

Oxfam - Diamond Valley Newsletter



October 2008 Web: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~dvoxfam>
Email: AHIE.Stewart@bigpond.com

Oxfam-Diamond Valley Book Fair 2008

Saturday October 18th 8am - 6pm

Eltham Senior Citizen's Hall
Main Rd Eltham, Mel. Ref.: 21J5

**FRIDAY EVENING October 17th,
4pm onwards: ALL HANDS ON DECK**

Our normal meeting time will be occupied in setting up the BOOK FAIR. We need ALL HANDS ON DECK on **FRIDAY Oct 17th from 4pm** to move thousands of books from the **Eltham Library Dungeon** (at the back and under the library) about 50m to the **Senior Citizens' Hall** and then all books need to be displayed on tables.

BRING 'WHEELS' AND HELPERS:

It is a **BIG job** so please come and bring your **ute, trolley, station wagon** etc. and **any other helpers** you can con into the job. Substantial snacks will be available all night, and we will get Pizzas at about 7pm.

HELP ON SATURDAY 18th

MOST IMPORTANTLY, if you have not already volunteered, can you please **let Beth Pender know on 9439 1716 if you can help** on Saturday 18th at Eltham Senior Citizens' Hall, any time **between 7.70am and 6pm**.

SATURDAY 6pm: CLEAN UP

We then do the clean up. Remember, many hands make light work.

'**Black Gold: Wake up and Smell the Coffee**' will be shown in St Francis Xavier Hall, 88 Mayona Rd, Montmorency, Melway Ref. 21 E5 on **Friday 24th October** at 7.30pm, introduced by **Graham Romanes**, honorary consul for Ethiopia, about the quest to find FreeTrade coffee in Ethiopia. Gold coin donation.

World Matters Rights, Responsibilities and Risks

Presented by Eltham Bookshop and Oxfam-D.V., Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th October at Eltham Library Multi-Purpose Room, Panther Place, Mel. Ref. 21 J5. Session \$6, Day \$15, Festival \$25
Sat. lunch: \$12 by asylum seekers, Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.
Sun. simple lunch, \$7
Sat. 11-8.30pm, Sun. 10-7.30pm

OXFAM QUIZ AGAINST WANT

Chris Rawlinson has 2 pre-paid tables (Numbers 5 & 6) as usual, so would welcome people to **re-imburse him** - at the early bird price of \$45 (instead of \$50 later).

Friday 21st November, 6.30pm for 7pm. **MCG**, Jack Ryder Room Jolimont St, Light Tower 3, Great Southern Stand; Mel.2G C6
Host: **Jane Clifton**, author, comedienne and all round talent.

A delicious supper and desert platter.

Drinks available at bar prices

The winning table wins ten "Luxury packages for two at a holiday destination in Victoria," but there are many other valuable prizes. **Can you contribute a** professional service or something for a silent auction - your handiwork, a B&B stay?

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ASRC COMEDY TRIVIA NIGHT!

North Melbourne Town Hall, 33 Errol Street.
Sat. 8 November, 7pm for a 7.30 sharp start
Featuring THE CREW, awe-inspiring improvisers

\$50 (concession \$40) Supper, drinks at bar prices. Silent auction, raffle.

Bookings kristine.r@asrc.org.au or website for a booking form or call ASRC 9326 6066.

Volunteer? Setting up, Food preparation – before and on the day, Bar staff, Food staff, Floor staff – greeting and seating, waiting on tables, raffle sales.

Email **asap**: tarawatson@aapt.net.au and Tara will send more information.

DOCUMENTARY (Timor-Leste): 'DOCTORS OF TOMORROW'

'Doctors of Tomorrow' is a 40 minute 2008 documentary of Cuba's contribution to training 850 East Timorese medical students, filmed in East Timor and Cuba, by Dr Tim Anderson of Aid/Watch. It features interviews with students who will graduate from 2010 onwards from what Dr Anderson claims to be the world's largest medical college. Don Stokes found it inspiring and interesting, and was given the DVD on condition that it would be shown around, so is happy for anyone to borrow it at any time. Phone him: 0425 730 554 9455 2771
Email: dosto@optusnet.com.au

SUCCESSFUL WOMEN IN INDIA

From **Oxfam Australia, South East India Program - Annual Review, 2004-2005.ss**
The following is a success story that helps us to understand how the program offers the

right direction and skills to the women under the SHGs (Self Help Groups), empowering them not only to manage themselves but also sensitizing them to the community issues around them.

Collective drive offers new identity! A story of two SHGs

Amrinagar is a village and a role model for women empowerment through self help groups. Incidentally the women are hailed by even men, who had been dominating the state affairs of the village till recently. Women have successfully dismantled the male bastion.

All started with an open tender for laying a local road in Amritnagar, which saw two SHGs of the village expressing their intention to bid for the tender. It appeared to be a dramatic fiction for many of the contractors who had never imagined any difficulty in having the tender under their belt. But things were different this time. The two SHGs were more than determined to bag the contract and were not ready to yield to any manipulations. And, by being ably supported by the Lok samiti *, the two SHGs finally won the contract.

(*Lok Samitis (People's Committees): Their impact on the life of the poor.

Lok samiti, a non-party and political and a non-partisan organization for the poor has evolved to serve as an organized voice for the poor to protest against all odds. Common issues related to environment and civil rights have been addressed through the Lok Samitis. The most important achievement of such Lok Samitis has been women empowerment in terms of gender equity and economic independence. The consultations with Lok Samitis reveal issues based

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struggles by the civil society to restore their basic human rights and civic liberty.)

Works began, and the two SHG groups worked hard to ensure the best quality work was being offered. They were able to complete the works and make a good profit out of their very first earning, which they wanted to contribute to a community cause. They chose to renovate their village temple which was in a dilapidated state, much to the astonishment of the locals, who felt really proud of them as well as the SHGs. Now they are also involved in the village cleanliness and anti-polio drives.

Ichak women and men present a perfect case of how illiterate Turahas (a scheduled caste community known for its poverty and drudgery) can gauge the market dynamics and make a sound business plan to suit their interest.

For us market is no more a riddle!

Ichak is a very well known development block under the Sadar Hazaribagh district, on the outskirts, inhabited by a cluster of Turaha families identified for their bamboo crafts. The community has a long association with the Lok Samiti.

The Turaha families are the key supporters of bamboo crafts in the area. Bamboos form the most important raw material for their crafts are procured from the local market, which often prove to be costly and this coupled with the market uncertainties often led them to a cash crunch. This is when they end up procuring loans from the local money lenders at exorbitant rates which always ended up as a costly affair. Yet another compounding problem has been the habit of consuming local brews by the men folks.

And at a point when the community was looking for an alternative support, SHGs proved to be a boon for them. The support extended to them by the groups, helped the community to make a turn around by expanding and strengthening their enterprises. They are now able to procure the raw materials required in bulk by availing the group's collective fund. This is thus no longer a costly affair, as they save Rs. 7-10 per bamboo.

With women assuming the marketing role of their products, the sales proceeds are not doled out to men to consume liquor, instead the money is now being diverted to the education of their children which is very much evident with more children now getting enrolled in schools. The families can now afford to plan their business and domestic chores, striking a perfect balance between the both. This doesn't mean that men folk have completely given up their habit.

DIAMOND VALLEY OXFAM **VENUE**

8.00pm 3rd Friday of each month
Living and Learning Nilumbik
739 Main Rd Eltham, Melway Ref 21 J7

OFFICE BEARERS

Meeting Chairman - Stephen Lavender 9439 2063
Meeting Organizers - Carole Wigg 9439 7272
Marguerite Marshall,
John Kent, 9434 6882,
Joan Pickard
Treasurer & Membership - Alister Rowe 9435 5958
Publicity Officer & Webmaster - John Kent 9434 6882
Minutes Secretary - Elizabeth Stewart 9459 4429
Book Fair Coordinator - Beth Pender 9439 1716
Trade Winds Tea/Coffee - Val Byers