



Sanctuary Northern Rivers Inc

A community based refugee support group

PO Box 1146 Lismore NSW 2480

www.sanctuary.asn.au

info@sanctuary.asn.au

Newsletter February 2010...

From the President's pen:

Volunteers: beacons of light

I recently happened upon a delightful interview on ABC radio with Professor Glenn Mitchell, Convener of the History Program at the University of Wollongong. He spoke passionately of the role that

individual and groups have had, and continue to have, in the development of society. He spoke of philanthropists, motivated by deep desire to reach the heart of humanity that cannot be found in material wealth; he spoke of the nobility of the Australian welfare system, that has emerged in a manner that recognises a need for a level of equality in the community, and serves to ensure that the welfare of all, regardless of personal circumstance, will be protected, and that strives to ensure the dignity of all.

Last weekend, I attended a workshop that touched briefly on the volunteers of L'Arche, an international movement that provides housing and domestic support and friendship for handicapped persons. Persons with profound disability are provided with the chance to live in community, built upon the generosity of volunteers who live with them, and tend to their needs around the clock; Remarkably selfless, and a powerful beacon of hope in our society. Need, in its often disfigured form of poverty, of disability, of darkness of mind, is not only ameliorated, but held close to the heart, and given purpose.

Volunteers or philanthropists, motivated by love or faith, principled in the values of equity and justice: you provide the signposts of modern society.

The endeavours that reach to the far ends of the earth, that seek to provide light to those in dark corners, that give attention to some who have found themselves - with their lives in constant flux - in search of a home: these actions cannot be understated for their purpose. When we reach to the margins of society, we create the very heart of society.

It gives me cause to dwell on the many who have given tirelessly in the work of settling refugee families into our community. I continue to be moved by the extraordinary generosity of those who step forth to assist. The task is frequently not an easy one. Family settlement, for example, requires deep commitment "day in, and day out - perhaps for weeks or months" leading the hands of these new "friends", sisters and brothers on another journey, who have shown the courage to put their hand forth in seeking help. I am moved by those who offer the generosity of financial assistance, who state their commitment to be one with those who arrive with their all material belongings in just a couple of bags.

It is these that epitomise our efforts, and ensure the success of the transition of the refugee to ultimately call our community their home. And it is much more. They build our community; form the fabric of our society. So often unsung in their efforts, yet they are the chorus of hope. Our future as an organization will depend on you who support in such a way. And indeed, the ability for us to continue to reach to communities across the world, and the ability for us to shape our own community is contingent upon your efforts.

As we journey toward these dreams, may I encourage the continued spirit of generosity, and offer gratitude for the inspiration that prevails in every effort of support.

Michael Douglas Dec 2009



Settlement update:

We have a busy time ahead in February and March with a possible 6 new families arriving in Australia.

The Volunteer Sub-committee has already met to discuss strategies and management plans for these families and are now calling for committed volunteers who are **available during business hours**, on week days to facilitate the support needed.

Please contact Katherine Morrison ASAP: Phone: 02 6685 3921 Email: kathtcosy@yahoo.com.au

Sanctuary Mullumbimby Settlement Branch

With increased membership numbers from Byron Shire residents, extensive fundraising support from the local business community across the shire, and a specific call from a group of Mullumbimby locals to be involved in settlement, Sanctuary has determined that the Byron Shire is an appropriate settlement area with the necessary support services and level of community commitment to human rights and refugee issues.

It is envisaged that The Sanctuary Mullumbimby Settlement Branch will support three Congolese refugee families to settle in Mullumbimby in March 2010.

Families Arriving in February and March

Arrived

Name	Nationality	Family size	Family Names	Volunteer Support
Mitiki Debretsiou Keflemarian	Eritrean	1		Freweyni and Alan
Balunme Santa Mburano	Congolese	3	Aline Pendeza (spouse), Janai (9 months)	Lauren and Nikki
NGOY, Beatrice K	Congolese	2	KIZITO Nganau (spouse)	Mullumbimby
NGOY, Helene M	Congolese	3	Jean-Pierre Kalend Mban (spouse), Nathan Munyiu (2 years)	Mullumbimby
NGOY, Marie Paul	Congolese	7	Hyeronime Bukasa Tshengi (spouse), Christian (4 yrs), Kevin (7 yrs), Oscar (10 yrs), Jean-Marc (13 years), Ernest (15 years)	Wollongong Family
NGOY, Eudoxie K	Congolese	8	Bertin Kabamba Matanda (spouse), Bellange (11 yrs), Belone (9 yrs), Benedicte (7 yrs), Bellarmee (5 yrs), Badel (3 yrs), Jonathon (13 yrs)	Mullumbimby

Impending Visa Approvals

Name	Nationality	Family Size	Family Names	Volunteer Support
Mukarwema Emilienne	Rwandan	4	Nzaramba Sibomana Pheneas (husband), Janine (female, 10 years), Igiraneza (female, 8 years)	



2009 Christmas Hamper Raffle Results

The Christmas Hamper Raffle raised over \$1102.00
Thanks to all the contributors for the wonderful items in the three hampers and special thanks to: Shane Keys, Jean-Claude, Rosalie Ellis, Eraston, Pat Gosling and Cherie for selling raffle tickets at Lismore Centro.

The lucky winners were:

1st prize: Rupert of Suffolk Park

2nd prize: The Prosser family

3rd prize: Sanctuary member Andrew Carlisle of Lismore

Want to donate to Sanctuary?

You can now do so online with our new online donations facility.

The new 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week service ensures that anyone can donate to Sanctuary at any time of the day or night.

Sanctuary is collecting the donations through the free online donations service powered by GiveNow.com.au.

The online donations service is totally secure and ensures that 100 per cent of the donation goes straight to Sanctuary. Only credit card fees are deducted from the donation.

To donate, just visit our website: www.sanctuary.asn.au and click on the blue button.

Make a Donation
to our Group
using the secure engine
of ourcommunity.com.au
CLICK HERE

Norco Community Cash Caps

Norco contribute 10 cents to our fundraising for every specially marked Norco Community Cash milk cap we collect.

Just collect the caps for us and we will collect the money from Norco milk. Drop your collected caps into the Lismore Neighbourhood Centre (or to a Sanctuary Board member).

Let's make it a great effort. Remember every cap counts!

Fundraising effort during Refugee Week 2010 needs volunteers

Sanctuary is the designated Charity of the Day for the Lismore Car Boot Market on June 20th. We need approximately 20 volunteers to collect donations in buckets as people arrive at the entrances to the market or to be on a stall promoting Sanctuary – perhaps selling raffle tickets, merchandise, doing hair wraps, drumming, playing music etc– or in some way inviting people to join our organisation.

The market runs from 8.00 am to 3.00 pm. We would like people to commit to shifts of 2-3hrs.

Please send an email to Cherie to register your interest in participating:
info@sanctuary.asn.au



Want to do something for the environment and support Sanctuary at the same time?

Russell Trebilcock, our Vice President, is also an accredited Home Sustainability Assessor, authorised by the Government to conduct an assessment of local residences to determine how energy efficient they are and to identify what can be done to improve their sustainability.

These Home Sustainability Assessments (HSAs) are available free of charge to anyone; a home owner or a tenant. The householder will receive a sustainability report (about 4-6 weeks after the HSA) that identifies ways they can improve their energy efficiency.

Even though recent announcements from the Government have removed the options of accessing a Green Loan through the scheme, the free assessment offer is still available. If you just want to find out how efficient your house is and how you can improve, then an HSA will help.

Russell is offering to donate to Sanctuary \$10 of the fee he is paid for every HSA he does for someone who books it as a result of this article or for some one who asks that the donation to Sanctuary be made when they book their HSA.

An HSA will take approximately 1½ hours and at least one of the principal householders will need to be present to answer questions about your energy usage.

If you are interested in having your home assessed and are prepared to book it with Russell, contact him directly on 6624 7458 or call Nickel Energy (Julie) on 6622 0088 and make sure you ask for the assessment to be done by Russell. If you want more information about the program, check the Government's website at www.environment.gov.au/greenloans

Corporate Support for Sanctuary

Corporate Membership

Do you run your own business or are you in an executive position in your organisation? If so, would you consider signing your business or company up as a Corporate Member of Sanctuary?

Corporate membership is much the same as individual membership but you have the option of getting multiple hard copies of the bi-monthly newsletter that you can circulate to staff or have on display in your office.

Corporate Supporter Group

If you want to take your Corporate support one step further then we have instigated the Corporate Supporters Group – with support at Bronze / Silver or Gold levels – and with contribution rates determined by how large your business or company is (as determined by you). Donations under this initiative are fully tax deductible and your business will be acknowledged via the Newsletter and on a Corporate Supporters page on our website.

Further information on this initiative is available from Russell Trebilcock (Vice President – 6624 7458) or from our website.



African Village Night

Sunday 21st March Ewingsdale Hall 6-9pm

Welcome to Sanctuary's Latest Corporate Member:
Rhythm Konnections of Byron Bay.

Come and enjoy a night celebrating African Culture and welcoming new friends
Drum and Dance performances by the Rythm Konnections students, AfroFunk DJ
African food available by Mani of African Village
Admission is \$15

For more info please contact :

Malaika

Ph:+61(0)2 66 857 927

M:0411 843 384

cheze@rhythmkonnections.com.au



Sanctuary Northern Rivers Strategic Plan 2010-2012

has been updated and is available on the website in the Members section.

The Mullumbimby Public Meeting

On Wed 3rd March around 50 people attended the Sanctuary Mullumbimby Settlement Branch's Public Meeting at the local High School.

Michael Douglas gave an overview on what a refugee was and what work Sanctuary Northern Rivers has done in Lismore settling over 120 individuals in the past 6 years.

Julie Webb spoke on the responsibilities, challenges and joys of being a volunteer involved in settling families into a new life.

Djuma Ostrinov Strelly Kikombe spoke passionately about his family's experiences as a settled person in Lismore.

Katherine and Tressa briefly addressed training issues and Michael described the "umbrella of support" that Sanctuary Northern Rivers would extend to the Mullumbimby community.

The attending Lismore Congolese community introduced themselves to the Mullum residents and expressed their gratitude to the community for undertaking settlement activities in Mullum. The meeting ended with general mingling and conversation.

Thanks to the Mullum High Principal Ian Graham for attending and hosting the meeting.

For more info on settlement activities in Mullum email: bglomath1@bigpond.com

"Had I the heavens" embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half light,
I would spread the cloths under your
feet:

But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your
feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my
dreams.
WB Yeats

Membership Update:

Individual Membership for 2009/2010 hit an all time high at 111 members.

As an incentive to join the Sanctuary Community now, all new members signing up in the next three months will be included in the 2010/2011 membership.

Sanctuary has two Corporate Members:

Fusion Hair, Beauty and Image, Jonson St Byron Bay
and
Rhythm Konnections of Byron Bay

Please support these businesses and let them know you appreciate them supporting Sanctuary Northern Rivers

We have a target of 20 Corporate Memberships by Dec 2010



Admin Officer News:

Congratulations Cherie, who has recently been appointed as the Volunteer Coordinator with the Byron Community Centre. While this will obviously impact on Cherie's availability for Sanctuary, the appointment also has some spin-off benefits for us. At Byron, Cherie is responsible for developing processes and procedures, training, recruiting, rewarding, rostering etc all associated with volunteering. We've no doubt she'll pass on the information she

creates and acquires at Byron for Sanctuary to draw on.

Cherie has commenced working three days a week in Byron and will continue with Sanctuary one day (Thursday) per week in the office at the Lismore Neighbourhood Centre.

Introducing Phil Veness North Coast Settlement Services Outreach Worker

As most members are probably aware, Sanctuary Northern Rivers has been the primary sponsor and settlement agency for the majority of the African Lismore community. It is our role, in partnership with Anglicare to provide assistance to new arrivals for at least six months into their settlement.

After six months, the main agency of support for the refugee community is the North Coast Settlement Service run by St Vincent De Paul Society. We are privileged to have Phil Veness in the position of outreach worker and very fortunate that he is in fact based in Lismore. I have asked Phil to write a few words about himself and his position so that Sanctuary members can be more aware of what services exist for the refugees settling here.



My name is Phillip (Phil) Veness, and I grew up in a small town, Manilla, just over the mountains. My education background includes: Secondary Social Science and Special Education Teaching at Armidale Teacher's College, a Grad Dip in Ed Studies/ Aboriginal Ed, and a Masters focusing on Education and Development in Developing Countries.

I taught in country schools for eight years before becoming the NSW Education Department's Aboriginal Community Liaison/ Education Officer. Later, as a teacher at Dulwich High School in Sydney, I worked with young people from many new and emerging communities, including refugees from Asia, the Middle East, Africa and South America. During this time I learnt about issues concerning new arrivals in Australia and the value/need to develop effective programs for young people. Such programs empower young people to positively influence the successful settlement of their families into their new community, and allow them broad ranging opportunities for the future.

After serving as Deputy Principal of a Pitjantjatjara Secondary College in Central Australia, I worked in JobNetwork as an Employment Consultant, Trainer and Training manager in remote Australian communities.

A strong sense of inclusion and social justice has motivated me in all of my professional and personal life.

I recently began work with St Vincent de Paul Society as Outreach Worker for North Coast Settlement Services, funded through the Settlement Grants Program (SGP) of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. The SGP focuses on:

- 1. Orientation – assisting people to become more self-reliant and able to participate in Australian society.*
- 2. Developing Communities – assisting new and emerging communities to identify common goals and interests, develop a shared purpose and promote a sense of identity and belonging.*
- 3. Integration: Inclusion and Participation – assisting new arrivals to interact with and understand the broader Australian community and encourage the wider community to be more responsive to new arrivals.*

I work in Lismore on Monday, Tuesday and Friday from the Diocesan Office of SVdP (above Vinnies in Magellan Street); Wednesday in Ballina (Vinnies, Martin Street); and Thursday in South Tweed Heads (Vinnies, Industry Drive).

I am happy to speak with anyone about any aspects of the programs.

My contacts are: Phone – 02 6621 5835 or 8050150

Mobile – 0435 659 829

Email – phillip.veness@vinnies.org.au



Passing on this email from Jessie Taylor

Jessie Taylor has fought to help refugees find their way to freedom. She has served as an intern to the Australian Delegation to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva and currently sits on the Chair of the Law Institute of Victoria's Refugee Law Reform Committee.

Her overall goal is to change Australian refugee policy.

A Google search will reveal much more information about Jessie and her work.

From:

Jessie Taylor

Sent: Friday, January 22, 2010 12:04 PM

Subject: **Caring for unaccompanied refugee minors**

Dear friends,

I am sending you this in the hope that you will consider it, and forward it on to your networks of people who might be interested!

You may know that recently a large number of asylum seekers have arrived on Christmas Island. Of these, many are unaccompanied children - mostly boys from Afghanistan who have been sent away from their families as they reach adolescence (therefore 'fighting age', and they become of interest to the Taliban).

The Department of Immigration and the Department of Human Services are DESPERATE to hear from people who may be able to accommodate these boys when they receive their visas. If they don't have a home to go to, they basically stay in detention, or in public group housing (not ideal!).

I am soon to become the 'carer' (not legal guardian) of a 14 year old Afghan boy I met in a jail in Jakarta who made it to Christmas Island. I have been in close contact with DHS and have been amazed at the level of support they offer, both financially and in every other way, to people entering into a carer arrangement.

The timeframe is flexible / negotiable - generally until the child either turns 18 or their parents arrive in Australia. Parental applications under the 'split family' provisions are being prioritised to ensure that these children are reunited with their families as soon as possible. A reasonable timeframe for that to happen is around 18 months, but there are no guarantees.

Please consider this thoughtfully. You can see a video on the background of children in detention in Indonesia here: <http://vimeo.com/7308275> (this is the context that most of them are arriving from directly).

Please don't hesitate to email me if you are interested in discussing this - no obligation!

Contact me if you wish to speak with the relevant person at DHS - she is lovely and very keen to hear from people.

Please forward this email to anyone you think would provide a loving and supportive home to a child.

Jessie

jessie.e.taylor@gmail.com

Whilst Sanctuary NR is happy to pass this information on, we encourage anyone who is interested in this initiative to verify all claims and information before making any decisions based on the above.

Up-coming Events

African Village Night

Sunday 21st March Ewingsdale Hall 6-10pm
Drum and Dance performances, AfroFunk DJ

Sanctuary Northern Rivers Board Meeting:

Thurs 8th April 6.30pm Lismore Workers Club
All members welcome and encouraged to attend.

Volunteer Week May 10th -16th

Sanctuary's involvement to be advised

Lismore Car Boot Market Charity of the Day 20th June (Refugee Week)

We will need all hands on deck to collect donations, give information and to attract memberships. So please plan to be there! More details later

Refugee Week in Byron Shire 20 26th June

Fundraising activities and Celebrations.
Sanctuary's involvement to be advised

Sanctuary Northern Rivers Board Members 2009/2010

Executive:

President/Secretary - Michael Douglas
Vice-President - Russell Trebilcock

Treasurer - Dave Noble

General Board Members:

Jean-Claude Mapatano

Katherine Morrison

Julie Webb

Contact Sanctuary Northern Rivers:

Administrative Support Officer: Cherie Mamet

(02) 6621 7397 (Thurs)

Postal Address:

Sanctuary Northern Rivers, P.O.Box 1146, Lismore NSW 2480

Email: info@sanctuary.asn.au

Website: www.sanctuary.asn.au

Office Address: Lismore Neighbourhood Centre, 76 Carrington St

Attended: Thursdays