



# KOORI NEWS

Summer 2023  
Swan Hill/Kerang



## From the CEO

**We have come to the end of what has been, bizarrely, both a very long year and a very quick year.**

The last couple of months I've travelled a lot, ensuring our communities' voices are heard in conversations around policy reform and funding. I have met with government ministers and department representatives, and I've also spent valuable time engaging with our local stakeholders, ensuring MDAS is strengthening partnerships and providing the supports and services you need.

In October, we were notified that MDAS had been nominated in the Community Employer of the Year category for the Wurreker Awards. I attended the event to represent MDAS and whilst we did not take out the award, we were a finalist and that is an achievement in itself. Also, in late October and November, we hosted our NAIDOC balls in both Swan Hill and Mildura. I was lucky



to be able to attend all these events – one of the highlights of my year. To see so many of you gathering to celebrate our culture, connections and the people who have been achieving great things was fantastic. We received several nominations for the NAIDOC Awards, and I congratulate all the winners and the nominees for their efforts and contributions.

MDAS has achieved a lot and, I think, learned a lot over the last year. We sometimes lose track of the progress we've made because we are so focused on what we still have ahead of us. But when I look back over the past year, I can see we have made great steps towards the reformation of MDAS. Are we across the finish line? Of course not, but we have a clear pathway ahead and collectively, we have the team who can get the job done.

Wishing you and yours a safe, happy, and healthy Christmas and may the New Year be everything you're hoping for.

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# IN THE COMMUNITY



## BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

Our Swan Hill Health team used Breast Cancer Awareness Day to remind our mums, aunts, sisters and grandmas about caring about their own health by having regular health checks. The choices we make today, could make all the difference tomorrow.



## SWAN HILL SWIMMING LESSONS

In November and December, our Early Years team swimming sessions were in full swing with kids building their confidence in the water and having a fun time while doing it. With a hot summer ahead, our swimming program is helping keep our kids safe. They practised floating, bubble-blowing and kicking.



## DR. LEO

It was great to have so many community members join us to welcome Dr. Leo to our Swan Hill MDAS family in November. Dr. Leo and his family have moved to our wonderful part of the world from Canada and he's really looking forward to caring for the health of you and your family.



# AUNTY STEPH CHARLES

Aunty Steph Charles has had an exciting couple of months. In addition to celebrating her marriage to Uncle Brian Burke, Aunty Steph was bestowed with a Lifetime Achievement and Honour Roll Award at the Swan Hill NAIDOC Ball and received a Special Recognition Award at the Wurreker Awards in Melbourne. Aunty Steph was also recently acknowledged by the Department of Justice, for her 15 years of service to the Koori Courts.

Congratulations Aunty Steph and thank you for everything you have done to support and guide our communities.

*\*Wedding photography captured by Mark Morgan.*



# NAIDOC BALL 2023

# WORKING FOR COMMUNITY



## SENATOR MALARNDIRRI MCCARTHY

MDAS recently met with Senator Malarndirri McCarthy, the Federal Government's Assistant Minister for Indigenous Australians, for a yarn about the issues impacting our Mallee communities.

Among other things, we talked about housing, cost of living and the need for targeted, flexible funding to support the programs, initiatives and services that will make a difference in our community.

We are committed to making sure our voices are heard.



Darlene with Senator Malarndirri McCarthy Federal Government's Assistant Minister for Indigenous Australians

## CLOSING THE GAP

MDAS recently participated in the Closing the Gap on Indigenous Health Forum in Melbourne. Representatives from a range of health and support services from across the country came together to discuss the barriers that continue to impact health service provision, and health outcomes, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

There were many common themes, including the need for: creative place-based funding models, increased investment in telehealth and digital health solutions, data sovereignty and a new approach to consultation and collaboration.

MDAS Chief Executive, Darlene Thomas, spoke to delegates about the challenges our community faces in caring for our Elders and people living with a disability. She highlighted the lack of culturally appropriate facilities and the complexities of the NDIS that often prevent people from getting the assistance they need. Access to quality health services is fundamental to closing the gap and MDAS will continue to advocate for the funding required to support better outcomes for our community.



# WHAT'S ON KERANG

## Kerang Regional parkrun

**23**  
Dec  
2023

Come and explore the Kerang Regional Park each Saturday during a free weekly, timed five-kilometre walk/jog/run.

 Kerang Regional Park, Western end of Wyndham Street, Kerang 3579

## Grow Collective Community Garden

**23**  
Dec  
2023

Come and tend to the Grow Collective Community Garden every Saturday.

 62 Wyndham Street, Kerang 3579

## 2023 Kerang New Year's Eve Party in the Park

**31**  
Dec  
2023

The Kerang Progress Association is hosting Kerang's biggest New Year's Eve celebrations, with more than six hours of events planned.

 Atkinson Park, Wellington Street, Kerang 3579



YOU'RE INVITED TO THE  
**KERANG COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS**  
*Party*

WHEN:  
**FRIDAY 22ND DECEMBER**  
**11:00AM - 2:00PM**

**KERANG POOL | 21 SHADFORTH ST KERANG**

FUN ACTIVITIES | BBQ LUNCH PROVIDED | PHOTOS WITH SANTA

For more information please contact MDAS Kerang: (03) 5412 6004  
Children under 10 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian.  
BYO Chair, Towel and hat.



**MDAS KERANG EARLY YEARS PLAYGROUPS**

For all carers with ATSI children 0-5 years

<b>TUESDAY</b> Playgroup Afternoon Session 1pm - 2pm	<b>ACTIVITIES</b> Arts & Crafts Sensory Play Imaginative Play & Cultural Activities
 MDAS Shed 11 Nolan Street Kerang	<b>THURSDAY</b> Playgroup Morning Session 10AM - 11:30AM

**LIGHT SNACK PROVIDED**

Did you know that you can also join our other Early Years programs?  
You and your little ones can have fun, meet friends and learn new skills.

Contact: Kel 0419 385 318



**Kerang Early Years SWIMMING SESSIONS**

Each week from  
**Wednesday 31st of January 2024**  
until  
**Wednesday 6th March 2024**  
at the Kerang Outdoor Swimming Pool

To secure your spot please call or text  
Kel on: 0419 385 318

FOR ALL ATSI CHILDREN 0-5 YEARS



# WHAT'S ON AT MDAS SWAN HILL

Do you want to help plan MDAS events? We have a community event committee you can join. Phone 5032 8600 to find out more.

YOU'RE INVITED TO  
**SWAN HILL COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS Party**

WHEN:  
**THURSDAY 21ST DECEMBER  
11:00AM - 2:00PM**

SWAN HILL OUTDOOR POOL  
MONASH DR, SWAN HILL

WATER SLIDE OPEN | RAFFLE PRIZES | PIZZA FOR LUNCH  
PHOTOS WITH SANTA

*Children under 10 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian.  
BYO Chair, Towel and hat.*



## YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**JAN 02** COOKING @ MDAS HALL  
10 AM - 12:30 PM

**JAN 03** PIONEER SETTLEMENT  
2 PM - 4PM

**JAN 04** RIVERSIDE SKATE PARK  
12 PM - 2PM

For more info contact Malinda Loats: 0427 998 104




### YOUTH GROUP Events for This Month

**JANUARY**  **2024**

<b>WED 10</b>	<b>COOKING</b> ▼ MDAS Hall 10 AM - 12 PM
<b>THURS 11</b>	<b>FISHING</b> ▼ Boat Ramp 3:30 PM 4:45 PM
<b>THURS 18</b>	<b>IT'S OKAY TO HAVE FEELINGS CHAT</b> ▼ MDAS Hall 1 PM - 2:30 PM

 **MDAS**  
MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES

**Contact Malinda Loats: 0427 998 104**

# WHAT'S ON SWAN HILL

## Swan Hill Regional Library School Holiday Activities



### Search & Find

Search for and find all the BIG Summer Read posters in the library these school holidays to receive a prize and to go into the draw for a chance to win a \$50 Swan Hill Gift Card!

The winner will be drawn on Thursday, 1 February 2024 at 4 pm.

**When:** Monday - Saturday  
**Time:** 10am - 5.30pm (10am - 12pm Saturdays)  
**For:** 5 years +  
**Cost:** FREE

See staff for an entry form.  
 Children under 12 must be supervised by an adult.

**Runs all holidays**  
**Win a \$50 Gift Card!**  
**FREE!**





### Safari Binoculars\*

Date: FRI 5th  
 Time: 1:30pm



### Playstation VR

Dates: MON 8, 15 & 22  
 Time: 1pm - 5pm  
 Age: 12+



### Minecraft

Dates: MON 8, 15 & 22  
 Time: 1pm - 5pm  
 Age: 5+



### Twilight Tales\*

Date: WED 17th  
 Time: 7pm - 8pm



### Mosaic Tiles\*

Date: FRI 19th  
 Time: 1:30pm - 2:30pm

## Special Storytime: A Big Blue Boat



**FREE!**

**Coming to Swan Hill and Robinvale Libraries in January!**

Join author Susea Spray for a special Storytime these school holidays.

**Saturday 13 January, 2024**  
 Robinvale Library, 10.30am

**Monday, 15 January, 2024**  
 Swan Hill Library, 10.30am

Susea will share her picture book, *A Big Blue Boat*, along with songs and craft. Children will love joining in with the fun wording and rhymes in this award-winning story about a boat, a girl and the sea.

[www.suseaspray.com](http://www.suseaspray.com)

**Bookings:**  
 Swan Hill Library: 5036 2480  
 Robinvale Library: 5036 2461




### Creation Station

Date: MON - SAT  
 Time: 10am - 5:30pm  
 (10am - 12pm Sat)



### DIY Worm Farm\*

Date: TUES 23rd  
 Time: 2pm - 3pm

Children aged under 12 must be supervised by an adult. For more information on these or other activities, visit [library.swanhill.vic.gov.au](http://library.swanhill.vic.gov.au)

\*Limited places for some activities, so bookings are essential. For bookings call the library on 5036 2480

# DO YOU NEED SUPPORT?

We know that Christmas can be a tough time for some people.

The pressure to spend can be stressful and the holidays can also increase feelings of loneliness and worsen family arguments.

If you find yourself struggling, please reach out.

You can phone our SEWB team, or a 24 help line – you are worth making the call.

**SEWB: (03) 5018 4100**

**13 YARN: 13 92 76**

**Lifeline: 13 11 14**



## MDAS Holiday Office Hours



### DECEMBER

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve
25 Christmas Day CLOSED	26 Boxing Day CLOSED	27	28	29	30	31 New Years Eve

### JANUARY

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1 New Years Day CLOSED	2	3	4	5	6	7