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ABORIGINAL HOUSING VICTORIA | Message Stick Newsletter
June-July 2016



Come and celebrate our NAIDOC Family Day

COME ALONG AND JOIN US FOR A FREE fun filled family day during NAIDOC Week at the Collingwood Children's Farm on **Wednesday 6 July** from 10am-4pm.

Our NAIDOC Family day has been a highlight on our annual calendar for 16 years. Every year the numbers are growing and we continue to find genuine appreciation and celebration of Aboriginal culture and a sense of community spirit, participation, respect and awareness from everyone who attends this event.

We are committed to connecting our community – bringing our people together to share in the spirit of NAIDOC Week and recognise, celebrate and acknowledge all the wonderful contributions that indigenous people bring to our country and to ensure that we keep the cultural traditions alive.

This year the theme is *Songlines* and this is a great way to continue sharing the stories, songlines and dreaming culture of the Wurundjeri, Boon Wurrung, Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung and Tangurung people of the Kulin nations of Victoria with future generations of Koori kids so that they can continue passing these traditions on. It is also about raising awareness and celebrating culture with the broader community in Melbourne, so that they too can be proud of our indigenous culture and feel connected to land and country.



There will be a Welcome to Country by Aunty Pat Ockwell followed by these many activities:

Wayapa Wuurrk will perform and share traditional indigenous dances; Lou Bennett, acclaimed performer from Tiddas will share Songlines; Aunty Vicki Couzens sharing storylines; Uncle Herb Patten will play the gum leaf; Uncle Trevor Edwards will be painting boomerangs; Basket weaving with Aunty Bronwyn Razem; The Indigenous Hip Hop Project will be teaching some tunes and moves; There will be a footy clinic with Melbourne, Mernda and Fitzroy All Stars footy players; Traditional emu feather and bead jewellery making; Mirragin Making star weaving; And also a bouncing castle, face painting, indigenous tattoos, tractor rides, showbags, a sausage sizzle and damper making!

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Sorry Day BBQ with SNAICC a success

THIS YEAR AHV JOINED FORCES with SNAICC (Secretariat of National Aboriginal & Islander Child Care) to host a Sorry Day event for staff, volunteers, tenants and local supporters at AHV's head office at Narrandjeri House in Scotchmer St, North Fitzroy.

Before torrential rain changed our plans to an indoor event, AHV had originally planned to hold our Sorry Day BBQ outside at the *Remember Me* mural, that was created by Melbourne based artist Reko Rennie (who also did the design for the indigenous installation recently displayed on the Sydney Opera House during the VIVID festival). Reko told AHV that his mural "*Remember Me* is about remembering the original people of this land - the Aboriginal people. It is a statement about us as strong people - and the true history of this country, that many like to dismiss or forget about".

Proud Wurrundjeri man Alex Kerr provided the welcome to country and smoking ceremony. AHV CEO Jenny Samms and SNAICC CEO Gerry Moore spoke about the significance of Sorry Day, which is a time for the community to stop and reflect on the devastating impact of the policies of forced removal of Aboriginal people - AHV and SNAICC staff took the time to acknowledge this significant date.

Staff and local community members, including Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Shayne Neumann MP, also participated in the 1 Million Stars to End Violence project by weaving some stars in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag colours.

Thanks to supporters of our Sorry Day event including Bakers Delight in Roxburgh Park for the bread, Piedemonte's for the sausages, Officeworks for providing bottled water and to everyone for coming along.



1. Harriet Stone and Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Shayne Neumann, MP.

2. Dean Wanganeen, Anthony Vizzari, and Michelle Lausen.

3. Shayne Neumann, Tim Chatfield and Jenny Samms.

4. Maria and Glenn fire up the barbie.

5. Preparing the smoking ceremony.

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There is a **NAIDOC Week Raffle** with an iPhone 6, gourmet hampers, a pet hamper, Gold Class movie tickets, Bunnings voucher, designer necklaces, espresso machine pack and more to be won! Tickets on sale now \$2 each or 6 for \$10.

We are also giving away lucky door prizes – **for tenants only**. So make sure you sign in at the front gate, so we have your name



and know you are there! There will also be some Koori beanies, scarves or gloves for sale at the AHV stall on the day.

If anyone needs help with getting there or wants to volunteer on the day or support this event in other ways, please contact Jo Thitchener on 03 9403 2100 or via email: jo.thitchener@ahvic.org.au

Supporting artists to tell their powerful stories

YORTA YORTA WOMAN MARGARET McNALLY knows the power of art better than almost anyone.

A painful past and a search for identity set her on a path to healing and discovery through painting. Before she was old enough to remember, Margaret was forcibly removed from her family. Raised by nuns in institutions in Ballarat and Bendigo, Margaret suffered abuse so terrible that she stopped talking as a child. As an adult, she had blocked out all memory of it. She didn't know until she was 15 that she had a father. It wasn't until she was in her 20s and started to paint at TAFE that a teacher set her on the path to finding out her real identity.

Now, Margaret talks openly about her life, and expressing herself through art has helped her to survive.

Margaret started out painting snakes, turtles, goannas and waterholes. When she started having flashbacks to her childhood, it made her confront her past, and painting has helped her process it.

"Every time I got upset I'd paint about things that meant something to me. I did a painting about me as a child, I represented the way the nuns made us feel."

Margaret is surprised how well her art has been received, with one of her paintings being displayed in two galleries. She is currently working on a mural for a doctor's surgery.



Aunty Margaret McNally with her granddaughter, Shakiya and her art

The Open Canvas project, that AHV has partnered with, provides Margaret with the cost of materials such as paints, brushes and canvases.

"Painting gives me peace of mind. The grandkids come over and I explain to them what it's about, their culture. So they are learning as they sit down and watch me. They ask questions. When the kids are around it's just a joy."

If any AHV tenants are interested in finding out more about the Open Canvas project, please contact Life Skills Worker Hannah Martin for more information on 03 9403 2100 or via email: hannah.martin@ahvic.org.au

Open Canvas identifies and nurtures potential artists through mentoring, masterclasses, and provision of art supplies. They aim to assist artists to market and sell their art; earn an income and be professionally recognised and rewarded in their field.

Being a good neighbour

TO GET THE MOST OUT of your tenancy it is important that you, your family and visitors behave in a way that respects the rights and privacy of others. Being a good neighbour ensures an enjoyable and safe family life for you as an AHV tenant. It also encourages your neighbours to behave in the same way to you.

Respecting the rights of your neighbours is set out in your tenancy agreement and is a commitment that guarantees your tenancy.

Acting un-neighbourly through vandalism, aggressive or violent behaviour, illegal activity, excessive noise or failing to keep your property

in a reasonably clean condition inside and out, can lead to the termination of your tenancy.

We know that most of our tenants already have great relationships with their neighbours and we would encourage that standard to be taken up by all our tenants. If you want to know more about your tenancy responsibilities (or need help or support with your tenancy), please contact your Housing Officer.



Mirrigin Making

Our star count at time of publication is **2,434**

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Culturally Responsive Housing Design

AHV IS DEVELOPING A SET OF housing design principles that are culturally responsive. AHV has engaged the expertise of Architect Jefa Greenaway of Greenaway Architects to develop these design principles.



Over the last couple of months Jefa has facilitated workshops across Victoria, both in metropolitan and regional areas with tenants and the wider Community. The workshops involved robust discussions on sustainable design options, housing types and mix, how a home appears, appropriate material selection and ways to connect to Country and culture.

A big thank you to all those that attended the workshops. We really appreciate the time you took to come and share your thoughts. Any tenants wishing to have input into how we design future housing are encouraged to contact Harriet Stone at AHV on 03 9403 2100 or via email: harriet.stone@ahvic.org.au

Spring Garden Competition reminder and winter garden tips!

DON'T FORGET, THERE IS STILL plenty of time to get your garden ready for our Spring Garden competition and be in with a chance to win a \$500 Bunnings voucher!

Even though it's cooling down, there is still plenty to do in a winter garden. Here are 5 top tips for winter:

- 1. Rake the leaves and pick up twigs, sticks and bark** - a great winter job that involves all the family and warms you as you work. Rake leaves, bark and small twigs for mulch or add to the compost heap.
- 2. Aerate the lawn** - many lawns are compacted and weedy after the long drought. Aerating now lets moisture into the soil so you can begin to rejuvenate the lawn in spring.
- 3. Dig the veggie garden and plant new crops** - there's still plenty of time to grow tasty fresh

vegetables in your garden. Plant snow peas, English spinach or some mini veggies, such as small-headed cabbage or lettuce.

- 4. Prune and tidy** - while plants are bare you can more easily remove dead or crowded growth or spot invasive climbers and remove them.
- 5. Cheer yourself with potted colour** - great time to plant up some winter pots of annuals, such as pansies or polyanthus for an instant show.

Please contact Jo Thitchener at AHV to register your interest in participating in the garden competition and to get an entry form on **03 9403 2116**.

For all your repairs and maintenance needs please call one of the following AHV Maintenance Lines:

General metro: (03) 9403 2166
Regional: 1300 664 392 (cost of local call)
Emergency after hours: (03) 9403 2171

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Hours of Business: Monday to Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm. **Address:** Narrandjeri House, 125-127 Scotchmer Street, North Fitzroy, VIC 3068. **Telephone:** (03) 9403 2100. **Fax:** (03) 9403 2122. **Email:** info@ahvic.org.au **Website:** <http://ahvic.org.au> **Aboriginal Housing Victoria** is a not-for-profit organisation that works to deliver accessible, affordable, appropriate and secure housing to meet the social, cultural and economic aspirations of the Victorian Aboriginal Community.