

Inspiring Communities March 2010 News – email newsletter

Kia ora tatou

Welcome to our third email newsletter of 2010.

Through these emails we aim to keep you up to date with the latest community-led development news. If you have any community-led development news, analysis or events to share, please send them to us by reply to this email.

If you're one of many who are forwarded this newsletter, or a new subscriber, you may like some background about the Inspiring Communities Exchange. We have added a bit about us to the end of this email.

Below we link to some of the latest items in our online Community News, including a look at city councils learning from each other about community-led development. You'll also see links to:

- A story of triumph over habitual debt for a Porirua woman, thanks to the Good Cents initiative
- *Events* coming up related to community-led development forums in the Bay of Plenty and Southland organised by Inspiring Communities and others
- *News You Can Use* and *Learning Links* - ideas and resources we've found online

IMPORTANCE OF PLACE – GETTING TO KNOW NEIGHBOURS BUILDS COMMUNITY

February and March are a busy time in many communities with local fairs and festivals that combine fun, working with our neighbours while fundraising for our local community. Here in Mt Victoria, Wellington we held our second fair in two years. There were food stalls, an eco-theme, Mt Victoria 'walks' and a speakers' corner. As well as sizzling many sausages (and trying not to burn too many!), this meant lots of conversations and enough money raised to fund a chair-lift access in our community rooms for people with disabilities.

Supporting stronger neighbourhoods and communities is what Inspiring Communities is all about and we are passionate about these local events, and larger ones such as [Neighbours Day](#). Many positive conversations are being held about the benefits of Neighbours Day and its potential to impact more of New Zealand - we hope to share more on this next month. Meanwhile check out links to some great neighbourhood building resources and ideas under *News You Can Use* below.

The importance of 'place', knowing and supporting our neighbours, keeping an eye out for each other is increasingly recognised as vital. For us in NZ, keeping an eye out for our neighbours means reaching across the Pacific too, where there are real and urgent needs following Cyclone Pat. The family of Alfred Ngaro, one of our Exchange team comes from Aitutaki in the Cook Islands, which has been left in devastation. The Cook Islands, independent for all practical purposes, share citizenship with New Zealand. They are our close neighbours. We hope many will support the important, concerted fundraising effort through the [Aitutaki Enea Cyclone Relief Fund](#).

IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING

March has been about much preparatory work for the Inspiring Communities Exchange, especially for the group planning our national Learning Forum next month with our Core Learning Cluster initiatives. Around 30 people from the initiatives and our Exchange team will be learning together on Rakiura/Stewart Island. Under Jenny Blagdon's guidance participants from the Core Learning Cluster have been co-creating this forum. The special venue, and the co-design process, have brought an exciting dimension and vitality. We will share the key gleanings from the forum with you in May.

We are also continuing to hone the content for our 'deeper learning' publication (for which 'What we are Learning' is the latest in a succession of working titles!) and we look forward to sharing this with you. Meanwhile, happy reading - and as always we welcome your comments and suggestions.

Mary-Jane Rivers
Inspiring Communities

You can go straight to the latest [Community New links on our website](#).

LATEST UPDATES ON THE INSPIRING COMMUNITIES WEBSITE

*** Good Cents tackles budgeting blues - Kay's story ***

Completing a Good Cents budgeting programme has had many benefits for Kay (not her real name)... perhaps the main benefit; she has regained confidence in herself. Read the full story in the [Wesley Community Action March 2010 newsletter, online](#).

*** Time Banking Taita workshop ***

Time Banking in Taita is one step closer to getting up and running. People representing a number of social organisations, health services, churches and the community came to a workshop hosted by Hosanna Church, St Matthews and Great Start at the New Dowse, and time banking was the hot topic...

*** [Sir Peter Blake Leadership Awards](#) nominations open for 2010 ***

Six Emerging Leaders have made two short videos which aim to inspire all of us to consider nominations. Take 90 seconds and click the link above to watch them. Nominations close 25 April.

*** In the media ***

We've added several links to recent media coverage of community-led and community-driven activity around New Zealand, in our [Community News section](#).

EVENTS

*** Regional Environmental Hui (Auckland) ***

Where: Auckland

When: mid-late April 2010

Hosted By: EcoMatters Environment Trust

Details are on the Inspiring Communities [Events Calendar online](#)

To register interest phone Mels Barton 09 816 8337 / 021 213 7779 or email mels@subliminal.co.nz

***** Bay of Plenty Community-Led Development Workshop with BayTrust and Rotorua Charitable Energy Trust *****

An opportunity for practitioners, interested communities, and people who support them to get together. Discussion will centre on community-led development in the Bay of Plenty; what's working, challenges, and things that would help.

Where: Rotorua

When: 14 April

Hosted by: Inspiring Communities, BayTrust and Rotorua Energy Trust

For further information please email Barbara.MacLennan@inspiringcommunities.org.nz

***** An afternoon with Professor Christine Whitehead *****

Where: Christchurch

When: 14 April

Hosted by: Australian Housing Institute

Details: See the Inspiring Communities [Events Calendar online](#)

[Register online at the AHI website](#) or for more details email david.jones@housinginstitute.org

***** Leadership NZ 2010 Café Series *****

Where: Auckland

When: Wednesday 21 April 2010

Details: See the Inspiring Communities [Events Calendar online](#)

For any questions, enquiries about the Leadership New Zealand Cafe Series or Forum membership, please contact Michelle Jurgens on michelle.jurgens@leadershipnz.co.nz or 09 309 3749

***** Inspiring Communities and Community Trust of Southland Forum *****

An opportunity to hear from Sir Stephen Tindall about community-led development and share about activity in the region.

Where: Maitai

When: 10 May

Hosted by: Inspiring Communities and the Community Trust of Southland

For more details or to register interest email Mary-Jane.Rivers@inspiringcommunities.org.nz

***** Small Towns, Big Futures Conference *****

Where: Taranaki

When: 19 - 21 September

Hosted by: Small Towns New Zealand

[Details are online at Google groups](#)

LEARNING LINKS

***** [Article: What makes the healthiest and happiest societies? Hint – its not wealth](#) *****

Epidemiologist Richard Wilkinson explains why its equality, and not high income, that makes a society thrive.

***** [Engage! March](#) *****

Beautiful thinking for March from Tamarack, an Institute for Community Engagement.

*** [Art of Hosting](#) ***

Don't be put off by the name! It is about convening conversations that matter using methods, maps, and planning tools to engage groups and teams in meaningful conversation, deliberate collaboration, and group-supported action for the common good.

Increasingly it is about involving community leaders who:

- want to learn to lead without being possessive
- want to be helpful without taking credit, and
- are ready to let go in order to achieve more for the common good.

At the heart is the discipline of asking really useful questions: Albert Einstein said: If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than 5 minutes.

*** [The Maytree Foundation](#) ***

"... we work with leaders who imagine and deliver effective solutions, and who are relentless in their pursuit of change for a better Canada".

NEWS YOU CAN USE

*** [Jane's Walk](#) ***

Jane's Walk invites people to get out of their cars and get connected. It is inspired by the life and work of the late Jane Jacobs of Toronto – a significant contributor to good neighbourhood design. For her, the best way to get to know parks, sidewalks and streets was to get out and walk around, especially with some local residents.

Last year there were 315 Jane's Walks in cities across Canada and the US led by urban planners, youth, guerrilla gardeners, professors, newcomers, social historians, cyclists...

*** [Organiser's Workbook – moving your neighbourhood from good to great!](#) ***

A comprehensive (102 pages) resource from the Indianapolis Neighbourhood Resource Centre. Download the beautifully produced PDF from the link above (note, very large file - 11MB).

*** [CommunityNet Aotearoa](#) ***

A useful website operated by the Department of Internal Affairs, with all kinds of community-related news and a community resource kit.

*** [Happyzine.co.nz](#) ***

News website featuring only 'positive' articles including many about local communities in action. Current examples are articles on [Complimentary currency experience](#) and [Intention and collaboration](#).

ABOUT THE INSPIRING COMMUNITIES EXCHANGE

We are a 'virtual' team of six individuals (based in Wellington, Auckland, the Bay of Plenty and also Brisbane); or around 3 full time equivalents; with many decades of community development social entrepreneurial and community change experience in Aotearoa.

Our mission is to support initiatives that strengthen communities of place. Primarily this is a networking function, connecting people and communities together to reduce 'reinventing the wheel' and encourage open sharing and learning together.

We also actively seek to influence policy and practice in NZ through building relationships with local government, central government, funders and academics. For example we presented on community-led development recently to the Social Service Industry Training Organisation and at the end of last year at the 'Passing Go' conference in North Shore discussing Auckland governance change.

The work of the Inspiring Communities Exchange is funded primarily by The Tindall Foundation with support from The Todd Foundation, the J R McKenzie Trust and others who generously contribute time, skills and resources. Inspiring Communities is a non-profit organisation, operated by the Community-Led Development Trust. We have a management group and a strategic guiding group that reflect multiple sectors.

You can read about our approach to learning, our framework for Community-Led Development, and more community stories at inspiringcommunities.org.nz

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