

Be a voice for your community

The Marrickville Council Multicultural Committee (MCMC) addresses issues about Marrickville's diverse ethnic communities and provides an important voice for members of those communities. It provides an opportunity for citizens to get involved in the democratic process by informing and acting in partnership with Council and to assist in the development of the Cultural Diversity Action Plan.

Marrickville Council is currently calling for nominations from individuals who would like to participate on the MCMC.

Membership of the Committee is open to individuals with an interest in issues affecting people from ethnic communities in the Marrickville area and the development of cultural diversity. Membership of MCMC will reflect the cultural diversity of Marrickville.

Membership is voluntary and a maximum of 12 individuals will be appointed for two years. Meetings will be held in the early evenings every two months.

Nominations for membership on the MCMC should use the 'Nomination Form' on Council's website and contain:

name, address, phone number and/or email address, and whether you live, work or study in the area;

reasons why you would like to be on this committee;
an outline of the skills and knowledge you can contribute to the committee; and
a statement that confirms your understanding of the commitment required should you be selected

The MCMC Terms of Reference are also available on Council's website at www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au.

Assistance can be provided for those wishing to nominate who need help with written English. Expressions of interest must reach Council by COB on Friday 29 August 2008. Address nominations to: General Manager, Marrickville Council, PO Box 14, Petersham, NSW 2049.

Australia helps refugees rebuild their lives

More than 13 000 people who have fled war, persecution or political strife in their troubled homelands began new lives in Australia last year, the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Senator Chris Evans, said.

"The 13 014 humanitarian visas granted in 2007-08 shows our commitment to helping some of the world's most needy people rebuild their lives in Australia," Senator Evans said.

Burmese people who had been living in camps on the Thai-Burma border and in Malaysia and India were among the major groups assisted last year.

During his trip to south-east Asia last week, Senator Evans visited a refugee camp on the Thai-Burmese border about 450km north-west of Bangkok to see first-hand the plight of some of the Burmese refugees who had fled to Thailand.

"There are more than 40 000 people in the Mae La refugee camp, mostly people of Karen ethnicity who faced persecution by the Burmese military junta," Senator



Evans said.

"It was distressing to see so many people living in makeshift housing because it is unsafe to live in their own homes in Burma.

"As a father, it was particularly upsetting to see children growing up in a refugee camp far from their homeland - without many of the things that most of us take for granted."

The Mae La camp started in 1984 as a small settlement for ethnic Karen fleeing

violence in Burma.

It has grown to be the largest of the nine refugee camps in the region. More than 9000 people from the camp have been resettled since then and a further 10 000 are expected to leave during 2008.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates there are currently about 116 000 registered Burmese refugees and about 3700 unregistered refugees in nine camps along the Thai-Burma border.

Senator Evans said 2215 Iraqis were the second largest group in Australia's 2007-08 humanitarian program, which also included 1185 refugees from Afghanistan, 1158 from Sudan, 410 from Liberia, 348 from the Democratic Republic of Congo, 303 from Burundi, 302 from Iran and 267 from Sierra Leone. Refugees from the Middle-East and south west Asia made up 35 per cent of the program, people from the rest of Asia 34 per cent and people from Africa 30 per cent. Almost 83 per cent of visas were granted to people applying overseas while 1900 initial protection visas were granted onshore.

Senator Evans said Australia's commitment to refugee resettlement was complemented by the Government's assistance to people suffering from long-term displacement. The Rudd Government recently approved \$6.45 million for international aid projects to assist displaced persons in Thailand, Iraq, Syria, Nepal, Bangladesh, Africa and Pakistan.

More than \$2.5 million of the funding will go to UNICEF and Austcare for projects aimed at addressing the situation of displaced people from Burma in Thailand. UNICEF will receive nearly \$1 million to strengthen child protection services for children living in the camps.

MEDIA RELEASE

SHORT-TERM E-TAG TRIAL A SUCCESS

Member for Bankstown, Tony Stewart announced that the RTA motor registry in Bankstown will now carry the new short term E-tags.

Mr Stewart said the short term E-tag would now be available in 56 E-toll registries throughout NSW after a successful trial.

"The Iemma Government introduced new E-tag products for people who don't use E-tags regularly, such as motorists from rural and regional NSW," he said.

"The short term E-tag addresses the problem of visitors to Sydney having to call individual motorways as they use them and pay for tolls over the phone.

"Now there is one tag motorists can rent and use all over Sydney - and give back when they're finished.

"The initial trial included six registries - at Bathurst, Campbelltown, Charlestown, Wollongong, Maitland and Gosford and was aimed at introducing mainly regional motorists to a more convenient way of using Sydney's motorways.

"Due to the success of that trial, the short term E-tag is now available in all the RTA's E-Toll registries throughout the city and at regional centres including Dubbo, Tamworth, Albury, Tweed Heads and Springwood."

Mr Stewart said feedback suggested people recognise the short-term tags as a practical, cost-effective means of travelling around the city. "The RTA short-term tag carries a \$5 weekly fee. Toll costs are charged to the motorist's credit card. There is no deposit or vehicle matching fee required and no limit to the number of weeks the tag is active," Mr Stewart said. "The tags can be used on all motorways in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland."

For more information on the RTA short term tag or for locations of E-toll registries visit the RTA website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au

The Hon. Tony Stewart

GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF NSW LTD

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206 - 210 Lakemba Street, Lakemba 2195 P.O. Box 324 Lakemba NSW 2195

The Greek Orthodox Community of NSW Women's Committee and Welfare Department Invite you to a: **FREE SEMINAR**

"HOW TO DRUG PROOF YOUR KIDS"

At the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW Centre
206-210 Lakemba St, Lakemba,

On Sunday 24th August 2008 at 3:00pm

The Seminar Will Be Presented by Marc Erbsleben,
from Focus on the Family

The Seminar will cover a range of topics including:

The reality of alcohol & drug use in Australia

Strategies for Strengthening a parent's influence

Practical tips on communicating with our kids

Responding to the issue of alcohol use

Afternoon tea will be provided

For further information please contact Eliza Ybanez

(Illicit Drug & Alcohol Project Coordinator) at the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW Welfare Department on (02) 9740 6022