



Friends of Venilale e-Newsletter November 2024

<http://venilale.com>
<facebook.com/groups/friendsofvenilale>



Update

There have been some wonderful surprises for FoV and Venilale this year. The Marsh Foundation has funded the scholarships for 5 Health students and Beryl Jolly has very generously donated funds to cover some education scholarships so that each student can attend school for three years. In Venilale the main road has been graded and bitumenised, Candida travelled to America for 7 weeks after winning a Fulbright Scholarship and Boss has been awarded a DFAT Scholarship which will enable him to further his studies in Australia. Fundraising activities were well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. Many thanks to our hard-working members and their friends who also volunteered to help. Savio is the only East Timorese seasonal worker remaining in Mansfield and he and others are constantly supported by Ann Eldred. Julie Aldous presented slideshows to Rotary, shire councillors and the partnership schools which have re-energised these relationships and updated new staff. The schools in Venilale are making improvements due to funds raised by their partners.

Buy your coffee at
'Oakbank
Produce' or
contact Ann
Eldred—
0419950724

Wild Timor Coffee is a coffee importing company founded by four Australian Peacekeepers after returning from service in East Timor. FOV supports 'Wild Timor' because it is a new business and they pay their farmers even better than fair trade companies.



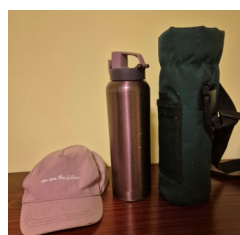
<http://www.wildtimorcoffee.com/>

Fundraising



The Ridgeline Walk

The Ridgeline Walk was a huge success with more participants entering than ever. It was a magnificent day weatherwise and there was a great buzz in the air at the end with many commenting on what a fabulous experience it had been. Thanks again to Helen and Andrew Crockett, Margie Twycross, the landholders, Lise Andreassen for marking part of the course and of course Rotary for their delicious BBQ.



LOST PROPERTY
Please contact Anne
0400100867

Mega Garage Sale

Coping magnificently with last minute changes Ann Eldred and Karen, with many members helping, organised the sale of many treasures and raised \$1954. Thanks to Jason Eldred for offering his place in town for the venue.



The November Bush Market was yet another opportunity to interact with locals and remind everyone of our friendship town relationship. Margaretanne Hood won the raffle.



Family portraits



A huge thank you to Kirstie-Lee Smith for donating her time, skills and talent. Her family photographs were absolutely delightful. She raised \$850 for FoV projects and provided many wonderful Christmas presents.

Monarch of the Mountain



Geelong Grammar Timbertop organise a cross country run, annually, for their students and staff. As very generous supporters of FoV and their partnership school in Venilale, Luga Oli Senior Secondary, they have invited FoV to cater for a BBQ at the conclusion of the event. The school makes a very generous donation to FoV in return. FoV members have been impressed by the courtesy and gratitude expressed by the students.

Open Garden



The Mansfield Strings captured quite an audience

Carol and Nigel Watts shared their magnificent garden and overall over \$3000 was raised. It was a fun afternoon. Special thanks to The Mad Orchestra, the Mansfield Strings and Bendigo Bank for use of their BBQ.



The MAD Orchestra entertained everyone with a wonderful selection of music



Ann Eldred, Karen and Tia (a Fijian seasonal worker) provided a delicious variety of scones



Ken and Andy thoroughly enjoyed cooking up tasty sausages in this delightful garden



Michelle accompanied by Savio (a Timorese seasonal worker) and friends from the Timor Hearts Fund certainly appreciated the setting



Friends and constant supporters of FoV whenever we need a hand— Kath Davey, Helen Hunt and Anne Foster greeted all the visitors.

The beautiful plant which was raffled was won by Liz Scales.

Scholarship Recipients 2024 High School



Dircia Maria Moniz, aged 13, is in Year 8 and attends Uai Laco Junior High. She is the youngest of 8 children.



Fidel Osorio Godinho, aged 14, is in Year 8 and attends Uai Laco Junior High. He is the middle child in a family of 6 children.



Juella Soares, aged 16, is in Year 8 at Uai Laco Junior High. There are 6 children in her family so they take turns to go to school. She lives with her grandparents.



Nelson de Jesus, aged 13, is in Year 8 at Uai Laco Junior High. He has one brother and his favourite subject is Portuguese. He likes cooking, swimming and soccer.



Celcia Romana Freitas, aged 16, is in Year 9 and attends Bercoli Junior High. There are 7 children in the family. Her favourite subject is English and she likes cooking, sewing and reading.



Divania Maria de Sousa, aged 16, is in Year 9 and attends Bercoli Junior High. Her parents are very poor. She would like to continue on to Senior High School



Duarte Antonio da Costa, aged 15, is in Year 9 and attends Bercoli Junior High. His favourite subject is maths and he likes soccer, swimming and reading.



Viegra Tito Elias da Costa, aged 16, is in Year 9 and attends Bercoli Junior High. There are 4 children in the family. His favourite subject is English.

Reasons for awarding scholarships

Adelaide Sousa Pinto, aged 13, is in Year 8 and attends Uai-Bua Junior High. She gains excellent results in exams. Her favourite subject is Maths.



Anita Maria F. Guterres, aged 14, is in Year 8 and attends Uai-Bua Junior High. She is the eldest of 4 children. Her favourite subject is English and she likes all sports.



Charles Celestino Guterres, aged 16, is in Year 8 and attends Uai-Bua Junior High. The children take turns to attend school so he has missed some years.



Mario F. de Oliveira Guterres, aged 16, is in Year 8 and attends Uai-Bua Junior High. There are 6 children in the family. The children take turns to attend school.



Students are awarded scholarships based on their academic achievement, economic circumstances and overall attitude. Nearly all the recipients have fathers who are subsistence farmers and mothers who are housewives. If there are not two parents then life is quite hard. Unfortunately the death rate in Timor-Leste is far higher than in Australia due to the hard living conditions and limited health resources. Life expectancy is 69.3 years. The average family has 5 to 8 children though family sizes are starting to reduce.

Students at Uai Laco and Bercoli are particularly remote from Venilale so teachers Pedro and Joni have to travel to these schools by motorbike to interview, photograph and award the scholarships to students.

Joaninha Luisa Fatima, aged 17, is in Year 11 at Luga Oli Senior High. Her family is poor and her parents are getting old. There are 8 children in the family. She would like to be an English teacher.



Jacinto Saturlino dos Santos, aged 18, is in Year 12 at Luga Oli Senior High. His favourite subject is biology and he would like to be a doctor. There are 5 children in the family.



Quelai de Carvalho, aged 17, is in Year 12 at Luga Oli Senior High School. Her favourite subject is physics and she would like to be an engineer. There are 8 children in her family.



Zefri Paolo Guterres, aged 18, is in Year 12 at Luga Oli Senior High School. His favourite subject is maths and he would like to be a Maths teacher.

Scholarship Recipients 2024

University



Zonibel Guterres Soares, aged 22, continues to study Civil Engineering at UNPAZ. He is in the last year of a 4 year course. He hopes to work in the construction area. In Dili he lives with his uncle and aunt.



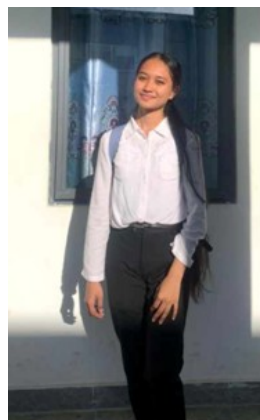
Esau Rui da Cunha Amaral, aged 22, continues to study civil construction at UCT (Catholic Uni of Timor Leste). He is in his third year. He lives in Dili with his eldest sister.



Edigar Basilio da Costa, aged 21, continues to study Human Rights at UNTL. It is his second year of the 5 year course. He hopes to be a civic education teacher.



Nelson Mandela Pereira Ximenes, is studying Health at UNTL. He is in the final year of a 4 year course and will graduate as a nurse. He lives with his brother in Dili.

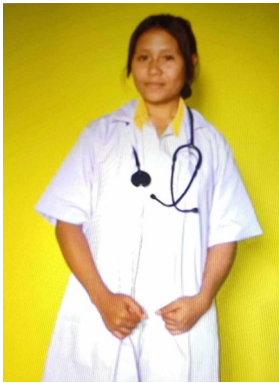


Jenita de M.da Costa continues to study Health at UNTL. She is in the third year of her four year degree. She hopes to be a nurse.



Cedeliza de Jesus Correia, aged 24, is studying Education at UNTL. She is in the last year of a 4 year course and when she finishes she will qualify as a Biology teacher. In Dili she lives with her aunt and uncle.

Marsh Foundation Scholarship Recipients 2024



Faustina de Sousa, 23, is studying nursing at UNITAL. She would eventually like to be a doctor.



Hellvenia Santos Castro, 20, is studying Public Health at Dili University. It is her first year. She hopes to become a midwife.



Nivio Belo Sarmento is studying Public Health at UNTL. It is his first year. He hopes to become a doctor.

Tom Tully found out about FoV by fortuitous conversations with Ann and Ken at a function in Goughs Bay.

The Marsh Foundation started as a result of the Bali bombings in 2002 and the discovery of poor local hospital conditions. A committee was established which decided to send surplus medical hospital equipment from Australia. When this became too costly their fundraising was directed to supporting health and medical students in Vietnam, Tanzania and now Timor-Leste.

The health scholarships are our most expensive and also most critical in Venilale. It has been wonderful that the Marsh Foundation provides full scholarships for students studying health courses.

These 5 students are the first recipients of this scholarship. If a student finishes their studies another will be chosen to take their place. The funding agreement lasts for 4 years.



Noia A. da Silva Guterres is in her 4th year studying Public Health at The Institute of Health Sciences. She hopes to be a midwife.



Zefiro Talino de Andrade, 20, is studying Public Health at the Institute of Health Sciences. It is his first year and he hopes to become a nurse.

Partnership Schools

Julie presented slideshows prepared by Annie to the Shire and each partnership school, updating staff on their Venilale partner.

Geelong Grammar Timbertop raised the equivalent of US\$2400 for Luga Oli Senior Secondary. They bought a storage /display cabinet for chemistry and biology equipment, 3 laptops, blackboards and dictionaries.



Mana Candida and the other teachers are very happy with the equipment for their school.



A huge development for Luga Oli Senior Secondary science students is the purchase of this special cupboard. For many years students studied science subjects using only a text book.



Principal Ximenes giving the scholarship funds to a recipient. This process is made possible by Maun Joni, our Friendship Liaison Officer. He is accompanied by Peace Corps volunteer Caleb.

Mansfield Secondary College students raised the equivalent of US\$715 for their partnership school, Bercoli Junior High.

This partly funded the building of a storage room for educational materials like class sets of text books.

The teachers' staffroom may finally offer space to move around freely and desks where there is space for teachers to work.



The Steiner School raised \$A105.50 for their partner Uai Laco Secondary to buy 20 notebooks, 5 pens, 2 microphones and 4 USB's.



Uai Bua completed their volleyball court made possible by US\$600 fundraising by Lauriston Howqua Campus. Students and staff pitched in to paint the lines.

Special Friends of FoV



Julie and Rachel presented a slideshow to Rotary about Mansfield's relationship with Venilale which will celebrate its 20th year in 2025.

Following on from this Beryl Jolly became inspired to donate funds that would enable high school students to access three consecutive years of schooling. FoV will continue to fund Uni students for the entire length of their courses.

Beryl's generosity will be life changing for many high school students in Venilale who are academically talented but often come from large families and economically vulnerable situations.

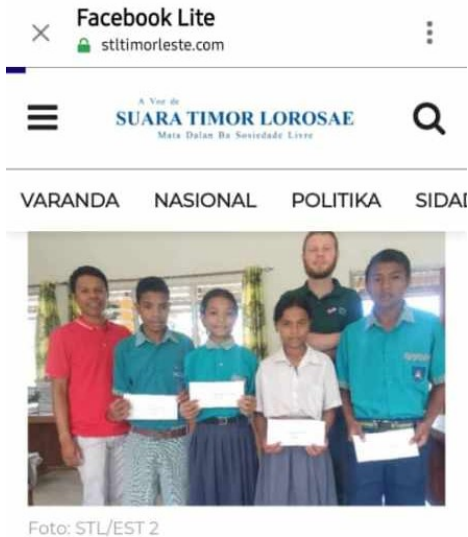
Candida left Venilale on September 4 on her way to Bozeman, Montana State, USA where she attended 6 weeks of training in a programme called Teaching Excellence and Achievement. This was the result of being awarded the only Fulbright Scholarship offered in Timor-Leste. There were 23 teachers from 20 different countries. They attended Montana State University for training. She learnt different methods of teaching, shared in conferences for teachers and learnt about USA culture. She also visited tourist sites. She learnt about leadership, how to use technology in the classroom and student management. Field experience at a variety of schools in Montana was very beneficial. What a fabulous experience for such an outstanding teacher and Deputy Principal of Luga Oli Senior Secondary. Candida is also our deputy Friendship Liaison Officer.



Boss has accepted an Australian Awards Scholarship offered by DFAT. He will arrive in Melbourne in February and start his Masters degree in June. Once he is settled, he hopes to bring his family over to join him. Boss was also selected for the Future Leaders of ASEAN program representing Timor-Leste. This was a 14 month immersion program to develop young Timorese leaders aged 23—37.

Boss is also the official translator for FoV. Here he is with former Ambassador to Australia Abel Guterres.

Special Friends of FoV



BAUKAU, STLTIMORLESTE.com – Belun Mansfield husi Nasaun Vizinho Australia neebe parseria ho Venilale oan, fo apoiu osan ba estudante kbiit laek sira, iha Postu Administrativu Venilale, Munisipiu Baukau.



Three US Peace Corps volunteers have been living and working in Venilale this year. Caleb Betts is teaching at SMKK and working with Joni, Andy Kline is teaching at Luga Oli Senior High and Quentin Power is teaching at Bercoli.



Caleb has been able to join in our FoV Zoom meetings most months. It was great to see English lessons resuming at the Community Centre.

Congratulations to Maun Joni (our Friendship Liaison Officer) for promoting the scholarship fund relationship between FoV and Venilale in the national newspaper, Suara Timor Lorosae. The reporters travelled to Venilale to interview him.



Congratulations also to Mestri Pedro (our Education Support Officer) who became the Venilale Inspector of Education in June.



Mana Teresa has been photographed by her talented son Eko in traditional Timor-Leste clothing. She is a founding member of the Venilale Women's handicraft group. She is also an amazing cook and has catered for visitors and special feasts for at least 15 years. Mana Teresa has walked to remote villages to teach literacy and numeracy to seniors at the request of the government.

She is such a generous and clever personality. She has boarded children so that they can attend school and she has managed to adjust to new technology moving from a treadle sewing machine to an electric one and teaching younger women.

FoV Committee for 2025

Enormous thanks to the committee of 2024

The position holders for 2025 are:

President -Julie Aldous

Vice President— Helen Crockett

Secretary—David Foster

Treasurer— Karen Lewis

Committee Members—Ann Eldred, Lynn Elder, Andy Barltrop, Andrew Crockett, Margie Twycross, Rachel Meadows, Trish McKenzie, Anne Foster, Joni, Boss, Candida



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2025?

Find out about our projects on the 4th Wednesday of each month, 6 pm in the RSL rooms

WANT TO BE INVOLVED?

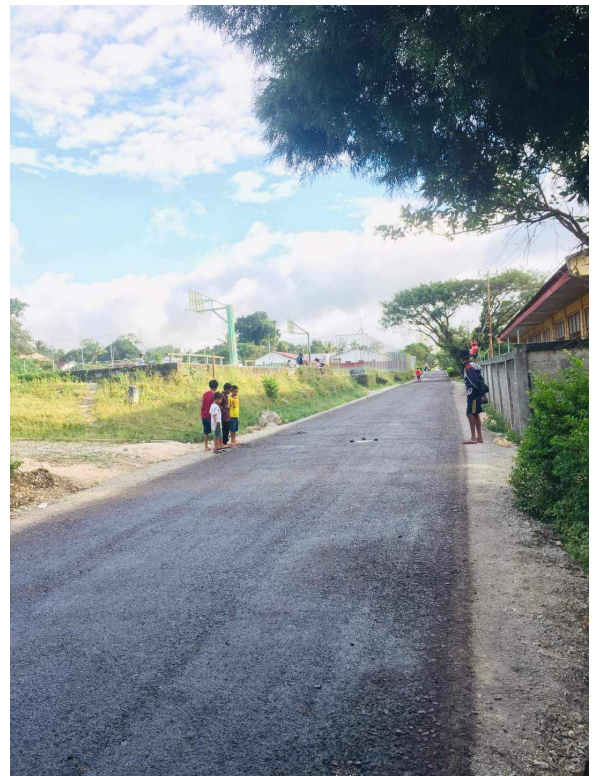
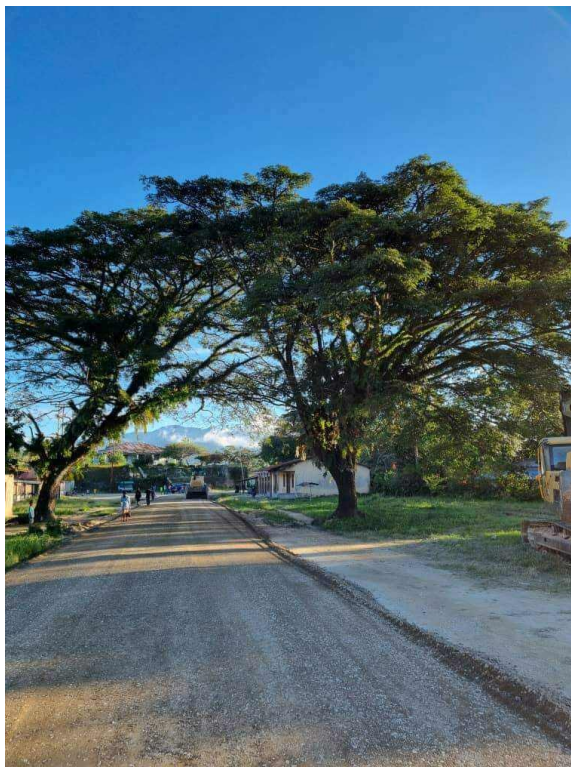
Here's your opportunity to contribute. Everyone welcome.

Venilale News



Maun Joni has regularly asked local students to share in the maintenance of the Community Centre.

The students happily work at this task and it must help them to feel greater ownership of this community asset.



For all those who have visited Venilale you will be amazed by the improvement in the roads. This government initiative has finally reached Venilale.

From the main road to Baucau the works have also been extended right along Venilale's main street towards Uai Bua. The road has been thoroughly graded and bitumenised.

This seems like a small event but every improvement to infrastructure means greater ease of trade and communication in a country where most people are reliant on walking.

Timor-Leste News



An example of Timor recycling ingenuity.

(Sourced from Facebook)

600,000 to 700,000 people, roughly half the entire population of East Timor, gather at Tasitolu for Mass with Pope Francis today.



The Pope's visit to Timor-Leste in September brought the whole country to a standstill.

The event and numbers attending reflect a significant component of Timor-Leste culture.



Friends of Venilale

MEMBERSHIP –If you are new or your membership details have changed please print this form, fill it in with your updated contact details and mail it to the address below. You may pay by cheque or direct deposit.

Bearing in mind that FOV is a purely voluntary organisation which is trying to make a difference, your annual membership of \$20 helps keep it viable.

NAME:

PHONE:

ADDRESS:

.....

EMAIL:



**Please post to—
Friends of Venilale
P.O. Box 204
Mansfield Vic 3724**



If paying by direct deposit

ANZ

Account Name: Friends of Venilale Incorporated

BSB: 013714

Account number: 269147371

Use your name as reference

If you want to know more about FoV or Venilale check out these websites:

<http://venilale.com>

[facebook.com/groups/friendsofvenilale/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofvenilale/)

If you do not wish to receive emails from FoV in future, please email anne_foster28@hotmail.com

SCHOLARSHIP FUND DETAILS

How much does education cost in Venilale?

For one year:

Junior High School
Grades 7-9 = US\$80

Senior High School
Grades 10-12 = US\$120

University—US\$240

Technical College - US\$240

To study to be a nurse or
midwife - US\$530



Venilale Scholarship Fund

Hunger for Education

Timor Leste has had a tumultuous history over the past thirty years. Forced occupation, a war of independence and civil unrest have ruptured many families and deprived children of opportunity.

But the hunger for education is strong. One of the 2012 scholarship winners is Adriana da Costa, who walks two hours each way each day to attend Year 11 classes at Luga Oli Senior High School. After Adriana's mother died in 2001 her father remarried and is no longer in contact with her.



If you would like to contribute to this fund use the same direct deposit details as for membership