



## VoRTCS Connect – December 2014

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**Marion McMahon - VoRTCS Committee Chair**

Where would we be without 9 dedicated and talented trainers, who have coached an amazing 450 volunteer tutors, supporting 760 refugees across 238 families throughout 2014? Your enthusiasm and willingness to commit your time is inspiring & greatly appreciated.

We have had so many positive highlights for the year - too many to mention individually, but include:

1. The welcoming of a new committee
2. The filming of a new video and its release on YouTube
3. Participation in community events (Lantern festival, Bridge to Brisbane, Multicultural day, World Refugee Day and University Expo's)
4. Gaining \$10000 in sponsorship from Australia Post to be used to expand and improve our program
5. Roughly 400 individuals attended our information evenings; with 230 people becoming VoRTCS Volunteer Tutors.
6. We are now providing efficient support to families living in the Logan, Ipswich and Western Brisbane suburbs.
7. We've been blessed to have a community of refugee families from a rich background of cultures including: Bhutan, Burundi, Burma, Sudan, Ethiopia, the Congo, Tigrinya, Liberia, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Myanmar and Vietnam.

But I would have to say the highlight for me was to attend the Kids Camp held in conjunction with the youth group at Camp Warrawee in September. What a happy time for volunteers and children as they challenged themselves and developed wonderful team and communication skills.

As a committee we will continue to build the links with the Society to support the program, and ensure it meets the needs of refugee families and our volunteers.

Thank you so much to everyone who has ensured this amazing program continues to grow.



and facts.

Have a safe and happy Christmas with your family and friends , I look forward to working with you all in 2015!

*Marion*

### **The Da Family Graduate!**

On Wednesday, 3rd December 2014 the Karen family that Sandra Cartwright, Robbie Clarke and Bryan Dickson had been tutoring for 2.5 years, graduated.

The simplicity of the 'ceremony' belied the huge achievement that this Karen family of six, from the parents to the youngest sons in Grade School, had made in their integration into the Australian way of life. The tutors brought Australian food (albeit pizza and Weiss bars) while the family shared with them, many Karen dishes. With the 'graduation' , it was realised that Wednesday evenings would never be the same for either the tutors or the family - and while this was sad at first, all realised, in one way or another the wisdom of the words from Mahatma Gandhi, when he said " Be the change that you wish to see in the world."



### **VoRTCS over Christmas**

The VoRTCS office will be closed for the Christmas break between the 24th of December through until the 12th of January inclusive.

Does your family need some support over the December-January break? Families should contact the Vinnies Helpline as soon as possible to ensure they receive assistance during this busy time of year - phone 3010 1096.

The VoRTCS team would also just like to say a big thank you for all of the kind words, well wishes and understanding about the flood damage to the office.

Have a very happy and safe Christmas break!



### **Visit Brisbane this Christmas!**

Looking for some family friendly events to attend this Christmas?

#### **The Lord Mayor's Christmas Carols**

Come one, come all to the Lord Mayor's Christmas Carols. It's time to ring in some festive joy with Brisbane's premier Christmas carols. Join some of Australia's most renowned singers, entertainers, celebrities and performers as they ignite the big stage in this magical celebration of Christmas.

Where: 59 Gardens Point Road, Brisbane

When: -

#### **The City Hall Light Spectacular**

See Brisbane's grand dame aglow with the colour and beauty of Christmas as spectacular 3D animations are magically projected onto the building's facade. The Brisbane's City Hall's clock tower will sound nightly to signal the start of the show.

The show runs every 15 minutes from 7pm from 12-24 December.



#### **South Bank Christmas Markets**

These holidays, experience the wonder of a traditional Christmas market with a Brisbane twist. The cobbled streets of Stanley Street Plaza will be transformed into a treasure trove of stalls offering a mix of handmade unique Christmas ornaments, decorations and more, all accompanied by the festive sounds of live music and carols.



When: 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 20th & 21st Dec from 11am - 8pm  
Where: Stanley Street, Southbank.

### **Christmas Parade & Pantomime**

The ever-popular Myer Christmas Parade & Pantomime makes a highly anticipated return to The City this Christmas.

The high-energy event features more than 200 talented performers, including dancers from the Queensland Ballet, and beautiful giant inflatable decorations.

When: -

Where: Queen Street Mall & King George Square, Brisbane



### **Recipes - Pandan-Infused Black Sticky Rice with Mango and Chilli Sugar**

#### **Fancy an Asian inspired dessert this Christmas?**

#### **Ingredients**

- 1½ cups black glutinous rice
- 3 cups water
- 3pandan leaves, tied in a knot
- pinch salt
- 1 cup finely grated dark palm sugar
- ⅓ cup boiling water
- 1 cup coconut cream
- 3large mangoes
- 2 tbsp finely grated dark palm sugar, extra
- ¼ tsp chilli flakes

#### **Instructions**

Soaking time overnight

8. Soak the rice in cold water overnight, drain and rinse under cold running water until the water runs clear.
9. Combine the rice, 3 cups of water, pandan leaves and salt in a large saucepan and bring to the simmer over a low heat. Simmer for 30 minutes or until the water has been absorbed and the rice is tender. Remove from the heat and cover with a tight-fitting lid or foil and leave to steam for a further 15 minutes.
10. Combine the palm sugar and boiling water in a heat-proof bowl and stir until the sugar has dissolved.
11. Stir ¾ of the palm sugar syrup through the rice, reserve the remaining for serving. Cover the rice to keep warm.
12. Cut the cheeks from either side of the mango seed and place onto a serving platter, sprinkle with the extra palm sugar and chilli flakes.
13. Place a spoonful of the black sticky rice into a serving bowl and drizzle with coconut cream and the extra palm sugar syrup, serve with mango cheeks.

**Note**

· Black glutinous rice, pandan leaves and dark palm sugar are all available at specialty Asian supermarkets.

**You're Important to Us!**

*This newsletter is created 'for you - by you'.*

We want to hear your feedback and any ideas for future stories. Send your thoughts to [info.vortcs@svdpqld.org.au](mailto:info.vortcs@svdpqld.org.au).

If you know any volunteers not receiving this newsletter please let us know as they're missing out on all the info!



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