

TIME TO CELEBRATE!

You are invited to the final meeting for 2014 of the Friends of Aileu Community Committee, at 6.30pm on Tuesday 9 December, at the Moreland Civic Centre. It will also be the last meeting for the Project Coordinator, Richard Brown, who is leaving at the end of December (see story opposite)

COME TO THE CAROLS

The Friends of Aileu will again be joined by the Wild Timor Coffee Co. to operate the tea and coffee stall at this year's Carols by the Lake at Coburg Lake Reserve, Murray Road Coburg from 5.30pm on Saturday 13 December – for more information go to the Moreland Council website.

Councils to sign agreement to assist Aileu

Moreland and Hume Councils have agreed to enter into an agreement with the Timor-Leste Secretariat of Administrative Decentralisation to assist Aileu District in the transition to elected municipal government.

The request to sign the Municipal Cooperation Agreement came from Local Government Victoria, which is coordinating the arrangements with a number of Victorian local governments.

The Councils agreed to provide the assistance within the framework of the existing Friendship relationship, which has been in place for nearly fifteen years. Under the existing Agreement, the Friends of Aileu has provided a range of assistance to the Aileu District Administration and the local community, including some training related to the transition to local government.

The proposed agreement covers a range of possible activities, including training and exchanges of personnel. If any activities are proposed which fall outside the existing Friendship Agreement and the related Strategy Plan, and require additional funds or resources, they will be subject to separate arrangements.

It is expected that elections for the first 'municipal assembly' in Aileu will be held by 2017.

Project Coordinator resigns

The Friends of Aileu Project Coordinator, Richard Brown, will finish on 18 December after nearly eleven years in the role.

This year, he convened the planning committee which organised the 'Working Together with Timor-Leste: The Next 10 Years' conference and expo in Melbourne, which attracted over 270 delegates.



Richard Brown (r) with Timor-Leste Prime Minister, Xanana Gusmão, September 2014 (photo by Jorge de Araujo).

For a number of years, he served as the Friends of Aileu's representative on the VLGA's Timor-Leste Advisory Group. He also represented the Friends of Aileu at a number of conferences and spoke to Friendship groups, local governments and various NGOs about the Timor-Leste Friendship movement.2/.

He plans to remain involved with the Friends of Aileu as a community volunteer.

Hume Council funds scholarships

Hume City Council has again agreed to provide a grant of \$3,600 towards the cost of scholarships for secondary students in Aileu in 2015.

Cr Helen Patsikatheodorou, the Chair of the Friends of Aileu Community Committee, also donated \$1,600 towards the scholarship program – this was the cost of her travel to Timor-Leste earlier this year, which was reimbursed by Hume Council

The scholarship program provides US\$120 to the successful students towards the cost of their education from Year 10 to Year 12.

In 2014 there were 36 scholarships awarded, 16 to boys and 20 to girls.

Reading Contest a success

The annual Science and Reading Contest, organised by the Aileu Resource and Training Centre, was a great success, according to Sister Rosalva Sandi, who helped organise the event.

Over 270 students in teams of three from 77 schools in Aileu took part, with the finals being held in two venues in Aileu Town in October.



Students at the finals of the Reading Contest in Aileu

The students, drawn from local primary and secondary schools in the District, are tested on reading and comprehension of texts based on the science curriculum.

This year, the heats held in each sub-District were organised by the new Director of the Centre, Guida Pereira, who had returned from studying management at an Indonesian university to take up her new role.



Guida Pereira (third from left) and other staff of the Centre

The contest is run by the Centre in association with the Timor-Leste Ministry of Education and the Asia Foundation, with funding from the Friends of Aileu.

ATA gets funding for solar project

Friends of Aileu partner, the Alternative Technology

Association was successful in winning a \$250,000 grant from Google Australia for its 'Solar for Timor' project.

ATA will use the funds to install solar-powered lighting in one thousand homes in villages in Timor-Leste, including in Aileu. ATA will also train fifty local installer/technicians over the next two years.



ATA CEO Donna Luckman & IPG Convenor Michael O'Connell at the award ceremony

Stop Press

The school reader, Kose Nehan, ('clean your teeth'), produced for the Friends of Aileu's Oral Health Program by Dr Martin Hall, Katrina Langford and the Arte Moris studio in Dili, has been chosen by the Timor-Leste Ministry of Education to be reprinted for distribution to every school in Timor-Leste.

For more information about Friends of Aileu, visit our web pages at:

www.moreland.vic.gov.au - (go to Community Services), or www.hume.vic.gov.au (go to About Council), or contact the Project Coordinator on 9240 1112