

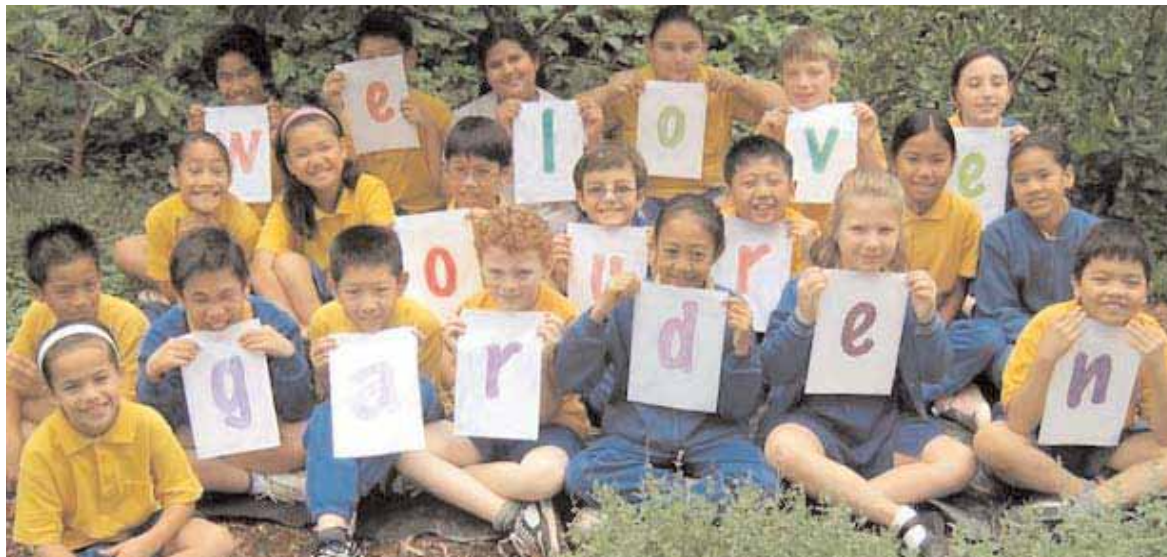
Costa's Garden Odyssey

Australia is regarded as one of the most multi-cultural countries in the world, and the suburb of Cabramatta typifies this more than most. Ninety percent of the students at Cabramatta Primary School are from non-english speaking backgrounds. With this in mind teacher Joanne Laxton has implemented a program that not only exposes the students to the joys of gardening but also gives them the opportunity to retain some of their cultural heritage. The warm welcome and enthusiasm shown by the students prompts Costa to provide his own touch to this remarkable program.

The Ghantous family in water starved Melbourne, have already implemented sys-

tems to save water inside the house. This week Costa pays them another visit to help them reduce water consumption outside. By creating a native garden that requires little maintenance, Costa will provide the family with not only more pleasant surroundings, but also further ways to help save our precious resource of water.

Last week Costa was introduced to the benefits of biodynamics. This week he discovers how biodynamics has helped put the New South Wales town of Rylestone on the olive-growing map. Lakelands Olive Farm has 4000 trees that produce olive oil that in his opinion rivals any of its overseas competitors, and that coming from a man of



Greek heritage is a big call!

The King family have a backyard with a common problem, their yard faces south and they just can't get anything to grow!

In this weeks Pimp My Plants segment, Costa identifies that the problem is more than just the south facing aspect of the yard and sets about helping

the Kings create their own kingdom, while this week's Zen Shed shows us how to get in touch with our Feng Shui when we visit the Zen Shed.

Property tycoon jailed for life



A developer has been jailed for life for murdering a tenant who got in the way of a £2m property deal. Thanos Papalexis, 37, ordered the death of Charalambos Christodoulides in 2000. The 55-year-old's body was found in a £2m warehouse complex in Kensal Rise, northwest London. He had been tortured to death, the Old Bailey heard.

Papalexis, who denied the murder, was jailed for a minimum of 20 years by Judge Jeremy Roberts, who described him as a "totally amoral person".

The court heard Papalexis, the son of a wealthy London-based Greek shipping magnate, was worried the property deal would collapse and needed money for another development. Judge Roberts said: "You found yourself with a serious problem. You decided to take a life of a harmless and innocent human being.

"You must have realised what happened, if it became known, would have scuppered the deal. He could not be allowed to live to tell."

He continued: "You are a totally amoral person in the sense that you do not think twice in doing or saying anything which helps you achieve your own ends. "This was an execution carried out for financial gain - you treated Charalambos as completely expendable." Jonathan Laidlaw QC, prosecuting, said Mr Christodoulides had been tied to a chair, tortured and strangled.

Mr Christodoulides' sister Anna, 60, said in a statement to court: "I truly believe he is like a devil for what he has done.

"Regardless of the length of sentence it will never justify how a multi-millionaire playboy can put the value of money over and above the life of my innocent, harmless brother."

She continued: "No amount of years will allow me to accept the senseless act resulting in the murder of my much-loved brother. "Charles was a quiet man, going about his own simple life - nobody deserves to die in such truly dreadful circumstances." But an American prostitute said he had confessed to the murder, leading to his extradition to face trial in Britain.

Australian-Greeks courted for poll vote

AUSTRALIANS of Greek heritage have been promised a wave of reforms to increase their involvement with their former country by the man who is expected to be elected prime minister of Greece this weekend.

George Papandreou, the opposition leader who enjoys a hefty lead in pre-election opinion polls, said yesterday he planned to improve the recognition of Australian university degrees and change other regulations to make it easier for Greek-Australians to work in the country.

Members of the Greek diaspora would also be allowed, for the first time, to vote in the nation's elections without the expense of travelling to Greece, and any obstacles blocking the quick payment of Greek pensions to thousands of qualified recipients in Australia would be promptly removed, he said.

Mr Papandreou's centre-left party PASOK leads the five-year-old conservative government of Costas Karamanlis in the polls by about 37 per cent to 30 per cent and is strongly tipped to win Sunday's election. The win would break a string of losses for centre-left parties in Europe.

In an exclusive interview with The Australian before an election rally in Thessaloniki last night, Mr Papandreou, 57, said he would encourage skilled members of the Greek diaspora to spend some time working in their former country, which would require withdrawing hurdles such as the need for military service and restrictive hiring rules at

government agencies.

"We would have to create a specific law which would give this possibility to open up positions for, let's say, two or three years for experts and advisers to come ... and work here," he said.

While the population of Greece is 11million, there are estimated to be up to 7 million people of Greek descent living abroad. Some 365,000 people told Australia's 2006 census their ancestry within the past two generations was Greek.

One area that has frustrated many of those Australians is Greece's refusal to recognise three-year bachelor degrees awarded by Australian universities as the equivalent of Greek degrees, which take four years.

"No one can deny that Australian universities are high quality universities," said Mr Papandreou, who did his university studies in Sweden, the US and Britain.



"There are obviously countries that give degrees that are much lower quality -- Australia is not one of them.

"Sometimes these procedures are overly bureaucratic and unfair to countries like Australia and of course to the degree holders who have gotten this education. So I think we have to find a more simple way and a more fair way to evaluate and to recognise these degrees."

More than 1 million of Greece's 9.7million registered voters live overseas but current electoral laws require them to travel to Greece to vote in their original electorates -- usually their place of birth.

But Mr Papandreou said he would like to see three to five seats put aside in the 300-seat national parliament for the Greek diaspora, who would be allowed to vote by mail or at consulates.

Prime Minister Karamanlis received an avid response from a large crowd in Sydney in May 2007, when he promised to give all registered voters an absentee ballot.

But such reforms need a two-thirds majority in parliament and PASOK vetoed the move, complaining it allowed consular votes but not postal votes and would have continued to count diaspora votes in existing seats rather than creating special seats as Italy has done.

The fact Mr Karamanlis now rules with only a one-seat majority shows that three to five new "diaspora" seats could prove influential, but Mr Papandreou's system would still give each registered overseas voter less clout than a domestic voter.

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