



Executive Chef Brendon Coffey with Food and Beverage Manager Alfredo Denage.

### *Friend's Fiji Style® @ Sofitel*

Delicious assortment of *Friend's Fiji Style®* jams, chutneys and pickles are gracing the La Parisienne Café at Sofitel. Executive Chef Brendon Coffey says he loves *Friend's Fiji Style®* range and other than using these in his cuisine, he wanted customers to taste and buy these. At the café there are bottles sitting for tasting as well as purchasing. This range includes newly launched mango and guava jams as well. Coffey says he is so happy that FRIEND has put the local taste on the market. Sofitel uses the full range of chutneys, jams and honey in their restaurants.



*Friend's Fiji Style®* products on display at La Parisienne, Sofitel Fiji, Denerau

### **PRISM Outreach in Communities**

Despite rain and floods in many of the communities, PRISM health outreach started again in January after the Christmas break. While some communities were slow to start due to weather conditions others came in droves after hearing about the recent fees at hospitals.

The shocking trend for this month was identification of a several young men in their thirties who had never attended clinics before but were diagnosed with high blood pressure and/or high blood sugar. A couple of patients didn't have any history of diabetes or hypertension in their families at all. In these cases, we made sure that the patients were counseled and encouraged to attend follow-up care on the established days.

While some patients were compliant with their medication, exercise and diet many were side tracked by the festivities and feasts during the break and high sugar levels and BPs became a cause for concern. To encourage better dietary compliance, PRISM has taken on board a dietician to help better educate patients. Sheetal Naidu has been visiting the communities with nurses advising patients on diet and exercise.



Sis Sai fills up the medication as Dr Ricketts chats with a patient

We are also very happy to announce that Dr. Finau Ricketts has joined the PRISM team as a part-time physician. Thus far, she has followed patients within the eighteen communities with our nurses. In the villages she has visited stroke patients at home and provided them with much needed care. The PRISM team is grateful for her diligent and compassionate management of patients and looks forward to the future involvement of other such local GPs interested in working/volunteering within the underserved sector.

### **US Embassy Donates to PRISM**

PRISM Health Initiative has a new Electrocardiogram (ECG) machine thanks to the US embassy. With this state of the art technology, our physicians will be in a better position to gauge a patient's heart activity and consequently make more accurate diagnosis. PRISM is extremely grateful to the Embassy of the United States for a grant of \$F18,000 which also helped in purchasing of other equipment needed for medical outreach.

This grant was also used to print vernacular-specific educational materials for the communities as well as PRISM banners.

### ***FRIEND works toward Food Security***

In its attempt to ensure that communities have food security and decrease their reliance on imports, FRIEND has been working with more than twenty communities start their own backyard gardens with a wide variety of vegetables. For two years running there has been ongoing campaigns also on planting of fruit trees. To harness the rains this year communities continue to plant fruit trees. Each of the participant in our governance program has been exchanging at least five fruit trees with others to ensure variety of fruits are planted for each family consumption.

FRIEND is also encouraging participants with land to set up orchards of fruits as they will not only be able to use this for home consumption but also be able to sell these in domestic market and fruit processing organizations who are always facing difficulties in sourcing fruits for large scale processing. This includes wild fruits like guava, sour sop, star apple as well as papaya and bananas. Food preservation for times of disaster is also a key component of community education programs. This includes looking at traditional methods of food preservation still practical in modern times like smoked/ dried fish. To combat increasing flour prices FRIEND has been encouraging communities to consider making their own flour from coconut, cassava and breadfruit that's in abundance this season. To make breadfruit flour, almost ripe breadfruit can be peeled, sliced and sundried and blended into flour. If there is no blender use the grog pounder and communities can be preparing its very own flour for home consumption!



## Got your cards for valentines day?



Looking for special bear hugs for your beloved, or do you want to say "I Love You" with just roses in the old fashioned way? You can be sure to find that special card to make you someone

feel extra special with a handcrafted, *Friend's Fiji Style*® Card this Valentines Day.

The card makers at FRIEND include veterans of the Friend's Fiji Style Handmade cards project that was started with a group of Deaf youths in 2005, when a number of them approached FRIEND seeking solutions for livelihoods following the loss of their jobs in the garment industry due to non renewal of SPARTECA agreement.

With each passing year the quality and creativity of the group in terms of their artworks continues to draw breaths of wonderment from those who see it. Visitors to FRIEND any day will find a group of youths quickly and quietly working away at the Card Workshop as they strive to finish their targets of at least ten cards a day. The hands seem to fly as each tiny paper rose,

each leaf, each thread of the artwork is shaped and pasted onto the boards to make up these special cards.

Currently the card workshop supports 15 people which include the Deaf, unemployed and those with special needs with their livelihoods.

The cards come in two sizes for Valentines 2011. The standard cards can be purchased from FRIEND for \$4.60 a piece while the Big Size are priced at \$25.00 per piece.

*Thank you for your assistance in our poverty alleviation initiative.*

*By Sandhya Narayan*

*The Card Makers*



## A dollar saved.....

"I am shocked", said Rita as she sat looking at her household expense sheet. "I did not ever realise how much was being spent on cigarettes and kava in our family", exclaimed the 35 year old.

Rita was part of a group of participants who recently went through a financial literacy session of the Governance Community Development Module. Her sentiments were echoed around the room by a number of other participants who admitted that they had never given their expenses much thought. Most of the participants, being housewives said they did know what budgeting, and were budgeting for their households all the time, but at the same time they said had never had a chance to put down their expenses on paper.

The session looked at individual participants looking at their household incomes and expenses, and making resolutions to create a balance between the two.

Participants were reminded that like a diet plan, they can only make their budgets work if they stick to their plans.

As the session came to an end, a 25 year old participant, Reshmi piped up that she is going to laminate her piece of paper and put it in her sideboard to constantly remind her to stick to her plan. A neighbour has volunteered to see that Reshmi carries out her promise and to report back to the course on the progress.

*In a follow on session Rita reported that her talk with her family, especially in terms of cigarette usage has seen an immediate 50% cut back in that expense.*

*By Sandhya Narayan*



## Before a Disaster Strikes...



We had just finished our Disaster Preparedness module as part of our Governance Community Development course with one of our communities that week, when the weather turned sullen and warnings for possible attack of Cyclone Wilma started airing.

I called in to check the status of the community and I got a very pleasant surprise as I was informed that the members of the newly formed Disaster Management Committee had just sat down for a break after successfully trimming the tall trees around their homes and cleaning up blocked drain to minimise any potential damages, should Cyclone Wilma come their way.

Poverty, vulnerability and disasters are linked - it is most often the poorest that are worst affected and suffer most. Their poverty makes them more vulnerable. Their capacity to cope with disasters and recover from the effects are constrained by their lack of resources. In our efforts to prepare the underserved communities to face up to the risks of various disasters that our communities are prone to the, our Disaster Preparedness Module gets participants to look at risks in their communities and prepare in advance for situations that may affect their lives and livelihoods.

Cyclones and floods are two of the main identified disasters posing high risk to this particular low lying community located right next to the sea.

Committee Chairperson Vani Leca says their preparedness program is not just for the participants of the FRIEND Course, but for the well being of the whole village which has more than eighty households with around 5-hundred people.

On our subsequent visit to the Community we were happy to note that the uneven grounds right in front of their Community Hall, holding water with the continuous rains of the previous weeks has been evened out with stones and soil and in the process had eliminated what had become a breeding ground for mosquitoes and toads.

Leca proudly informed us that this was the result of the action plan put together by the Committee, in which all the fifteen women of the FRIEND Community Development Course participated earnestly, along with some of the children from the community, who helped carry sacks of soil from outside the village to the site.

*By Vive Liutaki*



## Northern Youths

AS we made our way into the community hall, we were pleased to find more than a dozen youths already gathered and waiting for us. This was our first session with this community.

Earlier we had been to the Turaga ni koro's house and met with Isireli, the youth leader in the community, who had accepted the Sevusevu for his Uncle. As we sat with Isireli and discussed FRIEND and the plan for the session, we were joined by another friend of Isireli who voiced his concerns about what FRIEND was and what we were trying to do. But after the explanation that all we wanted was to work with the young people in the community for their skills development training, he too seemed reassured and welcoming.

The session started with a game of introduction between the participants and the facilitators. There was much fun and laughter as the tennis balls passed around for gathered speed, till everyone had had a chance of remembering the names of their colleagues in the room.

The next activity allowed the participants to reflect on themselves and learn something about their fellow participants in the process. Initially the group was a bit quiet, so this activity worked well to allow everyone to have a chance to talk about themselves. This was done by a Marble game where multicolored cards were put in a bowl. Everyone in the group was invited to grab as much or as little as they liked from the bowl. And for each piece taken, they had to answer a question, depending on its color. For example, Red : favorite hobbies, Green: favorite foods, Yellow: favorite movies, Orange: favorite places to travel , Brown: favorite song, Blue: wild cards (they can share what they choose) etc.

Most young people picked 1 to 3 cards. One participant took about 10 and the group found it funny when he went through every card and managed to say something about himself for each card. The group did well and helped each other by giving suggestions when someone was stuck and didn't know what to say.

Then followed the introduction of FRIEND. Participants were asked to put together a puzzle of the FRIEND logo, as well as look at the information on the pieces of the puzzle relating to FRIEND. A chance to play the game of the childhood excited the youths as they got in their groups to put the puzzle together.

The group farewelled the team warmly expressing wishes for our quick return for the next session

*Rewritten by Sandhya Narayan*



## Recipe: Mixed Vege Fritters



**Ingredients:** Leftover boiled uto/ cassava/dalo, finely cut bele leaves, grated carrots, chillies to taste, 1 clove of crushed garlic, salt to taste, mint leaves.

**Method:** Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Shape and place flat patties in a shallow frying pan or on a health grill. Cook though till the outside turns a nice golden brown. Serve with any of Friend's Fiji Style chutneys (Tamarind, Chilli or Sweet Mango) or place it between a burger bun with slice tomatoes and lettuce for a refreshing burger.

## TO BUY

FRIEND is looking for following seasonal fruits:

**Guava 50 Cents per kg**

**Star Apple 50 Cents per kg**

**Amda 50 Cents per kg**

**Pineapple 70 Cents per kg**

**Lime/Indian Lime \$1.00 per kg**

*Contact Mohinesh on 6663181*

## Two New Mango Products launched in the Friend's Fiji Style Food Range

*Friend's Fiji Style®* Khatai Chutney and *Friend's Fiji Style®*

Mango Jam are now ready to join the supermarket shelves around Fiji together with the first nine food product from communities being marketed under the brand name.

"It takes a long time to put the products in the market," says Mohinesh Reddy, FRIEND's quality control officer. Both the products have been undergoing shelf tests for over last three years.

"We have to see how long the products can stay on shelves before it can be released into the market. We use recipes that have been used and tested over generations and our products are free from any artificial preservatives, flavorings or colors."

"We also ensure that we use only the best quality of raw materials available to us. This ensures that the end product is of the best quality we can produce."

"Our food products are properly labeled and sealed for the market and apart from the locals there has been a growing demand for the products overseas. Visitors to Fiji shores carry back bottles and bottles of *Friend's Fiji Style®* products for their own use as well as gifts for their family and friends."

Currently there are more than a dozen other food recipes that are under trial at Friend's quality controlled kitchen in Tuvu.



*By Sandhya Narayan*



**My Story—The Big Impact**

*A Governance participant shares her experience of FRIEND in her entry for DESI 2010*

**FRIEND**, as I came to know stands for Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises and Development but when I first heard about it, one thing clicked in my mind is , if it is FRIEND, then friend as we all know, is a person that you know well and like, a supporter for a good cause or organization, so I am very glad to say that I am happy to be associated with an organization that will be a friend for life or for years to come. FRIEND has changed my life in a way. It has opened my eyes to new things that I once ignored. FRIEND has taught me to value my friends, my relatives but foremost, my family. I have learnt to cherish those special moments and accept the little things we have because we can make a difference in our society.

I have certainly learnt to grow my own garden. What those little squares could do was a big change. After setting it and planting different seeds and watering it, I was really looking forward to see the first seedlings to appear and it was amazing. Building or making a compost was quite challenging but thanks to FRIEND, I was able to make my own manure which is freely affordable and environmentally friendly. FRIEND has instilled in me the will to be a good person in my community. To appreciate one's effort and work out our own weakness. To speak boldly and be honest with the things we have. We can voice our concerns in the community we live in. When attending this workshop with FRIEND, it has changed me to be a humble person. It has enabled my relatives, my family, my community and myself to feel a sense of belonging, worthiness and being confident. Thank you FRIEND for the huge impact.

*By Tarusila Sivo*



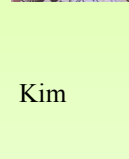
**Youth Employment Network of FRIEND**

YEN 2011 is ready to be launched in April this year. YEN or Youth Employment Network of FRIEND is targeted at unemployed youths from underserved communities to equip them with job skills aiming to level the playing fields in the job market. YEN has been working with around 45 youths a year for the last five years, taking them through esteem building workshops and placing them in work attachments. FRIEND youth Officer Jone Nawaikula says, "A number of our participants have ended up getting permanent positions at their workplaces. I believe this in itself speaks for the quality of training that YEN has been able to put together." He also excitedly adds, "there is one employer that has employed five of our trainees and we always get good reports on the five whenever we talk to this employer." However this year the program will also take on a new component of introducing mentors to the participants. "We have observed over the last few years that some participants need continued guidance before they can really shine through. And as such the team has been exploring the idea of a mentorship program for some-time." "We are quite excited about this new initiative of ours and have no doubts that this will be yet another feather in the cap of FRIEND", says Nawaikula. "We are all familiar with the theory of how poverty robs a person of a persons confidence in oneself to be able to do anything in their lives." "The basic idea behind the Mentorship Program is to pair the youths with suitable mentors and provide the support needed to build and restore the self confidence, esteem and the dreams of the young person to assist them in reaching their full potential." YEN has received the Nelson Mandela Graca Machel Innovation award in 2007.

*By Sandhya Narayan*



Mere



Kim



Ansoo

**Call for Youths**

There is no restriction or limitation on application. Youths with little secondary education or completed formal tertiary qualifications can apply for YEN training. Placement of youths with their mentors will depend on qualifications of the applying youths. Talk to Tamsin or Richard on phone 6663181 For more information



**Call for Mentors**

Youth Employment Network of FRIEND is calling for mentors in both formal and non formal sectors. The mentors will be working with young people providing guidance and leadership toward career goals. Please let us know if you are interested. You can email us on [friend@connect.com.fj](mailto:friend@connect.com.fj) Or call 6663181

