



Takitaki

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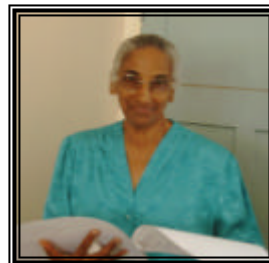
TRIBUTE: SATYA DEVI BALI 11 MAY 1935—2 NOVEMBER 2005

Satya Devi Bali was born in Ba on 11th May 1935 and died at Ba Mission Hospital on 2nd November 2005. From an early age, Ms Bali displayed great qualities of compassion and social justice and was a naturally caring person. She helped so many needy people in Ba and held many positions as office bearer within the Methodist church, school boards, civic committees, service clubs, and Hart Home. She greatly assisted in setting up FRIEND, and was president at the time of her passing away.

In 1953, Ms Bali commenced her nursing training at Ba Methodist Hospital and in 1954 went to Australia for general midwifery and child health training, returning to Fiji and the Ba Methodist Hospital in 1959. She expanded the caring side of her nature by becoming a welfare and probation officer for five years and in 1969 returned to Ba Methodist hospital as Nurse Educator and nursing sister / midwife. From 1976 to 1994, she was Matron of the hospital.

Sister Bali had a real concern for Fiji's seniors who were isolated, mainly because their children had migrated following the coups. A lasting legacy to her memory is the Ba Senior Citizens Center, which opened in June 1999. The only one of its kind in Fiji, the Center provides a place of respite, fellowship, health promotions and fun for those who attend.

Never one to think of herself, she saw to the needs of her mother and adopted daughter first . . . not to mention countless people who came to her for help everyday. She will be missed greatly by all with whom she came into contact.



PRISONS PROGRAM

With the permission and cooperation of the Fiji Prisons Service, FRIEND has begun a pilot program in the Natabua Prison. The aim of the program is to work with inmates nine months prior to release to prepare them, their families and communities for their return to society and a new productive life. This approach to working with prisoners is unique in Fiji. The program began with 12 inmates, from 19 to 45 years old, who were chosen by the prison. It is a diverse group in terms of ethnicity, background and crimes committed, and the men are primarily married with children. FRIEND facilitates sessions on restorative justice 3 days per week in the prison. Subjects include Life Skills, Restorative justice, and Anger Management. It is a privilege to have so much time to conduct classes as it allows each topic to be covered fully. Activities for each session include group discussion/work, case study, role play, ice-breaking games, artwork and writing. The role play is always the group favorite and is enjoyed with fun and laughter. The next phase of the project will entail working with the families to prepare them for their loved one's return. We have high hopes for this project, and look forward to much success as we progress.

DEAF YOUTHS CREATE EYE-CATCHING CARDS

There are eight deaf youths who make handcrafted cards as part of the Income Generation Program (IGP) at FRIEND. They spend their days working on the cards to earn a living. Some in the group use the quilting technique to make cards with intricate floral and holiday patterns. Others work with traditional Fijian materials, like masi and seashells. All of the youths use their creativity to come up with the designs. They are able to express themselves--what they think of the world or what they want in life-- through the artwork on the cards. In addition to gift and holiday cards, they also do invitations and cards to order for special occasions. Outside of their work, the youths are involved in activities such as teaching sign language class on Saturdays that are free to the public, and they have formed a Western Association of the Deaf to look after their needs as a community.

The New Year card designed by deaf youths



MAKE POVERTY HISTORY

White Band Day III
December 10, 2005

Wear a white band and speak out to your leaders and your community in support of the fight against poverty.

Ending poverty is everyone's business.



ISA ATASI!

It's always difficult to say good-bye to someone you've relied so heavily on. It's hard to wish someone farewell when you know the work they've done is the case with Peace Corps member Atasi Das. She has had her last official day of work with us in early November. Atasi came to Fiji for what she would accomplish. she has exceeded her own expectations.



Atasi Das

capacity in the many communities we serve through her work with the Governance program. She has spent time throughout the Lautoka and Ba areas, helping people to dream and see those dreams fulfilled. She has also been instrumental in increasing the capacity of FRIEND as an organization through proposal writing and her willingness to share her skills in training sessions with our staff. Atasi's contributions here have been invaluable, and though our FRIEND family won't be the same without her presence, we all wish her the best for a safe return to the United States and a happy and successful future. Atasi offered these last words to all the communities FRIEND works with and will work with in the future: "Always remember, you're smart enough, you're good enough, and gosh darn it, people like you!"

by, but for an organization which mitment and hard work of its staff, like losing one of the family. This volunteer Atasi Das. She has had FRIEND, and she will leave Fiji in Fiji two years ago with high hopes Through her work with FRIEND, tations. Atasi has helped build ca-

ON THE ROAD WITH RITA



Rita Vithal at the FRIEND Poverty Eradication Week stall

FRIEND recently participated in the craft fair organised by the Western Art & Craft Society at the Bounty Island Resort. It was a one-day event attended by visitors to Bounty Island and other nearby resorts. We were also invited to the week-long Poverty Eradication Week festivities held at Ratu Sukuna Park in Suva by the Ministry of Women, Social Welfare, and Poverty Alleviation. On both occasions we distributed our brochure and newsletter to the public, detailing upcoming events and explaining the work we do toward poverty alleviation at FRIEND. And, of course, we had our products available for sale. We now have a full range of items including: chutneys, mango pickle, hand-made cards with holiday themes, calico bags with masi designs, unique scarves, sarongs, and saris and more. The sale of all of these products benefit the rural, marginalized and special needs communities that are part of our income generation program. So when you're thinking of giving gifts this Christmas and New Year, think of purchasing them from FRIEND.

We're Shifting

FRIEND will be shifting offices this month to a new location. Effective November 14, our new address will be:

8 Valetia Street

If you've visited our Kitchen, you'll recognize the new office—it's just across the street. All other contact info will remain the same.

What's Happening?

November 20	Universal Children's Day
November 25	Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

From the Visitor's Book

On his recent visit to Fiji, **U.S. Peace Corps Director, Gaddi H. Vasquez** came to the FRIEND offices to learn about our organization and see the work being done here by Peace Corps Volunteers.

CONGRATULATIONS!

We've had some wonderful news at FRIEND this month. Our own Nilesjni Sekar, better known as Mala, has been selected as one of the winners of the Youth and ICT Awards. Her selection is in recognition of her work with our Income Generating Program, and specifically for her innovative use of technology as Art Coordinator for Friend's Fiji Style™ Handmade Cards. Mala's award entitles her to a full scholarship which includes travel and accommodation to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis later this month, where she will accept the GKP Youth Award. She will also sit on the panel at the Youth Workshop to be held during the WSIS. We're very excited and proud that Mala's work is being honored in this way, particularly since it is giving her the opportunity to travel abroad for the first time! Please join us in offering Mala our congratulations on her big win, and wishing her safe travels.

