



June Issue 2022



Sending cards to the members of the Northshore Stroke Club

Retired people would normally travel, visit a friend or fulfil their bucket lists before the pandemic, everything had changed now. All they have were lockdowns, self- isolates, Covid tests, masks and vaccines.

Tzu Chi community service in numerous locations has also been temporarily shut down since the second half year of 2021. The programme resumed in May this year, opened to all people who had received two jabs of vaccination.

Meanwhile, Tzu Chi young volunteers continue making and writing cards and sent them to the elderly. During the monthly meet-up for the stroke club's members on 16 June, everyone was happily reading and sharing their cards.



Sending love cards to Bucklands Beach Rest Home

Bucklands Beach Rest Home has been closed to the public in protecting its fragile elderly occupants since Covid-19 started. For this reason, Tzu Chi NZ's monthly outreach to the rest home has stopped for about two years. But Tzu Chi volunteers never stop thinking about their elderly friends in Bucklands Beach Rest Home.

One of the young volunteers had come up with the idea of making cards and writing to the elderly. Each card contains short messages such as a casual chat, a joke, a book review or a hobby. A simple daily chat is the best heart-warming conversation. On 23 April, two volunteers sent the cards together with Tzu Chi's love and care to the elders.



Donate hand sanitizer to schools

New Zealand had achieved a high vaccination rate and phased out the Covid-19 elimination strategy. Recently the government abolished mandated mask-wearing in school. Schools have to decide for themselves if masks are mandatory. This is difficult for the schools because parents have different opinions about vaccinating their children and about sending children to school during the pandemic.

Onsite teaching and learning resumed on 2 May this year. Tzu Chi NZ volunteers are concerned about the safety of the students in the schools under its care which are Dawson School, Mayfield School, East Tamaki school, Flatbush school, Manurewa Intermediate and Kedgley Intermediate. Tzu Chi NZ sent 450 bottles of hand sanitizers to the above schools.

The donation was greatly appreciated as buying hand sanitizer can add a financial burden to the schools, particularly during times of high inflation.

Second Food Donation to Tonga

Ken Laomahei and Mele joined Tzu Chi and became Tzu Chi volunteers in February this year, they worked with Tzu Chi NZ to support Tongan people in the aftermath of the volcanic eruption and tsunami. In March, Ken informed Tzu Chi NZ that a family with five young children in Tofoa of Tongatapu and another family with five young children in Tala fou need food donations. After discussion Tzu Chi NZ decided to send more than what was needed for the two families so that more families can be benefited.

The food parcels include 14 daily necessities: cooking oil, sugar, salt, flour, milk powder, biscuit, breakfast biscuit, oats, canned spaghetti in, canned beans, toothbrush, toothpaste, washing powder and toilet paper.

On 2 April, Ken, Mele and Tzu Chi volunteers went to Friendly Island Freight Ltd (Auckland) to send the food parcels to Tonga. The next shipping date is mid-April, and the goods are expected to reach Tonga by end of April.



PPE Donation to Montford Technical Institute in Tonga

On 22 March Tzu Chi NZ received a letter from Montford Technical Institute of Tonga on an agriculture equipment funding enquiry. The Institute is located in North Tonga, 5.3km away from the capital of Tonga, they have about 95 students and 10 teachers.

Dr Jim, the sender said that the school has not been financially viable, after Covid-19 and the volcanic eruption, the situation has become even more difficult. The further correspondence between Tzu Chi NZ and Dr Jim found that the school also needs funding for teaching resources.

The students cannot afford any personal protective equipment (PPE) for Covid-19 prevention. On 25 March, Tzu Chi NZ decided to prioritize the donation of PPE to ensure the safety of the teachers and the students. Subsequently, on 12 April Ken sent 200 medical-grade masks and 30 face shields to Tonga.

Tzu Chi NZ received a thank you letter from Dr Jim on 20 April to confirm the receiving.



Third food and clothes donation to Tonga

On 5 May, Ken and Mele brought along their neighbour Matila to Tzu Chi NZ. Matila received food donations previously, this time she came to enquire about food donations for her family members in Tonga. She also brought her bamboo bank and hoped that the money can help the Ukrainian.

After sending the second donation to Tonga, Tzu Chi NZ discussed the need of the Tongan people and decided to send second-hand summer clothes to them. On 20 May, Ken, Mele and Matila came to help Tzu Chi volunteers select suitable clothes to send to Tonga.

The third donation included food parcels and clothes. Food parcels include flour, sugar, rice, cooking oil, milk powder, noodles, breakfast biscuit, oats, milo, biscuits, toilet paper, toothbrush and toothpaste. The third donation was sent out on 28 May.

The third donation was to support Matila's family members in Mata Ki 'Eua as well as their relatives. Matila's young relative Isaac came to help with the delivery of the donation to the shipping company. Isaac told Tzu Chi volunteers that his hometown was severely affected by the volcanic eruption, many had been evacuated but some refused to leave the island.

Many houses need to be rebuilt, although Tongan house is easy to build due to covid19 it has been delayed until today. After completing the shipping procedure, Matila hugged and thanked the Tzu Chi volunteers repeatedly. This shipment will depart Auckland on 7 June and reach Tonga on 14 June.



Influenza vaccination

In New Zealand, most influenza cases occur during the winter months. In 2020 and 2021 influenza cases dropped significantly due to the border being closed. However, in 2022 the influenza vaccination rate increased again due to the change of the Covid-19 elimination strategy to the mitigation approach and the reopening of the New Zealand international border.

On 11 June, Vicky Chan of the Unichem Pakuranga Pharmacy came to Tzu Chi NZ to deliver influenza vaccination. She said, "This year it is even more important to get influenza vaccination because the symptoms of Omicron are similar to those of influenza, it will be difficult to differentiate the two." The influenza vaccine is free for all 65 and above, the rest will have to pay 20 dollars for the jab.

New Zealand healthcare is under great pressure due to Covid-19. Taking a flu jab is the best way to protect yourself and your family and friends from getting sick this winter.



Vegetarian meal fundraising

In March Tzu Chi NZ launched a monthly vegetarian fundraising project. The project is to raise funds for Tzu Chi NZ international Relief, as well as a way of promoting vegetarianism. Each month Tzu Chi kitchen decides on two menus, and the donors were to place an order beforehand.

In April the vegetarian kitchen prepared vegetarian risotto and red bean cake. All the monthly menus had received very good feedback. We greatly appreciate the support from everyone.



Papakura hot meal distribution

New Zealand Future Community Trust(NZFC) is a non-profit organization established in 2017 to secure a sustainable and integrated future for New Zealand's diverse community.

On 11 May, Peter Chou, the president of NZFC contacted Tzu Chi NZ inquiring about hot meal distribution to Papakura homeless people and low-income groups. NZFC worked with Tzu Chi NZ in April this year giving away free hand sanitizers and Covid Rapid Antigen Tests to the community.

Although New Zealand has a social welfare system, however, homeless people are increasing due to the pandemic, which brings along a poor economy, inflation and unemployment. Tzu Chi NZ decided to provide free hot meals to Papakura community from June. NZFC will decide on the distribution sites and route, while Tzu Chi NZ will provide food and manpower. Hot meal distribution is available on the third Saturday of each month.

The first hot meal distribution was on 18 June. At 3.30p.m., 11 Tzu Chi volunteers met NZFC members at their office in Papakura. The four distribution targets were the homeless at the park, the homeless shelter, the shelter for the mentally ill homeless people, and at NZFC office.



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