

Big Buddy Community News

What's coming up

The upcoming **Induction/Training Evenings** for prospective Big Buddies will be *Wednesday 24 March* at Big Buddy, 40 Strid Rd, Te Atatu South and *Thursday 11 March* at 7pm, at Barnados House, 85 Ghuznee St, Wellington.

Next Big Buddy **Mentor Meeting** dates are *Wednesday 10 March*, 7.15pm at Grey Lynn Community Centre, 510 Richmond Rd Grey Lynn and *Thursday 25 February* for a 7pm start at Barnados House, 85 Ghuznee St, Wellington.

Who's new

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

Lawrence Griffiths

Ross Donohue

Steven Hogg

Brian Molloy

Iain McRobie

Peter Shakes

Simon Carter

Adam Keith

Edwin Royeppen

Steve Jenkinson

Top 10 Summer activities

- *Learn to put up a tent using the instructions (or not!).*
- *Go fishing off a wharf, boat or beach.*
- *Go to a free summer music event.*
- *Prepare a picnic together and head for a park or beach.*
- *Go to Bastion Point or Mt Victoria and fly a kite.*
- *Wash a car together.*
- *Go for a refreshing swim in a bush stream.*
- *Cook a feast on an outdoor barbeque.*
- *Take the ferry to Rangitoto and climb the volcano.*
- *Take a bushwalk up Butterfly Creek at Eastbourne.*

All action for the boys at Ponsonby Fire Station

In December my Big Buddy Tony and I went for a tour of the Ponsonby Fire Station. Another Big Buddy, Don, had arranged this for a group of Big and Little Buddies.

The fire engines were cool. One of them had all sorts of tools to help fight fires. Another one even had computerised controls and another had a big ladder to get people down from high windows if they are trapped by fire and can't easily get out.

We also looked at where the firemen cook for themselves and eat. To get to this room they have to get down from the rooms above by sliding down a big pole. The walls in the dining room were covered with lots of badges firemen have been given for fighting fires. The firemen showed us a special camera that helps them see the heat from a persons body so they can find people trapped in smoke-filled rooms.

Later on we came to the most exciting part of it all. They let us hold a fire engine hose to knock over some road cones. One of the firemen had to help me hold the hose because it was very powerful and hard for me to hang on to. I knocked over all three of the cones and another of the Big Buddies was standing in the way so I squirted him with the hose. That was funny.

My Big Buddy Tony is the best and I am so lucky that he took me on such an excellent outing. Mummy and I would also like to thank Big Buddy Don for arranging for us to go – I had a great time.

Little Buddy - Corey Donovan



Ponsonby Station fireman showing Corey the ropes!

Funding Update

It seems like the recession is easing and Big Buddy has come through thanks to our wonderful loyal community of support, some of whom dug deep and donated quite large amounts. It also took a concentrated fundraising effort headed by Richard and Jude - our part time fundraiser.

A special thank you to those of you who continue to donate via automatic monthly payment. If more of you would like to donate this way, please see over the page or our web site for details.

Another special thanks goes to the Wellington area Masonic Lodges for their generous and continuing help.

Since our last newsletter we have also received grants from the following funders: Betty Campbell Trust (Wellington City Council), ACE Training (for Big Buddy Induction training), COGS, CYF's, John Logan Campbell Estate, Manukau City Council (Citywide Fund), ASB Community Trust, the Nautilus Foundation, the AMP Foundation and an extremely generous grant from the Todd Foundation.

We are especially grateful for the amounts we have received from the government's (Paula Bennett's) Community Response Fund (an emergency fund for non profit organisations hit by the recession). It really helped in a year of crisis.

Our very grateful thanks to all of you for your support.

Tony

Editorial

I write this embraced by the longed for warmth of the summer sun – what a great summer it's been so far – I don't want it to end.

Big Buddy starts this year with different approach to most years – it is a year of consolidation for us – the wild storms of last year's recession have battered the sails and rigging a little and I figure we need some time to get our waka strengthened for the years to come. This means we will not be opening up any more branches this year, staying steady with the organizational size we have got to, digging in a little to keep our foundations strong.

You'll forgive me for mashing up my metaphors there but there is nothing worse than stretching one metaphor when two will do.

There is always a chance the grace of providence may choose to land on our boat in the form of a benefactor or as serious government funding. If that happens we, of course, are ready to pull in the main sheet and set sail again and full speed but I need to plan for what I can actually see in front of us – it is what it is. Fortunately we have many fine funders willing to support our work, as it is and we are grateful to have such good support.

At our current size we have plenty to keep us busy and engaged with our work in the world. Many fine men are still regularly stepping up to volunteer their time to mentor fatherless boys and many caregivers are still approaching us for help. We have a wonderful story in the North Shore times this month about a Big Buddy pair who get on wonderfully but I was especially touched by the mention of the boy's grandmother who passed away three years ago, she asked as her dying wish that her daughter contact Big Buddy to seek a mentor for her grandson. She may be gone now but her wish has been fulfilled and we are much honoured to be a small part in that. One of our Little Buddy mothers, Sarah Henderson, is now writing up our stories and that story was one of them. Sarah is a freelance writer – a very good one – and felt she wanted to give something back to Big Buddy and this is her way. Many thanks Sarah, your stories feed our souls so well and we hope they will be appreciated by many others. As Chief Executive I have to spend a fare amount of time and focus on money and the whole business of running an organization of this size which I am happy to do, but what really feeds my soul and motivates me to carry on (especially in the darker hours) is our stories – simple stories of caring, of hope, of the deep human need for relationship and the magic that comes when we connect with each other.

So this year our waka may be sheltering for a while in safe waters but the heart of our work is alive, thriving and continues to flourish - as it will do for years to come. To all the fine men who volunteer with us goes my deep respect. To the many fine men yet to come goes my warm brotherly welcome. To the caregivers with us goes my gratitude for their trust in us. To the many boys with us now and those yet to come goes my grandfatherly love.

Go well friend, Richard

Big Buddy Wellington - update

Kia Ora Everyone,

Ahhh, summer in Wellington (oxymoron anyone?) Despite the glorious weather we put on for the Sevens, it's been a pretty average summer here in the capital with plenty of wet weekends. But that hasn't deterred the hardy Big and Little Buddies of our great city who grit their teeth to the southerly and get out there and have fun regardless. Shout-outs go to those like BB Don W who, despite breaking his leg late last year, has been biking here, there and everywhere with LB Liam. We're a tough bunch down here that's for sure. Also taking no notice of the weather, BB Ian and LB Callum who are always breaking new ground in their vege gardens and have even built a greenhouse in Callum's back yard. Go those green fingered fellas!! Also making plans, BB Steen and LB Rowen are scoping out a big tree in Rowen's backyard with the aim of building a wicked tree house. Can't wait to see the end result guys!

In some indoor news, BB Tony and LB Cole are busy writing a script for a movie they plan to make. Tony has been in the TV/film/doco industry for years and Cole has already made his own version of King Kong (and received a congrats letter from the maestro director himself, Peter Jackson - way to go Cole!). Keep an eye on that young fella, you'll be seeing him at the Oscars one day.

So all in all, and in the face of a challenging climate, there's still been plenty of fishing, swimming, biking, hiking, building, breaking, climbing, paddling, drumming and strumming, walking and talking going on between all the BB's and LB's this summer. Well done to all and here's to 2010 being a great year for everyone.

Kia kaha, Scott

How to donate to Big Buddy

Donations to support the work of Big Buddy are much needed and very welcome.

Ways to donate to us:

- See our website, www.bigbuddy.org.nz to donate online with a credit card.
- Download an automatic payment form online & become a Big Buddy monthly donor supporter.
- Simply send us a cheque, (write your name and address on the back so we can send a receipt).
- Make a donation direct into our bank account: 12-3039-0172153-02 (Please put your name in the reference box and email us your address details so we can send a receipt).

All donations go towards the work of screening, matching and supporting Big Buddy relationships and expanding our outreach to the many fatherless boys in the community.