



Takitaki

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AGM 2008



Phillip Gock presenting the Treasurer's report.

FRIEND's annual general meeting took place on Saturday, 21st June at Natabua High School hall in Lautoka. Members from as far as Rakiraki, Tavua and Suva attended the event. The Board President Dr Pramila Devi warmly welcomed the members including youth and people with special needs. Founder/ Director Sashi Kiran gave an overview report of the year and the treasurer Mr Philip Gock presented the audited financial report. Some of the challenges faced working with target groups and stakeholders were acknowledged as well as the successes were applauded. Sashi thanked the board, partners and staff for the running of the organization. Lionel Gibson was a new board member appointed after resignation of Satendra Kumar who had left for greener pastures. Dr Mridula Prasad is a new trustee as Sandhya Narayan, a founding trustee joined the staff. The meeting ended with refreshments.

AUSTRALIA COMMUNITY JUSTICE PAYS FRIEND A SURPRISE VISIT

Australia Community Justice program donated a much needed four wheel drive for delivery of our programs into rural areas. The vehicle a reconditioned Toyota Prado from ASCO was a surprise indeed for FRIEND team as the vehicle was green, the color of our logo and too 'flashy' for our image. But being a vehicle in good condition it certainly can fair the roads our programs team have to go to. Some of the communities FRIEND works in are in the interior areas with very bad roads especially in the rain making travelling into some of the areas extremely risky. FRIEND expresses its sincere most gratitude to Australia Community Justice Program for this kind donation for much needed service delivery. The Fiji Government kindly gave tax exemption on this donation making it affordable.



MOTHERS DAY PROMOTION



Luisa with FRIEND staff Luisa Kumkee, a working mother won a trip to Savusavu from FRIEND Mothers Day Promotion. "This is the first time for me to win something like this. I received the call on Saturday that I have won a prize. I thought someone was just joking but then felt excited, shocked and believed that I have really won a prize. I bought three FRIEND cards that were sold by some volunteered students of Natabua during the school holidays. I did not really expect that I will have this. Thank you FRIEND for promoting good things in our young people" says the cheerful lady.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING—FSPI

After a successful pilot of pro-poor budgeting training in 8 communities in Ba from 2005 to 2006, Foundation of the People of the South Pacific International has contracted FRIEND to run follow up training in the communities. This time the manuals have been translated in vernacular and further simplified. The sessions will assist families and communities with budgeting in their households in these difficult economic times. The sessions will create awareness and try to improve understanding on processes involved in national budgets and international stakeholders affecting the national budgets. The work will commence in the communities in September.



STRATEGIC PLANNING

FRIEND will be completing its six years of existence of office this year. Up until now it has been about start up of the organization, creation of structure, policies and creation of its programs for its survival. Some things have worked and some have not. In its next phase FRIEND has to work on consolidation. To analyse the past and plan for the next phase Dr Frasier McDonald, an administrator and lecturer at Unitec volunteered his services to get the team started. A development practitioner and Clinical psychologist Dr Frasier is a mentor for 10 Not for profit organisations in New Zealand and many others in the Pacific.

For a week in June Dr Frasier volunteered a week of his much valuable time to mentor staff and help the team analyze and plan for future. Some major strategic directions have been identified. Dr Frasier will be working with FRIEND for the next six months, meeting different stakeholders, support staff and Board of FRIEND come up with a strategic plan for consolidation of the organization. The team at FRIEND are extremely grateful to Dr Frasier for his much valued time and guidance to help us walk into the future.

**What's
Happening?**

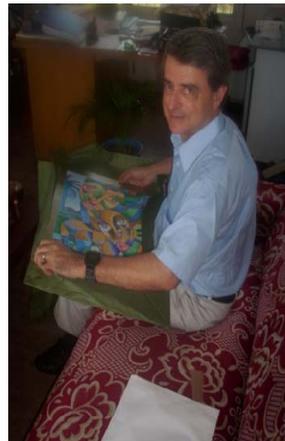
2 July
RJ Workshop

5 July
Food Crisis Project

9 July
FACE Presentation

10 July
GCAP Fundraising
Dance

18 July
Yellow Ribbon
Campaign

VISITOR FOR THE MONTH

The Ambassador of the United States of America H. E. Larry Dinger dropped in at FRIEND while he was in the West in June saying his goodbyes to friends. Mr Dinger completed his term in Fiji and left our shores for his next posting in Myanmar. During his time here he has been a friend of FRIEND. His wife Mrs. Paula Dinger is very creative and has always taken time to give creative ideas to FRIEND for its income generation program. Mrs. Dinger from her busy schedule would make samples of her designs and regularly talk to staff on new possibilities for

income generation program from existing resources in Fiji. Even on this trip to FRIEND Mr. Dinger had brought in two very exquisite designs from Paula. FRIEND bids farewell and wishes both Mr. and Mrs. Dinger all the best in their next posting.

REAL — SUCCESS!!

A program for prisoner rehabilitation was developed by FRIEND in 2005 and a recent review by the funders indicated that program is hugely successful. Restorative Education for Alternative Livelihood (REAL) works with inmates for nine months as it starts building relations with their families and communities. Inside the prison, staff work with relational skills, sensitizing of the men and work plans. Once the inmates are released the program bridges relational gaps to strengthen their families and communities and monitors the men and assists with execution of their action plans. In many cases FRIEND helps with job placements and provides ongoing support. A recent review of the program by Australian Law and Community Justice program that funds REAL revealed 89% drop in recidivism rate with inmates in the program. This has brought a huge relief to the team at FRIEND as we evaluate and consolidate the programs. The program will be further strengthened however a program that started as trial and error to assist the men coming out of prison start a new life, this survey has brought much satisfaction as we had to go through many hurdles to be able to start this program in the prison.

