



### Blue Ribbon Activities



FRIEND's month long Blue Ribbon Awareness campaign against Diabetes has been concluded with various fun filled activities through which communities were sent strong messages in taking appropriate action against management of diabetes.

During the month FRIEND visited homes, villages, schools and workplaces distributing blue ribbons and spreading awareness on the importance of yearly diabetic checks for everyone as well as conducting community clinics. 30 communities in the North, West and the Yasawas had presentations conducted by medical personnel bringing home the issue of crisis in Fiji—Diabetes and related disability due to amputations

The awareness program concluded in the West with the Amazing Race for Health which saw sixteen community teams attempting a number of challenges as they learnt about issues surrounding Diabetes.

In the North the main event was held in Yalava Village targeting people aged over 40, where around 80 participants from surrounding villages got together for a day of sporting activities

Fiji has been declared by the authorities to be in a



The top two pictures show youth participating in amazing race in Lautoka, while the bottom shows communities in a tug of war event in the North

state of National NCD Crisis.

The statistics state that there is one amputation every 12 hours in our hospitals around the country.

“Breaking down the messages to reach the level of their backyards was key effort of FRIEND during the awareness program” says FRIEND Medical/Associate Director Dr Jone Hawea.

“During the month we also conducted cooking competitions using local recipes which brought home the messages on local healthy food and the importance of cooking methods.”

“We cannot overload the public with jargon and expect them to read in between the lines. It is good public is made aware of statistics but ‘it is how to curb question that is to be made as locally practicable as possible’, says Dr Hawea.

### “Bees & Beyond with Thomas Körsten”

“You are in the right place, what you need is the right frame of mind,” were the words of Minister for Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries as he addressed close to 150 farmers gathered at the APIARY FARMER FORUM on November 14<sup>th</sup> at the FRIEND Training Centre in Tuvu, Lautoka.

Mr Inia Seruiratu reiterated his belief that Agriculture plays a very important role, not only for production of food but also for incomes. “Farming is the best business. Farming is the best job. Farmers working with focus can potentially earn upto \$200-thousand dollars a year compared to a new graduate whose starting salary would be around \$15,000 a year”. Mr Se-

ruiratu says Fiji has so much idle land that can be put to good use. “For example a farmer may have 60 acres of land out of which only 20 acre maybe is utilized. Where land is not suitable for planting cane, what is stopping you from planting coconuts which can grow anywhere or placing beehives for honey production?” questioned the minister.

The Conference was facilitated by Mr Thomas Körsten from Germany, an Apiary Farmer with more than 25 years of experience.

While the farmers learnt new techniques for maintaining and expanding their apiary knowledge from Mr Thomas Körsten, the Forum provided important platform where many of the farmers could liaise with high level government delegation present. Other than 60 FRIEND beekeepers, Ba, & Sigatoka Bees association also attended the forum.







### **Back to Yasawas**

AUSAID funded Nurseries Project is aimed to ensure speedy recovery in terms of food security for the islands after disasters

*Boat ride in high seas - FRIEND Associate Director Dr Jone Hawea & Field Officer Abdul Saiyaz*

A follow up visit to the Yasawas revealed that seeds left behind two months earlier were well used to develop vegetable gardens. Large vegetable gardens have emerged in 3 communities where work had started earlier. A family in Marou surprised everyone with large gardens from the seeds provided, women's group in Kese had a range of gardens and backyard gardens emerged in Malevu.

FRIEND revisited the Yasawas this month to provide technical support to sustain the gardens and food security programs as well as identify potential beneficiaries for plant nursery projects in Yasawas.



### **SOFRECO Head Visits GROW Projects Disaster Risk Planning Workshop for Vulnerable Communities**



*L-R SOFRECO Head, Mathieu Dassonville, PMU Team Leader Andrew Winter Taylor and FRIEND Director, Sashi Kiran*

Despite the heavy rains this month visiting SOFRECO boss Mathieu Dassonville visited the projects funded by the EU.

He was accompanied by SOFRECO employees in Fiji.

SOFRECO is a French company that is contracted to monitor EU Social mitigation project and the unit is based in Lautoka.

Communities from around Lautoka gathered at FRIEND for a one day workshop on Disaster Risk Planning as heavy rains of the past few weeks caused increased apprehensions of worsening weather in the coming weeks.

The workshop was attended by community leaders who had to draw their villages and identify risks after which they planned to go back and consult their village on the risks and plan preparedness.

“Our community sits in the banks of a river. Homes on lower land always gets flooded when the river bursts its banks. Many homes were also heavily damaged in the cyclone last year. We had not expected the cyclone to be so strong as we had never seen such damage before. Now we know better. This workshop is a good reminder that we need to work together to reduce the risks” says Turaga Ni Koro of Matawalu village.

The plans will be monitored by Field Officers to provide ongoing support for disaster preparedness in these communities as FRIEND continue to work toward food security.







### **Bees, Wax and Candle Making**

“If you are going swimming, you will get wet, it is the same with working with bees, you may get stung by a few, but it doesn't kill you,” quipped Thomas Körsten as he worked away happily answering questions from the participants at his candle making workshop.

The workshop was aimed to familiarize GROW Apiary Project holders with income opportunities from their projects apart from honey.

GROW project holders are now producing their own wax sheets utilizing the wax from their hives and are also equipped with skills and knowledge on how to make genuine beeswax candles.

“Uptil now we have had to rely on imported wax sheets which costs us 2 dollars per sheet to expand or maintain our hives. After this workshop we can now collect and filter our own wax to make wax sheets,” said beekeepers from Ba.

“Candle making takes a lot of patience and very steady hands,” says Ashika. “But I am pleased with my first efforts at making these.”

“In Fiji there is a lot that needs to be done to establish beekeeping as an industry. The potential is huge. And it is not complicated once farmers are able to grasp the basics,” say Mr Körsten.



### **Recipe Corner— Roasted Breadfruit**

**Ingredient:** 1 Breadfruit

**Directions:** If using a charcoal : nestle the breadfruit in the coals, raking the latter around it to cover as much of the fruit as possible. Cook the breadfruit until the skin is charred and the flesh is very soft. This will take 40 to 60 minutes, depending on the size and ripeness of the breadfruit. To test for doneness, insert a metal skewer the breadfruit should be soft in the center.

If using a gas grill (direct method), preheat to medium. When ready to cook, place the breadfruit on the hot grate and grill until the skin is charred and the flesh is very soft (see above for timing and test for doneness).

To serve, cut or break the breadfruit into wedges and trim away the burnt part.

***It can be served with meals however tastes the best with a squeeze of lime, chilli and garlic.***







**Visitors from Nadi Muslim League**

“We hadn’t realized the diversity of work FRIEND does in communities until now,” said Nur Nisha of Martintar Nadi.

Nisha visited FRIEND HQ with her friends from Nadi Muslim League as part of their annual outing at the end of the year.

The group watched FRIEND videos on Health,

Cyclone Rehabilitation and GROW projects and looked through card workshop and the gardens in their efforts to understand the work covered by FRIEND.

“We thought it will be a short stopover but the ladies seems reluctant to board the bus now — they like it here.” said Nisha as she said farewell.

**Happy Diwali 2013 @ FRIEND**

