

# The Soul of the Water

News from our Vanua

**FIJI**  
WATER



Volume 1, Issue 2

A Quarterly Newsletter for Our Fiji Water Family

June 2008

## Ni Bula and Namaste!

Welcome to our second issue. For those unfamiliar with the Fiji greetings above, "Bula" is not only the Fijian word for hello and welcome, but also for health and life. And it's what you say when someone sneezes. The "Ni" in front refers to all of you. "Namaste" on the other hand, is one of many Hindu greetings, a formal way of saying peace be with you, may your name be blessed.

### An ending and a beginning...

Here at operations in Fiji we have been celebrating numerous transitions within the company, most notably the departure of managing director Jim Siplon and his family for greener (and colder) pastures in New Zealand, while Paul Davies steps up from director of production



Early days at the Yaqara plant

and engineering to bosso levu (big boss). Jim leaves big, steel-toed boots to fill, but we all know there is no better man for the job than Paul and are proud to boast that this will be the first time in the history of FIJI Water that the managing director has been promoted from within the factory walls. Congratulations Paul and best of luck Jim! ■

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## LIVEGREEN: A Very Fiji Family Day

Celebrating our Fiji Water Family!

In keeping with our passion for a knee-slappin' good time, FIJI Water proudly hosted the second annual Family Fun Day on Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>. More than 1300 members of our Fiji Water Family gathered across the road from the factory for a day of sports, games, food, live performance, crafts, and employee recognition.



Nothing says fun like an egg on a spoon relay...

Like last year's event, employees and their families enjoyed a BBQ picnic lunch and organized games for the whole family. Employees were divided into 4 color teams and competed in netball and volleyball games. Team relays captured the attention of all ages, with sack races, egg and spoon races, apple bobbing, water balloon toss, and tug-of-war.

This year, however, in keeping with our passion for the environment, the organizing committee decided on a theme for the event- LIVEGREEN: Recycling, Reducing, Reusing, and Renewing our commitment to a cleaner vanua. Messages encouraging employees to collect and separate their recyclables were prevalent throughout the day. Children and adults alike received silicone bracelets baring the LIVE GREEN logo. Meanwhile, a contest for craft or household items made from recycled materials from the factory proved to be an incentive for some employees. First place winner, Sulita

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## Back to School

*Bringing new life to local kindergartens*

As reported in our last issue, Rabulu Village Kindergarten reopened a few months ago after a three-year hiatus for lack of a teacher. When Rabulu native Miss Salome came back from her Lautoka Teachers College preschool course, the kindergarten was back in business, but was in much need of a makeover. Enter our dedicated group of employee volunteers!

One sunny Saturday in April, a dozen employees and family members descended upon the mildewed school. With the help of Rabulu mother's club, the kindergarten management, and a lot of elbow grease, the classroom was transformed in a matter of hours.

Not content with a just paint job, a few artistically gifted volunteers, including Susan Siplon and daughters Emma and Grace, returned to the school a week later to add a splash of color to the beige walls.

Rabulu isn't the only kindergarten to receive TLC from Fiji Water employees. The Indian school nearest to our factory (where volunteers constructed a playground at GSM in January) was also begging a paint job for its busy kindergarten. This became the project of another weekend work group. Teachers and school committee members joined our Fiji Water contingent and the schools' walls and ceilings got good scrubbing and fresh coats of paint.



*The new Rabulu mural.*

We hope to continue these painting efforts at all of our kindergartens this year, as well as providing for some newer play structures. If you have items you would like to donate to our kindergartens, see the last page of this newsletter. ■



## A House Fit for a Tui

*We celebrate the official opening of the home of our regional paramount chief*

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, FIJI Water and the residents of our six local villages gathered in Drauniivi village for the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new home of our regional community leader, the Tui Vatu.

Despite inclement weather, community members and employees alike turned up in droves. Some carried umbrellas, but the village masters of ceremony stood stoically in the rain, offering traditional Fijian words and gifts of blessing. Among these were several *tabua* (whale's teeth), a roasted pig, and massive *yaqona* (kava) root. Managing Director Jim Siplon invoked the rain as a blessing, noting that water is the unifying element our company's special relationship with the vanua.

While the current Tui Vatu, Ratu Marika Rasuwaki, and his family will reside inside, this building belongs to all the people of the vanua and will serve as a meeting place and community resource for years to come. It is the largest home in Drauniivi and was built and funded by the Natural Waters of Viti Ltd (NWWL) Trust. FIJI Water first established the revenue-funded trust in 2000 to invest in needed community infrastructure projects, such as water and school projects. A house for the Tui Vatu was identified as an early priority, but it took a few false starts before FIJI Water was able to step in and project manage the building to its successful completion early this year.

This is another example of our company's commitment to the development of our vanua. We take immense pride in recognizing the effort of all involved and celebrating the unity of Vatukaloko. ■

## FIJI Water Foundation News: *Our contributions and projects throughout Fiji*

The FIJI Water Foundation, established in late 2007, is fast becoming one of the leading providers of humanitarian aid in Fiji for public health, education, and water projects. The Fiji Times recently applauded us for encouraging other Fiji-based businesses to follow our lead and set up vehicles for public outreach. We at the FIJI Water Foundation Headquarters in Suva (all two of us) are very excited to share news of the programs that are being made possible by all of your contributions to the Foundation.

At the end of last quarter, the FIJI Water Foundation board funded the first round of projects in Fiji and at the end of June another nine projects were approved. Below are featured a number of completed and in-progress projects:

**"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no person can sincerely try to help another without helping themselves." – R W Emerson**



*Malomalo is picturesque, but remote. Water for washing is drawn from this brackish well.*

### **MALOMALO PRIMARY SCHOOL**

#### **NADROGA SCHOOL WATER TANKS**

Malomalo serves 136 multi-racial students as well as the teachers and their families who live in the school compound. Until recently, they have encouraged children to bring their own water to school, as the rainwater tanks at were rusted and the school well draws brackish water. Thanks to FIJI Water Foundation funding, they have purchased 1750L water tanks and fittings. Their headmistress reports that now "children have a safe, clean source of drinking water."

### **RED CROSS COMMUNITY SAFETY**

#### **RAKIRAKI, TAVUA, LAUTOKA FIRE, WATER, AND FIRST AID SAFETY TRAINING**

The Red Cross 'Safer Communities' pilot project aims to deliver water, fire, and first aid safety programs to rural schools and communities. These programs promote safer lifestyles and assist in the reduction of accident related injuries and deaths among targeted communities through capacity building, community education, and school programs. FIJI Water Foundation's support will bring this training to communities throughout Fiji in rural Rakiraki, Tavua, and Lautoka.

### **PROJECT HEAVEN**

#### **KADAVU ISLAND CHILDREN'S EAR AND EYE SCREENING**

Project HEAVEN (Hearing And Vision Enhancement) is a unique local NGO that operates throughout Fiji. By identifying and remedying vision and hearing problems in children, the program has a huge impact on their classroom performance. Our contribution will allow the trained teams to screen more than 2,000 children on the remote island of Kadavu.



*Project HEAVEN funding. 2007 Heart Foundation surgeries.*

### **FRIENDS OF FIJI HEART FOUNDATION**

#### **FIJI-WIDE VISITING HEART SURGERY TEAM**

For the last 2 years, a group of volunteer New Zealand heart surgeons have traveled to Fiji to perform cardiac surgery on eligible high-need children and adults. Our major sponsorship of this program will provide necessary medical equipment.

### **GOLD FOUNDATION**

#### **TAVUA POVERTY ALLEVIATION THRU EDUCATION**

FIJI Water Foundation has funded the Coping with Poverty Through Income Generation Education (CPIGE) pilot program in Tavua. Targeting women in and around Tavua and Vatukoula, the CPIGE workshops empower women through financial independence and help them better manage their time and resources. It also provides them with support to succeed. ■

## The Maestro Visits Yaqara

*Rugby legend Waisale Serevi kicks off the FIJI Water 7s*

Many of us have admired him from a far, but few could imagine the impact this great player and great man has in person. Waisale Serevi, the international legend of Fiji Rugby, made a special appearance at the Fiji Water 7s and Netball Tournament on June 27-28<sup>th</sup>. His opening words of national pride and hope to the players brought tears to eyes all over the Drauniivi school field. Invoking

**LIVEGREEN: A Very Fiji Family Day** *continued from page 1*

Nainima, created a beautiful mat in the Fijian style from blue and black resin strapping.

Also present at Family Day were a number of medical officers from Tavua who volunteered their time and, along with our health coordinator Vicky Allen, conducted diagnostic health screenings for Fiji Water family members at the medical booth.

A number of performances kept everyone entertained as the food was served. The boys from Delai Vatuvula Jr. came down from the highlands to serenade the crowd with their newly recorded song *Natural Waters of Viti* inspired by Fiji Water. To everyone's delight, Fleet driver Atalifo Niurou's wife and two daughters performed a traditional Rotuman dance similar to the Hawaiian hula that had everyone cheering.

The day ended on a high note with a long service awards and a ceremony for outstanding performances by employees in the categories of safety, community service, attendance, and innovation.

And wouldn't you know it, at the end of the day, the big winners of the sports competitions were... the Green Team! A fitting end to a day of Fiji Green family celebration.



*Congrats Team Green! Co-captains Meraia and Campbell accept the trophy from Jim and Paul . ■*

the importance of education, Serevi also urged parents & spectators to give generously to the school fundraiser, which operated along side the tournament. At the tournament's end, more than \$20,000 was raised for Drauniivi Public School renovations. Many Thanks Serevi and to all the event organizers!



*Serevi and Jim with our FIJI Water 7s rugby teams. ■*

## GET INVOLVED!

For those of you interested in participating in outreach opportunities, there are a number of ways you can help make a difference in our Fiji communities:

1. **Make a \$\$ Foundation Donation:** Through Roll Giving Employee Grants or Matching Gifts, you can make a tax deductible donation to the FIJI Water Foundation. [www.rollgiving.com](http://www.rollgiving.com)
2. **Send us Material Donations:** Whether you're coming to Fiji, know someone who is, or can put a stamp on a box and mail it, send us your used or new **toys, children's books, and school supplies** for our schools. Visit the Well for more info: <http://thewell.roll.ad/Pages/Default.aspx>
3. **Join in:** If you're on your way to Fiji for a week or more, ask about weekend activities- you may be able to help us paint a school room, participate in events like family day, attend ceremonies like the opening of the Tui Vatu's home, or hand out some of your gifts in person at a school or in a village.

If you have more questions about FIJI Water's outreach or the FIJI Water Foundation, please feel free to email me: [mpowers@fijiwater.com](mailto:mpowers@fijiwater.com) and stay tuned for an upcoming Foundation website in the next few months. Until September...

**Moce mada and Fir Milenge!**

*Molly Powers, Foundation Coordinator*