

Choir in tune with society



By Caitlyn Morgan
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FOR a handful of With One Voice Mildura Choir singers the benefits of joining the group have been priceless.

After learning of the choir, SMECC co-ordinator of the adult migrant education program Danielle Hren encouraged her students to join.

"I believed it would be a wonderful experience to enhance their English language skills," she said.

"It has given them an opportunity to not only be part of the wider Sunraysia community but it has been so valuable for their learning.

"The choir is about having fun and has allowed for us to meet people from all walks of life and they all love it."

The With One Voice Mildura Choir was formed last year and has since grown to more than 50 members. The choir is open to people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds with no audition and no singing experience required.

With One Voice Mildura Choir conductor Catherine Threlfall said the choir aims to promote social cohesion and help to address some of the complex social issues the community faces.

"Singing together each week brings joy, a sense of belonging and can bridge the gap between people from disparate backgrounds," she said.

With One Voice Mildura will hold an official launch open to all interested individuals and organisations next Friday.

The event will be held at Sunraysia Community Health Services' activity room at 6pm. The launch will give attendees an opportunity to learn more about the choir, listen to some inspirational singing and "enjoy delicious nibbles and wine".

SMECC's With One Voice Choir members Seckin Aydemiz, Loan Nguyen, Danielle Hren, Kevin Delbridge, Jolie Muadi, Bosco Katembo, Martin Zigashane, Kiza Sama and Sue-Maree Murphy.

Picture: Ben Gross

Homeless trafficker jailed

By Allan Murphy
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A HOMELESS man who took his eight-year-old son on a \$10 million drug run through the Mallee will spend almost seven years in jail before being eligible for parole.

Thirty-eight-year-old Yaqoob Hassanpoor pleaded guilty in Wentworth Local Court in December last year to supply a large quantity of a commercial drug after Dareton Police found him in possession of 20 kilograms of the drug ice.

Hassanpoor's young son was seated next to him when he was intercepted by police, who found the drugs in the tray under a canopy as well as under the driver's seat.

The man told police he had obtained the drugs while in Sydney and was transporting them to Adelaide and his son had simply wanted to go on the trip.

Hassanpoor was travelling through Balranald in June last year when police carried

out a licence check and noticed the accused to be visibly shaking, nervous and sweating.

Almost 8kg of methamphetamine was found in a green shopping bag under the ute's canopy, while another another bag containing 5.9kg of the drug was also located.

After being arrested by the Dareton Crime Investigation Unit, Hassanpoor told officers there was another 5kg bag of ice in the vehicle.

A further search revealed the bag plus two resealable bags containing ice under the driver's seat labelled "Kingpin" and "Zombie Killer", each containing about 100g of ice, along with \$680 cash and a set of scales.

Hassanpoor appeared at the Downing Court in Sydney last week when he was sentenced to nine years and three months in jail, with a non-parole period of six years and nine months subject to supervision.

He has been in custody since his arrest on June 25.



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