

Issue 2, Winter 2005

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Big Buddy Community News

What's coming up

Spring! Less rain (we hope) more chances to get out there and have fun.

Big Boys Toys : 11th-13th Nov 2005

See separate story for more on this.

What's happened

Big Buddy in the news:

8th Aug: Holmes Show on Prime. A 6 min feature on Big Buddy. Turns out it was the last Holmes show, it got canned that night. Not our fault, honest! It showed Roger and Mason, who are now our very own TV stars and a lovely moment with Mason's mum Sharon.

10th Aug: Richard featured on TV1 Close Up feature about career change. Big Buddy got a great plug!

28th Aug: Richard interviewed about Big Buddy on Radio Static FM.

29th Aug: TV1s Close Up. Big Buddy story featuring Troy and his boys. Great plug for us and Troy.

This coverage reached many people who were very moved by the story. We were swamped with inquiries.

See editorial for more on Troy.

New mentors

13 New men coming to us from Ads and media stories. Our last training session had 12 men on it; biggest we have had for years.

Who's new

In this issue we welcome the following Big Buddies who have been matched with a little buddy:

David Anderson
Barry Williams
Tom Blackhall
John Turner
Bruce Fincham
Cyril Wright
Des Solway
Alan Watkins

Editorial from Richard

While this is the winter issue of the Big Buddy community news I'm noticing spring is on its way, man that was fast.

I still haven't used up my firewood supply yet! So technically we only just scrap into Winter, but hey it still feels like winter. We have been very busy lately; all the recent media coverage has meant lots of inquiries from men wanting to be Big Buddies and mothers needing mentors for their sons. We have also had many inquires from well outside of Auckland, "when is Big Buddy coming to... Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington...". It's going to take some work but we will be there I have no doubt about that.

For those of you who saw Troy's story on TV1's Close Up you would understand why we have been swamped with inquiries about Big Buddy. It was a moving story of a wonderful man who is dying from motor neuron disease and is looking for a Big Buddy mentor for his twin 7yr old boys. Troy's courageous attitude to dying was humbling and his articulation of the need for men in a boys lives was right up there with our philosophy. I feel privileged to have met him - talking with him was an inspiring reminder of the importance and simplicity of what we do.

New web site

Hey we have a flash new web site, courtesy of one of our Big Buddies, Cam Stewart. Cam runs a web development company, Phosphor Essence, and he generously donated their time to create a new web site. It was up and running just before the recent spat of TV coverage and has been heavily used. Thanks Cam.

Check it out www.bigbuddy.org.nz

Good Men Needed

To become mentors to fatherless boys

A Big Buddy *can* help make a profound difference to a fatherless boy's life and enrich his own.

Know of a man who wants to make this difference? Ask him to contact us.

Cool stuff to do

In this wee column we highlight a few interesting and low cost things Buddies can do together.

These are some of the things Roger and Mason (10) have had a great time doing.

- Went indoor rock-climbing at the Rocknasium in Balmoral.
- Repaired an old kite and tried to fly it. Didn't work but we had lots of fun!
- Sumo wrestled on the beach.
- Been to the mountain bike park at Woodhill a couple of times. Highly recommend. No experience or gear required. They give you a bike, helmet and trail map. There are miles of trails to explore through the forest. Check out bikepark.co.nz for more info.
- Upgraded his tree house. Now it's the most popular in the street.
- Washed my car and tidied my garage together (work can be fun!).
- Been to Youth Town a couple of times, recommended if you are stuck for an idea and the weather is wet. Tell them you are a family and entry is free. They have a swimming pool, basketball court, pool table, table tennis and squash court (small fee).
- Tramping in the Waitakeres. Waitakere dam, Fairy Falls, and Cascade Kauri are all good walks. Find a Nikau frond and tow each other down the hill at high speed.
- Got some old timber from a demolition yard and made a coffee table for his mum. It turned out quite well and she was blown away. We have made other things since.
- Split wood with an axe and light a fire.
- Baked a batch of banana muffins (Lucky Mason's Mum and sisters!)

A Big Buddy scores a grand for us

One of our Big Buddies, Bruce Walker was instrumental in getting us a donation of \$1000 from his employer Carter Holt Harvey. Bruce's team won a management performance competition, the prize was a donation to a charity

of their choice. Bruce of course made a passionate suggestion that the team choose Big Buddy - and they did!

Here's a picture of Bruce giving Richard the cheque. Our thanks goes firstly to Bruce for engineering this but also to Carter Holt Harvey for coming up with the idea in the first place.



Funding update

It's been relatively quiet on the funding front since our last newsletter, our thanks goes out to the Lion Foundation and Carter Holt Harvey for their recent donations.

ASB Trust has asked us to put a proposal to them for an expansion of Big Buddy across Auckland, employing more coordinators focused on the different regions of Auckland. We will update progress on this in the next newsletter.

"Advice is like snow; the softer it falls, the longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it sinks into the mind."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Big Boys Toys

The 8th annual Big Boys Toys event is on at the Auckland Showgrounds, Greenlane, Auckland, from Friday 11th to Sunday 13th November 2005. It's a show for men and boys though women are most welcome.

Their web site talks about a bionic dolphin, the world's most advanced humanoid robot, toys, cars, boats, cool inventions and life-style hardware (what is life-style hardware anyway?). Luxury marine craft, latest in audio, video and digital entertainment, sports stuff, live military assault, motocross and trail riding and the New Zealand strongman competition. Sounds great!

Several Big Buddies took their little buddies to it last year and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Now here is the good news, the organizers have offered Big Buddy a free stall place at the show and will be heavily discounting the entry price for all Big Buddies.

Current entry fees are Adults - \$16, Children under 14 yrs - free. We are still in negotiations, as they say, with the organisers so we can't say how much discount yet. We will put a message out later to Big Buddies about the details.

Big Buddy will use the stall space to promote what we do to the many men who will turn up to this show. Yes of course we will take time to check out the toys, Steve wants to drive a Ferrari and Richard will be finding out just what life-style hardware actually is. For more info check out www.bigboystoys.co.nz



Peer groups are rocking

The new Big Buddy Peer groups are trucking along really well. There are four groups in Auckland each with 6-8 men and meeting every 4-6 weeks. Each group is growing as new Big Buddies join. As well as being a good place to touch base with other Buddies and talk on mentoring, the groups are becoming a hot bed of ideas ranging from a Big Buddy ID card to how to promote the work and of course lots of ideas about activities for boys. In speaking to the many new men coming in to volunteer as buddies, I know they really like the idea that they will have a group of peers to meet with; that they are not doing this alone.

You...

Yes we would like to hear from you!

Send us an email, letter or phone call if you have something to contribute to this newsletter or suggestions of what you would like to read here. We will be sending this out every season. The next one is the Spring issue due out around October.