

Friends of Suai/Covalima

June 2019

Festival of friendship in Acland Plaza



Traditional dance performance by Timorese students.

Friends of Suai Covalima held our first ever 'Timor Leste Fest' in Acland Plaza, St Kilda on Sunday 24th March. Supported by City of Port Phillip and the Acland Street Traders Association, the idea was to provide an opportunity for local residents, friends of Timor Leste in the wider community and expatriate Timorese to get together and celebrate the 19-year friendship and partnership between the Port Phillip and Covalima communities.



Enjoying the music of Mystic Trio & Ego Lemos.

Entertainment was provided by local band Mystic Trio, with guest appearances from Ego Lemos, Paulie Stewart and many other Timorese musicians. Traditional dance performances from members of the East Timorese Student Association were also a highlight.

There were stalls with information about Friends of Suai Covalima, Timorese products and items for sale to raise funds for With One Seed Covalima.

There was a wonderful atmosphere and it was lovely to see the community enjoying the sunshine and the celebration of friendship. ●

More Trees Please!

Would you like to help us to plant more trees in Timor Leste and mitigate climate change? You can, by supporting our Reforestation appeal (see page 4 for details).

Fourth annual Trivia Night raises \$6,000 for With One Seed Covalima

Our Trivia Night was held on Thursday 2nd May and was a great success. There were 70 attendees and we raised over \$6,000 for the With One Seed Covalima reforestation project in Timor Leste.

This was our fourth annual trivia night and once again we were very fortunate to have Deputy Mayor Louise Crawford as MC and also great support from Councillors, Council staff and community. A big thank you to everyone who attended, donated items or volunteered to make the night a great success.

There are some great photos of the night on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofsuaicovalima/> ●



Deputy Mayor Louise Crawford once again did a terrific job as MC.

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40 scholarships offered for study in 2019



New scholarship recipients and their parents at the Community Centre.

There are 40 students who have received scholarships this year, including 17 new students commencing in 2019. Fields of study include primary teaching, nursing, community development, agriculture and electrical studies. Seven of the new students are studying at local vocational schools in and around Suai, which offer

Certificate level courses in general construction, hospitality and administration.

This will be a big year for graduations, with 23 students expected to finish their studies in 2019. We look forward to sharing great photos and stories on the outcomes for these students. ●

Science & Maths workshop a great success

Friends of Suai Covalima have once again provided support to an innovative group of local science and maths teachers in Covalima, for the delivery of a two-day in-service workshop for teachers in the district. The group were supported by their colleagues from the Centre of Study of Science and Maths (SESIM) in Dili to deliver the training, and there were also presentations from students involved in local study groups.

The workshop was held on 15-16 April, with 58 participants from pre-secondary and secondary schools throughout the district. The objective was to develop skills to implement practical activities to use alongside theory in the classroom. Trainers, teachers and students shared ideas to create fun learning experiences, often using everyday objects. The feedback from all who participated was that the workshop were extremely beneficial. ●



Teachers learn practical activities to share with their students.

Celebration of women in Suai

The Covalima Community Centre has a great reputation for supporting women's development, including encouragement of women's leadership and the participation of women in political and civil life. A fantastic campaign was held on 12th March to commemorate International Women's Day, with more than 300 participants from Covalima district walking together through the streets of Suai town. The objective was to promote women's rights and equality, with banners including slogans such as 'Think equal', 'We support women 100%' and 'Together we can'. Many people of all ages joined in this wonderful celebration and also attended forums to discuss the rights of women. ●



Celebrating International Women's Day in the streets.



Demonstration of washing hands with soap.

Health and hygiene training

Covalima Community Centre staff have been working with the Sisters from Maucatar clinic, to provide health and hygiene training to young women at schools in Fatululic and Suai sub-districts. More than 200 students and teachers at three schools have participated in the training, which includes information and demonstration of hand washing using soap. There has also been training on menstruation and kits have been distributed to older students. There are plans to continue to offer this training in the future to schools in sub-districts of Covalima. ●

Laptops used for village-based training

Last year a shipment of computer equipment from City of Port Phillip was sent to the Community Centre in Suai. The shipment contained laptops, which have allowed the IT staff to offer 'mobile training' outside the Community Centre classroom.

Mobile training is currently being trialled in local villages, with the hope to expand the program. For many, this is the first opportunity to use a computer and provides an excellent introduction to learn some basic concepts and skills, and to have hands on experience. ●



Introductory computer training for young students.

Reforestation appeal

Friends of Suai Covalima have made a commitment to support an exciting new initiative called With One Seed Covalima and we need your help!

With One Seed is a certified carbon forestry program in Timor-Leste, working with subsistence farming communities to replant deforested land and to generate income for farmers. Farmers are paid to plant and maintain trees and once the trees are established, income is generated through the purchase of carbon social credits.

Seedlings are propagated locally at a village-based nursery and given to participating farmers to plant on their land. Farmers receive practical education and training in agroforestry and permaculture.

The With One Seed project is community owned and management of the community reforestation activities are village-based, self-managed, community tree cooperatives. The Community Centre will manage the project and have employed four staff: a Program Coordinator, Village Officer and two field staff.

The project objectives are to:

- develop the capacity for subsistence communities to replant and maintain their forests
- build local economies and provide sustainable income for subsistence farmers
- deliver practical agroforestry and permaculture training
- educate communities both in Timor-Leste and Australia about the importance of trees for climate adaption and mitigation measures



Visiting With One Seed in Baguia.



Coffee, 'More Trees Please' t-shirts & tote-bags are available to purchase.

We are replicating the successful With One Seed program in Baguia in Baucau district which has been running for over ten years and involves 800 farmers with 150,000 trees under management. The team in Baguia are providing great support to our friends in Covalima, including communities in the sub-district of Tilomar, which is the intended location for the project.

There is great enthusiasm from community members and leaders in Covalima and we are committed to supporting our friends at the Community Centre and in Tilomar with this project.

We have a very ambitious fundraising target to support establishment costs over the next three years and would be extremely grateful if you could donate towards this exciting new initiative.

Donations can be made via the following methods:

Directly to Friends of Suai Covalima:

- A cheque payable to City of Port Phillip sent to Friends of Suai Covalima, City of Port Phillip, Private Bag 3, St Kilda Vic 3182
- Direct deposit into our Commonwealth Bank account. Acct Name: Friends of Suai donations BSB: 063 243 Acct Number: 1034 3552
- On-line via the Friends of Suai Covalima Give Now webpage: website <https://www.givenow.com.au/reforestation>

For tax deductibility, donations can also be made directly to With One Seed online via Australian Communities Foundation website (please write 'Covalima' in the comments).

For more information, please contact:

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