



# Takitaki

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## SEASONS GREETINGS TO LOVED ONES

Now we all know the story behind the making of the cards. The project was initiated with a group of deaf youths to assist them in earning a decent living.



Since then the project has won two prestigious awards - The Fiji Development Bank Award 2006 and the Global Knowledge Partnership Award of 2006. These days the card makers include other youths and talents adding to the range produced from the workshop. Send your seasons greetings to your loved ones this Christmas with Friends Fiji Style® greeting cards. We also have pickle and chutney gift baskets available from our kitchen to tantalize your taste buds. Contact our sales team at [sales@fijifriend.com](mailto:sales@fijifriend.com) or 6663181 to place your orders. You can buy these at Friends Fiji Style® shop at 154 Toorak Rd, Suva. Cards are also available widely through MH, Post Fiji, Prouds, Tappoos and Jacks Handicraft.

## DONATION FROM THE SUGAR FESTIVAL COMMITTEE



Presenting the cheque to Sashi Kiran is the Treasurer for the Sugar Festival Committee Mr. Hem Raj and Mr Pusp Raj (LCC)

The Sugar Festival Committee presented a \$10,000 cheque to FRIEND director Sashi Kiran on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> of November. FRIEND had sponsored a deaf contestant at the Sugar Festival to create awareness on the issues of the deaf community. Miss Priya Prasad won the Ms. Charity crown and her prize was a trip to New Zealand. In her speech Priya pleaded with Fiji TV to include sign language as a medium of communication during the news hour. She also called on the Government to provide sign language teachers at high school. The Director for FRIEND expressed her gratitude to the Sugar Committee and said the money will be put to good use at

FRIEND financing an income generating project for the youths in Lautoka

## CONSUMER COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Two staff from FRIEND Aarti and Sandhya attended the three day **Consumer Advocacy Workshop** held at Southern Cross Hotel in Suva. Along with fellow participants from Consumer Protection agencies such as the Prices and Incomes Board, the two swotted over the legalities of Consumer Laws and how it affects FRIEND and its customers. Out of the nine legislations that were discussed, three legislations namely **Fair Trading Decree, National Trade and Measurement Decree and Trade Standard and Quality Control Decree** were relevant to our organization. The two's participation in this workshop has helped FRIEND be more aware of the laws that relate to our products in the market.



## YOUTHS AT RISK

The Youth at Risk workshop was a great experience not only for me but for all other youths that took part. About 200 youths converged from all over Fiji to take part in this meet organised by the Australia Fiji Community Justice (AFCJP) and the Ministry of Youth. In my opinion the workshop represented one of the biggest windows of opportunity for national growth and development of youths in Fiji. It highlighted issues that affect youths and explored possible solutions and plans to counter them. This year the focus was on health particularly the challenges and adversities with regard to HIV, Aids and STDs. The message received at this meet was that all youths need to take ownership of their own development. They need to interact and network in order to tap into opportunities. I am grateful to FRIEND for enabling me to be part of this workshop.



Shalesh Raj

**PROPOOR BUDGET COMMUNITY REVISIT WORKSHOP (FSPI/FRIEND)**

Selina Bobo and a fellow Vatulaulau participant discuss action plans at FSPI workshop

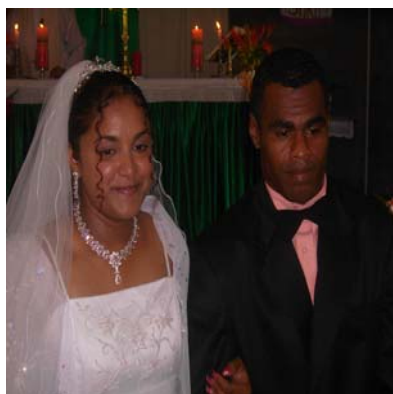
The communities in Ba were visited by the Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI) early October, a year after the completion of the Pro Poor Project. FSPI partnered with FRIEND on the ADB Pro Poor Budget project in 2005 working in eight communities of Ba, mainly squatter settlements, villages and Hart Home. Working with these communities was not easy. Most found it hard to attend any trainings or workshops due to other commitments. Those who remained interested in this project were part of the revisited communities on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2007. We met at the Senior Citizens Ba Community Center with community representatives from six communities. FRIEND program officers, FSPI representative Albert Cerelala, Sharon R. Bhagwan and her FemLINK team were all there to review the communities' action plans and their progress. Most are still working on their action plan projects while others have stopped due to a lack of community support and interest. In my opinion, The Pro Poor Budget Training had notable successes. Some women who were part of this training became spokespersons and leaders in their own communities. This is a positive result, the empowerment of these rural women to stand up and speak out for the sake of their communities. *Mereani Lomavere*

**What's Happening?****DECEMBER**

1st World Aids Day

3rd International  
Day of Disabled  
Persons10th Human Rights  
Day20th International  
Human Solidarity  
Day25th Happy Christ-  
mas**WEDDING TO REMEMBER**

After courting for over a year, the newly weds, who worked for FRIEND, finally made it to the altar exchanging vows in front of a packed St Peters Anglican Church in Lautoka. Families and friends came from all parts of Fiji to witness an occasion not to be missed. For Mitieli and Subhashni, the day marked the beginning of their life journey together. Subhashni will continue working at FRIEND



The newly weds, Subhashni and Mitieli Kalou

while Miti currently works for the Sabeto Youth Camp. The wedding was one of a kind as both come from the deaf community and the cross-cultural intermarriage makes it even more interesting. FRIEND congratulates Mr. and Mrs. Kalou and wishes them well in their new life together.

**HOPE FOR THE FUTURE**

OMG! For a second everything came to a standstill as I made my way to the training room inside the heavily fenced compound of Natabua Prison. I had mixed feelings of excitement and nervousness because it was my first visit in any prison. I went with Kiniviliame, one of our prison program officer, to run a series of esteem building sessions using art. This was part of our Youth Development program as most of the boys are below thirty years old. They were very respectful towards me and were eager to learn. It was an inspirational moment for me as I learnt a lot from them. In order to steer my boat safely through these stormy waters, their stories will help me focus and complete my journey because like them, I may encounter various obstacles in life. The young prisoners that we were working with can have bright futures if given the support from their families and the community. I saw hope in their eyes and I am sure that if given respect and support, they can become law abiding citizens of this country. All participants had inspirational stories to share with us. Towards the end of the session one of the prisoners said that he wanted to *fly away like a free bird and come home at dawn with few grains but with a sense of inner peace.* I am going to cherish this life time experience given to me by my brothers inside prison. I am hopeful that upon release they will continue with our youth development program. *Devina Devi*

