

TREES FOR SURVIVAL™

Children growing our future

Newsletter • Issue 8 • March 2009

Good times or bad – trees important

Welcome to our first 2009 newsletter – a year when the global financial crisis joins the world-wide concern over the future of our environment.

Even in times of financial constraint we must continue to protect our environment. All those involved in the *TfS* programme will be doing their bit by planting trees to reduce erosion, improve stream flow and water quality, enhance biodiversity as well as offsetting carbon emissions.



David English, TfS National Manager, encourages the students of Thames South School at question time.

Involving our school children in planting trees is an investment in the future. Not only will more trees be planted but future generations will be more environmentally aware than we and our predecessors were.

I believe that corporates and small business, despite the financial downturn, must continue to recognise that they too have a part to play in protecting our environment.

The *TfS* programme in schools is made possible through the effective involvement of our partners – the local councils, supporting organisations

particularly Rotary Clubs, landowners and sponsors. This newsletter recognises the support *TfS* obtains from councils, namely the Greater Wellington Regional Council (p2), our sponsoring Champions Yates and the Sustainable Business Network (this page). Funding like that received from the Boeing Environmental Fund (p4) enables *TfS* to encourage 'more children to plant more trees'.

Recently, the national average for *TfS* schools has been in the vicinity of 400 stems planted, resulting in around 60,000 plantings annually. This is a notable achievement but we need to do better, particularly to offset the fall in commercial exotic and indigenous plantings experienced in the last decade.

In order to encourage children, *TfS* promotes the Holyoake Award which rewards schools for effective and enthusiastic participation in the *TfS* programme. In addition, this year, plans are afoot to make prizes available for teachers too. More information will be available in our next newsletter.

This time next year it would be great if I can report a national average throughout New Zealand of over 500 stems planted per school for 2009.

So I encourage all our schools and the supporting partners to focus not only on planting more trees but, in doing this, to ensure that the trees and shrubs they plant are healthy and strong, thereby guaranteeing maximum survival rates.

In this way children in the *TfS* programme can lead the way in making a real difference in New Zealand's environmental landscape.

Sponsoring trees for carbon offsets

In 2009 the Sustainable Business Network plans to increase its commitment to the Trees for Survival (*TfS*) programme by sponsoring the planting of 12,000 trees by a group of *TfS* schools across Auckland and Wellington and several other regions around New Zealand.



In recognition of a Champion sponsorship of Trees for Survival, Mark Roberts of SBN, right, receives a plaque from TfS national manager David English.

The GreenFleet programme, operated by SBN, has dual objectives. One goal is to inculcate a culture of sustainability thus reducing emissions by careful vehicle purchasing and maintenance, limiting vehicle use where possible and encouraging alternative working patterns and travel needs. Parallel with this SBN has adopted a programme for developing carbon offsets by supporting the planting of trees.

"Our tree planting mission," say Mark Roberts, GreenFleet Programme Manager for SBN, "fits very well with the opportunities provided within the *TfS* programme and integrates well

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Trees for Survival
proudly championed by



Wellington region in good heart

The work of the Trees for Survival (*TfS*) programme relies on assistance from many partners, among which are various regional councils who usually play a prominent part providing seedlings for *TfS* plant growing units and advice to teachers, as well as interfacing over sites for planting and assisting at planting time.

Wellington region has been actively supporting the *TfS* programme for many years – with significant assistance from a dedicated team at Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW) who have made a major contribution to streamlining the functioning of the local programme. Under the leadership of Robyn Smith, team leader Community Environmental Projects and her committed group of Juzah Zammit-Ross, Kerry Penny, Warren Field, Callum Brooks and Richard Romijn with support from Geoff Skene, manager of Environmental Education, Greater Wellington plays an invaluable role.

With 16 committed schools, in an area



Left: Students of Wainuioru School in eastern Wairarapa benefit from experience as they embark on planting out, the culmination of their earlier nurturing work.



Right: Children from Epuni School get ready for a potting-on session and helped by John Lord (left), Karnabie Weitzel (centre) and Field Officer Anne Gaskin (right).

that runs up to the Wairarapa and over to Kapiti Coast, the programme is currently full. Since her appointment in mid-2008 as the *TfS* regional field officer, Anne Gaskin has visited most member schools.

Anne speaks with strong appreciation of Greater Wellington's help. She says, "they are a great team providing help and guidance in support of the

implementation of the *TfS* programme in our sixteen schools".

The efforts of GW are strongly on public land with the planting-out focus being on seaside dunes and rivers. Robyn Smith says, "we are committed to fostering plants that belong to the Wellington region thus building on the region's special character. And we work

From obstacle to asset

In December the prestigious Holyoake Award for 2008 was presented to Meadowbank School of Auckland. The impressive commitment of Room 13 and teacher Edith Cross to the Trees for Survival (*TfS*) initiative is in keeping with the school's involvement with the *TfS* programme since 1992.

Meadowbank School, divided into two parts by a deep gully with a stream in the bottom, has turned what on first appearances might be seen as divisive into a magnificent asset. The Gully Project plays a pivotal role in the highly-developed environmental programme which is a major part in school learning.

At the micro level, the school typically brings about 2400 trees through its planting unit each year for use in sites which are allocated by the Auckland Regional Council. Typically 75% of the trees are planted rurally, where students have the opportunity to develop a relationship with a particular farm, and the rest in the school or local community.



Top: Noel Holyoake, of Holyoake Industries, presents the 2008 award to Edith Cross.

Above: An impressive notice board summarises Meadowbank's commitment to the environment.

Some are donated for planting alongside other schools to help them establish native areas for birds. *TfS*, supported by Downtown Rotary and Remuera New World, is justly proud that its interaction with the school has played a very important part in the larger, more all-encompassing environmental education.

The key drivers for *TfS* are erosion control, maintaining water quality and stream flow, biodiversity and strengthening relationships with local groups as well as restorative planting enhancing our environment. At so many different levels the activities at Meadowbank epitomise those objectives.

Over the last decade the school's environmental focus has grown. Peter Ayson, who returned to the school as Principal in 1998, has given strong leadership and the appointment of Nicky Elmore as specialist Nature Science Co-ordinator has further supported Edith's work.

Work on the gully began in 2000. After a major clearing programme, the area now boasts a network of paths, constructed teaching areas and gardens

Working in TFS schools

to ensure that schools integrate the TFS programme into the curriculum, so that children gain a wider view of the importance of plants".

Under the guidance of chairman, Jim Greenhough, the Rotary District committee facilitates funding support for TFS schools .

Epuni School is a classic example of the way regional council assistance works. Here the drive of Juzah Zammit-Ross, with the help of Jay Howey of Hutt Valley Rotary, has been instrumental in getting a planting unit, taken over from another school, up and running. Now the Epuni students are able to participate fully part in the programme.

Next issue it is hoped to explore recent progress at Hutt Valley High School where Geraldine Smart has been single-handedly running the programme for the last five years.

Late last year a Trees for Survival (TFS) plant growing unit was installed at the historic Te Waotu School in the South Waikato. The whole school, supported by enthusiastic parents and representatives of Environment Waikato and the South Waikato District Council, attended the opening. Lesley Fitzgerald of Pokaiwhenua Tree Farm showed the children how to prick out and pot-on their seedlings.

Epuni School in Wellington's Hutt Valley have potted on their first set of seedlings, and all involved are looking forward enthusiastically to the planting season.

TFS plant growing units have been delivered to the Rudolf Steiner School in Tauranga, Ponsonby School and Takapuna Grammar School in Auckland while Te Karaka School in Gisborne is standing by to receive its new 4m unit. The application by Point View School in Auckland to become a TFS school has been approved – more information will follow in the May Newsletter.



Top: Enthusiastic students and helpers at Epuni School in Hutt Valley.

Above: Students at Rudolf Steiner School, Tauranga, get dirt under their nails.

and trees. The school activities also feature hydroponics, worm farms, water recycling, vegetable gardens, composting and the TFS plant growing unit.

Since 2000 Meadowbank School has received numerous awards in acknowledgment of its environmental programme, as well as being recognised by the NZ Institute of Landscape Architects with a Gold Medal for the Gulley Project. As a Green/Gold EnviroSchool, the whole school is committed to working towards sustainability with all year groups able to use exciting facilities to learn in, and about, the environment, while taking action for the environment.

The integration of this environmentally-based programme into the school's curriculum is apparently seamless. SOLO – an approach based on the Study of Observed Learning Outcomes – plays a significant part in encouraging enquiry and creating highly successful thinking processes for the students as they progress into secondary school. Concept Maps are utilised to explore a number of issues such as erosion and animal pests.



The school's work attracts both national and international attention. Edith's blog at <http://room13environment.wordpress.com> provides an evolving insight into the Meadowbank experience, while revealing her passionate commitment; her latest updates don't take long to be viewed worldwide!

Relationship with the broader community goes beyond a contribution to planting trees. Recently Ngati Whatua o Orakei carver Katera Maihi was commissioned to transform obsolete telephone poles into pouwhakarae – shaped posts traditionally used on pa sites to confuse and deter enemies. They have been erected around the school with the tallest, God of the Forest Tane, looking after the gulley. This carving is the start of a relationship with the bilingual Maori school at Orakei marae, Te Kura-a-Iwi.

Top: Recently completed Tane looks out of over the well-planted gulley.

Left: Nestled in the gulley, surrounded by evidence of the project, is the amphitheatre – an outdoor classroom.

Coming, coming...

In spite of our plans to circulate the Secondary School Resource to schools before the end of 2008 the fates conspired against us and the mailing of the resource package has been delayed, but it will be distributed to all Trees for Survival secondary schools soon. Resource Packs are available to be purchased for \$25 ea plus P&P. Write to Trees for Survival, PO Box 11836, Ellerslie, Auckland or email info@tfsnz.org.nz



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highly the work being done by Trees for Survival."

A typical vehicle on New Zealand roads will emit 3.4 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. Membership of GreenFleet facilitates the planting of 23 trees per vehicle per year as a carbon offset for these emissions.

Mark comments, "Participation in *TfS* programmes offers mutual benefits for both parties with SBN members being seen as committed to and in tune with their communities."

Collective action across broad partnerships is fundamental to SBN. On one side they have sponsors (Toyota, Honda, LeasePlan and Thrifty Car Rentals) who make possible the GreenFleet efforts while reinforcing their own individual commitments to environmentally-friendly business. On the other side SBN operates in a broad partnership with *TfS* and various schools in pursuit of their carbon offsets objective.

Environmental fund sponsorship

Trees for Survival (*TfS*) acknowledges the generous financial support from the Boeing Environmental Fund that will enable new schools to join the *TfS* programme. The schools are supplied with materials and equipment to grow and plant trees in their specially designed plant growing units.

Furthermore this funding will enable *TfS* schools to work with students participating in the Foundation for Youth Development programmes.

During the year *TfS* will be working with the Foundation for Youth Development in Auckland and Wellington. It is hoped that at least two schools in each region will be involved in initiating this joint venture. More details will be forthcoming in the May edition of the *TfS* Newsletter.



Craig Saddler (right), Graeme Dingle (Founder of FYD) and Hardayal Singh from Air New Zealand with children of Randwick Park School in Manurewa. Craig Saddler spoke to the children about the need to respect our environment.



FOUNDATION FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

TfS sponsors and supporters

We sincerely thank the following for their assistance and donations:

The Sustainable Management Fund,
Boeing Environmental Fund, Cuesports
Foundation, The Chenery Trust,

NZ Steel, The Northern Gateway
Alliance, G S Shapland Ltd, Regency
Duty Free and Parkland Products.

Trees for Survival acknowledges the Rotary Clubs of New Zealand, Multistrut, Foster & Co and local councils throughout the country for their ongoing support of the *TfS* programme.

Keep in touch!

There are many stories to tell and we would like to publish them in our newsletter. If you have a news item of interest, or a photo of your *TfS* activities, please send them to info@tfsnz.org.nz marked attention 'Newsletter Editor' We look forward to your contributions!

Application forms to apply to become a *TfS* school can be downloaded from www.tfsnz.org.nz/userimages/File/Get_Involved/ApplicationForm08_3.pdf

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