

Issue 10, Winter 2007

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Big Buddy Community News

What's coming up

The next **Induction/Training Evening** for prospective Big Buddies will be *Tuesday 18 September* at Big Buddy, 40 Strid Rd, Te Atatu South.

Next Big Buddy **'Monthly Meet'** dates, 3 *September, 1 October*, 7pm at the Ponsonby Community Centre, 20 Ponsonby Terrace, Ponsonby.

Who's new

In this issue we **welcome** the following new Big Buddies to the programme:

Jeff Cate
Michael Gray
Mark Talbot
Bruce Ross
Garry Lenihan
Scott Cleaver
Bishop Brown

What's happened

Big Buddy has been mentioned in the media on a few fronts recently.

This week saw Richard making the opening speech for the *Waitakere Focus on Fathering Week*, happening 27 August - 2 September. This resulted in him being interviewed by John Tamihere and Willie Jackson on their Radio Live talk show. The Aucklander West and NZ Herald also featured significant stories on Fathering Week including excerpts of an interview with Richard and mentioning Big Buddy.

In global news, an article featuring Big Buddy entitled "Male Mentors Down Under" was written for 'Rapport', the Magazine of the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation in the UK. This was in response to the positive feedback Richard got from presenting at the UK conference in May.

And finally, an article on Big Buddy has been written in the Titirangi Tatler for the upcoming issue. Look out for it if you're a Westie living amongst the trees.

Big Buddy Winter Day Out

Some might say it was too cold and windy but not the 50+ Big Buddies and boys that joined the Big Buddy crew at Parakai Hot Pools a few weeks ago for a wet and wild Winter Day Out. We huddled up for some introductions and talked about the day before the crowd scattered to get into the action of warm pools and hydro-slides. That was until the wolf whistle call brought the hordes to the feast that had been prepared. Sometimes it's the simple pleasures like bread, sausage and sauce together in a perfect harmony... mmm...eh, what salad!

Energy was up after lunch so more swimming, sliding, water pistol fights, water launches and general mayhem ensued until it was time to head home with satisfied smiles.

Like our *Day Out* over summer, this event continues to build on a sense of real community spirit with many of the men and boys becoming familiar with each other and newer matches introduced and felt welcome by our growing group.

The Big Buddy Day Out creates an opportunity for newer Little Buddies to meet others just like them who don't have a Dad around but who now have a man by their side, hanging out and lending a helping hand. And with the added bonus when we all get together for the boys to have many other men meeting and engaging with them. Good stuff!

Steve Sobota

Editorial from Richard

I write this winter editorial in what is clearly the beginning of spring. Daffodils all over the show and even some keen Kowhai flowering so this serves as reflection back over a winter now on its last legs. It's been an intensely productive time for us developing the ground work for the expansion of Big Buddy over New Zealand. We wanted to do it well and pay careful attention to retaining our developing culture as more people join the Big Buddy team. Its intensely human focus work we do and we keep it real by keeping it real with each other. As any organisation gets bigger it risks losing sight of what it is really about, it risks becoming rigid with too many systems, it risks losing its heart. We have come through a winter of much hard work developing more systems in parallel with much soul searching. We have arrived in spring well ready to take the next steps to launch Big Buddy out to New Zealand.



Continued overleaf...

Editorial continued....

The first of those steps was to take on a new Co-ordinator, Martin (see separate story), who, once he has completed his training, will become our Co-ordinator for North Auckland up to Rodney. Steve Sobota will thus be freed up to take on the role of training our next Co-ordinator in Wellington and establishing our operation down there. After Wellington we will look to Christchurch, then back up north to other parts of the North Island. As a certain kiwi model once said "it won't happen over night but it will happen."

Expanding our reach means our costs expand, so a lot of my time will be focused on raising revenue and funds to support our work. We keep it pretty lean but Big Buddy Co-ordinators are multi-skilled people willing to work all sorts of hours and in my opinion need to be paid well for their work as quality is everything in what we do. While I'll be approaching all sorts of traditional funders, I am especially interested in working with businesses and am working on a new idea to develop a community of business supporters who may help us with funds and promotional work, while we help them by association with the good name and cause of Big Buddy. I will be looking for real relationships with business people who understand what we are about, support the spirit of our work and who we can support with integrity. Meanwhile winter recedes to spring's advances, offering new growth and new possibilities, while we at Big Buddy are readying ourselves for the next steps in taking our work further out into the world.

Go well Friend.

Big Buddy Business Supporter Community

The idea is simple. Big Buddy builds a series of strong win/win relationships with select businesses across New Zealand. Each business will commit to Big Buddy a certain amount of funding, promotional opportunities and perhaps expertise or help from their staff. Big Buddy in turn will help each business by allowing our brand and logo to be used to help promote that business with customers or employees. We will list these business supporters on our web site and develop other ways each business can show the world they are key supporters of Big Buddy. In an increasingly competitive world it's important for business people to find a point of difference. Customers are changing, becoming much more selective in who they deal with. Recent studies by Philanthropy NZ show kiwis prefer to shop or do business with companies who support worthwhile causes. Who a business is and therefore who they support is as important as price in many cases. Employees are also looking closely at who their prospective employers support. They want to work for a company that does more for the world than just make money. While business links to the larger charities have been around for a while, it seems the time is right for smaller charitable organisations like us to step up into the business arena.

As we develop this idea we will keep a firm eye on staying true to our ideals and the spirit of our work. We hope you, the readers of this newsletter, will help hold us to this.

Cool stuff to do

Storyfest is a free fun day of storytelling, performances and workshops for the whole family. This year's event takes on the theme 'One World- Our World'. Be entertained, enter the Stardome to see our world at night, take part in flag making, calligraphy, printing, mask making, cartooning or card making. Get your face painted, enjoy the mural art and the three performance spaces. Bring the whole family for a feast of story, myth and legend from around the world. *Saturday 22 September from 10am-4pm* at the Kelston Community Centre, Glen Eden.

If there are things that you've done that's been fun and hasn't cost a lot, then let us know and I might put it here!

Welcome to new Coordinator

This issue we welcome our new Co-ordinator Martin Hosking. Martin lives on the North Shore of Auckland and will eventually become responsible for all Big Buddy work on the North Shore and to extend our reach further north to Rodney including Warkworth and Wellsford.

Martin, a father of two boys 18 and 20, has made the change from a business background, facilitating groups for Essentially Men Education Trust and advanced work in Co-Counselling. Martin went through the same process our volunteers go through to become Big Buddies, so while we all knew Martin previously, we got to know him very well through our induction process. I hope you join us in welcoming Martin to the growing team at Big Buddy. We recently had a special welcome ceremony for him and I know he felt right at home straight away.

In the next issue we will get him to write a little about his first impressions in the Big Buddy Co-ordinator role.



Who do you know

If you know of a good man out there who would make a fitting Big Buddy now's the time to tap him on the shoulder. Person to person is always the best way to promote what we do.

**If you have somewhere for displaying Big Buddy material please call us for brochures, display stands and promotional material.*