



**Manawatu**  
Multicultural Council Inc.

*"We celebrate, support & connect multicultural communities in the Manawatu"*

# ETHNIGRAM

## Newsletter

*Te Kaunihera Ahumahi Manawatu*

October 2019



### First Voice E-Version Launched

In September 2019 we celebrated the official launch of the electronic version of First Voice programme which can be viewed online from any spot in the world. The E-version contains publications of writings of students from non-English speaking background of Palmerston North intermediate normal school in the last 20 years. We intend to grow this project and get more kids involved. This programme has improved over the years; this year we had 60 participants who wrote in 24 mother tongue Languages.

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### Upcoming Events

- **Festival of Cultures 7 March 2020**

Preparations started early this year. Registration for stalls and performances for World Fair is open now.

**Timeline:**

**30 November 2019:** Applications close 5 pm. Don't miss out!

**20 December 2019:** Confirmation emails will be out to applicants.

**31 January 2020:** Payments for stalls and food trucks due.

**February 2020:** Roll out of inductions and training sessions will commence

We would like to see new performances, food, arts and stalls next year. Registration for the stalls on the link below <https://form.jotform.co/91948469715878>

**Registration for performances:**

<https://form.jotform.co/92120371658859>

If you need help, contact us either via Facebook message or [info@mmcnz.org.nz](mailto:info@mmcnz.org.nz)

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Saturday 29 February to Saturday 7 March 2020

## Festival of Cultures

**Fashion/Costume Parade in Festival of cultures 2020 on stage - on Saturday 7 March 2020.** We want to show as many costumes as we can. Obtain form from our office at 77-85 King Street or you can email [info@mmcnz.org.nz](mailto:info@mmcnz.org.nz) or simply dial MMC's office on 06 3581572

Women, men and children all welcome to show and be proud of their cultures.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am honoured & humbled to be elected to serve as the MMC's President for the second year. It is an amazing organisation with great mission to bring communities together, support our multicultural communities and build a more cohesive society and I am committed to do my best to strengthen and build a more sustainable organisation.

The last couple of months have been very busy for me and for the board members. I am also overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from all our members who help us out on many levels. I know it is cliché but our members are truly engaged and have contributed immensely to the success of this organisation.

I have given thought to what I want to accomplish in the current year and here are what I have come up with:

- MMC is great and a lot of people have worked hard over the years to sustain it. We are serving a great course and we will continue to improve on our main purpose, which is to serve and support our multicultural communities and be your voice.
- We care about our communities, so we listen and make things happen. For our organisation to remain vibrant & active we need to really focus on not only attracting new members but meeting the needs of those we already have.
- We do a lot of good work, but I would like to do more, and have more involvement from our communities' men and women. I would love to create programmes related to health and wellbeing, leadership, getting active, celebrations, cultural and educational seminars. I would love to hear from our communities about what we can do better!

I have decided that my theme for this year is to keep it simple - more focus on professionalism, have fun, get involved and build a cohesive community. It is not "we" or "them," it's "US" so let us keep our community great.



Rana Naser

## *Continued from page 1*

Our mother tongue language is our identity. It is the first thing we learnt in our early years by imitating our surroundings. We use it to express ourselves and to give our most personal views of the world. It brings us the closest to our origins which makes it our first voice. There are 7,000 languages that coexist across the globe, out of which 3,000 are on the brink of extinction due to a variety of causes. Some of these languages are threatened by other languages, and some are being spoken by fewer number of individuals.

The First voice project started 20 years ago by the duo of Palmerston North Intermediate Normal School and Manawatu Multicultural Council (MMC) with the support of Palmerston North City Council (PNCC). Students from the school work with their mentors to select a theme and write essays in their own languages. It's a way to connect them with their culture and encourage the children to sustain their spoken and written mother tongue languages.

This was an actual celebration of diversity, and a project that our organisation is very proud of. However, it wouldn't have been a success without the help of the parents, mentors, students, Intermediate Normal school and PNCC.

***Kids' mother tongue writings on display at the launch***



## Monrad Intermediate School Visit



***A cross-section of children at the assembly during the visit***

On Friday 13 September our volunteers from Bhutan, Colombia, Kenya, Libya, Philippines and Pakistan visited Monrad Intermediate School to present facts about their countries/cultures. The presentations were aimed at bringing cultural awareness and respect among different cultures represented in Palmerston North.

About 100 students and their teachers attended the assembly and interacted with the presenters.



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- **Potluck Dinner Friday 25 October 2019 6pm-8pm**

This is our regular monthly shared dinner. Relaxed, fun, and kids-friendly environment to meet new comers, make new friends and connect with each other. It is our way to welcome new and regular members and listen to wonderful stories. Invitation is open to our community to get together and enjoy the last Friday of each month.

- **Diwali in the Square Thursday 24 October 2019**

This year's Diwali (Festival of Lights) will be held at The Square for the first time, from 5pm-9pm. Enjoy cultural performances, community stalls, food trucks & more.

- **MMC Annual Dinner 8 November 2019 6pm-9pm**

This is a good opportunity to network, celebrate our cultural diversity and acknowledge our wonderful volunteers, funders and supporters.

We will love to see our communities come together to achieve inclusive and cohesive community. Come along and get to know more about multiculturalism in the region.

Ticket is \$35 per person.

Please book your seats/table on time by the 1st of November by phone on 06 3581572 or e-mailing [info@mmcnz.org.nz](mailto:info@mmcnz.org.nz)

## Executive Member's Profile

My name is Mojgan Sadighi and I am a reasonably new member of MMC executive committee. I have been involved with MMC since my move to Palmerston north in 2015 and joined the committee in January this year. I am a qualified librarian with a science background and currently work at Massey University Library. I have delivered various community programs and projects in Australia as part of my leadership trainings and my role in the public libraries and intend to continue my involvement with the multicultural communities in Palmerston North.

Both my husband and I were born and lived in Iran till 1999 when we moved to Australia for his higher education. We have two daughters who are passionate about and involved in community activities related to social inclusion and community wellbeing.

Although we are Australian citizens, we already consider ourselves kiwis as we have adapted to the culture and environment quite well and enjoy living in this beautiful place. My secret to living harmoniously in Palmerston North is avoiding any discussion about Rugby, Pavlova and Lamington! Instead I shift the focus to my Iranian heritage talking about Persian history, Persian cuisines and Persian Cats. The latter seems to make everyone interested in the conversation!

I am looking forward to being part of the MMC community and contribute to its success in years to come. Exciting times are ahead of us as we are implementing "changes that we can believe in" - (Barack Obama's election campaign slogan).



Mojgan Sadighi



Cutting of 59th Independence Day Cake

## Nigerians Celebrate National Day with Friends

Nigerians in Palmerston North connects to the wider community as they celebrate their nations 59th Independence Day, which was held on Saturday October 5th, 2019.

Friends of the community from within and outside the City gathered to celebrate this day. There were lots of opportunity for networking and there were also assorted Nigerian and African cuisine for guests.

Our president, Rana Naser and Secretary, Ebele Ezepue, who is also Chair of the community attended the event.

# Celebrating Our Diverse Community

We organised and delivered two successful events in August - celebrating Eid with Muslim Community and Ethnic Songs and Praises celebration. We have worked in partnership with Manawatu Muslim Association, Te Manawa, City Library, Council Community teams, Sport Manawatu and ethnic community groups to deliver outstanding, meaningful and full day events.

## Eid Celebration

Thanks to the Arena events and operations team who supported the event and to the volunteers who worked hard on that day to help and support visitors and who were committed to making the event a success. The Eid celebration was a special one because it was the first time ever such an event was opened for the public to share the special day with the Muslim community; an opportunity to create harmony and enable engagement.

This event was best described by Mayor Grant Smith as mini festival of cultures. We were overwhelmed by positive feedback received from guests from and outside the Manawatu region.



*Attendees having lunch at the Eid Celebration*

## Celebration of Ethnic Songs and Praises

It was inspiring to listen and see talented members of our multicultural communities. Celebrating diversity is what MMC stands for and upholds. We support our ethnic communities all the way to be loud and proud. We appreciate all community groups who were committed to this event and passionate about participating to showcase their cultures before the wider community. Thanks to everyone who supported, participated and contributed to the success of the event. Special thanks to our sponsors and funders.



*Karen Burmese Choir performing at the event*

# Our Potluck Dinner: Key to networking and cohesion



*A snapshot from September's Potluck Dinner*

We have maintained our potluck dinner for the past 9 years and counting. It is an initiative designed mainly to offer a welcoming atmosphere to new migrants coming into our City, but it has grown over the years and has recently become a regular function that we thrive to hold last Friday of every month. It is now a function that MMC uses to bring together migrants, international students, individuals and refugees regardless of how long they have been living in the City in a safe, welcoming and relaxed platform.

Attendees can connect with each other, make new friends, share stories and establish conversations that make them feel at home. This is a crucial way through which MMC builds a cohesive society, encourages and grows communication, networking and information-sharing among our communities in the City.

## Regular Events

### SESSIONS & CLASSES

#### English conversation classes

Beginners: Tues, Thursday and Friday 10am-12noon  
Advanced: Monday to Thursday from 1pm-3pm

#### Women's only Zumba class

Thursdays from 6pm-7pm at Carncot School, 263 Broadway Ave, Palmerston North.

#### Basic cooking classes

Every second Friday of the month, from 12-1pm at the Centre.

#### Potluck dinner

Last Friday of the month, 6pm-8pm at the Centre

**To get updates on our activities,  
visit and like our Facebook page  
or email us on  
[info@mmcnz.org.nz](mailto:info@mmcnz.org.nz) to receive  
notifications**

## Thanks to our Supporters

Palmerston North City Council

Palmerston North Community Services Council

Ministry of Social Development

Lottery Grants

Ethnic Community Development Fund

COGS

The Lion Foundation

Thomas MacArthy Trust

Mainland Foundation

Olive Tree Trust


East & Central Community Trust

NZ Federation of Multicultural Council

United Way & Pub Charity

## ETHNIGRAM

A bi-monthly newsletter published by  
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