



Issue 11, January 2011

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Citizen of the year 2011

The staff at MRC would like to express hearty congratulations to Mrs Romilda Amorosa who received the 2011 Citizen of the Year award, presented by the Lord Mayor of Hobart Ald Rob Valentine at the annual Hobart City Council Australia Day awards. Romilda is a well known face around the MRC through her participation in the Thursday (Italian) Ladies Club which meet at the MRC every Thursday. Romilda's visits to the MRC are eagerly anticipated by staff keen on being the first to buy the scrumptious baked items and fresh fruit/vegetables which Romilda sells as a part of her fundraising initiative for the Cancer Council. Romilda has been supporting the Cancer Council of Tasmania for the past eight years and is renowned for her Biggest Morning Tea fundraising event. Since she commenced her drive for fundraising she has collected \$107,000 for the Cancer Council

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MRC EVENTS

Home & Community Care (HACC) BBQ

The MRC HACC team held a BBQ for its clients on Friday 14 January 2011 at the German Club. With the HACC Day Centres not operating in January it was a great opportunity for many of our clients to connect with the MRC staff and their friends during this break.

Clients from the Croatian, German, Chinese and Multicultural Day Centres were invited. Approximately 104 people including MRC clients, volunteers and staff attended the BBQ and heartily acknowledged the excellent food and ambience. Congratulations and thank you to Maribel our Day Centre Assistant and the HACC team who did a great job organising this event. Thank you to the volunteers who helped out on the day: Otto, Betty, Martin, Stan and Conchita. It was a big effort and only possible due to the great team work.

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Kids and Family Beach Day Out



The MRC Settlement Team organised a Kids and Family excursion for children under 12 years of age and their parents at the Nutgrove Beach on Friday, 17 December 2010. Approximately 25 participants

enjoyed taking part in activities ranging from face painting, art work, games and a talk by Hobart City Council staff about wild life, followed by a BBQ lunch.

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Hobart Myer Christmas Pageant Awards

The 2010 Myer Hobart Christmas Pageant Awards were held on January 19th in the Alderman's Lounge. The Migrant Resource Centre received two awards - the Lord Mayors Award and Best Community Group – Runner Up. Cedric Manen, General Manager, received the Awards on behalf of the Migrant Resource Centre. Thank you to everyone who was involved.



Best Community Group – Runner Up



Lord Mayor's Award - Winner

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Top Gear Meeting

The next Top Gear meeting will be held on Thursday, 3 February at 5.30pm in the Acacia

Room. An officer from the Tasmanian Police Department will come along to talk to the attendees about road safety. For more information please contact Eliza on 6221 0999.

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African Elders

The next African Elders Meeting will be held in the Acacia Room, 49 Molle Street, on Wednesday 23 February. African Elders Meeting dates for 2011 are:

- Wednesday February 23
- Wednesday March 23
- Wednesday April 20
- Wednesday May 25
- Wednesday 22 June
- Wednesday 20 July
- Wednesday August 24
- Wednesday September 21
- Wednesday October 19
- Wednesday November 23
- Wednesday December 14

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MRC Stakeholder Consultations

Due to the expansion of the services of the Migrant Resource Centre in the past three years it has become necessary to operate our services from three locations. This has implications for the way in which we deliver our services in the future and we are now considering consolidation of our operations.

We would like to get an informed perspective on our relocation strategy through consultation with stakeholders, clients, members and the community.

The first of these sessions will be conducted on Thursday 10 February at 1pm at the Acacia Room at our office on 49 Molle Street, Hobart. The aim of this session is to provide information on MRC's current progress towards relocation and to receive feedback from our valued stakeholders in regards to the implications of relocation.

The Hon Cassy O'Connor MP, Minister for Community Development and Minister for

Human Services has kindly agreed to open the session with a presentation on the importance of the community sector in Tasmania. The consultation process will be facilitated by Elida Meadows from TasCoss and lunch will be provided at the meeting. The agenda for the meeting includes -

Agenda:

1. Opening – MRC General Manager – Cedric Manen
2. Guest Speaker – The Hon Cassy O'Connor MP
3. Key consultation questions (facilitated by TasCoss)
4. Summary and close
5. Light
6. Lunch

Please RSVP reception@mrchobart.org.au or 6221 0999 by COB Friday 4 February 2011.

Tasmanian Transcultural Mental Health Network (TTMHN)

The TTMHN is holding a state-wide meeting Thursday 10th February, video linked between three DHHS locations in Burnie, Launceston and Hobart. Service Providers who support the mental health of people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds are invited. Agenda items will cover: Agency Updates; TTMHN Action Plan; the development of a TTMHN Website; planning for the Phoenix Centre Forum; and will highlight the story of a Sudanese born man who has experienced mental illness and addiction after settling in Tasmania. Please RSVP to rvalentino@mrchobart.org.au if you would like to attend or phone Renee Valentino on 62210999 for details.

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MRC Website

The Migrant Resource Centre launched a new-look website at the beginning of the year. You will find the site at www.mrchobart.org.au.

MRC SERVICE UPDATES

Job Coaching @ Connect

MRC's Employment Support Service's Centre – Connect will re-commence its Job Coaching Program on Wednesday, 16 February 2011 and will run to Wednesday, 29 June 2011.

This program is suitable for jobseekers from a refugee or humanitarian background who meet the following criteria:

- Have a good basic understanding of English
- Are registered with a Job Services Australia agency
- Can commit to attending every Wednesday from 10am – 3pm
- Are not in full-time study

A qualified and experienced job coach will work with up to 15 participants one day per week (Wednesdays from 10am to 3pm) in a group and individually to:

- Customise job searching strategies that are relevant to each participant's personal situation.
- Provide weekly support to guide each participant through the job seeking process.
- Maximise access to suitable vacancies.

Connect ran this program from October to December 2010 with 50% of participants securing employment as a result. For further details please call 6272 2614 or email akay@mrchobart.org.au [\(Back to top\)](#)

Computer Training at Connect

Connect will be commencing another 'Introduction to Computers and Word Processing' course on Tuesday, 15 February 2011. The course is delivered in 2 hour sessions over 8 weeks.

The training is conducted by a highly experienced I.T. trainer, Michael Collinson, on a voluntary basis. Michael has a passion for assisting people to get to a particular stage in their computer use and knowledge. Connect received fantastic

feedback from participants who attended the previous course.

A client who attended both the Job Coaching and computer training last year said “I have learnt more here in the last few weeks than I have in the last 7 years I have been in Australia”. For further details please call 6272 2614 or email akay@mrchobart.org.au
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Happiness Project

The Phoenix Centre has recently commenced an innovative program with ‘Kick Start Arts’. This project is a two year state wide initiative that will focus on a diverse array of communities in Tasmania, from Flinders Island to Glenorchy. It is a community arts project that utilizes the theme of happiness and incorporates a variety of activities around this idea. The ultimate aim of the project is to make a number of short films; these will tour the state in a mobile hand built cinema.

The Phoenix Centre has linked with the project by involving six humanitarian entrants from the Glenorchy City Council area. These participants are children aged 6-11, and are meeting each Wednesday morning as part of a school holiday program. The group is facilitated by two Kick Start Arts community arts workers, and a Phoenix counsellor. The children are involved in a variety of activities, including games, dance, circus skills, and drama. The main artistic aim of the group is to make a short film of their choice.

In a broader mental health context, the group also has an important therapeutic role. This is to provide a setting that is fun and creative, for children who have experienced trauma at various levels. This model was chosen, as it can be difficult to engage children in traditional counselling processes. It was obvious from the first session, that this form of activity is not only fun, but helps children engage, create social connections, and build their confidence and self-esteem.

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Grant Success for MRC

The Phoenix Centre was recently awarded a grant from the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation, allowing for the purchase of therapeutic resources for working with children primary school age and younger.

MRC has been successful in three of its applications under the Department of Premier and Cabinet Community Capacity Building Grants Program.

- The ‘Creating Community Connections’ project has been funded to assist with employment outcomes for new and emerging communities.
- The ‘CALD Cultural Arts & Crafts Project’ has been funded to enable the MRC to support the Annual Refugee Week exhibition which will showcase the diverse arts and crafts for those people of migrant & refugee backgrounds in Southern Tasmania.
- The “Play-Rewind-Fast Forward-Pause- Its time for MY Playback Activity” project has been funded for engaging playback theatre in our youth program during National Youth Week 2011 events.

In testimony to MRC’s Employer of Choice Initiatives, we were successful in our application for the Skills Tasmania - 2011 Productivity Places Program. This will enable six MRC staff to undertake Certificate IV training at no cost to them and renders approximately \$15 k savings to the organisation.

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MRC Positions Vacant:

Greek Speaking Bicultural Worker

The Packaged Care Programs are currently recruiting a Greek speaking bicultural worker. This 7.5 hours per week position will provide support to Greek speaking clients of our Golden Age Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs) and Extended Aged Care at Home Dementia Packages (EACHD). These Programs already offer bicultural and bilingual MRC-based staff, who between them speak German, Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese, Vietnamese and Dutch.

The new worker will provide assistance to the Programs' coordinator/case manager Kim Phong as well as to case managers Melanie Tekolf and Wendy Ho, and also link in closely with the German speaking bicultural worker, Annette Hitchman.

The Greek speaking bicultural worker will, for example, visit clients in their homes, translate written information into Greek, and strengthen our links with the local Greek community.

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Community Development Officer

This full time (negotiable) position requires an understanding of community development principles and a demonstrated ability to implement community development strategies.

The person we are seeking will have a keen interest in refugee settlement issues especially those from the emerging communities. Key activities include: information provision, advocacy, project work and consultations with communities and stakeholders. This position is funded by the Dept. of Immigration and Citizenship and is on a fixed term contract till 30th June 2012.

For more information including copies of the position description and selection criteria please contact the Migrant Resource Centre on 62210999 or email reception@mrchobart.org.au

This position closes on Monday 7th February 2011.

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MRC Communities Update

Seasonal Work – Fruit Picking

MRC's Employment Support Services Program - (Connect) clients were connected with seasonal work late last year in the Richmond area and Derwent Valley with most of them still busy cherry picking at the moment in the Hunter Valley. Excellent feedback has been received

from the orchard owners about clients Connect has sent. This has proved very valuable for new communities who have not worked in Australia prior to this.



Members of the Karen community picking Raspberries at a farm in Westerway

The Connect team were successful in placing 10 Karen community members to work at a farm in Westerway, picking raspberries.

The Connect team also organised a MRC volunteer to drive the Karen community members to the farm in Westerway and back every day in MRC's vehicle.

The Karen workers received high praise from orchard owner Richard Clark for their work ethic!

The mercury did a story about the picking, which can be accessed by clicking on the link below:

http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2010/12/22/195105_food-wine.html

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Tasmanian Police Charity Trust

MRC would like to express sincere thanks to the Tasmanian Police Charity Trust, for the gifts the Migrant Resource Centre received through the Tasmanian Police Charity Trust to be distributed to our Clients and communities. Such unexpected gifts are a welcome surprise for our Clients when they cannot afford such luxuries in their day-to-day lives. One young single man living here without any family was particularly touched with a box of luxury food items as were the young children with the toys. All of the gifts were

distributed to worthy families and individuals prior to Christmas day either by delivery by our staff or by collection at our three premises.

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Cultural Calendar Dates – February 2011

Feb 3 Thu: Chinese New Year (Year of the Rabbit) - The Year of the Rabbit represents peace, beauty and hope. Chinese New Year festivals feature traditional cultural activities, food stalls, arts and crafts, fire crackers, lion dances and dragon parades.

Feb 3 Thu: Tet (Vietnamese Lunar New Year) - Vietnamese people celebrate Tet with family reunions, special foods and gifts. This festival is also an opportunity for Vietnamese Australians to share their cultural heritage with the wider Australian community.

Feb 4 Fri: Independence Commemoration Day - Sri Lanka

Feb 6 Sun: Waitangi Day - New Zealand

Feb 7 Mon: Independence Day - Grenada

Feb 11 Fri: National Multicultural Festival, Canberra (to 13 Feb) - the National Multicultural Festival features local, national and international music, dance, food and creative arts.

Feb 11 Fri: Perth International Arts Festival (to 7 March)

Feb 11 Fri: Victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran - Iran

Feb 12 Sat: Carnevale Italian Festival, Adelaide (to 13 Feb)

Feb 13 Sun: St Kilda Festival, Melbourne

Feb 15 Tue: National Day – Serbia

Feb 15 Tue: Nirvana Day - Buddhist

Feb 16 Wed: Independence Day – Lithuania

Feb 16 Wed: Prophet Muhammad's Birthday - Islamic

Feb 17 Thu: Independence Day – Kosovo

Feb 18 Fri: Adelaide Fringe (to 13 March) Festival

Feb 18 Fri: National Day - Gambia

Feb 19 Sat: Magha Puja – Buddhist

Feb 22 Tue: National Day - Saint Lucia

Feb 23 Wed: National Day - Brunei Darussalam

Feb 23 Wed: National Day - Guyana

Feb 24 Thu: Independence Day – Estonia

Feb 25 Fri: National Day - Kuwait

Feb 26 Sat: Pako Festa, Geelong - Pako Festa is a celebration of cultural diversity and attracts thousands of people to enjoy food, folk dancing, art exhibitions, films, craft, activities for children and the Pako Parade.

Feb 27 Sun: Independence Day - Dominican Republic

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SPOTLIGHT ON OUR VOLUNTEERS

Tiiu Raabus – Healthy Living Group & Admin Volunteer

My Volunteering Interest At MRC:

I help staff with the Healthy Living Group when needed. I have also assisted the administration team at MRC with Reception duties as required.

My Experience With Culturally And Linguistically Diverse (Cald) Communities :

I have been a home tutor for women who are not able to go to classes because their latest child is too young to go to childcare. That has put me into contact with women from Sudan, Burundi, Indonesia and Syria. I have been a volunteer at the Multicultural Council of Tasmania for just over three years which has brought me into contact with even more communities, both old and new. And I am a member of one of those communities myself. I am Chair of the Estonian Community and their present Estonian language teacher.

My Favourite Life Experience :

Breathing is good.

I Presently Spend My Daylight Hours:

Preparing for the Wooden Boat Festival ! I'm a volunteer at the Maritime Museum too. Then there will be the Scout/Guide Regatta ...I'm a Guide leader for 14-18year old girls. Lots to do for a bit.

I Admire :

The women of the world who continue to care for their families under often horrendous circumstances but still manage somehow to

produce generations of overwhelmingly decent people.

I Laugh When : Often, whenever I can. Most things are funny if you change your viewpoint.

The Biggest Challenge I Find Is? Old age.....or, people's attitudes to it.

My Wish For The Cald Communities Of Tasmania: Whatever they wish for themselves. I wouldn't presume to decide for them.

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Tune in to Hobart FM 96.1 to get more updates from the Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tasmania) Inc on the last Monday of every month. Next broadcast is on Monday, 28 February 2011 at 1pm. If you would like to contribute any community updates, please email

aanil@mrchobart.org.au

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