



Message from the Chair

Tony Capolo, Author, said "While you were asleep last night 30,000 children died of malnutrition related diseases". I am sure you, as well as I, look at the pictures of malnourished children in many countries in the world, and ask, what we can do? We need to look for

opportunities to support these families by being involved with existing projects, to add-on a garden or to add education materials for the use in gardens already developed.

It was great to meet Rotary District Governors and District Governors Elect at the Institute in Melbourne. I am sure they will keep our RAG in mind when they are either finishing their year or planning for the next year.

We have some celebrations this month!

1. Bruce French received an Officer of the Order of Australia and Buz Green a Member of the Order of Australia. Bruce's was received for distinguished service to agricultural science through the provision of edible plant information for improved food security, nutrition, and improved health outcomes for people in developing countries. Buz's was for agriculture, horticultural sustainability and research, and to the community. Following directly from their work, Learn Grow and then Food Plant Solutions was born. Both awards whilst completely separate are very well deserved.

2. We now have 13 signed "Letters of Intent". These letters outline the joint aims and intentions of FPS and our partners.

3. Our Social Media Coordinator - Johanna Baker-Dowdell provided us with an informative presentation at our most recent committee meeting. Johanna manages our [Facebook](#) page, which I am sure you have all seen and is achieving increasing hits each month.

4. The committee recently agreed on the 4 Key Performance Indicators for the year ahead;

- 1) Fundraising - aim to rise \$50,000 a year.
- 2) Aim to have 3 signed Letters of Intent a year.
- 3) Create 4 field guides a year.
- 4) Raise awareness about the project both within and outside Rotary.

Please assist us in any way you can to help us achieve our KPI's. This could be through you talking to other Rotarians and friends about FPS - we need to spread our message to as many people as possible. This time of the year we are all thinking of attending our District Conferences, perhaps you would like to promote FPS at yours - we would be happy to send to you some of our material.

Thank you for all you do.

PDG Una Hobday, Chair Food Plant Solutions

Indonesia – 800 Guides Distributed

Following the printing of 1000 copies of the Bahasa version of "Potentially Important Food Plants of Indonesia", Don Hall from the Priscilla Hall Memorial Foundation visited Indonesia to distribute the guides. During this time Don successfully distributed over 800 of the guides to various organisations including; Austrade, Salvation Army, YUM, British Women's Association Jakarta, ANZA and Rotary Club at Bali Taman.

The remaining guides are in storage at both Jakarta and Bali. For a copy of the guide please contact either info@foodplantsolutions.org or pnmf@priscillahall.org



Speaking Engagements:

Food Plant Solutions has the following engagements scheduled:

- RC of Glenorchy, 25th February, 2016
- D9830 Conference 2016 Deloraine, Tasmania, 8th -10th April, 2016
- D9600 Conference Maroochydore, Queensland, 29th April – 1st May 2016
- RC of Devonport North – 28th July, 2016.
- International Convention Seoul, South Korea, 28th May – 1st June, 2016

Program Countries

Food Plant Solutions has either developed or is in the process of developing educational publications for the following countries:

- Solomon Islands
- Papua New Guinea
- Timor Leste
- Haiti
- Sierra Leone
- Guinea
- Nigeria
- Uganda
- Tanzania
- Mozambique
- Swaziland
- Sri Lanka
- Cambodia
- Vietnam
- Philippines
- Western Pacific Islands
- North Korea
- China
- N.E. India
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Indonesia
- Nepal
- South Africa
- Northern Thailand
- Ecuador
- Angola
- Pakistan
- Ghana
- Ethiopia
- Madagascar
- Bangladesh
- Myanmar

Please contact us for details
info@foodplantsolutions.org

Bruce French – Officer of the Order of Australia

In the 1970s Bruce French was living in a village in Papua New Guinea where he noticed that many villagers suffered from disease and malnutrition and that there were no books on the local foods of that country. This would lead to lifetime commitment where Bruce would extend his research to include food plants from all around the world. Bruce's research has helped create a solid foundation for learning and teaching information on food plants from around the world and how a simple and sustainable solution to global malnutrition can benefit entire countries. From this work, Bruce has created a growing database of over 27,000 edible plants, which has become the world's most complete and comprehensive database and forms the basis for all of the work that FPS undertakes. Our country has rightly recognised the significance of Bruce's work through his recent award – Officer of the Order of Australia. Food Plant Solutions is under-pinned by the FPI database as we recognise and appreciate the immense value of Bruce's work. We have the ability to provide self-sustainable solutions that empowers local people to make informed choices about what plants to grow that will nutritiously feed their family and this is due to Bruce. The FPS team sincerely congratulates Bruce on this well-deserved award.



FPS field guide) and showing them how to plant and look after them.

- The students at the schools have enjoyed the benefits of the plants they have grown as they are provided with lunch.
- Children are given seeds to take home and plant; - families are now starting to grow more of their own plants and vegetables
- Encouraging feedback has been received from the local authorities and rural development officials in the rural communities regarding the school gardens and the potential for not only improving the nutrition of families in their communities, but also increase their knowledge regarding better farming techniques.



- During training at one of the schools, the school guard was outside the classroom looking through the window and listening. The guard had worked as a farmer for most of his life and as the information

about the nutritional values of various plants was shared, he became very interested and subsequently asked for a copy of the guide. He referenced Cassava during the conversation (along with other plants) saying that he had farmed this plant for years never really knowing the nutritional value of it. He was very excited and wanted to learn more about the various plants.

AOG World Relief Vietnam aims to continue to establish Food Plant Solutions gardens in schools in the rural communities in Vietnam and as a result, see healthier, happier and more prosperous families. For further details please contact us at: info@foodplantsolutions.org



Working with Others

Dr John Thorne - Director, FPS

We know just how difficult it is to get our story across about nutrition and growing the right food in the right place. In addition we rely heavily on the need for a wide group of individuals to be able to read our materials, for our major energy goes into producing written materials.

One of the six areas of focus for Rotary is "Basic Education and Literacy". Like nutrition, expenditure of scarce funds on literacy activities, is an investment with high yields, globally. The education of girls and mothers is an ever so practical way to tackle community problems, even in the short term. Even slightly more educated families and slightly more literate people can understand our messages about diet, health, vitamins, energy and cost of food so much more easily.

There is a very strong case for programs involved with family health (such as FPS) and programs supporting literacy to combine forces and work together with challenged families and communities as a team. For further details please contact us at: info@foodplantsolutions.org

School Gardens in Vietnam

A successful pilot programme in 2012 with AOG World Relief Vietnam and FPS at Truong Dinh Nam Primary School saw children taught the nutritional value of herbs and vegetables. Based on the FPS field guide "Potentially Important Food Plants of Vietnam", the following significant progress has been achieved:

- Gardens have been established at a number of schools in the Quang Nam Province with teachers educating the students on the nutritional value of various plants (using the

Why Volunteer as a TSS?

Lyndie Kite, Volunteer Technical Support Specialist (TSS).

Working as a Technical Support Specialist (TSS), I have assisted to compile Draft Field Guides for the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania and Bangladesh. Being a TSS involves researching the country for which you are compiling a Field Guide including, determining what grows there, climate, rainfall, frosts, daylight hours etc., and what crops are commercially produced. Training and support are provided by FPS for the whole process.

I volunteered for this role for several reasons. Firstly, I worked in ornamental horticulture for 18 years, as well as having a love of vegetable gardening and missed having daily contact with this work. Being a TSS enables me to keep this interest going and expand my knowledge of edible foods. I have found this very interesting and it has changed my view on the food we do and don't eat. Also, how much

as a western society we waste by not eating parts of plants we have never considered edible, such as the leaves of sweet potato, or the growing tips of a pumpkin vine – all very nutritious. Secondly, I am able to contribute in a small way, to improving the quality of life for the people who live a very different and difficult life to mine.

