



Initiatives of Change  
Australia

# newsbriefs

Building trust across the world's divides

APRIL 2019 NO. 298

Once again it's autumn in our Southern land, and the changing seasons remind us of the cycle of life! While our regular program activities continue in Life Matters, Creators of Peace, and Sprout! Community, this issue of *Newsbriefs* focuses on some new initiatives.

The big event is Australians Sharing a New Story, which takes place the weekend of 3-5 May 2019 in Blacktown, Sydney. This multicultural story-sharing forum goes beyond 'food, flags and festivals' to focus on the deeper layer of our individual experiences, values, beliefs and, ultimately, stories that can unite us as a community and a nation.

In February we began the first cycle of the new Spiritual Ecology Leadership Program, supported by the Victorian Multicultural Commission's Community Harmony Program and conducted in partnership with the CERES Environment Park in Melbourne.

You'll also find in this issue two recent 'personal stories' from people associated with IofC Australia - one a lifetime volunteer, and one a recent guest at Asia Plateau in India. Each presents her own account of living and learning: may you find inspiration here for your own walk in life.

*Newsbriefs* is the bi-monthly newsletter of Initiatives of Change in Australia – part of a worldwide movement of people of diverse cultures and backgrounds who share a vision for a just, peaceful and sustainable world.

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## NEWS



### Bringing Australian Indigenous Wisdom to Asia Plateau

The Indigenous view of human growth and development is an ideal foundation for working with young people, says broadcaster and activist Susan Moylan-Coombs. The idea of the 'seventh-generation legacy' helps us to live our lives mindful of our impacts on humanity and Mother Earth. [Read more.](#)

## Australians Sharing a New Story: Shooting for the Stars

Mayor Chagai was once a refugee; he loved basketball and wanted to use his passion to give back to the community. Savanna Pride is the basketball team he started. It got African youth off the streets in Blacktown, improved school achievement and reduced youth violence in the area. [Read more.](#)



## Spiritual Ecology Retreat in the Otways

The 2019 Spiritual Ecology Leadership program organized by lofC and the CERES Community Environment Park began with a four-day retreat in the Otway Ranges. Participants connected with nature in beautiful surroundings that inspired both reflection and action. [Read more.](#)

## Call for Expressions of Interest

Initiatives of Change Australia (lofCA) is calling for expressions of interest for applications to the newly structured lofCA Board. You can download the application form [here](#). To submit an expression of interest or enquire about applying, please contact the Secretary, [Elizabeth Lee](#). For further information about the lofCA board, its structure and functions, and the selection process, please click [here](#).

## PERSONAL STORIES



### Susan Moylan-Coombs

Australian Indigenous broadcaster and community leader, Susan Moylan-Coombs, addressed

the 'Breaking Barriers, Building Trust' conference at Asia Plateau in Panchgani, India on 29 January 2019. She spoke about her people's history, and the work she has been involved with to bridge divides. Read extracts from her talk [here](#).

### Liz Weeks

Liz Weeks began her career as a nurse, but soon the inner call to go to an lofC conference featuring Rajmohan Gandhi was so strong that she gave it all up to attend.

This was the start of her travels across India, Europe and Papua New Guinea as part of a traveling musical theatre group. Read about her adventures [here](#).



## EVENTS

### Australians Telling a New Story - Blacktown Forum

**Friday 3 May to Sunday 5 May 2019:** This much awaited event - a weekend of story sharing and trust building in Blacktown NSW, is almost here. Come share your story!



**AUSTRALIANS  
SHARING A  
NEW STORY**

Finding who we are ...and can be

Everyone's story matters; Your story matters and together we can help create a new story of our shared humanity. More information about the event and the program schedule for the weekend is available [here](#). This public event is being organised in partnership with SydWest Multicultural Services.

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### Bridging Differences Across Borders

**Wednesday 15 May 2019:** An event organised by the Cambodia Vietnam Exchange Program, to present the grass-roots reconciliation initiatives being undertaken in the South East Asian region, to bridge differences and bring hope and healing after the many years of conflict and trauma the region has been through. The evening will include a talk, a power-point presentation, cultural music and dance and time for discussion. Light refreshments will be served. Time: 7.30pm Venue: 226 Kooyong Road, Toorak. Please see [here](#) for more information.

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### Friday Film Series - Hope Road

**Friday 21 June 2019:** The first movie of the annual Friday Film Series will be Hope Road - An "Inspiring, eye-opening...a captivating and necessary contribution to our refugee debate from one of Australian cinema's most humane storytellers." - *Melbourne International Film Festival Program*. Time: 7pm Venue: Armagh, 226 Kooyong Road, Toorak. Pizza will be available from 6.30 pm. A contribution of \$15 is invited to cover expenses. Please see [here](#) for more information about the whole series.

**Please note that the film 'Our Park', which was previously scheduled for screening in May, will not be screened at this time.**

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[See all events](#)

## GET INVOLVED

### Volunteer with us

Initiatives of Change prides itself on being a big family, nationally and internationally, and there are many ways to be involved. As a volunteer, you are welcome to join our bi-monthly social catch-ups and workshops. These are a great way to meet new people and also to get to know more about IofC. Volunteers also have access to the IofCA mentoring program, with experienced people who have worked for many years in peace and trust-building initiatives all around the world.

There are many areas you can volunteer in, depending on your skills sets and where we have a need. If you are interested, please contact our [Volunteer Coordinator](#) with an introduction about yourself, your motivation, and your area of interest. We'd love to hear from you!

## DONATE



As we develop our community engagement work, we're excited to see your donations coming in. We value so much your support. Please know that your contribution allows Initiatives of Change Australia to sustain its trust-building and peace-building work.

**Every donation**, large or small, has a **direct impact** on the individuals and communities with whom we work. You can donate through our page [here](#) or contact the [Treasurer](#) to send a cheque or make a bank transfer.

Donate Now

You can now follow us on social media.



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