

Inspiring Communities News No 21: **March 2011**

In this Newsletter you'll find...

Inspiring Communities and Core Learning Cluster News:

Neighbours Day Aotearoa is just around the corner; get a preview of one Victory Village Forum workshop; read Megan Courtney's thoughts about place, young people and education; get an overview of the February 28 Story Telling workshop in Whakatane

Community-Led and Community Driven:

Hunting for – and valuing – the treasure in our own back yards; read about a Design Your Own Park initiative in the US

News You Can Use:

Sir Peter Blake Leadership Awards; Out of our own backyards (Ooooby)

Events:

Neighbours Day Aotearoa; Community Economic Development Conference; Victory Village Forum

Learning Links:

A new narrative about community and citizenship, from Tim Brodhead, President and CEO of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation; A website providing abundant information for Abundant Communities; and Evaluation 2.0 for Community Change, from Mark Cabaj of Tamarack.

EDITORIAL

Kia ora tatou

While considering the important and current relevance of neighbourhoods recently, we noted with interest that in the international [Philips Liveable Cities Awards](#) for which voting closes this week, the two projects receiving most votes – by far – are about neighbourhood.

This comes as no surprise to a team that since mid-2010 has been planning and working to promote our inaugural Neighbours Day Aotearoa; this small team with big passion, is fuelled by the belief that connected, supportive, safe, fun, respectful neighbourhoods are the building blocks of a strong New Zealand.

Neighbours Day Aotearoa happens this weekend and it's encouraging to see how warmly this has been received by New Zealanders. A Google search reveals how far the word has spread online (even to Kiwi websites based overseas!) and local papers throughout the country are picking up the story. Most importantly, people are participating: We've heard about activities planned for back and front yards, carports, living rooms, parks, reserves, streets, gardens and farms, even rest homes, early childhood centres and schools.

We hope many will take photos and send us the stories of what happens in your area, so we can share these with each other. Those in the Bay of Plenty will be ready to use their new story telling skills, gained at the workshop presented by Anna Kominik in February.

Another important national event is – the Victory Village Forum, NZ’s first conference about family-centred, community led development. **Originally planned for late April, the Forum has been rescheduled for 27-29 July to reflect high interest and better timing.** We encourage you to attend and hear about the inspiring journey of NZ’s first ‘Community of the Year’ (Victory in Nelson) and many other inspiring and leaderful communities.

The theme of families and schools working together is dear to Megan Courtney whose article in the recent COMET (City of Manukau Education Trust) Annual Report (linked below) explores the potential and importance of connecting children and young people and families in their education.

In another month that sees many in our own country and elsewhere in the world unexpectedly in great need, may we each contribute what we can to building sustaining and resilient communities.

Noho ora mai

Leigh Strange and Mary-Jane Rivers

You can download this Newsletter and previous issues as PDF from our website.

<http://www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/community-news/newsletters>

INSPIRING COMMUNITIES & CORE LEARNING CLUSTER NEWS

Neighbours Day Aotearoa – it’s here! (last weekend of March 26 – 27th)

It’s not too late to start something where you live – download the Neighbours Pack from the website or just browse the stories and ideas, and find one that suits you and your neighbourhood. And please remember to sign up to show your support and share your ideas for participation. <http://www.neighboursday.org.nz/>

Victory Village Forum now 27 – 29 July – A preview from workshop leader Louisa Erickson, Opotiki

At the upcoming Victory Village Forum, one of the sessions offers a choice from eight workshops about getting started with local communities. Louisa Erickson, Iwi/ Community Development Project leader for Whakatohea Maori Trust Board, will present a workshop Stream focussed on getting started with Iwi and Hapu, Read the preview on our site, and to hear it all register for Victory Village Forum, Nels. <http://www.confer.co.nz/victoryforum/>

BoP Telling & Sharing Our Stories Forum – report now online

37 people from around the Bay of Plenty gathered in Whakatane on 28 February to learn about their own stories – how to identify, capture and share them with others including the community, funders, the media. Seven key tools for memorable stories were shared, and can be read in the forum report – now available to read and as a [PDF download](#) from our website. (<http://www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/component/content/article/120-regional-forum-reports/416-regional-forum-reports>)

Where place matters, young people and education matter

This thought provoking, inspiring and practical article, written for the Annual Report of COMET (City of Manukau Education Trust), explores the potential in connections between schools, families and communities to benefit all. Megan notes that in a city with “over 200 suburbs – and many more villages or neighbourhoods - the old African adage of ‘it takes a village to raise a child’ is more important now than ever before.

Just as each young Aucklander is special and unique, so are the neighbourhoods they live in. “But how strong are our villages in Tamaki Makaurau? Do we really have all the right ingredients in place to effectively nurture and enable the next generation of Aucklanders to reach their full potential? What else could or should we be doing differently?”

[Read the full article online.](http://www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/community-led-development/regional-networks/auckland/478-inspiring-communities-through-community-led-family-centred-learning-hubs-in-tamaki-makaurau) (<http://www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/community-led-development/regional-networks/auckland/478-inspiring-communities-through-community-led-family-centred-learning-hubs-in-tamaki-makaurau>)

COMMUNITY LED & COMMUNITY DRIVEN

Hunting for Treasure in our own back yards – no metal detector required

The idea of building a strong local economy is something that is gaining traction all round the world and in the lead up to the second CED conference it’s exciting to see several Auckland communities exploring their local assets – while having fun and getting to know each other. Communities around the rest of New Zealand may be inspired by these ideas...

Last year we shared the [story of the Pt Chevalier Treasure Hunt](http://www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/learning-centre/topics-a-themes/neighbours-a-streets/410--hunt-in-pt-chevalier-finds-more-than-just-treasure) (<http://www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/learning-centre/topics-a-themes/neighbours-a-streets/410--hunt-in-pt-chevalier-finds-more-than-just-treasure>); a similar Hunt was held in McLaren Park Henderson in November (see lead up [article in the Aucklander online](http://www.theaucklander.co.nz/local/news/treasure-one-another/3927861/) (<http://www.theaucklander.co.nz/local/news/treasure-one-another/3927861/>) and we hope to bring you the story in a future newsletter). Another Hunt is coming up in Massey, in May - see “Our Amazing Place” event in the [Massey Matters newsletter](http://www.waitakere.govt.nz/OurPar/pdf/2011/masseymatters-mar11.pdf) (<http://www.waitakere.govt.nz/OurPar/pdf/2011/masseymatters-mar11.pdf>)

Design Your Own Park - Placemaking Project in Binghamton, New York State (USA)

In partnership with the [City of Binghamton](http://bnp.binghamton.edu/projects/dyop/) (<http://bnp.binghamton.edu/projects/dyop/>) and United Way of Broome County, *Design Your Own Park* (DYOP) is a friendly competition among Binghamton neighbourhoods to turn vacant lots and other neglected spaces into wonderful community places. In the process of designing, implementing and maintaining their parks, the neighbourhoods become empowered to take charge of their own affairs in other respects.

The DYOP competition is one of 9 out of 450 entries to make the short list of the 2011 Philips Livable Cities Award, a global competition to support ideas that improve the quality of life within cities. The short-listed entries will be advertised nationally (in the US) on CNN and on the [Livable Cities Award](http://www.because.philips.com/livable-cities-award/) (<http://www.because.philips.com/livable-cities-award/>) website. The final judging will be made by a distinguished panel, which will consider a public vote as part of their decision.

LEARNING LINKS

A new narrative for the Community Sector

Tim Brodhead is President and CEO of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation. In this [article](http://www.industrymailout.com/Industry/LandingPage.aspx?id=713869&lm=29284954&q=296068281&qz=fa5792e1557516410a4dbc9d7b317054) (<http://www.industrymailout.com/Industry/LandingPage.aspx?id=713869&lm=29284954&q=296068281&qz=fa5792e1557516410a4dbc9d7b317054>) he writes about the creative opportunities for the business, government and community sectors to evolve creatively and effectively. Tim bases his argument on the concept of a '*new narrative*' that puts the citizen, the problem or the cause at the centre, rather than the institution, the mandate, or the jurisdiction.

Abundant neighbourhoods

The Abundant Communities [website is a wealth of information](http://www.abundantcommunity.com/) (<http://www.abundantcommunity.com/>), including stories about neighbourhoods and neighbours that show how everyday action like baking cookies and bread can make a difference. There are also tools, events, recordings and a way to sign up for news – a fabulous resourceful place.

Evaluation 2.0 for Community Change

Mark Cabaj has written a [succinct article](http://tamarackcommunity.ca/index.php#2) (<http://tamarackcommunity.ca/index.php#2>) about Lisbeth Schorr's research on how successful efforts towards tackling complex challenges like poverty and unemployment use:

- comprehensive approaches that address joined-up root causes
- continually evolve to reflect new learnings and changes in the environment, and
- are customised to reflect the unique nature of the neighbourhoods and families they aim to assist.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Sir Peter Blake Trust Leadership Awards 2011

Nominate someone showing leadership in your local community. Applications are now OPEN for:

- **The Blake Medal and Emerging Leader Awards.** Read more about this at the [Sir Peter Blake Trust website](http://www.sirpeterblaketrust.org/leadership/awards/) (<http://www.sirpeterblaketrust.org/leadership/awards/>)
- The **Sir Peter Blake Youth EnviroLeaders' Forum**, which will be held in Auckland 17 - 21 April. The Sir Peter Blake Trust and the Ministry for the Environment are seeking 48 young New Zealand leaders with a passion for the environment and the desire and ability to take action. See the [Youth EnviroLeaders Forum website](http://www.sirpeterblaketrust.org/environment/youth_environment_forum/) (http://www.sirpeterblaketrust.org/environment/youth_environment_forum/) for further information and to download an application form.

Ooooby – you, your neighbours and local food, the perfect combination

Ooooby is an acronym for '**Out of our own back yards**' and it's all about connecting communities through local food. Ooooby founder Peter Russell says: "In these uncertain

times it is becoming apparent that neighbours will soon reclaim the status of being among the most important people in our lives. As we move away from the industrial era towards the networked era, neighbours will morph from being anonymous cohabitants of a strip of suburbia, to being the direct source of most of the things that sustain us, including food, energy and entertainment."

Ooooby is for you if you either like to grow food (on a farm, in your backyard, in a community garden or where ever) or if you just like to eat locally grown food. Check out the website <http://www.ooooby.ning.com> (that's 4 o's!)

EVENTS

Neighbours Day Aotearoa: What are you doing where you live?

NZ's inaugural Neighbours Day Aotearoa will happen in neighbourhoods all around the country this weekend (26 – 27 March). It's not too late to:

- download the **Neighbours Pack** from the **Ideas & Tools** page at www.neighboursday.org.nz and get something happening with your neighbours.
- sign up at the website to support the initiative and help show how many people and streets are celebrating neighbourliness.

19 – 20 April: 2nd NZ Community Economic Development conference (Auckland)

Due to popular demand a second CED conference will be held at the Trusts Stadium Waitakere, organised by Community Waitakere on behalf of the CED Trust. The theme of this conference is ***Making it happen: from possibility to profitability*** and will feature a host of leading practitioners from New Zealand and overseas.

Read more in our [Events section](#) or visit the [Community Economic Development](#) website.

27-29 July 2011: Victory Village Forum (Nelson)

All are welcome to join in celebrating the Victory community's growth and change and engage in lively discussion about how they created a more vibrant community. This is a chance to learn from cutting edge examples of community-led development in Victory and across Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Victory Village Forum (www.confer.co.nz/victoryforum/) is brought to you by Victory Village in partnership with the Families Commission and Inspiring Communities.

October 2011: Tamarack's 2011 Communities Collaborating Institute: Leadership That Transforms Communities (Canada)

This signature, week-long learning event (3-7 October 2011 in Calgary, Alberta) is "an opportunity to be part of a dynamic learning community of individuals who are deepening and expanding their capacity to lead collaborations in their communities."

More information & registration: www.tamarackcci.ca

ABOUT INSPIRING COMMUNITIES

The Inspiring Communities Development Team is a 'virtual' team of six individuals (based in Wellington, Auckland and the Bay of Plenty) or around 3 full time equivalents; with many decades of community development and community change experience in Aotearoa.

Our mission is to support initiatives that strengthen communities of place and advocate for a community-led approach to development in NZ (where we see social, economic and environmental development as intrinsically interwoven). We do this by:

- **Focusing on intentional learning and outcomes:** noticing how change happens in communities and learning from this how best to foster positive change and growth. We aim to be a conduit for news about community-led development (CLD) activity in New Zealand (and overseas) and are grateful to all who share their stories and thinking on our website alongside our own stories from our [Core Learning Cluster](#). We co-facilitate forum events (with partners) to support learning about community-led development around the country.
- **Connecting people, communities and ideas** together to reduce 'reinventing the wheel' and encourage open sharing and learning together. We are closely connected with our [Core Learning Cluster](#) of eight initiatives, and are seeing increasing interest in several regional networks developing around the country.
- **Supporting local leadership and advocating** for "leaderful communities" where leadership comes from all corners, is recognised, encouraged, shared and passed on in a way that strengthens the whole community.
- **Actively advocating and talking about CLD** with those who influence policy and practice in NZ, including local government, central government, funders and academics to share what is being learned by NZ communities.

Inspiring Communities is a non-profit Trust. We have a management group and a Board of Trustees that reflect multiple sectors. The work of the *Inspiring Communities* is funded primarily by The Tindall Foundation with support from The Todd Foundation, the J R McKenzie Trust, Community Trust of Southland, BayTrust, ASB Community Trust, TSB Community Trust, Call Plus, Integrated Mapping, Ideas Shop, and others who generously contribute time, skills and resources.

You can read about our approach to learning, our framework for Community-Led Development, and more, on our website: www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz

For all our latest news you can go straight to our to [Community News](#) online.