

Oxfam - Diamond Valley Newsletter



July 2009 Web: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~dvoxfam>
Email: AHIE.Stewart@bigpond.com

Next Oxfam-Diamond Valley Meeting
8pm Friday July 17th,
Nillumbik Living and Learning Centre,
739 Main Rd Eltham.

Oxfam campaign to help Mekong River people whose food and income security is at risk.

Speaker: Jessica Rosien.

“Siphandone – Mekong Fishing Under Threat.”

The Cambodian Laos and Thailand Governments are considering building on the Mekong **11 hydropower dams**, which would completely change the fish migration and place at risk the food and income security of millions of people. This is the first year Oxfam groups will be able to fund-raise for this campaign.

Also at Friday's meeting:

Proposed Schools' Reconciliation Workshop.

A plan is on the table, for consideration by Oxfam-D.V. members, to approach a couple of secondary schools in the district about holding a workshop for senior students early next year. Planning would need to take place this year to give ample lead time. Frank Hytten, who has worked with **ANTaR** and **Reconciliation Victoria** until recently, provided the plan for such a workshop, which takes participants on a journey of discovery about reconciliation.

There are four sections of work:

1. Where do you stand on the continuum of cultural competency?
2. Gaining a conceptual framework for Reconciliation.
3. What do Indigenous people want?
4. Finally, what can I do? Six categories of activities are matched with six levels of activity.

The plan would involve a small group of Oxfam members approaching the selected schools and engaging with staff who would take on the preparation and management of the event at the school. It is hoped that a few schools would join together in this project. It may be possible for interested members to attend also.

At the July Oxfam-D.V. meeting, members will be asked if they support the group in making an initial approach to a school. Eltham College seems a good way to begin.

Jan Aitken, Nillumbik Reconciliation Group, Oxfam-D.V.

Foot stamping Winter Warm-up!
Oxfam-Diamond Valley Winter Dance
Saturday 8th August 2009 7.30 - 11pm.
(or until caller goes hoarse).

Eltham North Community Hall

Cedar Avenue, off Wattleree Road, Eltham North
Melway Reference: 11 K12

Cost: \$20 individual, Family \$50
Bring friends or come and join a set.
(Flat, leather-soled shoes recommended).

Delicious Supper provided.

BYO Drinks

Bookings: Call Ruth / Stephen on 9439 2063
Leave a message clearly stating number of tickets required and a contact number: payment on the night.

Plenty Valley FM radio's Marie Ryan requests a speaker monthly on the Monday morning to give details of that week's Oxfam-D.V. meeting.

Climate Action: A campaign manual for Greenhouse Solutions. Book Launch, author:

Mark Diesendorf, Deputy Director, Institute of Environmental Studies, University of New South Wales; previously CSIRO Principal Research Scientist and coordinator of the Australian Conservation Foundation's Global Climate Change Program.

His urgent message is that if we don't exert collective pressure through grassroots climate groups, environmental and social justice NGO's, student, faith, trade union, business and professional groups, our governments will surely fail us and the planet. Climate Action shows us how to work together to:

. Demystify the fallacies created by vested interests, the 'Greenhouse Mafia'

. Explain the potentials of various clean energy technologies

. Argue for policies that will lead to reductions in emissions

. Develop and implement strategies and tactics to change the stances of governments, businesses, trade unions and citizens.

Wednesday, 5th August, 7- 8.30pm, Gathering Space, Our Lady Help of Christians, 1-13 Henry St, Eltham.

Entry: \$5.00 includes refreshments

Bookings Essential: elthambookshop@bigpond.com / 9439 8700

Oxfam - Diamond Valley Newsletter



July 2009 Web: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~dvoxfam>
Email: AHIE.Stewart@bigpond.com

Julian Burnside at New Voices 2009 Festival Saturday 25 July 2009 Testimonies: Witnessing Life

Do books have the power to effect social, personal and historical change? In *Bitter Shore*, journalist and human rights lawyer **Jacquie Everitt**, presents the tragic story of young Shayan Badraie's Iranian refugee family. Our own **Robbie Grieg** will sing his song *Shayan*.
Chair: **Julian Burnside** QC, author of *Wordwatching* and *Watching Brief*: reflections on human rights, law and justice.

The fourth annual all day **New Voices** festival features cutting edge, talented writers and poets who will inspire aspiring writers and provide a breath of fresh air for avid readers. Listen also to mentoring voices of Arnold Zable, Jane Sullivan, Fiona Sievers and Kevin Rabalais.

Entry: \$5.00 per session. Full Festival 20.00.

Fundraising Lunch catered for by ASRC \$10.00.

Bookings are essential for each session:

elthambookshop@bigpond.com / 9439 8700

Asylum Seeker Resource Centre News.

CEO REPORT

It's been another big week at the ASRC. We had the fantastic news that as of July 1 the 45 day rule is no more! Which means that all new asylum seekers will not lose their work rights if they take more than 45 days to apply for asylum nor lose their work rights when they seek the intervention of the Minister (as long as they remain lawful).

The changes are not so far reaching for those already on Bridging Visa Es. They will need to show a compelling need to work and a reasonable reason for delay. A difficult two-tier test needs to be met. Nonetheless, it's a significant breakthrough, one the ASRC has fought tirelessly for with the rest of the asylum seeker sector for the past 8 years. Well done to the Minister for Immigration Senator Chris Evans for making these great changes happen.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Christmas Island, where the government is looking at using a disused casino to house immigration staff and over 700 asylum seekers there. It is absurd the lengths and costs this government will go to to keep open an offshore detention centre that is in breach of international human rights laws and remains a place where children continue to be held and where they are denied the protections and rights they are fundamentally entitled to under the Convention on the Rights of the Child that we are a signatory to.

ASRC WORKING BEE

Yes, it's time. While the generally shambolic state of the ASRC is undoubtedly part of its character we thought it was perhaps time to roll up our sleeves and go to town on windows, floors, shelves, cupboards, bench tops and anything else we can get our hands on to get the place spic and span for Spring!

Date: Friday 17th July

Time: 9am -2pm

A yummy BBQ lunch provided so if you can come along to help please email volunteer_admin@asrc.org.au, we'd love to see you!

ASSET CLEANING SERVICE

Need Some Help?

- Can't keep up with your household cleaning?
- Want to see out your windows better?
- Is the garden a jungle that's growing worse by the day?

Our asylum seekers have already assisted more than 30 happy customers with their household cleaning and gardening. We're now looking for more customers for our growing list of skilled personnel. So why don't you give yourself a break and assist an asylum seeker at the same time?

Give Brian a call on 0432270786 or email on bmcmanus99@yahoo.com.au and ask about our people and great rates.

DIAMOND VALLEY OXFAM

MEETINGS

8.00pm 3rd Friday of each month
Living and Learning Nilumbik
739 Main Rd Eltham, Melway Ref 21 J7

OFFICE BEARERS

Meeting Chairman - Stephen Lavender 9439 2063
Meeting Organizers - Carole Wigg 9439 7272
Marguerite Marshall 9439 3232
or 0422 042 099
Treasurer & Membership - Alister Rowe 9435 5958
Publicity Officer & Webmaster - John Kent
9434 6882
Minutes Secretary - Elizabeth Stewart 9459 4429
Book Fair Coordinator - Beth Pender 9439 1716
Trade Winds Tea/Coffee - Val Byers

Oxfam - Diamond Valley Newsletter



July 2009 Web: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~dvoxfam>
Email: AHIE.Stewart@bigpond.com

Climate Change, by Don Stokes at our June meeting:

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was set up by the UN World Environmental Program and the World Meteorological Association in 1998 in response to deepening concern over climate change. Its 4th report, in 2007, resulted in IPCC being jointly awarded the Nobel peace prize. However, the reaction to this report by the fossil fuel lobby resulted in massive concessions to the industry by Governments around the world.

Under the Howard government the self-described 'Greenhouse mafia' was publicized via a 2006 'Four Corners' program, and Graeme Pearman, CSIRO chief climate scientist, outspoken on the effects of climate change, failed to have his contract renewed.

Worst-case IPCC projections of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and arctic sea ice melt rates have proven far too conservative, with the Arctic melting 100 years ahead of schedule. The summer ice was 21% less than the baseline in 2000, 40% less in 2007, and by 2013 Arctic sea ice may disappear altogether.

'Albedo flip' refers to the change when sunlight *reflected* by white ice is *absorbed* instead as the ice melts to become the darker surface of open water. Albedo is the reflective value of the earth's surface. Increasing temperature causes ice to melt, then the ocean absorbs more heat, causing more ice to melt.

The Arctic melt is triggering melting of Greenland's ice sheet, an estimated 3 million cu.km to cause a sea 7 metre rise in seal level, predicted by the IPCC to take 100 years - but that was said about the Arctic.

The Vostok ice core, taken from the Antarctic, and the longest ice core sample taken, has allowed scientists to prove that global temperatures have closely followed atmospheric CO₂ concentrations over the last 400,000 years, indicating that the present climate change is man made.

The atmospheric concentration of CO₂, 280 ppm (parts per million) pre industrial revolution (1800s), is now 385ppm, causing serious climate disruption. If the earth is to remain habitable, greenhouse gas levels must stabilise and drop to below 300ppm urgently. Government and industry targets of 450 to 550ppm will result in runaway climate change with unknown and irreversible consequences.

Climate Justice: People have a right to reside in their own country with equitable access to earth's resources. Developing countries are paying the cost of prevention, mitigation of effects of climate change and resettlement. *'The Life you can Change'*, written by Peter Singer discusses the ethics of wealthy people needlessly spending money that could save lives. The climate change analogy

is the unnecessary use of non-renewable energy in the minority world at a great cost to those critically vulnerable to climate change.

Global warming now contributes to over 310,000 deaths and affects 3 million people annually. Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General, and President of the Global Humanitarian Forum recently initiated the Human Impact Report, which predicts that by 2030 the costs will be 500,000 lives, 5000 million affected and \$125 billion per annum.

Drought and declining food production is affecting countries around the world. Many people are being displaced in India, Haiti, Mexico, and Bangladesh. Melting of Himalayan glaciers will affect the water supply of over a billion people in Asia and India. By 2050 there will be 1 billion climate refugees.

Australia has the second highest per capita CO₂ emissions, close to the US. Our government subsidises the fossil fuel industry over renewable energy by a factor of 40 to 1. However, people around the world are mobilising and achieving change. Climate change is now part of every political discussion and consideration. Global investment in renewable energy infrastructure recently passed investment in non-renewable energy.

Solutions:

- Massive renewable energy rollout. Carbon tax and rationing, not trading.
- Funding proportionate to the problem. The sooner we act, the less damage to the economy.
- Address global poverty to allow developing nations to cope.
- Empower women to reduce population growth.
- Transition town movement. Regain public ownership of 'the commons'. Building of our social structure around justice and sustainability instead of greed.
- Reduce your footprint. Sign up to green power. Use public transport, ride a bike. Grow your own food. Join a Climate Action Group.
- Promote sustainability in your workplace.
- The problem of climate change is one of policy and governance. Nothing will happen until politicians' jobs rely on their action to reduce emissions. Get involved with local council. **Become politically active!**

References: *'Climate Code Red'* by David Spratt and Phillip Sutton.
'Scorcher' by Clive Hamilton. Both in Eltham Bookshop.
Web; www.climateemergencynetwork.org/
www.carbonequity.info/ -has link to an excellent weekly news e-subscription.
www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/climate-change/
www.foe.org.au/climate-justice/