

NORTHERN BEACHES REFUGEE SANCTUARY LTD

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Welcome to the NBRs Winter 2018 Newsletter

We have had a busy and successful last six months. We have helped 319 people bring our total for the year to 643. We have now helped 5700 refugees come to Australia since we started. This has been our busiest year ever. We are still seeing most of the families coming from Syria.

I told you in the last newsletter that we were in the process of separating from the Manly Freshwater Catholic Church. This separation is now complete. We are officially a public company and a public benevolent institution. We are a registered charity and have been granted DGR which means we can offer tax receipts for donations.

The committee and the work will continue as before. We will still all be volunteers. We will incur some additional costs for administration, insurance and bank fees etc. but we don't expect these to be a significant amount, about \$1,000 per year.

I would like to thank the Manly Freshwater Catholic Church and the Parishioners for their wonderful support over nearly 16 years. I would also like to thank the members of the committee both past and present who have given their time and effort over many years.

One of the families we assisted is from Afghanistan. The father arrived in Australia by boat and was detained. When released and granted a visa he tried to apply for his family. He had to wait until he was a citizen before he could apply. Then the application took four years due to access to documents and some health issues. When you apply for a visa there is always an expiry date by which time you must be in Australia. Medicals and security clearances only have a limited life. In this case the visa was issued on the condition that the family could arrive in Australia within 8 days. The lawyer who referred them to us said that if the visa expired it would be extremely difficult to reinstate it. There were some health issues as well as the costs of a new application. The family was in Iran without a visa and it can take six months to get an exit visa, so they had to travel to Kabul, which is a dangerous bus ride. It was a holiday and the border crossing was closed for a day. The International Organization for Migration did a wonderful job and they were able to arrange the travel. The family arrived a day before the visa expired. A fantastic outcome and the family were incredibly grateful for our help.

To be granted a Special Humanitarian Visa you need to be sponsored by an Australian citizen or permanent resident. This would normally be a family member. We are now seeing some of the people we helped in the past sponsoring some of their families. Recently we helped a family of 5 who were sponsored by their sister who we helped come a year ago. The sponsor has completed her English lessons which has dramatically improved her English skills. She has started work in the IT area. Her husband is working as a car mechanic. The children are in school and doing very well. She will be able to help the new arrivals with settlement as well as be a terrific example for them.

The next family we will help is a family of 7 from Syria. The sponsor has been in Australia for a year. He sponsored his family and expected that he would be able to save the money for the fare. He is still studying English and isn't working yet so he doesn't have the money for the fare. He contacted Carmen, one of the community leaders who approached us for help.

The visa will be issued next Friday. The Lebanese Government will only allow the family to stay for nine days once they have a visa for Australia. We have agreed to help with the loan. He will go to a travel agent in Fairfield who will make the booking and we will pay them the fare. The family arrives and then starts to repay so that we can help the next family. It is such a simple process if you have the funds available.

We will be looking for donations this year if you are able to help.

All donations are tax deductible.

The easiest way is to deposit money into our bank account. Please include your name as a reference. If you let me know by email that you have made a deposit I can email you the receipt.

Our bank account details are

Commonwealth Bank
The Northern Beaches Refugee Sanctuary Ltd
BSB 062197
Account 10993154

If you prefer to post a cheque can you make it payable to
The Northern Beaches Refugee Sanctuary Ltd
P.O. Box 306
Frenchs Forrest
NSW 1640

I would like to thank all those who have supported us in the past; without your donations we couldn't have helped so many refugees.

David Addington
13/06/18