and engage in nature connection activities. Limited spots are available, so contact us to secure your spot. This will be an amazing day out on 10th April!

To register or inquire further, reach our to Jason at foodsafari@lcms.org.au or Yoko at y.vigor@lcms.org.au, or call LCMS at (03) 5441 6644

HOMEWORK CLUB

LCMS's Homework Club has received a positive response from both participants and volunteers in term one, offering basic maths and English assistance tailored to students from late primary to upper secondary levels. Sessions are held at the Bendigo Library every Monday from 3:45pm to 5pm during the school term, with a maximum of 2 students per tutor for personalised attention.

The programs will pause for the school holidays and resume in term two on April 15th.

If you have a child who would benefit from a weekly tutor, please contact us. Or, if you have a previous teaching experience, placement requirements, or simply want to volunteer and make a difference, we are always grateful for people's generosity of time and intelligence.

Call LCMS: (03) 5441 6644 or email Yoko: y.vigor@lcms.org.au



CAFE FOR A DAY

Another great collaboration is between LCMS & Bendigo Food Share to deliver the *Café for a Day* program.

Jas from Indian Asian Grocer (Kangaroo Flat) & Jas's Indian Kitchen shared recipes, skills, and passion for all things delicious to create a menu for the International Women's Day Celebration. Jas taught three of the LCMS youth network members how to cook her Butter Chicken, Punjabi Chole Curry, Puri bread and Cashew Halwa.

As part of the *International Women's Day* event, there were guest speakers, one of whom was Jas. She shared her journey to Australia, how she came to own her grocery store and build a food truck and make amazing friends and connections across Bendigo.

If you see her big yellow food truck (Jas's Indian Kitchen) at local events such as Zinda, Vegetarian Festival or at the Rotary car park in Kangaroo Flat, be sure to stop, say hi and try some of her delicious food.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY LUNCH

We had an incredible *International Women's Day* lunch on Tuesday, 5th March, in partnership with Bendigo Health and CatholicCare Victoria.

The event was a huge success with a fantastic turnout, amazing company, powerful stories, mesmerising dance performances and divine food prepared by Bendigo Foodshare Cafe for a Day program and Jas from Jas's Indian Kitchen!

LCMS would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who joined us to celebrate the strength, resilience, and achievements of women around the world, promoting exclusivity and diversity.

Together, we are making a difference and empowering each other to reach new heights! Let's continue to uplift and support each other every day, inspiring inclusion and unity.



ZINDA MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL 2024

Expressions of interest are now being accepted for this year's Zinda Festival, which will take place at the Garden for the Future in White Hills on Saturday, October 12th, from 11am to 6pm. Whether you are a community group, organisation, or individual interested in performing, fundraising, sponsorship, becoming a food vendor, running workshops, or volunteering, this is your opportunity to be part of a vibrant celebration.

To participate, simply visit the festival's website at https://zinda.org.au/get-involved/ to download the necessary forms. For any inquiries or to discuss your involvement, you can reach out to Jason at zinda@lcms.org.au. Sponsorship opportunities are available for businesses and organisations looking to support the event. To access the latest sponsorship prospectus, visit https://zinda.org.au/get-involved/#sponsors and discover the benefits of getting involved.

By connecting with the Zinda Festival, you will have the chance to engage with the community, celebrate tradition, culture, and diversity, and gain exposure through the LCMS channels. It's a fantastic way to showcase your support and connect with a wide audience.

Our latest exciting news is that two pop-up Zinda events are scheduled, one in Castlemaine on May 4th and another one in Echuca on June 15th. Keep an eye on our socials for further updates and details about these exciting events. If you are interested in participating in these events, please contact Jason at zinda@lcms.org.au to express your interest.

Don't miss this opportunity to be part of these wonderful celebrations and contribute to the cultural vibrancy of our region.

Get involved today and make a difference at the Zinda Multicultural Festival 2024!



THE NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME

The Australian Government's National Redress Scheme is for anyone who experienced institutional sexual abuse as a child. Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services provides Redress Support Services (RSS).

The National Redress Scheme:

- acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions;
- recognizes the suffering they endured because of this abuse;
- holds institutions accountable for this abuse, and
- helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response, and a Redress payment.

If you are eligible to apply to the Scheme, an offer of Redress can mean access to:

- Counselling that is confidential and culturally safe, including:
- a direct personal response, such as an apology from the institution;
- a payment of up to \$150,000 your own choice of what parts of the redress offer you want to receive.

What are my options?

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services can assist you to discuss your options.

How to Reach Us

If you or someone you know may be eligible for support under the National Redress Scheme, please contact us:

Email: redress@lcms.org.au

Phone: 0403 626 805 / 03 5441 6644

For more information about our Redress Support Services, visit our website: https://lcms.org.au/community-programs/national-redress-scheme-support-services/



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (RAP)

The team at LCMS is continuing to build connections with Country and First Nations Peoples within the Loddon Campaspe Area.

We have two collaboration events coming up in March and April. Keep an eye out for our socials.

We have purchased our new Djarra County signage.

We have been focusing on the connections between our LCMS Strategic Plan and the On Country Plans of the five First Nations where we live and work to build our understanding of the common values between people.

We are also working to build connections throughout the Loddon Campaspe region with community groups and will continue these very important stepping stones to this by working toward connections with Elders and country in outlying areas through visits and programs.





UPCOMING EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

GLOBAL PHOTO BOOTH AT EASTER FASTIVAL

Come visit LCMS's Global Photo Booth at the Bendigo Easter celebration at the City of Greater Bendigo Intercultural Ambassadors tent and try something on from our cultural wardrobe.

Location: Rosiland Park, Bendigo

Date: Friday, 29th and Saturday, 30th March

Time: From 10am - 4pm

CAFE FOR A DAY

We are happy to announce another *Café for a Day* session, which is open to the public, as part of the LCMS school holiday program.

Jas will once again lead the youth team and assist them with their pathway into the hospitality industry. We recommend preordering, as the meals made on the day do sell fast, but walk-ins are always welcome.

Venue: Salvation Army Hill Top Café (enter gate 2 on the corner of 65 Mundy St & Bramble St)

Date: Friday, 5th April

Time: Dine in or takeaway between 12pm -

1:30pm

MENU - \$15

Butter Chicken

• Punjabi Chole Masala (Chickpea, Vegan)

Served with Fragrant Basmati Rice & Roti Bread.



To Pre-order scan the QR code or click *HERE!*

MIRAWARA EARTH SKILLS EXPERIENCE

This excursion is planned with the support of Catholic Care Victoria for our multicultural youth to connect with nature and have the opportunity to learn about the ecology of Leanganook as well as learning to make natural cordage, fire-by-friction, cook on the campfire, listen to stories and participate in nature connection games.

There are limited spaces, so please contact us and register now.

Call LCMS: (03) 5441 6644 or email Jason at foodsafari@lcms.org.au or Yoko at y.vigor@lcms.org.au

Location: Leanganook (Mt Alexander) Meet at

LCMS Office

Date: Wednesday, 10th April **Time:** 8:15am to 5:30pm

COMMUNITY BUSH WALK

In partnership with DEECA and Friends of Crusoe Reservoir we have organised a Bushwalk for Multicultural Communities. DJARRA will be welcoming us to Country and leading a cultural awareness session and we will also be joined by Friends of Crusoe Reservoir to learn more about their work.

Spots are limited, so RSVP by 4th April to La Ka Paw on (03) 5441 6644 or email l.pe@lcms.org.au

Location: Crusoe Reservoir function Centre

(Crusoe Road, Kangaroo Flat)

Date: Friday, 5th April Time: 9:30am - 12:30pm





GET INVOLVED

CAREER WITH US

Are you passionate about making a difference in the lives of others? Do you enjoy working with people from a diverse cultural background?

We are recruiting a passionate and experienced Redress Advocate to join the team so that we can support people from culturally diverse and mainstream backgrounds who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse to access support from the Scheme.

For more infomation and to apply, click **HERE!**

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

We are looking for volunteer to assist with a number of programs which include:

- Homework Club
- Multicultural Playgroup
- Zinda Multicultral Festival (October, 12th)

To register your interest and for more information please contact us on (03) 5441 6644 or drop in by our office located on 437 Hargreaves St, Bendigo

DONATE TO OUR CARE AND FOOD PROGRAM

The LCMS Food Care Program is an initiative aimed at providing food and support to multicultural communities in need. By donating to this program, you can help make a difference in the lives of individuals and families who are struggling to put food on the table.

Your donation will go towards providing culturally appropriate meals and other essential support to those who are facing food insecurity. Whether you choose to make a one-time donation or become a monthly donor, every contribution helps us make a positive impact in our communities lives.



To donate to our Care and Food program, scan the QR code or click **HERE!**

BECOME A MEMBER

Be a part of Multicultural Services and help create a vibrant, thriving and multicultural central Victoria.

By becoming a member you will be:

- Showing your support for multiculturalism and newly arrived communities in our region.
- Supporting us to advocate for and with multicultural communities.



To sign up, scan the QR code or click HERE!















Ayam Kari (Chicken Curry)

Submitted by Sandra Penna

INGREDIENTS

- 1 big onion
- 5 cloves garlic
- 5 candle nuts
- 1 chilli or 1 teaspoon sambal oelek (optional)
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon ground coriander
- 1 tablespoon galangal powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- · 2 tablespoon cooking oil
- 1 cup coconut milk
- Pinch of sugar (optional)
- 2 medium size potatoes cube into bite sizes
- 1 chicken breast cube into bite sizes

METHOD

- 1. Put onion, garlic and candle nuts in a blender.
- Put oil in pan. cook pulverised onion mix. cook until brown but not burnt.
- Stir in ground coriander. cinnamon. galangal and chilli.
- Put potatoes and chicken into the pan and stir about 5 minutes.
- Pour in coconut milk and keep stirring until all cooked.



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR SANDRA'S COOKING DEMOSTRATION





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.

437 Hargreaves Street Bendigo, VIC 3550 (03) 5441 6644 Email: info@lcms.org.au

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www.lcms.org.au



