

SCARF COMMUNITY ENGAGES WITH ILLAWARRA FOLK FESTIVAL 14-17 JANUARY

This year SCARF was nominated to share the opening night Charity Concert proceeds with Bulli Public School. The Burmese Dance Troupe gave their premiere performance as the opening act. It was colourful, musical and very entertaining! The concert raised \$600 for SCARF. Our community members were also present throughout the Festival as part of the Recycling Team.

We had twenty two volunteers, and they contributed significantly to the Festival's fabulous recycling effort.



BURMESE DANCERS IN ACTION.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION 12 DECEMBER

We spent a very interesting couple of hours considering many aspects of resettlement in the Illawarra. Questionnaires were completed which provided helpful feedback about areas of concern as well as community interests, we had 25 respondents to the survey on proposed workshops for adults and 12 young people recorded activities and workshops in which they would be interested to participate. We were very pleased to be visited by Fadel Benhima from NSW Community Relations Commission during the course of the afternoon. Special thanks to volunteers who supported the day as facilitators and caterers.



SOME OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED ON THE DAY.



THE PERFORMERS



ANN LEHMANN FROM THE ILLAWARRA FOLK CLUB



RECYCLERS ON THE JOB- ALEE SHA, BU REH & ROBYNNE MURPHY

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- March 6
SCARF General Meeting
 - March 8, 4:00pm
L2P Mentor meeting
 - March 10
Workshop in Basic Auto Mechanics
 - March 17
Wheels To Go Workshop
 - April 12, 4:00pm
L2P Mentor meeting
 - May 3, 4:00pm
L2P Mentor meeting
 - May 16
Bunnings Sausage Sizzle
 - Oct 8,9,10
ART4refugees
- Please refer to our website for updates.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Homework Help tutors will be interested to know what Gracia is doing this year.

Gracia writes:

I have been successful in getting my first offer in Bachelor of Communication and Media/ bachelor of Commerce at Wollongong University. I take this opportunity to thank all SCARF volunteers who offered me help and support in reaching this goal!

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ILLAWARRA MERCURY "TAKE TWO" WEEKENDER JANUARY 16TH

William Verity wrote an excellent interview featuring SCARF volunteer Ted Booth and community member Oo Reh. It was great to see such positive publicity for SCARF and hopefully will raise awareness in the wider community of the difficulties facing new arrivals. Thanks to Ted and Oo Reh for agreeing to be interviewed.

ART4refugees - Supporting local refugee families
Charity Art Show @The Illawarra Grammar School

ART4refugees
PO Box 106, Keiraville NSW 2500
www.art4refugees.org.au
Email: info@art4refugees.org.au
TEL: 0417 166 011

Our hard working committee, Jane Coburn, Benita Andrews and Sue Boyd, have commenced planning for this year's ART show. Please reserve these dates in your diary – 8,9,10 October – as this is our major fundraiser of the year. The opening night on 8 Oct, when it is first in best dressed as far as securing some wonderful artwork, is well worth attending. Mark that date in your diary now!

Our vision is to see refugee entrants happily settled and participating fully in the life of the wider community

VOLUNTEER LUNCH 27 JANUARY



VOLUNTEERS' LUNCH

We were delighted to welcome 20 volunteers and potential volunteers to our first social gathering for the year. The excellent catering was provided by Val Green, and enjoyed by all!

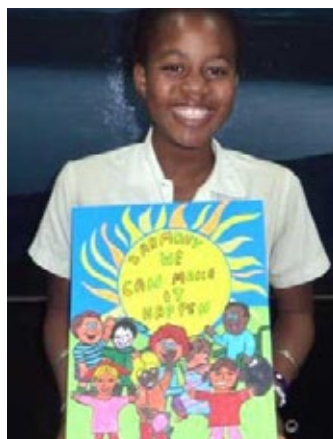
This was a social event, rather than a serious information swap but it was agreed that meetings would be held regularly throughout the year for volunteers working in particular areas eg mentors, home tutors, driving mentors, English for Adults tutors. It was exciting to be able to give many volunteers their first inspection of the newly organised Community & Training Centre plus the Administration Centre.

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION UPDATE

SCARF now occupies #36 & #39 in the Piccadilly Centre. #36 is our Training Centre and #39 is the Office. Having the two areas separated is making a noticeable difference to the delivery of services to the community. We have had excellent attendance at the extra English for Adult Learners sessions offered during January. Extra classes are scheduled to continue for Levels 1 though to 4 as well as specific Conversation Classes.

CECILE HAS LOTS TO SMILE ABOUT!

At the end of 2009 13 year old Cecile Sanougah-Amoussou and Jim Derbyshire, collaborated to produce this colourful poster for a 2010 Harmony Day Poster Competition, a project of the Alfred Dreyfus Unit of B'nai B'rith NSW. Cecile has been announced as a regional winner and has been invited to attend Parliament House for an award ceremony in March.



CECILE WITH HER POSTER

A REMINDER

SCARF is a University of Wollongong supported community organization and donations can be made under their Workplace Giving Program. For more information go to the following website: <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/community/giving/index.html>

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SCARF HOLIDAY FUN

We were kept busy during the holidays with some major outings for young people and adults.



START STRUCK POTENTIAL BALLERINAS

Twelve lucky SCARF community members were invited to the Hawks game on New Year's Eve. It was a fun night, made all the happier by the Hawks win over Adelaide 93 to 88 ... the excitement and enthusiasm of the Hawks fans was a real eye-opener!

Twenty children 10-14 years travelled to the Belvoir St Theatre to see the powerful production of The Book of Everything, a stage play adapted from the novel by acclaimed Dutch children's author Guus Kuijer A great day was had by all!

On 16 January 22 very excited little girls attended the English National Ballet's performance of Angelina Ballerina. The sets and costumes, the music and

dancing had everyone wide-eyed. After the performance they were allowed to stay back and have 10 minutes on stage ... living out the fantasy of being ballerinas themselves ... what fun!

Five young people with an interest in music were fascinated to attend the Illawarra Folk Festival Music School. The Folk Festival awarded two scholarships, which enabled John Say and Esther Esther to experience music styles from all over the world. All five had great fun participating in the penny whistle workshop!

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DAPTO COMMUNITY GARDENS

Introduction. DAPTO Community Gardens are located in Darkes Rd Dapto. They are an organic Garden where anyone can hire a plot & start gardening. The plots we have are 90 metres long X a metre wide. These cost \$30 per month to hire & included is the use of all tools, wheelbarrows, compost & a range of free seeds. Everyone there is very friendly & helpful & I thought it a perfect environment for our new refugees to grow some of their own food & give them something worthwhile to do, while adjusting to a new country. Fortunately Sharyn & Kel agreed.

Getting Started. On the 7th January Kel & Sharyn came & brought 6 Burmese & 1 African to get started on clearing the old spinach & weeding the very overgrown bed #135. Kel paid the deposit & \$5 per head Membership Fee. Scarf agreed to pay 2 months rent to help get established then it was up to the gardeners to pay for their seedlings & Bed Rent. With 2 wheel barrows & spades & forks, & huge smiles, they cleared the whole bed before they would stop working. Absolutely awesome! I couldn't believe their enthusiasm & hard work. The community gardeners are very generous & there is a box in the kitchen where everyone can place their excess produce for anyone to help themselves. Te Bu was given a giant zucchini, & they shared tomatoes & lettuce to take home on their first day. We divided the bed into 5, so that everyone has their own plot to plant & care for. Our first day gardening was a huge success! Fortunately John Say & Siang Uk speak & understand English so they interpreted & that was a huge help for me.

On Wed 13th January, Kel arrived with another 2 Burmese, including Kang Che Hang & paid the deposit on a second Bed # 127. On Monday I called in & the bed was completely cleared of weeds. A huge effort, Kang Che & his daughter had travelled out on the train, walked about 1 Kilometre from the station, & cleared the bed. Awesome!

Margaret Atkinson the Gardens Treasurer has been absolutely wonderful. She found us a bin to use for water & a watering can to keep on the bed. We also have been given a compost bin for each bed & John Say & I put them together while waiting for the others before our meeting on Thursday 28th Jan.

At our meeting Te Bu offered to be the Treasurer & collect all the money due each fortnight & give it to Margaret or Christine. This was a major relief for me. The system works on an honesty system, where you write out a docket for what you have bought or used & put it into a box. Margaret sorts it out & puts our account in our Scarf Drawer in the kitchen. Te Bu will work out & collect the money. They have 2 drivers & cars, so the transport problems seem to be sorted out. John is happy to ride his bike.

The gardens are a wonderful learning experience for us all, I love the environment there, it is so friendly & nurturing. There is still a huge amount of learning about growing vegetables & recording to organic standards, but I must say so far this has been a huge success & I'm confident the Burmese will be happily eating their home grown vegetables before long.

Feb. 2nd, tasted first radishes grown from seed, delicious, (a new vegetable for John.) & lettuce & bok Choy ready to start harvesting. Absolutely awesome! John Say said, 'Everyone is very happy with the garden & our working together'.

Ann Rays, Self Appointed-Dapto Community Garden Co-ordinator

Editor's note: Ann reports that the group are also looking for donations of small hand tools, trowels & secateurs, to help cultivate." There aren't many at the gardens, & when we arrive en-mass, there are not enough. " If you can assist please contact Sharyn.

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1ST DAY GARDENING, & EVERYONE HAPPY!
(PRODUCE GIVEN BY FELLOW GARDENERS).



HAPPILY CLEARING OUT THE OLD SPINACH FROM BED 135.



JOHN, SIANG UK & PUM NAULUK.OUR NEW COMPOST BIN & WATERING CAN & WATER CONTAINER, SO WE CAN FERTILISE WITH WORM POO!
DEFINITELY GETTING ORGANISED. (ALL DONATED BY D.C.G.)



OUR MEETING 28.1.10, & SORTING OUT SEEDS TO PLANT.
(SOME SEEDS FREE & OTHERS \$1 PACKET)

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OUTSIDE INTEREST IN L2P PROGRAM

Four community organisations have recently sought information about SCARF's Learner to Provisional Driver program [L2P]. Mt Gambier Road Safety Group are planning a similar initiative with their refugee community. Volunteers Central West at Bathurst, Bhutan Refugee Organisation and the Bondi Youth Accommodation Association are seeking ideas for supporting young people aged 17 -25 to obtain their P Licence.

Ted Booth the L2P manager provided copies of the SCARF documents developed for our program and outlined the issues that SCARF has had in developing the very popular local initiative. All four organisations indicated they would acknowledge the assistance of SCARF in their own program documentation.

CHANGES IN NSW LEARNER LICENCE REQUIREMENTS

From 2010 over 25 learner drivers will not have to complete 120 hours of 'log book recorded' driving hours to be eligible to take the practical driving test.

Drivers under 25 years of age will still be required to complete 120 hours of supervised driving. The first 10 lessons taken with a registered driving school will now count for 30 hours in their log book.

The state government has responded to many letters, including from SCARF, that mature aged drivers are not a high risk of having an accident. For the refugee community the burden of securing the 120 hours was unreasonable and took too long.

There is still a need for all learners to gain a wide range of driving experiences and confidence building before they set off alone or with their families aboard their new car.

L2P will continue to provide driving sessions in 2010. A new SCARF car is coming as the initial red Laser developed 'terminal' automatic transmission problems in December!

It is hoped that as the number of mentors increase, L2P will be able to provide under 25 year old learners with opportunities to log some of their required 120 driving hours. Please register at the SCARF Office.

Ted Booth [L2P Program]

NEW BASIC MECHANICS WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Wheels on the Road: A Workshop in Basic Auto Mechanics will be held on Wednesday 10th March from 5.00 pm – 6.30 pm.

The hands on workshop will be at Harrison Auto Repairs, near the Flinders St. Roundabout [No.15] – Behind AVIS Car Rentals in Wollongong.

A practical program will be led by Tom Harrison and his mechanics.

Topics will include:

- What the car instruments mean and what to do when the red light flashes.
- Tyre checking and how to change a wheel.
- The important things to check under the bonnet.
- How a regular service will ensure the longer life of your car.

Find out how Tom will be able to provide a very reasonable inspection service before you buy a car.

Refreshments will be provided.

Please tell us if you are coming by email driving@scarf1.org.au or call Ted Booth on 42293284 before the 7th March.

THINKING OF BUYING A CAR?

The next Wheels to Go Workshop will be held on Wednesday 17th March at 4.00pm.

Find out about how to choose your first car and the financial and legal matters that must be covered for the safety of your family.

Refreshments will be provided.

Please tell us if you are coming by email driving@scarf1.org.au or call Ted Booth on 42293284 before the 15th March



GETTING GOOD INFORMATION IN ADVANCE USUALLY SAVES GRIEF LATER!

**New L2P Office Hours are
 Mondays 3.00 to 5.00 pm**

**L2P Mentor meetings will be held over
 an informal afternoon tea from 4.00pm
 on March 8th, April 12th and May 3rd
 in the first instance.**

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BUSH WALK IN ROYAL NATIONAL PARK



JOSEPH AND A SMALL LIZARD

Our names are Elizabeth and Soe Meh. Our families came from Burma but we were born in refugee camps in Thailand. We came from different camps but now know each other in Australia. I hope you like this report of our hike.

On Saturday 23rd November five families went to the Royal National Park with Ted and Joce. We had a fun day. The children most enjoyed the swimming.

In the morning we have to catch the train with our friends from Coniston railway station. When we went to buy the ticket the ticket machine wasn't working so we had to catch the train for free to Wollongong.

At Wollongong station we waited for another train to go north. We all sat together in the last carriage of the train. Ted and Joce met us at North Wollongong.

"I didn't believe I was going to have to walk so far," Elizabeth reflected. "I had a dream to see natural Australia, but not on a hot day!"

I was excited, but unsure how others felt. The group were really happy and ready for it! During the train journey, Ted showed us on the map where we had to walk from and the pool we were going to meet Joce and the younger children.

At Waterfall we had to get off the train and get ready to do the "long" [9 km] walk. The hike to Karloo Pool took about two and half hours. We had to stop every 30 minutes to have a rest and take a drink. Joseph discovered a big lizard by the track.

Five small white metal crosses were found beside the track. They were in memory of five firemen who died in their fire truck when they could not escape a horrible fast burning bush fire. It was a reminder of those who had died trying to save the bush.

The children and mums walked the shorter hike down from Heathcote station. They were there first and had already had a swim. When we arrived from our long walk we were both hot and excited and ready for a swim.

After we had some lunch some of the children went back into the cool pool for a second swim. It was the best!

We all had a great time and a big thank you to Ted and Joce.

Soe Meh and Elizabeth



ELIZABETH AND SOE MEH

COMPUTERS FOR THE COMMUNITY UPDATE

Requests for assistance with computers continues, so far SCARF has assisted around 90 families in the Illawarra with this essential technology. Programme Manager Chris. Cartledge reports that as the numbers in the community with computers grow, more of his work is maintenance. Phil Miranda has recently joined the Computers for the Community team and is currently assisting with the refurbishment of donated PCs.

SEWING CIRCLE UPDATE

The African Women's Sewing Circle has started off the new year with a series of workshops.

Working with experienced local costume designer and pattern maker Virginia Settre, SCARF's Enterprise Coordinator and fabulous team of textile teachers will be working together with the group, sharing skills for new pieces in 2010. The group is enjoying getting together again, exploring some unique cross-cultural ideas, inspired by fusion design.

Anyone interested in volunteering as a textile teacher, or with fabric donations, or fabrics for sale, please contact enterprises@scarf1.org.au

You can find one or two of the group each month at Coledale Markets, and local festivals.

SCARF Office Hours:
Monday 12:30 to 3:30
Monday L2P Assistance:
3:00 to 5:00
Tuesday 10:00 to 3:30
Wednesday 10:00 to 5:00
Thursday 10:00 to 3:30
Friday By appointment
Conversation, Numeracy
and Literacy Classes
are held in the office
by arrangement

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HOMEWORK HELP DRIVERS NEEDED.

Homework Help is at Wollongong City Library from 4:00-6:00pm Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Tom Thumb Room. If you are free to assist in transporting students home from 5:55pm on either of these days during term time could you please contact Sharyn.

BOOKS AVAILABLE!

Do you know a community member who would like some books either for themselves or their family? Maybe dictionaries or in specific subject areas or childrens' books. Kathy Martin, who has provided books and toys at two Freemarkets, is willing to take orders and source these books for you for free. They will be secondhand but in reasonable condition. She requires details such as sex, age, topics if relevant and needs a contact phone number to let you know when the order will be ready for collection. If educational texts are needed it is important to indicate what level is required. The orders should be placed through the SCARF office and books will be available for collection from there.

BUNNINGS SAUSAGE SIZZLE.

We have been allocated just one date this year: Sunday 16 May. Thanks to Jayne Hartgerink for volunteering to manage the day. Volunteers needed. Please contact Sharyn.

FACTS & FIGURES.

Did you know that: Australia rates 51st in the world for the total number of refugees currently hosted 20,919 (Dec 2009). Pakistan is the leader with 1,780,935.

Australia rates 2nd behind the USA in refugees settled in 2008 with 11,006. The USA 60,192.

From Refugee Council of Australia's Annual Report 2008/9:

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS 2010



JAN, GRACIA, ANGELIQUE AND SHARYN

This year a new award was introduced: "The Community Award of the Year" for a local volunteer group or organization which has provided the most outstanding contribution to the community. This came with a \$250 charity incentive sponsored by the Illawarra Mercury.

We are pleased to announce that SCARF was the inaugural winner of this new award. Sharyn and Jan accepted the award on behalf of all our volunteers and members at the Australia Day Dinner at City Beach Function Centre on 21st January. Gracia Ngoy was one of 3 people who spoke in the segment "Why Australia/Why Wollongong?" and made a great impression on the gathering with her inspirational

story and obvious commitment to her new home. The Illawarra Mercury editorial reported: "And any refugee family that has sought aid from SCARF would attest to the organisation's great humanitarian work."

In conjunction with The University of Wollongong Chancellor's Award for Community Service in October 2009 and Sharyn Mackenzie receiving the Illawarra Region Volunteer of the Year Award in November 2009 from Volunteering NSW, these awards will be an added impetus for us to continue to provide meaningful programs and services in 2010 for the benefit of our community members from refugee backgrounds.

REMEMBER to look up our website for all details of SCARF activities and events, application forms for volunteering and/ or membership as well as links to related sites and resources for tutors and mentors. Enquiries welcome!"

SCARF gratefully acknowledges
Newsletter design from the Scarlet team.

The *Scarlet* Design Group

SCARF
strategic community assistance
to refugee families



Please feel free to pass this Newsletter on!

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VOLUNTEERS WE NEED YOU

SCARF always needs more volunteers... mentors and home tutors for primary and adults. Do you know anyone who may be interested in helping transform the life of a newly arrived refugee? Have your own circumstances changed and could you offer more time to our wonderful refugee community? We are in contact with families urgently in need of help adapting to their new lives here in Australia. Please put the word out to your friends and relatives. All prospective volunteers undergo a screening process and Working with Children checks.