

## Issue 11, Spring 2007

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# Big Buddy Community News

### What's coming up

The next **Induction/Training Evening** for prospective Big Buddies will be November (date to be advised) at Big Buddy, 40 Strid Rd, Te Atatu South.

Next Big Buddy **'Monthly Meet'** dates, Mon 12 Nov, 7pm at Big Buddy House, 40 Strid Rd, Te Atatu South.

Mon 3 Dec at the Grey Lynn Community center 510 Richmond Rd Grey Lynn.

### Who's new

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

Grant Harvison  
Mike Collins  
Lawrence Stanaway

### What's happened

Its been a light few months for Big Buddy in the media with only one media piece; Richard interviewed on Shine TV.

We have, however, been advertising quite a bit in West Auckland; many thanks to Waitakere and Portage Licensing Trusts for their financial help in paying for these ads. In October, we had front page banner ads in the *Western Leader* and *The Aucklander West*.

Great responses so far, with many fine men of the West stepping forward to become Big Buddy Mentors.

### Steve in Slovakia!

Coordinator Steve Sobota is having a 5 week OE in Slovakia and Italy. We've had one email from him and apart from connecting to old family roots, so far he has been busy eating, drinking and singing his way around Slovakia. Sounds like he is having a great time. You may not know this but Steve used to be in the wine industry before he joined Big Buddy and he also has a great singing voice, singing regularly in the *One Voice* choir. It appears an ability to sing well and an appreciation of wine gets you everywhere and anywhere in Europe! Steve will be back at work on Nov 5 with, no doubt, lots of stories about his travels.

### Editorial from Richard



Spring is in full flight as this newsletter reaches your eyes, with hungry Tui working over the Kowhai flowers. Ti Kouka (cabbage trees) in our area are flowering, spreading their sweet scent everywhere. I seem to remember that's a sign of a long, hot summer to come. Excellent! Growth is blooming and thrusting out everywhere as our planet turns toward the sun and summer. Here at Big Buddy we too are busy growing; our new coordinator Martin is well into training (see his notes overleaf) and in response to recent advertising, we have a rush of men contacting us wanting to become Big Buddies. In October we tried banner ads on the front pages of the West Auckland newspapers, with great success. We could not have done this without the financial support of the West Auckland trusts, Portage and Waitakere. We changed the format of our ads as well, including in them a picture of our West Auckland coordinator Stephen Bell, who is now world famous in West Auckland! All this just after the local body elections had been dominating local papers. We are well pleased Mayor Bob Harvey got back in again; Bob has been a consistent supporter of Big Buddy for years now, so we wish him well in what may be his last term.

Continued overleaf .....

### Business Supporter Update—Michelle Dobson



Michelle Dobson

You'll remember from our last newsletter we are developing the idea of linking with business in a win-win idea that will mean income and support for us in return for increased promotional opportunity for the business aligning with us.

I am happy to announce we have signed up our first supporter, Michelle Dobson. Michelle is a real estate agent with Harcourts Takapuna. She has been a mentor herself in Otago a few years back and still stays in contact with the young woman she mentored; in fact she is her Godmother now. Michelle has committed to donating 10% of her income to Big Buddy. In return, we

allow Michelle to use our logo and represent herself as a Big Buddy supporter. Her motives are primarily altruistic; she believes passionately in what we do, but she is also trying to create a point of difference for herself in what can be a very competitive market place.

She is a good person trying to make a go of it in real estate and wanting to make a difference in the world. We like her!

Her contact details are 09-486-9214 or 021-949-722  
[michelle.dobson@harcourts.co.nz](mailto:michelle.dobson@harcourts.co.nz)

PS : She is part of the 8th Annual Greenhithe School Golf Day on November 29, 2007, where she will be promoting Big Buddy to the golfers. If you want to be part of this, give us or her a call, so we can pass on the entry form.

### ***Big Buddy gets the birthday presents!***

George Clarke may not have turned one yet, but he's about to get his first lesson in philanthropy! First-time parents Elizabeth Stallworthy (30) and Mat Clarke (31) – both doctors - of Ellerslie decided to mark George's first birthday this October by inviting friends and family to donate to Big Buddy, rather than giving their son more toys.

"I had the idea after seeing all those dreadful child murders in the news," says Elizabeth, a doctor specializing in kidneys at Auckland Hospital. "Mat and I thought that rather than George stockpiling toys and trendy clothes, we'd try and make a small contribution to making the world a better place for him to grow up in."

Mat, an A&E doctor who is currently doing a six-month stint as a stay-at-home Dad, chose Big Buddy because of the value he and Elizabeth place on fathering. "George loves having Mat at home and he's really benefiting from the different activities his Dad does with him," says Elizabeth. "For example, I would never have thought he could go down slides at 10 months old!" "I got a few frowns in the playground on that one!" laughs Mat. "But George loves it."

Mat and Elizabeth are hoping family and friends will help them raise \$100 for us. We think the gesture is humbling. Elizabeth and Mat may think it's a small amount but in our world, every dollar counts.

It's really heart-warming for us to see these young parents prepared to do something positive for their son's future that involves helping someone else and we are very encouraged by this type of support.

To visit Elizabeth Stallworthy's fundraising website, check out ... [www.fundraiseonline.co.nz/ElizabethStallworthy](http://www.fundraiseonline.co.nz/ElizabethStallworthy)

### ***Editorial continued....***

I'd like to mention one of our supporters, Travis Field, and his business partner, Mike Taillie. They offered us a place in their new magazine, *Weekend*, and we received many calls from our ad. Travis and Mike are helping us with our business supporter idea and being well connected to the business community, their help and advice is invaluable.

Another of our supporters, Vodafone NZ Foundation, through their mini World of Difference award, offers a select number of Vodafone staff paid time off to do work for a charity of their choice. A winner of this award, Rachel Harrison, has elected to work with us, doing some much needed work on our communications databases. We are looking forward to working with Rachael and we are honoured she picked Big Buddy to work with.

On a low note, our kayak trailer got stolen. It was chained and padlocked to our carport but that didn't stop the enterprising thieves. Fortunately, it was insured and now the replacement trailer is heavily chained, padlocked and wheel locked. We took it in our stride; it will take more than that to put us off get out on the big blue!

All in all, It's great to be alive and working well in springtime, with the promise of summer not far off. Go well friend.

### ***Cool stuff to do***

One of our Big Buddies deserves a medal for taking his 17-year-old Little Buddy to the recent Marilyn Manson concert. He said "it was the loudest music I have ever heard" and "the people-watching was as interesting as the music".

Other ideas easier on the ears are...

Teach you Little Buddy how to split wood with an axe; how to light a fire, in any conditions, and if you get the fire going, boil a Billy of water and make a cup of tea or Milo. Hey, if you're hungry, cook a sausage on a stick while you are at it. If the weather is too wet for fires, how about going to a car sales yard to take a new car for test drive; aim high and try a new Porsche!

### ***Words from Martin***



First impressions.

When I first arrived at Big Buddy, I heard from the men here the full story of the organisation - the concept, humble beginnings, early days, expansions, and the part that each one of them has played in it. Each step along the way was well

considered, debated, mistakes and learnings taken on board (they are very human here!) and the right steps naturally followed.

For me, and for other co-ordinators who will inevitably arrive here, they have worked hard - systems tightened, paperwork readied, it is all there to just step into. Thank you men, it's great to be joining Big Buddy where it is now.

So, I've been getting to grips with that, and am moving forward into the real heart of the work, the human connections.

I'm lucky to have been to some match meetings and have come away keen and inspired. The mothers are loving and supportive, the boys as keen as, I see them checking out their Big Buddies, organising activities, and have thought, hey I wouldn't mind going along too, looks like good fun times coming up!

Time is so precious in our lives, it is great to see the generous spirit that men show in putting their hands up to be Big Buddies. If you are one of them, I really appreciate your commitment to set time aside each week for your Little Buddy. I am looking forward to meeting you all as I go along.

### ***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.*