



Storehouse Seasons

Rita's Story

The history of civilization is a timeline strewn with incidences of war and conquest, of dispossession and displacement, and of refugees abounding. It is a fact that people fleeing political, economic, racial, and religious torment have by numbers, influenced the ethnic and cultural diversity of the world since the earliest of times... and this is part of Rita's story too.

Rita Rachmat, an Indonesian national of Chinese heritage came to Australia in 1998. At that time, Indonesia was gripped with internal tensions stemming from the Asian Financial crisis. Among the consequences of homeland insecurity was a rise in nationalism, so culprits and scapegoats are found. Historically, ethnic cleansing is favoured. Consequently, Rita, was forced to flee out of personal fear, and came as a self-supported permanent visa holder to live in the safe-haven of Australia.

Grateful for her life in Australia, and seeing a flyer about The Kogarah Storehouse in the Rockdale library, she responded and began volunteering at Storehouse, which she has now been doing for over a decade, wanting to give something back to those people in need.

Rita, raised in the Catholic faith, believes all religions encourage people to do good things for others. She says "When I give something it is spontaneous, from my heart, feel happy, do not expect anything in return"

Working among volunteers from all faiths, Rita can be seen at The Storehouse most days, diligently helping organize the food pantry, while ever being cheerful and smiling.

Recently, Rita's devotion and reliable care and concern for her fellow humans was recognised with an acknowledgment Award from the Australian Parliament by the Hon. Linda Burney MP, Federal Member for Barton electorate.

Thankyou Rita, from all at The Storehouse and our community, for your dedication by volunteering, by your generosity and by your smile!

Lala's Greetings

May I say what a privilege it is to be "Manager" of The Kogarah Storehouse. The generous volunteers and supporters who you meet along the way, the people we help - brings joy to my heart. I could "Glory" all day over the good people and good works I see being done through The Kogarah Storehouse - but I dare not!

Mind you it is not always "plain sailing". So often, we are challenged by questions such as: "how will we fund that program?", "will we have enough food?", "will we have sufficient help?". But experience has taught me not to be concerned. Time and again, when things look bleak, miraculous things happen!

Some might say "that's luck". Rather, we see it as evidence of God's providence. The apostle Paul, a murderer turned martyr, and the greatest apologist for Christ wrote "I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ might rest on me." - 2 Cor 12: 9

So, I do not "Glory" - for all this is only possible through the providence of God. We are weak, but God is able, and it is He alone who enables us.

Blessings,
Lala Noronha,
Manager



Storehouse Food Parcel Home Delivery Navigates Second Lockdown

The latest government restrictions, caused by the Covid Delta variant, has increased the strain on charitable organisations. With “stay-at-home” orders for staff and volunteers, some charities have closed whilst others are struggling to adapt and provide. A recent article by journalist, Dom Vukovic, highlighted how national charity, Foodbank Australia, has reported a 200 per cent increase in demand for its emergency food hampers since the Greater Sydney lockdown began. “We’re building about 2,500 hampers a day in our warehouse,” CEO of Foodbank NSW & ACT John Robertson said. (ref: Dom Vukovic SBS news). And in the words of the Commissioner for Charities, Dr Gary Johns: “As we all know, the last year or so has been a particularly challenging period for charities. Overall, the sector has risen to the challenges with many charities having been highly resourceful”... (ref: Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission)

At the Kogarah Storehouse we have regrettably had to suspend all our current community group meeting programs. Despite this, we have been resourceful and have continued to provide many needed food parcels, No Interest Loans assistance (NILS) and Energy Accounts Payments Assistance (EAPA). These services are being maintained through the diligence and sacrifice of our staff and loyal volunteers, which has necessitated that they be fully vaccinated and attend covid testing every 7 days. Additionally, we have commenced home delivery of food parcels to those who are in compulsory isolation as Covid positive or close or casual contacts and also, to those who are outside the five-kilometre travel restrictions and can’t get to our centre to pick up their parcels or to those who are house bound for many reasons. It is literally a ‘God Send’ for these people who could otherwise go hungry.



About The Kogarah Storehouse

Our mission: “To be a haven of hope and practical help to people in need in our community”.

Established in 1992, The Kogarah Storehouse Community Centre is a non-government, not-for-profit, registered charity with (PBI) Public Benevolent Institute, DGR status. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. It operates from the Kogarah Uniting Church and is an outreach mission of the church.



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