



12 Years A Celebration of Diversity

FRIEND's 12th anniversary was celebrated with old friends and new as the focus for the next three years for FRIEND was announced - Food, Health and Sustainability.

The day saw around 300 friends and community members enjoy traditional foods spread out as part of Learning Festival organized to commemorate the day at Tuvu HQ on 29th August 2014.

Opening the Community Panel, FRIEND Founder/Director highlighted concerns on use of highly processed foods winning preference over natural and locally available option.

"Our teams travel into interior areas as well as out to the islands. In rural farming communities we see people eating and serving imported dhals and people eating instant noodles and canned fish in the islands when they are surrounded by fresh fish and rootcrops," says Sashi.

FRIEND Associate Director, Dr Jone Hawea urged people to stop feeling guilty for indulging in local foods as they are always better for health.

"Many times when out in communities, we find hosts are apologetic when they are not able to serve tea with milk and sugar. Our forefathers have always used draunimoli and lemon grass. They are full of natural goodness and we should be proud to have such resources widely available around us," says Dr Jone. "Plus we have people coming to us and vouching that they seem to have better control of their blood pressure when they drink



Guests and communities join FRIEND Staff in the timeless tradition of cake cutting to mark the 12th Anniversary



Sashi Kiran



Adi Litiana

lemongrass tea."

Radini Tui Vitogo, Adi Litiana Sovasova talked about the impact of FRIEND interventions in her village over the years and how people are adopting a healthier eating habit by growing their own food, eating healthier and exercising. She called on everyone to actively participate in programs offered by FRIEND as it is for their own benefit.

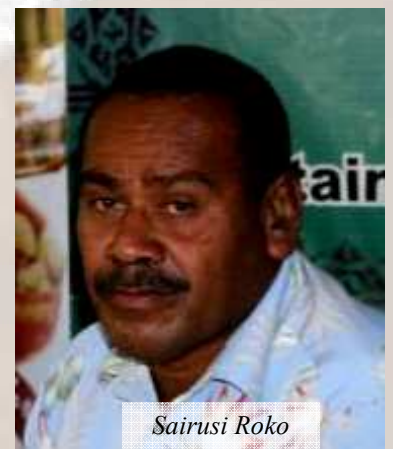
Vitogo Villger, 47 year old Sairusi



Dr Jone Yuli

Roko, who found discovered he was a diabetic after a minor injury that resulted in him losing his leg through amputation a few years back talked strongly about the need for everyone to have themselves tested for Diabetes before they have to lose a limb.

Fiji records atleast 1 diabetic amputation every twelve hours.



Sairusi Roko

Mela Na Waqe Build Up towards Finale

Communities who organize regular physical activity came together for a one day sports event held in Lautoka to encourage communities towards greater physical activity. The fun filled event had many great prizes for grabs! The event was sponsored by the Australian High Commission supporting physical activities.

Lack of exercise is one of the key causes for lifestyle diseases.

The day began with the Walk Race Event which saw a number of elderly participants actively participating.

“People are generally quite active physically when they are young, however as they get older their level of physical exercise decreases. This increases the risks associated with NCDs like diabetes, hypertension and heart diseases,” says FRIEND Medical Director Director Dr Jone Hawea.

“To encourage older people to get involved in physical activities FRIEND has been organizing community sports activities where we have seen people who have not been involved in active sports for years come out and play.”

The main event will be held in November to commemorate World Diabetes Day.

The **blue circle** is the global symbol for diabetes but to many people around the world it still means nothing. One of the aims of World Diabetes Day is to increase awareness of the symbol and strengthen its role as a means of bringing diabetes to the attention of the general public and supporting all efforts to improve the lives of people living with diabetes and reduce the serious global threat that the epidemic represents.



Product of the Month—

Friend's Fiji Style®

Layalaya & Cinnamon Tea



Fiji Cha Layalaya Tea with Cinnamon is made from ginger like root also known as Drove of Cogolaya.

The roots have been used to treat ailments like colds, indigestion, stomach ache, bladder trouble, diabetes and blood pressure complaints for generations.

“When we were kids, my grandmother used to sit all cousins in a line and made sure we drained our cups one by one. She would prepare the drink from freshly grated roots every Saturday. It will clean your system out we were told,” says Mereani Lomavere, “The bitter taste made the drink very difficult to swallow.”

However this Fiji Cha blend has been developed with local cinnamon which adds to the taste and aroma.

“I like this blend. It has a smooth fresh taste and none of the bitterness that goes with layalaya,” says Mereani.

Traditional Foods take Center Stage

The Food Festival held as part of the event to mark FRIEND's 12th anniversary brought many mouthwatering dishes to the table.

“We are hoping to provide an opportunity for people to learn, taste and adopt traditional foods as healthier meal choices for themselves and their families,” says Sashi Kiran, Director, FRIEND.

Most of the dishes that used to be a staple in rural homes not many years ago are now rare to come across. These foods incorporated a lot of ingredients found fresh and easily around homes and villages.

“The assortment of dishes were on sale for the day and we had very positive feedback from our guests on the freshness of produce as well as trips down memory lane over dishes many had not come across in years or had maybe heard of but never tasted,” says Sashi.



Matavalu ladies serving food with a smile



Kokoda



Vakalavalava



Lairo Vakasoso



Kadwadu Curry

Recipe Corner—Rourou Vakalolo with Fresh Cane Syrup



Ingredients:

- 1 bundle Dalo Leaves
- 1 Heap Cassava (peeled & grated)

Method

Boil the Dalo leaves

Mash the cooked leaves and once cooled, mix with freshly grated cassava

The mixture is then wrapped in banana leaves and boiled.

For Fresh Cane Syrup

Extract about 2 cups fresh cane juice from sugar cane.

Cook the cane juice till it turns brownish.

Add 2 cups fresh coconut milk. Add a whole lemon to the mixture and cook into syrup consistency. Stir Continuously. Take care not to let the syrup boil over.

Once it is ready remove the lemon and coat Rourou Vakalolo in Fresh Cane Syrup and serve.

Words of the Wise

"From where I stand, I do not see the lost people of the South Seas, the defeated and the despairing, shrunken shadows of those who went before.

What I observe are the proud descendants of some of the most remarkable explorers and settlers who ever lived. We carry the cultural and historical inheritance of ocean navigators of peerless skill and their courageous kin who crossed vast distances before the tribes of Europe had ventured forth from their small part of the earth. Our forebearers populated islands scattered over the world's greatest stretch of water, covering a fifth of the planet's surface. It was one of the most amazing migrations in history, a triumphant testimony to human endurance, fortitude and achievement."

Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara



Education Status in Fiji & the Region

Education coalitions from PNG, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands met with Fiji CSOs to discuss the Education Post 2015 Agenda in Lautoka this month.

The meet was organised by Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education, USP Lautoka Campus and FRIEND.

The Forum provided a valuable opportunity to gain an update on international education policy debates and positioning in the lead up to decisions to be made at the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

Representatives from national civil society education coalitions in Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands provided brief update on education policy challenges in their respective countries.

This was followed by strong Fiji-an perspectives with a presentation of the government's thinking on education post 2015, and the responses and positions of Fijian civil society organisations (CSOs).

The forum agreed that Fiji has had significant strong actors in Education over the years and continues to build on education opportunities for progress and development.

The Forum also officially marked the Regional Event for ASPBAE's 50th Anniversary in 2014.

Officials and Guests join hands to celebrate 50th Anniversary of ASPBAE



Carrying the Legacy Forward



FRIEND has been entrusted with a \$20,000 donation by the family of late Susan Parkinson of Suva towards implementation of promoting and producing healthy foods in communities.

Mrs Parkinson who was a well-known South Pacific nutritionist and a pioneer of women's rights in Suva passed away in October 2012 at the age of 92.

Late Susan Parkinson

She was an acknowledged regional authority on food and nutrition preaching the gospel of healthy balanced diets, based on local foods.

Susan saw that this was critical for avoiding the lifestyle diseases that would inevitably accompany the growth of consumerism.

The money will be used to setup solar dryers as well as provision of four mill/grinders in communities involved in production of root crop flours and dried fruits.

A boost in supply of local dried fruits would ensure that school children as well as the general community will have an option of naturally preserved food as a healthy snack option.

While the flours can be utilized by households to complement/replace their meals from the existing imported refined flours that is commonly used.