



December Issue 2019



## Spreading the Christmas Cheer

Tzu Chi Foundation organised many events to engage the elderly community. From the 13th to 30th November, there were seven Christmas celebrations held with various local elderly communities by volunteers.

Tweety, the MC shares the origin of Tzu Chi and spreads the caring love which starts with caring for our planet. Volunteers prepared 287 ecobags as gifts to encourage the move away from plastic bags. The spirit of caring for the environment was captured in sign language song performance.

Music was also an integral part of the interactions, volunteer also livened up the atmosphere with their talents by playing musical instruments, such as the piano, violin and saxophone. The songs varied from pop to classical. Dressed in beautiful red traditional costumes, volunteers performed folk dances from Taiwan and XingJiang, captivating the audience.

The first event was held at the Stroke Association. Huang Tao lost her husband to stroke two years ago. TC accompanied her during the tough times. Now she passes on the love by devoting her time every month to spend time with other residents.

Rosa is a resident who loves a good yarn. This year her hearing and sight have deteriorated, which has affected her mood. With the volunteers around to listen and accompany she said to them, "you are the best".



Having lost the ability to speak from stroke, Ranjith joined the event with the encouragement of caregiver, Sudhir. With the friendly volunteers and fun activities, Ranjith happily danced with everyone. Sudhir said that these events allow Ranjith to recovery quicker.

A new partnership with Panmure Centre Communicare was established this year. Bev Wall organises to provide care for the elderly community. She also oversees the red Cross initiative, Meals on Wheels, every Thursday. Volunteers prepared a birthday surprise for Glendowie Centre Communicare's Bryan with a violin performance. Val, a member of the Centre made a kind donation in gratitude for Tzu Chi's efforts.



On November 21, 42 members of the North Shore Stroke Club visited the Tzu Chi branch. Friendly volunteers welcomed them with hospitality and attentiveness. As her first time visiting, Alice relished this opportunity to learn about Tzu Chi. With morning tea and beautiful music, volunteers asked James for a dance. Despite having experienced stroke, he recovered well and happily accepted. James exclaimed, "when I get home, I'm going to tell my wife that I challenged myself and danced in front of everyone".

"Without Tzu Chi, our event could not have run this smoothly" expressed Peter on behalf of the members. The Club generously made a donation to Tzu Chi to thank the volunteers' selfless giving. At the conclusion of the event, everyone prayed kindness and love in the world, and especially for Rikki's fast recovery. Rikki is an elderly Maori member who was unable to attend due to health conditions.



Tzu Chi volunteers have continually visited the residents of Bucklands Beach Rest Home on the last Saturday of every month. A year has already passed since the start of this initiative and every visit feels like a catch up with old friends. Volunteers integrated the spirit of giving through sign language and musical activities. With the involvement of many young volunteers, their youthful energy brings smiles to the residents.

A special warm up exercise using sign language songs was designed for the rest home visits by volunteers. Music is a permanent activity on the program. Among the volunteers, the Lin brothers duo perform Christmas and popular songs on the violin and cello. Fellow volunteer, Jovyn prepared favourite songs of the residents bring both joy and tears.

The Christmas spirit was complemented with presents from Tzu Chi representative, Wang Ping. Copies of the Jingsi Aphorism were gifted to the rest home and volunteers gave all the residents ecobags along with a heartwarming hug. Rosemary enthusiastically began reading the Aphorism was soon as she received it, showing how the book resonates with many people.

"The love one receives is as great as the love that one gives". Volunteers gained so much from the interactions and conversations. Ling, a volunteer from Hong Kong found that the visits brought a new understanding to everyday life. New immigrant, Peggy felt touched by the encounters with the residents. Singing songs with Peggy, the shy resident Gloria happily holds her hand and enjoys the music. This special connection with Gloria has given Peggy a sense of acknowledgement and trust. "Come see us again soon!" At the end of every visit, the residents say this to us.





## Fun Day Out for Special Kids

The Fun Day Out for Special Kids was held on 19 October at the Auckland North Shore Event Centre. The Kaipatiki Communities Facilities Trust hosted the free annual event with Interfaith Friendship Group and Tzu Chi NZ shared the responsibility to run the event. This event provided food and fun games for the children to enjoy in a fun and loving environment. It was also a day for the parents and caregivers to relax.

There were also support agencies such as The PHAB-Physically Disabled & Able Bodied Association Incorporation, Star Jam and others that set up stalls to give information on the support available for the children, caregivers and parents.

45 Tzu Chi volunteers helped in hosting games and running food stalls. Many young volunteers took time off their busy work and study schedules to help running the event. The games were based on environmental protection. The sign language performance “The Children of the Earth” and “A Clean Earth” attracted the young and old audience to dance together. The activities were designed for the special kids as well as all children with love and care.





## Lesson on empathy and tolerance

Jing Si Chinese class ran a special lesson on empathy and tolerance on 30 November.

A video about a pair of Asian brothers narrated their mother's daily life humorously. The video reflects the difficulty of migrant families in adapting to western culture. The brothers talked about how their mothers would choose to wear warm clothing in cold days instead of turning on the heater, they are diligent in doing recycling, they save energy by washing the dishes by hands, convert the dishwasher into a cupboard. Everyone has a smile on their face because these are not unfamiliar to them.

The video is also conveying a message of protecting the earth. The video teaches empathy, and to understand the perspective of others. At the end of the lesson, Tzu Chi volunteer Steve demonstrated the water purifying system created by Tzu Chi Foundation.



Community course – vegetarian class and flower arrangement. Both community courses had completed for this year.



Most of the students became Tzu Chi volunteers. Thanks to the effort of volunteer teams who designed and developed the courses.



## Jing Si Book Store Seminar: -Will and Power of Attorney-

A seminar on Will and Power of Attorney was held on 26 October at Jing Si Book Store. Tzu Chi NZ invited lawyers Bibiana and Yihong Shi to talk about New Zealand law and the process of setting up a will and a power of attorney.

The speakers explained the difference between a will and a power of attorney. A power of attorney is a document you can sign appointing another person to act for you regarding your financial matters. Whereas a will is a legal document by which a person expresses his wishes as to how his assets are to be distributed at death. One can make his own will using a will kit and two witnesses. A beneficiary should not be witnessing the will where he or she is named as a beneficiary.

Generally, a will made in Taiwan must be validated by the NZ court to be valid in New Zealand. A will made in Taiwan will not be able to dispose of or distribute immovable properties such as real estate in New Zealand and vice versa. For an individual who dies without a will, his family can use letters of administration to apply for assets inheritance. An enduring power of attorney is a legal document which sets out who can take care of one personal or financial matters if one cannot, such as after one lose his/her mental capacity.

The seminar was attended by about a hundred people from the community age from 65-70.



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## Christchurch end of year food parcel & hot food distribution

"Ni Hao, Xie Xie" Elliot saying thanks to Tzu Chi Volunteers.

On the 29th of October 2019, 10 Tzu Chi volunteers flew down to Christchurch to distribute living supplies to 49 support cases; the receivers are the survivor of the 2011 earthquake. Volunteers in Christchurch pack the supplies into 40 bags, each bag up to 22 items in total. After the volunteers from Auckland arrived, they immediately commence the preparation and decoration of the venue for the distribution.

"Long time no see!" said the residents while asking for group photos with the volunteers. Tzu Chi has been distributing supplies for the earthquake survivor annually since year 2011, meeting the volunteers again is like meeting old friends to the residents.

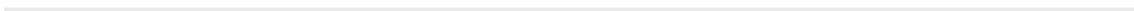
In addition to the year end supplies distribution, Tzu Chi local volunteers have been providing hot food once a week to local residents for the past eight years as well. Vivian Li, one of the volunteers said, "I provide help to the people in need and I receive a lot of smiling faces, thank you for providing me an opportunity of giving."

Eric, a retired soldier, stood out from the group of volunteers cooking in the kitchen. He was not familiar with baking and cooking but has been learning for a couple of years, with the main purpose of distributing hot food to the residents in this annual event. Now he is able to cook a handful of delicious dishes. Another volunteer, Ralph is in charge of the menu for the dinner of the day as he knows very well the preferences of the local residents. Mr Wei, just arrived Christchurch after his trip to Taiwan and seize the chance of giving, lending a hand to whoever needs help.

The residents appreciate a lot for what they received, they brought along the bags they received last year and showed it to the volunteers. The bags filled with daily supplies are heavy, 84 years old George used to be able to carry the bags easily and walk swiftly but as age caught up with George, volunteers could see his physical ability decline and now he often takes the bus or receives a ride from friends.

One of the earthquake survivors, Christina, shared a story with the volunteers "Tzu Chi helped a lot of people after the Christchurch earthquake, particularly the education part and the children. My son was studying at Linwood College at that time, he told me Tzu Chi distributed lunch in the school for free. I think we are really lucky." Meeting Tzu Chi again has moved her a lot and expressed her gratitude multiple times.

Although life is difficult for the earthquake survivors, everyone was inspired and pleased to bring a "bamboo bank" home with them. Though their own actions they were able to transform themselves from a recipient to a giver of great love.





## **Donation of Special Chair to Rosehill Special School**

"Hello! I work at Rosehill Special School and take care of children with disabilities. The school needs a special chair." Occupational Therapist Melissa Walker-Tate wrote to Tzu Chi New Zealand requesting for a donation of a special chair. Rose Hill School is an innovative school for people with severe disabilities who have special needs between the ages of five and twenty-one. The school provides interesting and active learning opportunities. Students actively participate in real-life related courses and explore their potential to develop their skills and abilities.

Three Tzu Chi volunteers visited the school on 18 September. Melissa said that students with severe disabilities face various sensory stimulation challenges, they do not like to interact with people, and they can easily become anxious and out of control. Occupational therapists found a specially designed hug chair that provides a compensatory effect similar to the effect of a human hug, which allows students to calm down in a short period of time. Due to the high price, the school cannot afford to buy more. There is only one chair for 70 students in the school.

In 2002 Tzu Chi NZ donated an outdoor sports field and a water dispenser to the school. After 17 years the school approached Tzu Chi NZ again for help in raising fund for the "Protac Sensit and Puff Chair". On 1 November at 10.45 am, Tzu Chi volunteers came to Rosehill School for a ceremony for the donation. Principal Gill Hedley, teachers and therapists received Tzu Chi volunteers with Māori songs. The green special chair looked very bright in the sun, students were attracted to the chair and wanted to try it.

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## 20 year Earthquake Remembrance Dinner

21st September 1999, a 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck Taiwan and attracted international attention. The chair of Auckland Civil Defence Sharon first contacted firefighter Mitchell Brown, a Howick local then and asked if he could get a Search and Rescue team ready to fly to Taiwan. Just hours after the earthquake happened, four members of NZ Search and Rescue team, Scott Bel, Bryce Conybeerl, Royce Tatham and Gary Richardson, flew out to assist the earthquake-struck city.

Two years after the 921 earthquake, a strong earthquake struck Christchurch on the 22nd of February, with magnitude level of 6.3. The NZ firefighters who assisted in 921 earthquake used the experience they gained in the Christchurch event. Taiwan firefighters also responded immediately and helped to overcome the serious consequences.

On the 3rd of October, Auckland Civil Defence, Cr Sharon Stewart along with Jeff Liu, director general Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Auckland initiated the 20 year Earthquake Remembrance Dinner.

Many prestigious guests attended the dinner hosted in Grand Park Restaurant, including the firefighters who had flown to Taiwan in their hour of need, members of the Tzu Chi Foundation, members of Civil Defence from NZ and Taiwan, members of Auckland Fire Fighting Department and City Council. Bruce Linghu (Deputy Mayor of Taichung City, Taiwan), Jerry Shih (president of the Taiwan Business Association), and past mayor of Manukau City.

Steve Hsu from Tzu Chi New Zealand talked about Tzu Chi's global work in disaster relief. We pray that there will be no more disasters but when disasters strike, Tzu Chi volunteers are always ready to assist. Friendship and unconditional great love solace the pain from disasters, we are grateful for the assistance from all departments contributed to the disaster relief.



## Support Case - J

On September 22, Shirley in South Auckland referred a domestic violence case to Tzu Chi NZ. J left her abusive husband and lived with her children on government assistance scheme. Tzu Chi volunteers will continue supporting her and providing follow-up care.



## **Jing Si Book Store Seminar: -Happy Summer Time-Burglary Prevention and water safety-**

Summer is approaching and with Christmas and New Year holidays just around the corner, how can we ensure that we go on our holidays happily and return safely? Tzu Chi NZ held the above seminar on 23 November, Justin Zeng, Ethnic and Pacific Liaison Officer and Officer Lee of the Counties Manukau Police were invited to deliver the seminar.

At the time of the seminar, in 2019 there had been 1,990 break ins in the eastern suburbs of Auckland, 1,359 cars stolen and 844 car break ins. Asian communities need to get into the habit of reporting incidents to the police. All reported incidents help the police decide where they need to add more police resource to patrol. The report information is also shared across suburbs so if the suspects show up in other areas, the local police will also know to arrest them.

Burglary is a concern to most people during the festive seasons. In preventing burglary, the following advice was given:

1. If there are elders or children in the family, please remind them that if a stranger knocks on the door, do not open the door under any circumstances.
2. Always store your garden tools away so the burglars do not have easy access to tools to break into your house.
3. The home keys should be kept separately from car keys; otherwise, the thief could get into the car and enter the house.
4. Even if the car is parked in the compound of your house, remember to lock it.
5. Don't put money, cigarettes, items or bags in the car, which can attract a burglar.

Before leaving your house:

1. Ask your neighbour to put the rubbish bin out on the rubbish day and collect your mail for you.
  2. When you are not home, don't leave your computer or other valuables in a place where people can see from the window.
  3. Set timer for the light or radio
  4. Install alarm or CCTV. Ensure doors and windows are closed and locked properly.
- Prepare an emergency contact book at home and write down the police station and other important phone numbers for an emergency, particularly if there are elders who do not speak English at home.

In New Zealand, if you are in the middle of an emergency and the burglar has not left the premise dial 111. If the burglar has already left or you return back days after the event, please dial 105 the non emergency reporting line.

You don't need to know fluent English to report a case. Just remember "111, Police, Chinese". First you dial 111, and when you get through to the operator, you will be asked for Police, Fire or Ambulance. Say Police, and you will be put through to a different department, at which point you can say Chinese. They will transfer you to a Chinese speaking agent for assistance.

Do not panic when encountering criminals. Protecting yourself is paramount. If there is a current offender in the house, do not try to stop or drive him out, and do not confront him. If possible, lock yourself in a safe room or escape the scene and report to the police. Your health is far more important than your property.



During the summer, water safety is particularly important as children have more opportunities to enjoy the beaches and water sports.

Over the past five years, New Zealand has an average of 103 drowning deaths each year. Read the tide time table before going to the beach.

If you are caught in a strong rip current, do not fight against it, swim parallel to the shore, or go with the flow (either floating or treading water) until the current dissipates beyond the surf line. If someone is drowned and rescued ashore, observe the signs of life before applying CPR. Doing CRP unnecessary may cause a secondary injury.

Police Officer Li was very happy to have young attendees in the seminar. They will have a good understanding of the correct way to deal with a crisis like that, and they will share the knowledge with their families or communities.

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## Support Case - Christine

"We will load it up for you" said the volunteers while loading the furniture to the van. Johnny, a social worker from school, referred Christine to Tzu Chi Foundation. The family is in need of some basic furniture such as double beds and drawers for clothes. The volunteers got in touched with Christine and she is delighted to hear about the good news. Before the volunteers could organise a home visit to deliver the goods, she has visited the branch in East Tamaki by herself .

On the 31st of December, three volunteers visited Christine and her family. They are a large Samoan family with three generations living together in a same house. There are two seniors and five children. Christine is also pregnant with a child and the due date approximately to be March 2020.

The family currently staying in a double storey state house with three small bedrooms on the second floor. The big family does not receive enough income to cover their basic needs with limited government funding and single parent (Christine's partner) income.

"We are currently on the waiting list for a bigger state house so that there will be bigger space for my family," said Christine. The volunteers sincerely wish Christine best of luck and have a holiday filled with joy.



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## Support Case - Adri

Adri is a middle-aged woman diagnosed with breast cancer. She has been through many surgeries and is currently on the road to recovery.

Unfortunately, she has recently got into a car accident and the burden has increased for her and her family. Therefore, she sought for emergency assistance from Tzu Chi Foundation.

Adri and her family lives in a small town in Northland, approximately 4 to 5 hours drive from Auckland city. Unable to visit due to the long distance, volunteers called up Adri to get more information about her situation. Adri has to visit Whangarei Hospital frequently due to her health condition and that has increased the financial burden for her family due to transport fee.

With Christmas season approaching, they are also worried that they do not have enough funds to provide food and presents for her child. After the evaluation, Tzu Chi foundation sent BP voucher and Pak'n Save Voucher to Adri and her family via post. The volunteers have also prepared a set of stationary as Christmas present for Adri's daughter; they are organising a visit to Adri and her family soon to send love and blessings to her.

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