



Takitaki

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WESTPAC DONATES FUNDS



Marie Chan receives cheque on FRIEND's behalf.

Westpac pledged a donation of \$5000.00 to FRIEND at the Fiji Institutes Accountant Congress held early June at the Shangri-La Hotel. FRIEND Trustee Marie Chan was there to receive the cheque on behalf of FRIEND in Westpac's main branch in Suva. Westpac general manager John Cashmore, said that they were proud to be associated with an organization that assists the community by providing market avenues for their products/crafts thus supporting income generating projects for the community. The donation will help fund our DESI (Developing Enterprises for Sustainable Income) programme. Jon Hartley a speaker and panelist at FIA Congress started the ball rolling by giving a personal donation of \$1000 after hearing Sashi Kiran's presentation on Cottage Industries in Fiji, the work of FRIEND and the constant challenge of fundraising. He called on those present to act towards poverty alleviation and support the work of FRIEND. ANZ General Manager also donated \$1000 and has begun partnership with FRIEND in rural banking. Other than cash donation many organizations present pledged support in kind. FRIEND coordinator says FRIEND is thankful for the funds received which will be used for the work poverty alleviation. However she says its more important for people of Fiji to acknowledge that we have poverty and if everyone commits to doing small things in their own community/ locality poverty will be history in Fiji

CITIZEN EDUCATION WORKSHOP (ASPBAE)



Participants at ASPBAE Adult Education Workshop, 2007

The Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) conducted a one week workshop on adult education focusing on the Citizens Education Action Learning (CEAL) guide. This was held from the 21st to 27th July at The Macambo in Nadi. The workshop had participants from all over Pacific region coming together to exchange ideas and learn from each other. The workshop was opened by Mr. Timoleti, a senior lecturer from the University of Waikato in New Zealand, who reminded us about bonds with our island homes and duties to the land and people. I found this workshop very informative as well as educational. As our facilitator took us through the different modules in the guide, the participants shared stories about the work they do in the communities. Though we came from different countries, the issues we faced were very similar as our cultures are very close. A cultural night was organized at the conclusion of the workshop and participants shared dances and songs from their various countries. This workshop helped build a new family of friends with all participants gaining new friends, sisters, brothers and aunts.

ANZ BLUE WEEK

ANZ Blue Week was from 23rd July to 27th July, 2007. For the first time FRIEND was invited to place its stall inside the Lautoka ANZ Bank. The theme of ANZ Blue Week was "Fundraising for Charitable Organizations". FRIEND products were sold from the stall and the public was made aware of community development programs. ANZ assisted by placing donation tins at all of the counters throughout the week. On the final day, ANZ did more fundraising for FRIEND by selling chicken palau and free blue cake and blue juice for all its customers.

The following week, ANZ Lautoka manager, Maimun Singh accompanied by a few of her colleagues, presented a \$2000 cheque to Sashi Kiran, FRIEND director, at a morning tea hosted by FRIEND staff. Ms Kiran ac-



knowledged ANZ's support and commended Ms Singh's staff for their efforts in not only raising funds for FRIEND's work in poverty alleviation but also focusing public awareness on poverty issues in Fiji.

THE CUTTING EDGE



Kiti Joeli & Bill on the job at FRIEND

As part of the YEN (Youth Employment Network) program, FRIEND has engaged a group of young boys who provide yard service once a month. Their grass cutting service includes the weeding of flower beds, trimming of hedges, raking, and clearing of rubbish. This service is an income generating project for these young boys who call themselves *Cutting Edge*. In spite of difficulties they have encountered, this group of boys still dream and hope for a better future. Starting this project is a step towards the realization of those dreams. You can contact them on trimmingedge@yahoo.com, 6640471 or 9 4 6 0 9 3 9 for more information.

FIJI PRISON CORRECTION SERVICE MARKET DAY

On the 27th of July 2007, the Fiji Prison Correction Services held its first "Market Day" at Churchill Park in Lautoka. It was one of the best events ever held for the inmates and the ex-offenders, prison communities and their families in the Western Division. The Fiji Prison Services which is now known as the Fiji Prison Correction Service came up with the idea of this market day with the support of the other stakeholders from other government ministries and NGO's. The main objective of this market day was to raise awareness of the different Community Based Programs introduced to help offenders & ex-offenders break the cycles of re-offending. It also support the pre-release rehabilitation programs to prepare prisoners for reintegration into the community. FRIEND's REAL Program participated in setting up display tables on all products that were made by the core participants of the training program in Natabua Prison and also the ex-offenders whom FRIEND is helping with their IGP. The chief quest of the event was Mr. Peter Drysdale, Manager Western, William & Gosling (Coordinator Koroipita Rotahome, Lautoka). He was welcomed by the Commissioner of Prison, Brigadier Iowane Naivalurua. Also participating on the day were the 3 Prison communities in Suva (Suva Goal, Naboro and Nasinu Prison. The event was closed by a Minister from the Methodist church of the Topline Circuit in Lautoka.

**What's
Happening?****September****8 International Literacy Day****14 Launch of GCAP month (FRIEND)****15 Walk for Poverty (FRIEND)****21 International Day of Peace****22 Race for Poverty (FRIEND)****VOICES OF THE NORTH**

At this point, FRIEND's program in Labasa is without an office although a challenge is not a barrier to our activities in the rural communities. Our main priority at this point is the conducting of a feasibility study and needs assessment to identify priority areas of focus. A further priority is the relationship building process with local communities.

One of the communities that I visited this month is Batinikama, situated in the interior about 14km from Labasa town. The village of Batinikama and the settlement of Vuinaqou are situated on either side of the river nestling at the foot of the mountain range of the Three Sisters. Close by are 3 Fijian villages and two Indian settlements. I experienced the realities of their struggles when I had to walk half an hour as the transport could not reach the village. The bridge had been broken during the big flood that affected Labasa in February and the road is in very poor condition.

Similarly, Suweni and Vunicuicui are other areas that have had broken bridges for the past decade. This is but one example of the issues these communities struggle with on a daily basis.

Adivasu Chute

ASPBAE VISIT TO KOROQAQA

My name is Kasanita Buloulutui. I'm originally from Kadavu and happily married at Koroqaqa Village in Ba. I have 5 children and 6 grandchildren. I am the group leader for FRIEND's Save Scheme program at Koroqaqa with 27 members. FRIEND has introduced us to workshops which has enlightened the Koroqaqa unemployed youths. On the 24th July, 2007, a group of 30 regional ASPBAE workshop participants visited our village. It was the first time a group like this has visited our village. We were looking forward to this visit. The village women welcomed the group with garlands (salusalu). The young people decorated the meeting place and the women with their colorful sulu ni jiaba, brought a plate of food each for the gathering. We made fresh lemon juice and while the visitors had their refreshments the young people performed items. I gave a brief talk on the work that FRIEND has done in Koroqaqa and the effect of their programs on our livelihoods. I thanked FRIEND for giving us the opportunity to meet other Pacific Islanders and also for helping our unemployed youths.

