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Auckland Regional Migrant Services is now on Facebook. Become a fan of the page and stay up to date with our workshops, events and migrant related news.



We have devoted another Special Edition of ARMS REACH to covering community updates and official information related to supporting Christchurch people either up here or down there. There have been many wonderful stories of Auckland's communities mobilising their volunteers in a range of ways. We will continue to gather stories about Auckland's community efforts following the Quake, and hope to enable the sharing of key learnings gained from these. Our ARMS Reach newsletter is our way of sharing your community's good news stories across all of Auckland's diverse communities. If you would like to be part of our ARMS Reach community network, please send an email to shomap@arms-mrc.org.nz.

Community Update

Master Chef...with a difference

The staff at NZ Ethnic Social Services Trust in Te Atatu had not seen themselves as chefs before the Christchurch earthquake, but certainly earned the title after cooking halal meals for up to 120 displaced people for 18 straight days following the disaster.

As well as providing general language and cultural assistance to those displaced by the earthquake, the 4-person team provided food to those who might have otherwise gone hungry.

Trust worker Glenda Ryan said challenges included getting used to cooking such in such huge quantities and also coming up with meals that would be suitable for the mostly Afghani families to eat. The Trust also had to build good relationships with donors and educate volunteers on what food would be most useful to bring. "We had to be quite specific about what we needed and then manage the donations to make them work...as well as dreaming up things to make on the days when we had no meat" she said.

Based on an average of 100 meals per day, the Trust believes they would have provided just over \$18,000 worth of meals, something the agency could never have footed the bill for out of their own budget, so donations and volunteer time were invaluable.

Looking forward, Glenda Ryan said she hoped that agencies would keep an eye on those Christchurch refugees who have decided to stay in Auckland. "As they get settled, get their children into school etc, we hope that agencies will look for symptoms of post-traumatic stress and if necessary, get some help that feels okay for them".

Making a Difference through Telecommunication

The Chinese New Settlers Services Trust launched a free nationwide telephone service **0800Asians / 0800274267** a day after the Christchurch earthquake to assist Chinese community members with information and counseling.

"We tried our best to meet the cultural needs of the Chinese Community, who were affected by the quake", said Gloria Goa, the Operations Manager for CNSST.

"We also worked closely with the Manukau Welfare Centre to address the come specific cultural needs of our community such as language, food and counseling".

"A lot of people called us from Christchurch and from the airport seeking help", she added.

With the help from local Chinese community, CNSST collected more than \$25,000 in cash, which will be donated to the Mayoral Relief Fund. The following services are being provided by the CNSST social worker and counselors with assistance from volunteers:

- Information and resources
- Assist with application for emergency financial support from government
- Assist with arrangement of temporary accommodation
- Transportation service
- Language support
- Employment services
- Counseling services & emotional support
- Free legal advices and Asian police community office
- Arrange the children to continue studying Chinese or art programme at our 9 community education centres in Auckland and Wellington

For more information, please contact: Telephone: 0800Asians / 0800 274 267 or 09-5701188(Auckland region). Please ask for the "we are family" ChCh earthquake relief team; Email: info@cnsst.org.nz

Seniors Generosity

Shanti Niwas seniors have raised \$1100 which they will donate to the Red Cross Christchurch Earthquake appeal and have also collected crockery, other kitchen items and linen to assist those earthquake refugees in Auckland.

Project Manager Indu Bajaj said that as far as money was concerned, seniors had done what they could to help, but would also make themselves available for a n y volunteering/befriending opportunities etc for those affected by the quake who were now in Auckland. She said the organisation would continue to collect household items that were needed and may also be able to assist with books and stationery for children. Contact: info@shantiniwas.org.nz

Community Fundraising Efforts

Drumming for the Cantabrians

The African communities in Auckland rallied behind the Christchurch Earthquake appeal on the 12th of March 2011 at the Mount Eden War Memorial Hall in Auckland. They raised over \$3000 for the Red Cross. Christchurch is home to many African refugees and immigrants, many of whom have experienced shock, trauma and displacement as a result of the earthquake.

About 200 people, representing more than 50 different African ethnic groups, as well as many people from the host communities in Auckland, attended the event. The Burundian Drumming Group opened the function with a pulsating drum line, followed closely by Mohammed Bangoura, master drummer, who flew in from Sydney especially for the occasion. Nure-din Hassan the Director of the African-New Zealand network 'Nile Flow' and one of the organisers of the event, said, 'The African community wanted to show ordinary Cantabrians and the Africans affected by this quake that our thoughts and prayers are with them as they rebuild their lives'.

Korean Day Fundraiser

Korean Day, held in Mid March, was also used as an opportunity to fundraise - this time for those affected by the Christchurch earthquake. It was organised by the Korean Society. Society President, Justin Yang, said 'The festival was a great opportunity for us to expose our cultural heritage in New Zealand. We are also dedicating this big event for the New Zealand-wide campaign to raise money for Christchurch.'

The opportunity was also taken to highlight traditional art, food and music. Displays and activities included song and dance performances and a taekwondo demonstration.

Auckland Communities Quake Action Network

The first meeting of the Auckland Communities Quake Action Network took place on Tuesday 8th March, with 26 attendees from NGOs, health, religious organisations, central and local government agencies.

Service providers described what they are doing for evacuees in Auckland, or what they would like to do. Most attendees do extensive networking and are able to communicate effectively with diverse ethnic communities. In many cases, the service providers or their staff and volunteers are from those communities. Some of the issues raised at this first meeting included cultural appropriateness of responses, accommodation matching, and post-traumatic assistance.

The second meeting held on Tuesday the 15th of March focused on the collating of information and practical support that ethnic community groups or service providers can deliver to evacuees from ethnic communities.

This included:

- Culturally appropriate and/or language specific resources/trained personnel/resources qualified to provide counselling or other social service support or act as cultural brokers (Raeburn House was asked to compile a database of trained cultural social service personnel)
- Opportunities for recreation and activities to relieve stress
- Ongoing sources of support for 'secondary' issues after immediate needs have been met
- Volunteer workers
- Advocates to help in particular situations e.g. how to get financial help for international students if they are not eligible for benefits; scholarships or insurance payouts; supporting traumatised evacuees who don't trust anyone.

This was gathered to:

- Communicate Civil Defence information to ethnic communities, so that official information can be spread by word of mouth and rumours can be denounced.
- Refer evacuees from ethnic communities to local people from their community.
- Enable Civil Defence to contact representatives from local ethnic communities to help with problems that may arise.

If you wish to join the Auckland Communities Quake Action Network, please email Bevan Chuang on bevanc@arms-mrc.org.nz. Future Network meetings will be held as and when needed.

Does Your Organisation Need Volunteers?

Volunteering Auckland supports community groups and organisations in sourcing volunteers to assist with your services. If your services are in high demand due to the quake, think about where and how volunteers could assist. We also run training workshops in how to recruit and retain volunteers in your organisation. Contact admin@volunteeringauckland.org.nz for more details. Or see www.volunteeringauckland.org.nz.



Editor's Note: We welcome your comments and feedback on this issue. Please contact Shoma Prasad, Communications and Public Relations Officer on 625 3095 or email her on shomap@arms-mrc.org.nz

Job Loss Cover extended for Christchurch individuals

The Ministry of Social Development has extended the current Job Loss Cover for displaced employers by two weeks to April 18th. The Cover will then be replaced with an Individual Support Payment. The Job Loss Cover of \$400 per week in the hand for full time workers or \$240 in the hand for part time workers will continue until 18 April.

This payment will provide a top-up payment to the benefit:

\$50 for a single person

\$80 for a couple without children

Plus \$10 a week for each child, up to a maximum of \$110 per week

The Individual Support Payment is for people who lost work as a result of the earthquake and need time to adjust and look for alternative employment.

Those currently on Job Loss Cover will automatically get the two week extension, but will need to apply for a benefit if they need assistance beyond 18 April.

Through phoning those currently on Job Loss Cover, the Ministry of Social Development has found around one third have already found jobs.

Christchurch Earthquake 2011: Current Situation

The Auckland Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) has reported that the number of persons being evacuated from Christchurch under emergency provisions has significantly reduced with many persons now reporting to the Auckland Recovery Centre (Manukau) to extend/change current accommodation arrangements or services agency provisions. A decision on the continuing operating structure of the Recovery Centre is likely in the coming period.

To date 3,430 people from Christchurch have registered at Auckland welfare centres. The Ministry of Education has advised us that there are 841 students from the Canterbury region relocated and now attending schools here in Auckland.

A Recovery Centre opened on 15 March 2011 at Civic Building, 31-33 Wiri Station Road. Agencies represented are NZ Red Cross, Housing NZ Corporation, Work & Income, CYF and IRD. Civil Defence staff manage the centre.

CDEM Group expects the numbers of persons arriving in Auckland from Christchurch seeking assistance will decline over the coming period thereby reducing demand on services and resources to support them. The coming period will see work in this area focus on satisfying accommodation needs in the mid to long term and repatriating those wishing to return to Christchurch. The responsibility for providing emergency housing rests within the CD environment but all agencies are working together to ensure this aspect is managed effectively and efficiently with cognisance to the National Controllers directives. CDEM have ceased financing urgent accommodation needs and all enquiries are being directed to the appropriate government agency e.g. Housing New Zealand.

Donations: Toys Welcome!

The following agencies are happy to have good quality used toys and books dropped off at their centres. They will then deliver them to Auckland Refugees as Survivors.

Auckland City Mission

140 Hobson St, Auckland
Between 9am and 7pm

Anglican Trust for Women and Children

10 Beatley St, Otahuhu

Auckland Council Community House

141 Robertson Rd, Mangere
Tues/Wed/Thu
9am to 3pm
Please mark boxes "For Refugees from Christchurch"

Access Radio Delivers Multilingual Quake Information

Community Access radio station Community Radio Hamilton has coordinated a project that is delivering essential quake recovery information across the country in multiple languages. Key messages from the Office of Ethnic Affairs have been translated and recorded into Spanish, Fijian, Portuguese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Tamil, Japanese, Tagalog, Russian, and German.

The audio clips are all made available across the country and while mainly intended for Christchurch broadcasters to download and rebroadcast across the city, they are freely available to anyone to download and share. The audio clips are available at www.accessradio.org.

Christchurch evacuees receiving assistance from 31 Citizens Advice Bureaux in Auckland

Citizens Advice Bureaux in Auckland are receiving 28 earthquake-related enquiries per week. Some people need help with missing persons or planning care arrangements for orphaned children. Others need assistance accessing support from WINZ or filling in forms. Some have left tenancy and flatting situations in haste and are involved in disputes, and many really need someone to talk to. Donations of practical items remains the most common type of enquiry at Auckland CABs, followed by residential tenancy, emergency housing, and care and support for older people.

The CAB Language Link service in Three Kings, which provides free and confidential information and advice in 26 languages, is helping Christchurch evacuees from migrant and refugee communities by talking with them in their own language about the issues they are facing. As of Friday 25th March the most common enquiries at the CAB Language Link were about secondary education, donations of money, and insurance. Many victims of the Christchurch earthquake are bewildered by the challenges and language barriers they face and are simply asking for advice. Some whose Christchurch houses are OK still need to move because their children's schools are closed. Some families need help with tenancy agreements for their new accommodation in Auckland and others have Registered with the Red Cross and have moved into temporary accommodation. There are many enquires about earthquake and house and contents insurance. Sadly there have been a number of people calling on behalf of parents overseas looking for their children. Many CAB Language Link clients are offering accommodation and asking how they can donate money, goods and voluntary help to Christchurch people.

Top earthquake related enquiries received at CAB Language Link, ranked from highest to lower:

Recent EQ-related enquiries (7th- 25th March)	Older EQ-related enquiries (1st - 6th March)
Secondary education	Donations of money
Civil defence	Locating missing persons
Donations of money	Passenger transport
Home and contents insurance	Donations of practical items
Academic education	Seeking accommodation
Goods	Offering accommodation
Multicultural and ethnic groups and activities	Core benefits
Other support for individuals	Seeking voluntary work
Residential tenancy including disputes	Secondary education
Work permits	Travel advisory, health and safety

Fundraising Diary

Studio Presents NZ Red Cross 2011 Earthquake Appeal, Newton, 16 April 2011 at the Studio, 340 Karangahape Rd, Newton. Come see live music and entertainment, and support a good cause. Free!

8.00 - Wayne Anderson - singer of songs and MC for the evening
 8.30 - O'Lovely's
 9.00 - Avalanche City
 9.30 - High Society
 10.00 - Honey Lamour (burlesque)
 10.30 - Ivy Lies
 11.00 - Rule of Theives
 11.30 - Mean Girls

On the 14th of May, Five Canterbury writers - Carl Nixon, Fiona Farrell, Joanna Preston, Tusiata Avia and Sarah Quigley will reflect on their experiences and pay tribute to their "lost" city, as part of the Auckland Readers and Writers Festival. Where: Lower NZI Room, Aotea Centre, 50 Mayoral Dr, Auckland CBD

Ticket Information:

- Festival Club: \$16.00
- Earlybird: \$20.00
- Standard: \$25.00
- Student : \$12.50

To buy tickets, call on - 0800 BUY TICKETS

Racing for Christchurch Gala Dinner. When: Sunday 1 May from 6.30 pm to 12.00am. Where: Ellerslie Racecourse, 80-100 Ascot Ave, Ellerslie. Tickets \$150pp and includes:

- * Three course meal and beverages
- * Live entertainment
- * Auction of stallion services and racing memorabilia. Buy Tickets - 09 522 3824