



# Sanctuary Northern Rivers Inc

*A community based refugee support group*

PO Box 1146 Lismore NSW 2480

[www.sanctuary.asn.au](http://www.sanctuary.asn.au)

[info@sanctuary.asn.au](mailto:info@sanctuary.asn.au)

## Newsletter April 2009...

### Message from the Vice President

Refugee settlement in Lismore has been the primary focus of Sanctuary Northern Rivers for the past 5 years. We have now assisted nearly 100 individuals to arrive and settle into our community.

On the whole, these families have arrived at a slow but steady rate of 3 or 4 families per year often after a long period of waiting (in some cases up to 2 years) from when they first were told their claim for a humanitarian visa was considered legitimate.

Recently, we have seen the numbers of applicants assessed as eligible for referral to the next stage (involving identity and medical checks) rise significantly.

This places us in a dilemma. In the past we did not make any distinction between applicants seeking sponsorship but agreed to sponsor all who could put together the paperwork Immigration required. Now, both the rise in demand for sponsorship, and the recent level of approvals mean we are no longer sure we can extend this support to everyone who asks. We are concerned that we do not have the capacity in terms of trained supporters to extend the support settlement requires, and we wonder to what extent the community has the capacity to absorb new arrivals in terms of accommodation, services and jobs.

Somehow we must find a way a way forward, whether it be extending our

limited resources or making choices – difficult choices between applicants. But whatever we do, we want to continue to extend the hand of welcome to new arrivals without jeopardising the community goodwill that exists for settlement.

To maintain integrity in the community, any decisions on settlement policy must be open, transparent and withstand public scrutiny. To achieve this we need to determine what approach to adopt that has the support of our community whilst maintaining our humanitarian ideals.

For this reason, **Sanctuary Northern Rivers is hosting a public forum on the issues of refugee settlement in Lismore on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May at 7 pm in the Lismore City Hall.** Our goal is to engage you and the community on this issue so that we can continue to work within the goodwill this community has for refugees and refugee settlement. To do otherwise would be to abrogate the responsibility this community has imbued in us as its lead organisation for refugee settlement – something we value highly and do not wish to lose.

Please put this date in your diary, tell your friends and work colleagues and encourage all who can to come along and be a part of this forum.

You can find out more about the forum and the issues on Sanctuary's website.

*Russell*



## Homework Centre

We have been successful in gaining funding through community Connections for a part-time coordinator at the Homework Centre! We now have five students who will sadly not be returning to the Centre: Ajok, Achol and Aquot have left for Adelaide, and Nicholas and Edwin will be moving to Sydney during the holidays.

Some younger students can now be invited to join the program and we will be contacting the Lismore African Community to advise them of this opportunity.

We are on a school holiday break until 29<sup>th</sup> April when school goes back. *Sue*



**Above:** Sue Darnell, Sanctuary's nominee for the Volunteer Expo Awards for her tireless support of students at the homework centre, also pictured are students Achol Mayuen, Agu Garang and Ajok Myuen

## Universal Declaration of Human Rights Project

Two more local schools are displaying a wall hanging depicting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights this month: Goonellabah Primary and Evans River K-12

Each wall hanging costs between \$120 and \$200. They are given to the schools free-of-charge by generous contributors to the project. *Russell*

If you would like more information on either how schools can access the offer or to contribute to the project please contact:

Russell Trebilcock: 6624 7458  
Cherie Mamet: 66217397  
info@sanctuary.asn.au



**Article #1 UNDHR:**  
All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood

Above: Doubtful Creek Primary School displaying the UNDHR Banner with Russell on left



## A Round-up of Sanctuary's Sub-Committees:

### **Volunteer/Settlement Sub-Committee**

This group looks after our volunteers, making sure that we arrange information sessions, training and support as well as coordinating who is assigned to each new family as they arrive.

This group also focuses on sponsorship and settlement administration, responding to those asking for assistance and making sure new arrivals have what they need to settle into our community.

The convener of this committee is *Katherine Morrison*

### **Gala Dinner Sub-Committee**

A small group organizes the Annual Gala Dinner and Fundraiser evening. This is a big event held annually which takes a lot of coordination. If you have an interest in event management then perhaps you could help the members of this subcommittee create the most successful event so far.

The convener is *Brian Nash*



## **April's Featured Sub-Committee is:**

### **The Membership Sub-Committee**

The membership sub-committee was established to take responsibility for maintaining the membership database and for fostering membership throughout the community.

This group looks after all membership communication activities including the website, the newsletter, community liaison, member events, membership drives and fund-raising.

We are particularly keen to have more Sanctuary members active on this committee, as "Membership" is our focus for the first half of the year.

If you have experience in writing, editing, publications, graphic design, website content management (specifically Joomla), event management, recruitment, corporate canvassing, envelope stuffing, filing or creatively keeping-in-touch with loved ones then jump on board this committee and come for the ride.

Our Members provide the basis of a welcoming community for new settlers. So much is possible!



*Secretary Dave Noble and Russell Trebilcock co-convene this diverse sub-committee.*

***Sub-committee conveners can be contacted via  
[info@sanctuary.asn.au](mailto:info@sanctuary.asn.au)***



## Sanctuary in the Social Networking World??



Would the work of Sanctuary be enhanced by joining any one of the multitude of online social networks?



twitter

Could it help to raise the profile of refugee issues here and abroad?



Might there be increased options for refugee resettlement due to capabilities of the social networks?



Would there be increased opportunities for Sanctuary to raise funds, sign up new members, recruit volunteers?

Are you passionate about the potential benefits of social networking for community organisations?

Would you be interested in taking Sanctuary into the cyber-world and maintaining it's presence on various sites?

This would be a voluntary position supported by the admin support officer and directed by the board members.

Please contact Cherie: [info@sanctuary.asn.au](mailto:info@sanctuary.asn.au)

Target for 2009/10:

-100 members



33 members  
2008/09 -

### Time to renew our memberships with Sanctuary

We have thirty-three current members for 2008/2009.

Seven of those members have already renewed for 2009/2010.

Our target is to have 100 members for 2009/2010 by the end of July.

If all current members could encourage another to join Sanctuary, our target will be easily reached.

Membership application forms can be downloaded from [www.sanctuary.asn.au](http://www.sanctuary.asn.au)

-7 renewed members for 2009/10



## Up-and-coming Events

### **Sanctuary Northern Rivers Ordinary Board Meeting**

Tues May 12<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm  
Lismore Workers Club  
All members welcome

### **Volunteer Expo and Awards**

Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> May  
10am start  
Lismore City Hall

Article #3 UNDHR:  
Everyone has the right  
to life, liberty and  
security of person

### **Public Forum : Future Directions of Refugee Settlement in the Northern Rivers**

Fri 29<sup>th</sup> May  
Fountain Room  
Lismore City Hall  
7pm – 9.30pm  
Register your interest:  
Email: [info@sanctuary.asn.au](mailto:info@sanctuary.asn.au)  
Phone: 66217397  
Download background paper @  
[www.sanctuary.asn.au](http://www.sanctuary.asn.au)

### **Sanctuary Northern Rivers Board Members 2008/09**

#### **Executive:**

President - Michael Douglas

Treasurer - Brian Nash

Vice-President - Russell Trebilcock

Secretary - Dave Noble

#### **General Board Members:**

Sue Darnell

Katherine Morrison

Paul Morreti

### **Contact Sanctuary Northern Rivers:**

**Administrative Support Officer:** Cherie Mamet  
(02) 6621 7397 Ext 26 (Wed & Fri)

**Address:** Sanctuary Northern Rivers, P.O.Box 1146, Lismore  
2480

**Email:** [info@sanctuary.asn.au](mailto:info@sanctuary.asn.au)

**Website:** [www.sanctuary.asn.au](http://www.sanctuary.asn.au)

**Office Address:** Lismore Neighbourhood Centre



Sanctuary Northern Rivers Inc  
Lismore's community based refugee support group

Invites You to a  
**COMMUNITY FORUM**  
ON LOCAL REFUGEE  
SETTLEMENT

**Lismore has settled about a hundred  
refugees over the past 5 years.**

- ◆ How do we continue to respond to the enormity of the refugee plight, while ensuring we do so in line with community expectations and in a way that the social harmony of the Northern Rivers is maintained?

Please come along and have your say!

Your contribution to the future direction of local refugee settlement policies is important to us.

A background paper covering the issues can be downloaded at  
[www.sanctuary.asn.au](http://www.sanctuary.asn.au)

**Friday 29th May from 7pm to 9.30pm**  
**Fountain Room, Lismore City Hall**  
**Refreshments provided**

**For more information and to register your interest:**  
**Email: [info@sanctuary.asn.au](mailto:info@sanctuary.asn.au) or**  
**Phone: 66217397**

Working With Refugees Worldwide