

YOU HAVE A FRIEND INC

IN THIS EDITION ~

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ISSUE 6 ~ April 2010

P.O.Box 637, Tweed Heads, NSW 2485
Our website www.youhaveafriend.org.au

Imagine only having contact with people who are paid to have contact with you..... this is chronic homelessness.....Think about it.....

Brisbane Star
Cruises



Island Style
Promotions

Easter 2010 Edition

*"responding to the needs of the
poor and marginalised"*





From The President!

It is hard to believe on the 1st May 2010 our registered charity "You Have A Friend" will be two years old. We consider a most generous donation of funds to purchase a second van, as our birthday gift. For this wonderful donation we are most grateful to Mrs Rosalba Gustin who on behalf of the Mamma Lena & Dino Gustin Foundation donated the finance. This will now

provide us the ability to continue the support so needed by the homeless and marginalised in the Tweed district. We will be much more mobile and effective in this support of our friends at our outreaches with meals, fresh fruit, vegetables and bread to the hundreds of people in need on the Tweed.

Our outreaches serve over 300 meals a week to many living on the streets, in cars, or couch surfing. The Tweed district has the state's second highest number of homeless behind Sydney. Over the last few months I have visited Federal, State and local council politician in the Tweed Heads district regarding the lack of housing, crisis accommodation or even just a drop-in centre in the area. All to no avail and I am left once more fighting to get recognition from the authorities that there is a major homeless crisis in the district. We are now supporting women sleeping in squats in Tweed Heads, many people with mental issues, domestic violence victims and many others living in cars, behind buildings or under bridges. These people are conveniently forgotten and abandoned by the authorities.

Our Coolangatta/Tweed outreach regularly supports 30 – 40 persons each outreach. Chinderah has regular attendance of 20 – 40 persons and Murwillumbah is currently supporting 30 – 50 persons each week. Sadly, more and more children between the ages of 1 to 14 are attending our outreaches. We are in contact with approximately 20 children a week and provide food, love and care to each. Our Court outreach has progressed in leaps and bounds over the last few months and for that we thank Lorraine who has been responsible for the "new look" at the court house in Tweed Heads. Our gold coin donations have noticeable improved and in some cases more than doubled with the new displays, professionalism and a new variety of sandwiches.

In the last few months, we have successfully begun our "Food-Drop" outreach. Woolworths at Tweed Centro has authorized our charity to distribute their day old fresh fruit, vegetables and bread to the friends we support. This we gladly accepted and on four days a week we provide fresh food to two caravan parks in Chinderah as well as a housing commission estate in Tweed Heads. Our goal is a seven day fresh food "Food Drop" service to other local areas as well.

Our Murwillumbah Thursday BBQ volunteer lunch team continues to provide an amazing service. We also thank Wendy and her community centre volunteers who support us each week with the location, utensils, gas and equipment. It is at this BBQ each week that we will provide our latest venture, "bingo". The object being to alleviate some of the boredom many of the unemployed, marginalised and homeless people in the district experience. Prizes will be food hampers.

As always, this wonderful charity would not be possible were it not for the efforts of our 55 volunteers and also the wonderful support that we receive from the St. Joseph's and St. James Primary colleges of Banora Point as well as Mt. St. Patrick's College in Murwillumbah and St. Anthony's Primary in Kingscliff who provide us such wonderful support by way of students who join us on the streets and also collecting food for the many hampers we provide each week. Also not to forgetting our many sponsors who ask for nothing except the chance to support our cause. Finally a special thanks to the Catholic Church in Tweed Heads who provide us facilities for storage of clothes, food, utensils and a kitchen to prepare meals in.

As always I reserve our greatest thanks for the caring love, respect and support our friends provide me and each and every one of our wonderful volunteers.

May God bless you all. John Lee ~ President



YHAF Court Outreach

Operating from the Tweed Heads Court
Monday and Tuesday mornings.

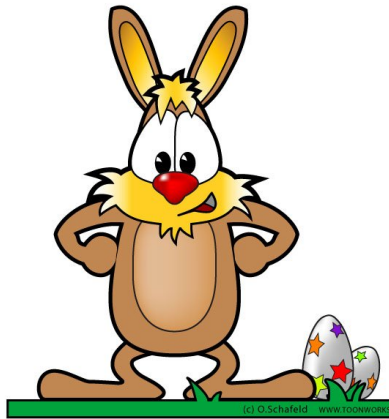
The Court Outreach, at Tweed Heads Court on Monday and Tuesday mornings, continues to do well, with increasing sales. New signage depicting the You Have a Friend logo has generated many positive comments and enquiries about the charity from the public. This interest has translated into more generous donations as it is now more obvious that we are a charity and not part of the court itself. We continue to expand the range of products on sale to cater for the needs of the public and the new chocolate display stands make us look like a 'real' shop! - LS

A note of "Thanks" to Lorraine for her wonderful efforts in setting up the outreach for us. Also a very big thank you Val for your

wonderful support each Tuesday. You both do a wonderful job and yes, we are now becoming very professional and it really shows in the takings. The money we make each week through donations and drink sales goes a long way in supporting our vans with fuel for the many outreaches we are now operating as far away as Murwillumbah - JL



Easter Celebrations in Coolangatta!



Easter Sunday dawned and the vollies gathered at the hall to prepare for the celebrations (and the regular Sunday Brekky). Over 130 treat bags (15cm x 9cm) had been prepared containing a mixture of eggs, chocolates, nuts, dried fruits, lollies and biscuits.

They had been divided evenly into the three boxes – one for Coolangatta, one for Murwillumbah and one for Chinderah. Added to each box was a great selection of toys and CDs which had been collected from Woolies the previous month.

Armed with the usual breakfast foods, dozens of packs of Easter Buns, the boxes of prepared gifts and, wait for it, 15 to 18 large Easter Eggs (donations arranged by FDB in Tweed Centro) ready for the customary Easter Egg Hunt. What a great time we had at

Coolangatta!

All our friends loved being showered with the gifts and Easter Buns and the volunteers loved sharing them out. After breakfast Karen quietly slipped away to hide the colorful Easter eggs in the pandanus tree branches and roots.

The children had a ball – even the little one year-old assisted by his mother.

The wonderful thing about remembering to celebrate Special Events with our friends is that it brings them into line with the rest of the world and what they see is going on around them for us privileged folk. **Hope you all had as happy an Easter morn as we did.**

*When one door closes, another opens.
But we often look so regretfully upon
the closed door that we don't see the
one that has opened for us -*

- Alexander Graham Bell

Easter 2010

Well what a great Easter we had at our three major outreaches.

Preparation began over a month before the big day with our newly formed "Special Events" group planning and putting together the 130 treat bags of wonderful treats neatly packed into bags we distributed to all present. Wonderful Easter eggs were very kindly donated by



FDB in Tweed Centro and added to that were other items distributed by Woolworths, Tweed Centro.

At all outreaches, it was the children, some as young as 1 year old and some as old as 60, who provided us with such fun. After our standard brekkie of ce-

real, eggs, sausages, toast, juice, tea, coffee, it was distributing presents and then the "Easter Egg Hunt". Such fun when the kids find what the Easter bunny has left for them and then it is chocolate all over their faces and clothes.

A highlight at Murwillumbah was the famous "Chicken Dance" aptly led by Denise, to the delight of the kids and not to mention the adults and Vollies.



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Thank you all our helpers for your wonderful support. The preparation of the packs, giving up of your time and for your love and dedication on such a special day. I know over 100 people and 30 children were made so happy and felt so special on this important day.

May God Bless you all and Happy Easter to you all.

Meet some special Voolies...

Every Sunday rain, hail or shine two of our most senior and dedicated volunteers walk hand in hand to the breakfast area to greet our friends with a warm smile. Milton and Betty met on the very same beach at Coolangatta where our breakfasts are cooked. Introduced by an Uncle some years ago, they have grown very fond of the beach. As avid swimmers you will find them every morning in Currumbin Creek at around 6.30am, a key I expect to their excellent health.

Milton worked up until the age of 84 working as a boilermaker for 24 of those years and teacher at Coolangatta State School for 26 years.

With 66 years of a wonderful marriage under their belt not a day goes by that they are not thankful for being blessed with a fabulous life they have been given. Their tips for a happy marriage they say is to keep romance alive, have a good sense of humour and have fun together. Milton jokes that if you can train your kids to always answer "Yes Dad" it can make life a little easier. With 11 children, 38 grandchildren and 40 great grandchildren they certainly have had an active lifestyle. The trick to longevity they believe is your state of mind, positive attitude and belief in God.

And so every Sunday Milton and Betty take their positions, Milton as head chef at the BBQ plate cooking sausages, despite him being vegetarian and Betty serving cereal and hot meals. Their radiant and gentle persona provide the outreach with such a warm, caring feeling all our friends delight in being in their company as much as Milton and Betty enjoy our friends.



Vollie View....

I have been helping YHAF for a few months now, serving breakfast in the Coolangatta Park, and collecting items for the Christmas presents. It has brought back memories of helping with the homeless when I lived in New York City for 4 years. I lived in Mid-town Manhattan, with Grand Central Railway Station one block away one direction, and Times Square one block the other. So I was "pretty central". The church I helped out in provided cooked breakfasts, a bagged lunch and on special occasions such as July 4th or Thanksgiving and Christmas, a lovely festive dinner.

Unlike here, where we have wide-open spaces to cook and serve the meals, we had to feed everyone in the church. Some of us cooked and served, whilst others made the lunches which consisted of a sandwich, piece of fruit and perhaps a cookie.

We also had a clothing supply which we gave to people -- especially in the winter, when it would get down to well-below freezing often. The cold winds would rip right through you and I really felt for those who had to sleep on the steam vents on cardboard, just to keep warm. Of course, they had to share the space with huge cockroaches! It was a common sight to see three people all huddled over the vents.

When I compare the beautiful area we have here in Coolangatta, or Murwillumbah or Chinderah, to the hard streets of NY, where you never knew if you'd wake up in the morning or have been shot during the night, I realise that Yes, we do have challenges here, but we also are blessed to live in this lovely climate. And NY was fabulous compared to what I saw in Soweta, South Africa and the harsh streets of India. As the old saying goes, we should always count our blessings.

Count Your
BLESSINGS

Vollie on a Mission...

Hi Folks,

I just want to put in a good (and grateful) word for those hotels that supported me in supplying toiletries for our Christmas baskets. Because I live on Marine Parade in Coolangatta, there are many local hotels that I could ask. I started with the high-rise I live in, and they kindly agreed to supply shampoos, conditioners and body lotions. Bolstered by this success, I ventured forth along the strip and asked every hotel in Coolangatta I think!

What was most heartening was that when I told the managers what I was collecting the toiletries for, so many of them replied "Oh yes, we've seen you down in the park cooking breakfasts and giving out food."! So we don't go unnoticed, and everyone was appreciative. Some of course had their own regulations and charities that they donated to, but most gave at least something, such as coffees, teas and sugars. I ended up with a kind of a dilemma when one hotel donated a lot of conditioners--**NOW I HAD A MISSION!** And that was to even up the scales by finding more shampoos!!! But it was a fruitless task it seemed. So I ventured farther afield, up Golden Four Drive, but still no shampoos were to be found. Finally, I got an inspiration to call the Royal Pines, way up in Ashmore. Why there, I have no idea--way inland, standing out by itself, but call them I did. You cannot imagine my delight when I spoke to the manager and she enthusiastically said "Oh yes, we can help you. We have 6 boxes of shampoo that we would be more than happy to donate." Off I trotted, in my little car in the middle of a wild thunderstorm, to pick up what I thought was 6 small boxes of shampoo.



When the concierge said he'd help me put the boxes in my car, I got the impression that these were slightly larger boxes than I'd anticipated. I couldn't believe my eyes when he wheeled over a luggage trolley with 6 huge boxes containing 3,000 bottles of shampoo!!! One part of me said "Oh no, now I have to go and find a lot more conditioners!" the other part said "I can rest now--my task is complete!" And as I handed out the little bags of toiletries that Dorothy and friends had made up, at our Christmas Party in Coolangatta, I was so moved by how many happy and grateful faces I saw. I look forward to doing the job again at the end of the year. Thanks again to everyone who contributed.



YHAF Clothing Pool

(Pictured to the right) is Val busily sorting the clothes in the clothing pool.'

YHAF has a clothing pool, where each week we can take good quality clothing out to our friends...

"With the help of another wonderful clothes sorter, Dee, all the clothes are sorted, bagged and labelled ready to be distributed amongst our friends on the street. Another great contribution to YHAF"



My unbiased Impressions....

I was introduced to the concept of the 'You have a Friend' specifically in the Murwillumbah area, when I accompanied a group on the first Thursday after my arrival in Australia. I was introduced to the selfless dedicated people who had formed the organisation. Under Ursula O'Grady the team leader, she had enlisted 2 or 3 devoted men and several special ladies forming gallant band of totally indefatigable individuals who were totally committed to the cause of the 'You Have a Friend' organisation.

I was so impressed by the absolute devotion of the team I had now joined it compelled me to attend this special venture every Thursday for 11 months. I was uplifted to observe the relief and pleasure of the people we served when they attended each week, who during the week when I met them gave the impression that they had very little to live for. They looked forward to every Thursday which brought them back to life. They enjoyed the social company,

the barbecued food provided for them by the male staff together with the salad, buttered bread and rolls as well as fresh fruit provided by the ladies. I discovered all these provisions were donated by local tradesmen in the town with the utmost generosity, and absolutely free of charge. They are to be highly commended for their unselfish attitude towards the less fortunate members of society by fully supporting the organisation.

I was truly overawed by all this consideration shown, and I believe it would be a much better world if everyone joined their crusade or something like it.

Finally, a worthy expression of praise for John Lee, whose concept this whole scheme has been, and who has now gone onto form more of these outreaches. I am now more than a little sad that



my 12 month tourist visa to Australia has expired and my return to the United Kingdom is imminent, thus depriving me from taking part in any further wonderful experiences in my life. Long may this organisation flourish, enriching and uplifting the lives of the homeless and marginalised people within our community, as well as the gallant band of volunteers who make it all happen.

My fondest best wishes to all those who continue to be involved in this joyous enterprise, as I prepare to depart to my home in the UK, all is not lost because I come to Australia for a two month holiday every year. **Gold Bless Australia ~ John**

what is a friend? ★

a friend is someone who you think your life would be different if they didn't exist. a friend is someone who NEVER leaves you out, you are ALWAYS included when you are with them. a friend is there for you, no matter what.

Does this describe your friend?



YOU HAVE A FRIEND INC

Young friend Vollie ~ Mitchell, can be found most Saturday mornings packing kits and helping to prepare for the out-reaches—here Mitchell is packing tea, coffee & sugar packs to be given out to our friends on the street.

Mitchell also spent many hours during the hot January days lifting, carrying and moving things into place, and generally helping Dorothy with the organisation of 'Centre Stage.' Bear in mind that Mitchell is only 10 years old and, at the time, all his mates were probably in the surf, it was a marathon effort and also great fun working with him. His contribution was immensely appreciated.



Thank you for all the well wishes and those who supported 'Young Friend' Ben recently when he participated in the U/17's rowing in the Australian Titles in Victoria ~ what an amazing experience he had, and meet many of Australia's champion rowers.

Ben made it through to the A level final and placed 6th.

He is now back in training for a few upcoming local regattas, then the Marathon event "Head of the Tweed" which is on our river ~ a 25km race from Chinderah to Murwillumbah.

What's Happening...

Our New Venture - "You Have A Bingo Friend"

As of this Thursday, we start Bingo at the Thursday BBQ lunch.

All are most welcome as we start at 9.30 and then lunch will be at 11.30 (approx).

I have noticed there are so many people just plain bored and even though they may wish to get a job, there are none.

So, to provide a little fun – we will have Bingo! need someone to help teach me the calls - "Legs eleven, Two little ducks..... "and so on !!!!

Should be great fun and this will only just be the start - Chinderah caravan parks are next !!!!.



A Request ~ If anyone has an old guitar or knows of one that is of no more use, I would love to give it to Wayne, one of our special friends.....He is a wonderful kind and gentle man who sleeps on the streets in Murwillumbah.

Three weeks ago, at night on the street, he had his face smashed with a brick and guitar destroyed by 6 young teenage thugs. Then next week they stole his second guitar given to him. This may happen again but he is hiding in different locations each night and is so sad and lonely without his music!!! If we can help, that would be fantastic.

St Anthony's Primary join YHAF



"You've got a Friend"

John came to St Anthony's Primary School to discuss his work on helping the homeless.

He talked to us about the things that we can do as a school to help the homeless and less fortunate in our community.

Mini Vinnies and other school families, agreed to help John supply food for the people in need.

Mr Monahan and Mrs Brown helped us make a roster for the Mini Vinnies students and anyone else who wanted to make a difference. Each week before Tuesday morning a team of Mini Vinnies students and other students would

bring in food for the less fortunate.

During the Christmas period and Easter holidays, selected Mini Vinnies students were to bring in food that they would treat themselves with during those times.

We started the *"You've got a Friend"* program at the beginning of Term 4 2009 and have kept this up ever since.

Mini Vinnies and other students and their families from St Anthony's Primary School have enjoyed helping John with his charity for the homeless and less fortunate. As well as have fun we have made a difference and we are proud of that.

By Genevieve Spamer and Erin O'Keeffe (Grade 6)



Tweed Shopping Village - 83 Wharf St, Tweed Heads

**In our next edition
(due out end of July).....
read about our latest adventures
'food drops' 'bingo'
'Jimbo's Sleepout'**



Woolworths
the fresh food people

The Earth Village



If you could fit the entire world into a village of 100 people and maintaining the proportion of all people living on earth, that village would comprise of :

52 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 Americans (north, central and south), 8 Africans.

Of those 100 in the Earth Village:

There would be 52 women and 48 men, There would be 30 Caucasians and 70 non-Caucasians, There would be 30 Christians and 70 non-Christians, There would be 89 heterosexuals and 11 homosexuals.

Of those 100 in the Earth village:

6 of all those people would contain 59% of all the wealth and all would be from the USA, 80 of the people would be living in poverty
70 would be illiterate, 50 would be suffering from hunger and malnutrition, 1 would be dying, 1 would be being born, 1 (yes only 1) would have a university degree.

If we look at the world this way, the need for acceptance and understanding would be obvious.

But consider this:

If you wake every morning with good health, you have more luck than 1 million people who won't live through the week.

If you have never experienced the horror of war, the solitude of prison, the pain of torture, have never been close to death from starvation, then you are better off than 500 million people today.

If you are able to worship with no fear that someone will assault you or kill you, you are better off than 3 billion people

If you have a fridge full of food, clothes on your back, a roof over your head and a place to sleep, you are wealthier than 75% of the world's population.

If you have a bank account, money in your wallet and coins in your purse, you are one of the 8 privileged few amongst the 100 in the Earth Village

If your parents are still married and alive you are a rare individual

If you can read this article, then you are not one of the 2 billion who cannot read or write.

And SO.....

WORK like you don't need money
LOVE like no one has ever hurt you
DANCE like no one is watching
SING like no one can hear you
LIVE as if this was Paradise on Earth



**WITHOUT HOPE-
WE HAVE NOTHING.**

A man sooner or later discovers that he is the master-gardener of his soul, the director of his life.

~James Allen

It always strikes me, and it is very peculiar, that when we see the image of indescribable and unutterable desolation - of loneliness, of poverty and misery, the end of all things, or their extreme - then rises in our mind the thought of God.

~Vincent van Gogh

**We have grown literally afraid to be poor.
We despise anyone who elects to be poor in order to simplify and save his inner life.**

If he does not join the general scramble and pant with the money-making street, we deem him spiritless and lacking in ambition.

~William James

The Gift:

Everything in this life is borrowed. You have to give it all back. The only thing you get to keep is the love you gave, the love you received, and the experiences your soul got to have.

Kurek Ashley in his book "How Would Love Respond."

Thank you for supporting

YOU HAVE A FRIEND INC



Thank you
for your support!

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Thomson & Frances St
Tweed Heads

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St Joseph's College
Ph: 07 55249002

St Joseph's Primary
Ph: 07 55362519

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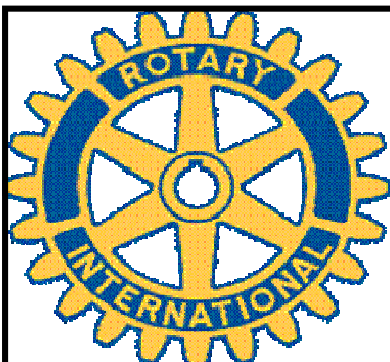
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