



Together we believe, inspire and celebrate.

Newsletter 11

27 March 2015; 6 Jamadul Akhir 1435



World Hijab Day



This year marked the 3rd annual World Hijab Day, but it was our first time celebrating it. UMSLV organized a World Hijab Day breakfast on the 8th of February at the GMS community room, Morwell. The event was simply lovely, attended by both muslims and non-muslims. It started off with children's recitations of surahs and selawat. Maiserah Chowdhury explained how World Hijab Day (WHD) began by describing the ordeal WHD founder Nazma Khan went through after migrating from Bangladesh to America. This was followed by, the highlight of the day, a beautifully sincere and moving faith journey story by our new Muslim sister Sarah Price. Given Sarah's recent travels to Africa, the children performed a nasheed entitled Children of Africa as a dedication and thanks to her. At the end of the event, we all made new friends, understood each other better and felt closer together as sisters. Ieda Azhari.



Sarah's views on hijab

Coming from the country side in Australia, I was never exposed to Islam. I knew nothing about it. I thought of it as an oppressive religion, whenever I heard about it. It wasn't until I went to Malaysia, that God guided me in ways I never expected, Subhan'Allah.

I learned that Muslim women also have rights, which were legally given even before the West did. Meeting impressive women like Sisters in Islam and Marina Mahathir, also inspired me to divulge into Islam more. I found that I could have a career and be a Muslim. However, it wasn't until a year later, I reverted, Alhamdulillah.

Islam is a beautiful way of life to praise and worship Allah as One God every single day. While it is not easy to explain to friends and family, I wouldn't have it any other way. I did a lot of research and interviewed many Muslim and even non-Muslim women on why women choose to cover up. I also learned a lot from my Imam and his wife, who taught me it is for women to be recognized more for their intelligence, not be as exposed, to this sometimes, overly sexual world and to keep your beauty for your husband.

I've met many wonderful, intelligent women who chose to wear Hijab, which is her right. Dressing more modestly came naturally after reverting. I hope to one day wear Hijab every single day, In'sha'Allah. God truly is the Turner of Hearts – I never in my wildest dreams thought I would become a Muslim, yet, He opened my heart and has blessed me in more ways than I could ever imagine or repay Him for.



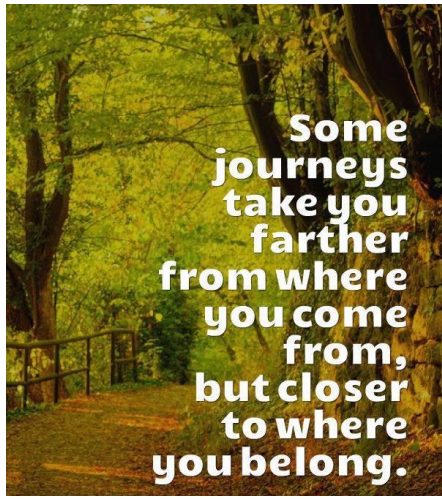
Understanding Journeys Event



UMSLV Committee members

UMSLV welcomes Sarah Price and Tehmina Tanveer as our new co-opted members. They have both been actively involved with UMSLV activities and would like to continue to assist us with us upcoming events. These photos of Sarah with other sisters were taken at our recent Understanding Journeys event.





The ladies who attended the Understanding Journeys event.

UMSLV was approached by Lisa Price to help organise an event to show Australian women's support to Muslim women, given the current global climate. So, we, together with Lisa Price, Debra Carnduff, Val Prokopiv and others organised an Understanding Scarves event in November 2014. This event was about creating an awareness of Muslim women and their culture, by providing a safe space for women from the wider community to ask all their burning questions. Those who attended this successful event requested that we organise another event.

The organising committee of Understanding Scarves organised the Understanding Journeys event that took place at the Traralgon Library on 16 March, during cultural diversity week. This event was about creating an awareness and acceptance of people from diverse cultural backgrounds living in the region and to acknowledge their journeys and contributions to modern day Australia. We used the living libraries concept where people came to the library and borrowed a book that was a person. That person told her story.

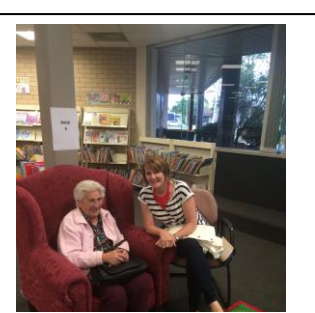
Every one of us has been on a journey. This event gave people the opportunity to share their stories through the use of oral narratives. In the lead up to the event, one of our books said "It was a very difficult time, and now 61 years later I get to tell my story", which we found very touching. The readers thoroughly enjoyed listening to the stories of journeys experienced by Maltese, Malaysian, Nigerian, Filipina, Nepalese women amongst others.

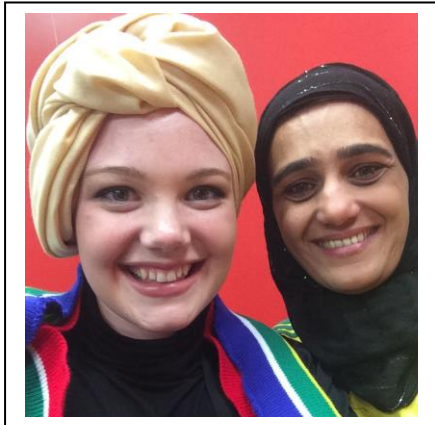
Allah says in the Quran: "Oh mankind! Allah has put you into nations and tribes so that you may get to know one another. Verily the most honoured among you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous". Getting to know one another is what the organising committee aimed to achieve with Understanding Journeys. Khatija Halabi



Istarliin Ali and other ladies choosing the books they want to borrow (on the left).

And on the right one of our books with a reader.





Twin City Archery Club's Fun Day

The Twin City Archery Club from Toners Lane, Morwell held a family fun day on Sunday 8 March. Proceeds from the day went to Relay for Life.

UMSLV had a stall on the day to raise money for the holiday activities that we run at no cost to the families attending. We were overwhelmed by the generous donations that we received and we thank all those who donated clothes and accessories. Thank you also to all those who helped set up and manage our stall.

The clothes that we did not sell will be given to Oferya, a lady involved with the Days of Hope Charity. This charity collects clothing and sends them to communities in Zimbabwe.

The 14 books at the Understanding Journeys Event

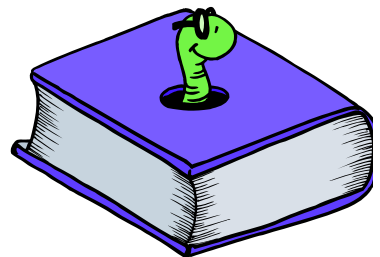


Book Corner

Book Review Sarah Price

'You can be the happiest woman in the world'

This treasure chest of reminders by Dr Aid al-Qarni is surprisingly refreshing. It's simple, easy to read and brings up some very good points on how to be happy as a believing woman. Now...I was sceptical at first (because how can a man possibly know how a woman can be truly happy?) but once I delved further into this book I found his reminders concise, accurate and quite beautiful. This book made such an impression on me that I am instilling some of his sound advice into my own life. His advice is not harsh or unreasonable...it incorporates quotes from the Qur'an, stories from Eastern and Western characters, and provides a quietly charming account of what makes women naturally happy. And of course, every chapter also reminds us that the key to true happiness is placing your trust in Allah (swt) and being kind to those around you. Truly worthwhile read - not just for those going through anxiety or depression, but also just as daily reminders to encourage women to become better Muslims.



Children say the cutest things....

Children always ponder about things that they cannot see, like the gases that make the sky blue. Although we cannot see Allah we know that he is present everywhere.

Let's see how our children perceive His presence.

"A big cool blanket wrapping up the world (to protect everyone living in it)". Karima, 8.

"A tall man dressed in a white kurta with a white (embroidered) topee. But if you say He is not like a person and you don't know what He looks like, can we ask google this question?" Zahra, 6 years.

"A tall man with a long, black beard almost touching the floor. He wears a turban that is green and white. He is nice". Shahabudeen, 9 years.

Inshallah children we will all see Him one day.

Quiz Question

What is the first month of the Islamic calendar?

- a. Shawwal
- b. Ramadan
- c. Muharram

Please sms your name and answer to Teacher Zeinab on 0411800892 by 5 May.

The names of those who get the answer correctly will be put into a hat and a lucky winner's name will be drawn at our next UMSLV committee meeting.

Upcoming events



Thank you Marjolene Cras and Zeinab Badreddine for coming up with creative craft and cooking activities respectively that the children thoroughly enjoy!

We wonder what you have in store this holiday!

School holiday programs

Day	Date	Activity	Time	Venue	Age	Cost
Wednesday	8 th April	Craft activity	1 to 2.30pm	GMS Community Room, Morwell	All ages	No charge
Friday	10 th April	Cooking activity	11am to 1pm	GMS Community Room, Morwell	All ages	No charge

The craft and cooking activities will take place at the Community Room, Buckley Street, Morwell. Please advise Yumna if your children will be attending any of the above activities. yumna.umslv@yahoo.com .

Latrobe Shire Holiday Program For bookings & enquiries Phone 1300 367 700

Activity	Description	Date	Time	Age	Cost
Red The Clown	Interactive performance	Tuesday 31 March	10.30-11.15 Traralgon library 1-1.45pm Morwell Library	4-12 years	\$5
Postcards from Nanna	Interactive show	Tuesday 7 April	10.30-11.30 Traralgon library	4-10 years	\$5
Budding teenage authors	Workshop	Friday 10 April	1.30-4pm Traralgon Library	Teenagers	Free

This holiday is action packed. See the holiday calendar at the end of this newsletter. Please contact the relevant organisers with your enquiries.

Fun run/walk and UMSLV's second birthday!

UMSLV's annual fun run/walk for charity at Matthison Park will take place on Sunday 19 April. Participants can run/walk one or more laps around Lake Hyland. Entry is \$5 donation per adult and a gold coin donation for children. Breakfast will be served after the walk. Craft activities made by children who attend the craft holiday program will also be sold.

All proceeds from the day will go to Starlight Foundation who do a marvellous job at making sick children feel better. A visit to a Starlight room to see the work they do will be organised a few weeks after the walk for all interested families. This visit will serve to instil a feeling of social responsiveness in our children. We are reminded by several Hadith to take care of the ill and this gives the children an opportunity to see how it is done.

Watch this space for more details.....

Community News

Gippsland Australian Muslim Community Inc. (GAMCI) held an event to commemorate the life of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and to make dua for the recovery of Hayyan Ahmed on 31 January 2015. The children who participated did a wonderful job of reciting surahs and telling stories that reminded us of the noble character of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

Brother Ahammed's dua for Hayyan's recovery was beautiful.

Hayyan had muscle weakness of sudden onset and was admitted to hospital on 26 December. Doctors have found that it was due to a swelling on the spine. He is making progress, Mashallah. Please continue to remember Hayyan and his family in your duas.

UMSLV Committee members

As we approach our second birthday we would like to acknowledge our founder committee members Tahrira Rahman, Nahla Nabulsi and Farhat Zafar whose involvement has been restricted due to relocation and personal commitments. We thank them for getting UMSLV started and offer them 'life membership' 😊 Their contribution will always be welcome!

Each difficulty in life, each pain and each tear we shed is a form of MERCY. It is through the hardships that we gain strength, patience and new insights. The trials and tribulations chip away at our flaws and shortcomings leaving us purified and ever more aware. This awareness leads us to be more grateful, more cautious and more wise. Embrace the difficulties with the anticipation of becoming a better person! (Haleh Banani).
Sister Syeda copes with life's challenges as a mu'min.
"Although we may not know what it is yet, there is goodness in this situation". You are an inspiration to us all!

A baby boy

Congratulations to Farhat and our Imam Dr. Zafar and their family on the safe arrival of their baby boy. May Allah make him the coolness of their eyes. Ameen