



Hội Thân Hữu Cao Niên Việt Nam NSW

NSW Vietnamese Elderly Friendship Association Inc

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Introduction:

* The NSW Vietnamese Elderly Friendship Association Inc. (VEFA) established since 1992, is a non-profit organization of 1,460 active members aiming at promoting the friendship spirit, unity and mutual support amongst all the Vietnamese elderly without distinction of religion, sex.

VEFA's main activities:

- *Providing all members every opportunity to participate in various activities such as: religious services, musical entertainment, excursions, walkathons, fitness training, chess playing, English classes and community life.
- *Assisting new arrival members in their integration into the new way of life.
- *Encouraging and support the members in the task of preserving and promoting the Vietnamese traditional culture to enhance the multicultural heritage of Australia.
- *Giving assistance and relief to needy members in case of sickness, accidents, traditional wedding ceremonies, funeral services.
- *Coordinating with local governments to promote community activities along with other Vietnamese organisations; also with other ethnic groups to promote harmony in the multicultural society.
- *Organising meetings, pay visits and provide information introducing services offered by government or private agencies regarding Social welfare, Allowances, Health care, Medicare, Aged care, Veterans' Affairs, Aust Citizenship, etc.

Geographic coverage

The Association has a large area at the back of the premises used as a meeting area, also known as the Association's Community Centre. It is a place where activities, programs are carried out and has a capability of hosting 200 people.

- The Association organises **regular meetings** on monthly basis in which members, their families and friends are able to come along and enjoy food, musical entertainment and participate in social networking activities. **Guest speakers** from a range of professional backgrounds occasionally attend to deliver talks and provide information on various topics including, welfare, taxation, veterans' affairs, housing, health care and aged care, etc.
- In order to preserve and display Vietnamese traditional and cultural performances to the public, the Association has established an artist group called "Huong Que" who has showcased their musical performances at many local events hosted by **Fairfield City Council** and **Vietnamese Community in NSW** throughout the year.
- Occasionally, staff from Fairfield City Police, UnitingCare in SW Sydney, Textile Clothing Footwear Union of Australia or other organisations come and convey information on their services as the centre is also open for members of the general public to use in hosting their functions or meetings when required.

VEFA's benchmark events

1. **Organised the “Happy Life-Longevity and Marriage Anniversary Event” in Sept 2018 & December 2021:** This event created inspiration and joy for VEFA members on their remarkable points of life. The anniversary was happily marked with congratulation messages from the Queen, the General Governor, the Prime Minister, NSW Premier and Federal/State Parliament Members for the applicants in the age of 80 plus. This event has proved successful and we keep celebrating it as an ongoing activity whenever possible (pls see photos attached).
2. **The presentation by VEFA President on “Vietnamese Australian cultural differences and its impact on the Vietnamese families in Australia”** in October 2019: Its purpose is to create understanding and sympathy amongst members of different generations in the same family in the Vietnamese community. This topic will be addressed more-often in an effort to help break down violence in family.
3. **Comments & quotes**
 - Comments of the NSW Mental Health Commissioner **Ms Catherine Lourey** after visiting VEFA in 2017. She said:
“On the wellbeing end of the spectrum, we were so impressed by the Vietnamese Elderly Friendship Association, which provides its members the social connection and sense of purpose vital for maintaining good mental health. It’s exactly the kind of initiative we want to see more of in every community” (pls see attach).
 - Comments of **Mr Tinh Phung** (member#: 2182 - joined VEFA for 11 years):
“What I like most of VEFA is its effective management of our mutual support benefit fund since its inception: whenever there is a member who passes away their family would receive an immediate financial support from VEFA for their deceased member. Another point of interest is VEFA has provided activities that benefit their member’s wellbeing both physically, and mentally and information that enable the Vietnamese Australian elderly to stay connected to the mainstream community”.