

Issue 5, Autumn 2006

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Big Buddy Community News

What's coming up

Big Buddy Day Out - It was unfortunate that we couldn't pull off the event this year with the marginal weather but we're putting our thinking caps on to see what we can do as an alternative in the next couple of months. We'll let you know what we plan to do and get an invite out soon!

Next **Training evening** for Big Buddies is *Monday 12th June*.

Next Big Buddy '**Monthly Meet**', Monday May 29 at the Grey Lynn Community Centre, 510 Richmond Road, Grey Lynn.

What's happened

Big Buddy in the news:

Close Up, TV1 on Monday May 1st was promoting Troy's March. See <http://tvnz.co.nz/view/page/554440/709256>, and play the Related Video: Mateship.

In March, Richard and one of the guys on Troy's March were interviewed on the Radio Live *Keri Smith Show*.

Big Buddy Monthly Meet:

- *All Big Buddies welcome*

We had 10 Big Buddies attend our first meeting and feedback at the end of the night was that it was valuable to the guys, so if you weren't there and want to stay connected and check-in about how things are going with your little buddy or life in general then see you on May 29th. (see details above).

Who's new

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

Graeme Skipper
Vaughan Wharton
Harley Neil
Oliver Maisey
Graeme Desmond
Keith Walters

Editorial from Richard

Autumn surrounds us now, but as nature slows the whole thing down in preparation for winter, here at Big Buddy we are rocking ahead and very busy. The Troy's March fundraiser is taking off in all directions (see separate story for more on this exciting event); we are busy looking for new premises and finding that we are not easy to please in that regard. We figure Big Buddy's new home has to feel like a home - we are not talking flash but just something with a bit of heart. So, as the search for premises goes on, we also continue to expand in numbers - numbers of Big Buddies, numbers of boys needing a mentor, numbers of people who want to help us. Our newest caseworker, Stephen Bell is well engaged with the work and very much part of the Big Buddy family now. Through the process of training him, Steve Sobota and I have realised just how much is involved in the work; the intensity of engaging with so many people at quite a personal level, the heart break of having to say no to some boys and the leaping up and down joy of making a good match or simply hearing stories of how much difference this all makes to the lives of the men and boys who are part of the Big Buddy community. We are looking forward to getting our new home, lighting the fire (yes, we need a fire!), making a coffee and maybe - just maybe! - putting our feet up for a short mid-winter rest. Go well friend.

Words from Stephen Bell

It's been several months since I began. We are now a team of three and I'm very much feeling part of the Big Buddy team and community. A lot of good work is happening in 'the cave' (an affectionate name for our current office). Richard's on the hunt for our new Big Buddy home while Steve Sobota and I get to do the good stuff meeting potential Big Buddies, Mums/caregivers and boys. Last week Steve and I met up with a number of Big Buddies for our first Big Buddy Monthly Meet. I am inspired by the great work these good men are doing with their Little Buddies. Stories of richness and hope filled me.

I have been struck by the number of boys out there waiting for their Big Buddy, great little (and not so little) boys hungry for connection with an older man to 'rub shoulders' with. I feel admiration for the Mums who recognize and move to fill the gap left in their sons' lives when a father or older man is not present. It's heart connecting work and great to be a part of.

I look forward to meeting more of you as I move fully into my role.

Quotes for the season:

"Unless we think of others and do something for them, we miss one of the greatest sources of happiness."

Ray Lyman Wilbur

"Be the change you want to see in the world."

Gandhi

Troy's March



In our last newsletter we talked about Troy's March a fundraiser for Big Buddy. Troy Fisher, was an amazing 37-year-old man with Motor Neuron Disease. We found a Big Buddy mentor for his twin boys. Troy died in March and in his honor, some of his ex-army mates are doing a 250km march across the Gobi Desert in China (as you do!) to raise funds for Big Buddy. It's what Troy wanted.

Team Troy's March leaves late in May for the Gobi and they are making a sterling effort on the fundraising front leading up to their departure. With some recent exposure on the telly, donations are pouring in. You can find out more about the race on our website.

Troy's mates couldn't stop there, another group of mainly ex army mates have organised a Charity Auction for Thursday, May 18. They wanted to say goodbye and good luck to the Troy's March team and raise some funds for us at the same time. They are getting some great auction items on the table including two Sacks of Crayfish, Lion Red Beer fridge, original art including a Sean Chen piece worth \$3000, signed sports memorabilia, Italian Silk ties, Surfboard (Phat fish), a sky jump from the Auckland Sky Tower and latest Nokia phone to name some.

The auction will be held on 6:30pm **Thursday 18th May** at New Zealand Trade Centre, 26 Albert St, City, Auckland.

Should be fun and oh yes it will be international; we have a proxy bid from a supporter in the US!

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 news letter or suggestions of what you would like to read here.

Boats for Big Buddy!

We have placed an order for kayaks and special built trailer. The trailer is taking a while but we expect to have them available for Buddies to use by June. Here's pictures of some of them. We went for a mix of "sit-on" and "sit-in" kayaks. Sit-on's are basically unsinkable, very safe but are usually complete dogs to paddle. After a lot of research we found sit-on kayaks that are just as safe but perform really well, apparently they are ideal for fishing from, as well as paddling.



We have also included two serious "sit in" sea kayaks for those with more experience. The package will include all the safety gear, life jackets, flares etc even waterproof bags for cell phones. But wait there's more ... due to a generous donation we are able to purchase a small fishing boat for those really serious about fishing (like

every boy we have ever met!) It will be a 3.9 m aluminum boat with 30 hp outboard, steering etc. It's a pontoon style – looks like an inflatable but all metal and is virtually unsinkable. It is all brand new, we didn't want to take any chances with dodgy gear, but a generous discount from Wayne at Glen Eden Marine has made this possible. Let the mucking about in boats begin!



Cool stuff to do

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

- Start a garden, find out what winter crops are ready to be planted, learn about the care of soil, plants and the use of tools.
- Go to a golf driving range and try to wack the cover off a little white ball. Multiply that by 100 balls!
- Do a woodwork project, teaching the use of carpentry tools, - build a birdhouse, a go-cart, a coffee table, a bookshelf...
- Paint a piece of furniture or a shed or water-blast a fence or a driveway. Great fun!
- It's changeable weather so go and visit the Museum or Art Gallery.
- When we get our Kayak's give us a call and book them out for the day and cruise around Pupuke Basin or the inner harbour.
- There's lots of outdoor markets happening in the weekend. Takapuna, Avondale, Otara and others. Visit a local school fair, flea market, garage sale or auction.
- Rotate the tyres on your car, check the oil and water or change the oil or sparkplugs. Where do those sparkplugs live anyway?