



Takitaki

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3, MARCH 2008

PAPER MAKING WORKSHOP



Rakeshni and Salaseini working with paper pulp



Nilesh and Taswick cooking banana fibres.



Nileshni with workshop participants drying papers

FRIEND organized a paper making workshop on 6th and 7th of March with some youths as part of the youth week. Nileshni Sekar disseminated the knowledge of paper making which she learnt in a paper making workshop in Suva organized by Secretariat of the South Pacific. Nileshni is thankful to the facilitator Prue Townsend from New Zealand for the knowledge she shared. The workshop was conducted using very basic equipment. Natural fibers as well as waste paper were used to make handmade paper. About 10 to 15 youths will benefit from the program. People have already shown interest in recycled paper and we are hoping that this project will grow and benefit youths.

Nileshni Sekar

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP LECTURES

How can we create an ethical, harmonious society, through leadership and governance based on core human values?

This was the focus of two Public lectures delivered at USP Suva and Lautoka by Dr Elizabeth Denley from Sydney. She explored how western and eastern philosophies plus other traditional views on ethics and value formed the basis of leadership throughout centuries. The lunch time event on 26th March was held in Suva in conjunction with the USP Governance Department. This was the first seminar in the PIASDG series for the year. The Lautoka lecture was on the evening of 28th in the partnership with USP Lautoka Campus. Sixty participants including academics, students, members of the NGO/Business community and general public attended the sessions in both localities. A lot of interest was generated and there have been calls for more engagements of this nature. The power point presentation from the seminars is available at FRIEND.



Suva participants of the public lecture on Community Leadership

TOPLINE YOUTH FORUM

As part of National Youth Week celebrations, FRIEND organized a youth forum at Topline Settlement on the 12th March 2008. The young people talked openly about issues concerning them. They also had the opportunity to speak to Jock Gillespie of the Australia /Fiji Community Justice Sector Program, who listened and gave advice on realistic actions and goals. This session turned out to be informative and inspiring for the more than 30 young people who turned up for the event. A dominant issue highlighted was the lack of support from families and the community as whole for youths at risk. This informal talanoa session proved to be an effective way to engage young people.

Devina Devi

CRIME FREE DAY

The 15th of March saw the streets of Lautoka come alive through a parade with music and people holding banners. The banners highlighted the theme for the Crime Prevention Day- ***Integrated Approach to Promote Community Safety and Security***. Stakeholders and business houses supported the day with foods and drinks for the public at Shirley Park. The Chief Guest, Assistant Police Commissioner, Eroni Antonio opened the day. Influential and vibrant speakers were chosen to highlight the theme for the day. FRIEND supported the day by means of a booth that provided relevant information about its rehabilitation program. Entertainment from various institutions livened the occasion and the day proved informative for the public and the stakeholders.

WHY IS MOM FUN—MOTHERS DAY PROMOTION

This is a competition put together by FRIEND with help from supporting organizations who share our vision of a proactive approach to poverty alleviation. This came out of the need to move some 15,000 cards in stock so that we could continue to provide for the card makers in our workshop.

Entry is simple. Purchase any Friends Fiji Style Handmade Card and ask for a competition coupon from the point of sale. The entries can be in a form of an essay about your 'funny' mom, a poetry or a photo. The entries will need to be sent to FRIEND office in Lautoka P O BOX D623 with the coupon. One coupon – one entry. One person can enter as many times.

Major Prizes

- 1st Prize: Return air ticket to Auckland by Macquarie Travel
- 2nd Prize: A 3 day cruise trip by Blue Lagoon Cruises
- 3rd Prize: Return air ticket flying Air Fiji from Suva to Savusavu
- 4th Prize: \$250 Prouds Shopping Voucher

Consolation Prizes

- Pure Fiji Gift Packs
- Home Appliances sponsored by Supreme Fuel
- MH Shopping Vouchers

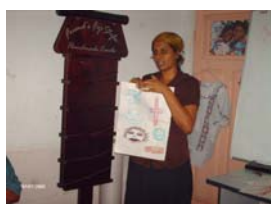
The competition will close on 31st May and winners announced the following week.

The entries will be sorted out at a later date and bound into a Fiji Book as a tribute to mothers in Fiji who continue to smile because and in despite of what they face.

Selected entries will also be placed in Mai Living magazine throughout the year.

**STAFF TRAINING**

Isao, Ashna, Swastika and Adi Vasu in deep discussion



REAL program officer Ashna presenting.

Paulo Bale was invited by FRIEND to conduct a three day consultation workshop for the programs team focusing specifically on the REAL program. The main idea of the three day consultation was to discuss the monitoring of ex-offenders (2006 – 2007), the framework for reporting internal and external service providers, REAL program plans for 2008 and assess the training needs of staff. During the workshop, FRIEND staff were able to identify some key elements that would assist them in their work. These include compiling appropriate reports, identifying exit points in the rehabilitation program, designing a pre-release intensive program and the 2008 prison program plan for the new intakes. In addition staff learnt about debriefing strategies and how to act on lessons learnt. The three day consultation workshop was very important for the program because it helped them identify and acknowledge weaknesses and confront any fears in a professional manner.

Isao Damudamu

HOW WE CELEBRATED INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY



FRIEND staff representing women from different countries.

FRIEND staff commemorated International Women's Day through a 'adopt a country and speak about their women issues' forum. Staff adopted and represented Cambodia, Afghanistan, India, Marshall Islands and Trinidad and Tobago. The Fiji Islands' representative (Adi Makelesi Wacikula) hosted the meet welcoming the international women delegates to the conference. The speakers spoke on women's issues in their countries. Most of the issues raised were similar to every other third world country. Fatima Blush of Afghanistan highlighted the lack of access to education for young girls in their country. Experiences were learnt from the forum as the ladies engaged in group discussion and compared statistics. It was enlightening for all as it provided a greater awareness of such gender issues in countries other than our own.

SKETCH CARDS



These are finely detailed pieces of work by Apimeleki Vakarau of Tavakubu. Apimeleki is a former flight attendant who has been bedridden for the last nine years after he injured his spine playing rugby. *Friend's Fiji Style* © Handcrafted Sketch Card was born after Vakarau submitted samples of his art on framed pieces of wood. The team at FRIEND advised Vakarau that he had a better chance of earning a sustainable income to support his family if he put his work on cards. Look out for the new Sketch cards in various designs on our card stands.

Upcoming Events

1st April
CSO Showcase, Waterfront Hotel

7th April
World Health Day

FRIEND's Mothers Day Promotion

13th & 14th April
PACE Community Leaders Training in Rakiraki

PACE- COMMUNITY TRAININGS

Tavua locals want to be known as people from the Gold Town of Fiji. Three staff from FRIEND's governance program (PACE) entered this rural town on the morning of Thursday 13th March finding it quiet and peaceful. The training was at the District Officer's Conference room attended by twenty women, young and old, indigenous and Indo Fijians, representing various organizations. Most knew FRIEND but this was the first time they had met each other. This training of trainers aimed to empower community leaders assisting them in identifying their resources before setting plans and goals for any project development. There was much interest shown by the younger participants. The training ended on the 14th March with follow up workshop planned for early June.

MEETING THE FORCE

Partnerships are important to FRIEND whether they be formal arrangements or general understanding. The field of community development is one where cooperation amongst all stakeholders is needed to ensure success. This was the message relayed to the Police Department during FRIEND's presentation on the 4th March at the Lautoka Police Station. FRIEND director Sashi and the Programs team spent an hour with representatives of the Community Police informing them of various programs that FRIEND conducts and communities involved. Those present were appreciative of the work that FRIEND does particularly FRIEND's open door policy. The police pledged support and understanding when dealing with our more challenging community groups.