

# Close to Home

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## Stable home and strong community support equals success

AUTHOR  
Bridget Kerr

The Falanikos were determined to help their children achieve a brighter future through a happy home and quality education – and they have.



Limasene and Gase with Fofoga on her graduation.

When Limasene and Gase Falaniko came to New Zealand 25 years ago, they dreamed of a better life for their three children, Fofoga, Vae and Melani.

Hoping to instil in them the lesson that through hard work, a focus on family and love, they can achieve anything, the couple prioritised their children's education, and their hard work paid off.

Fofoga graduated from Auckland University of Technology in 2010 with a Bachelor's degree in Business. Her advice to other young people – strive to do your best and don't give up.

Vae graduated from Auckland University with a Bachelor's degree in

Teaching and is currently back at the University doing a post graduate diploma. He believes you should live your dreams, set goals and achieve them. The youngest, Melani, is in his third year of a Bachelor's degree in Commerce, also at Auckland University.

The couple also attribute their children's success to a stable family home – where the kids were able to attend the same schools, make friends, and enjoy the support of a close knit community. They are grateful for the support of Housing New Zealand. The family have many fond memories of celebrations and weekly Sunday feasts (to'anai) in their state home.

"I'm humbled to meet such a lovely family but also very proud of the part Housing New Zealand played in supporting the family and enabling them to make a home to raise their children in at a time when they needed help most," says Rosita Ekeroma, Housing New Zealand Development Officer, when she visited the family at home. As soon as money allows they would like to buy their own family home. ☺

Happy New Year!



As we enter the new year it's a good time to stand up and be counted. On 8 March you, and the other members of your household, will be filling out the census form. Please make sure you tick that you are a Housing New Zealand tenant where it asks you. This will enable the government to make better choices for you and your community.

Close to Home this year is all about the communities in which we live – and in this issue, we start by meeting our Pacific neighbours. We hope you enjoy it! Look out for our next issue, where we explore our Māori neighbours, and the last issue of the year where we take a look at the many other cultures we live alongside.

As the weather starts to turn, those nasty seasonal bugs start to hit. That's why, we've also included some information about flu vaccinations to help you prepare and avoid the flu bug this coming winter.

In the meantime, take care and make the most of the good weather!

Editor

### PACIFIC FACT

There are more than 25,000 islands in the Pacific Ocean.



SUPPLIED BY



# Census day is almost here

## – be counted on 8 March 2011

**Did you know that everyone who is in New Zealand on census day must fill in a census form (or have one filled in for them)? This includes babies, children and any visitors who might be staying the night of 8 March 2011.**

The census is the official count of how many people and places to live in there are in New Zealand. The results help the government decide how to spend billions of dollars on things that can benefit you, your family/whanau and your community. Important things like hospitals, kōhanga reo, schools, roads, public transport and recreational facilities.

You can fill out your census form one of two ways: online or on paper. Before census day, you'll get paper forms and an Internet Access Code delivered to your home. Forms are available in either English or Māori. Filling in your forms online is secure, quick and easy. And if all the forms for your household are filled in online, your collector may not need to come back.

But if you'd rather fill out paper forms, that's fine too. A collector will come by to pick them up after census day.

**All of your personal information is protected by the Statistics Act 1975. It is never shared with anyone. No one – including the New Zealand Police, Immigration Service or Inland Revenue – is allowed to see census information that will identify you.**

The census will ask you some questions about your housing situation (Questions 7 to 13 in the Dwelling Form). This information is extremely important – it helps us to understand the kinds of houses New Zealanders need, where they should be located, and the need for affordable housing. Please make sure you answer these questions fully so that our housing plans match the needs of our tenants and their families/whanau – both now and in the future.

**Remember – census day only comes around once every five years. Make sure you, your family/whanau and anyone staying with you on 8 March fills in their form. ☺**



### PACIFIC FACT

Pacific people make up roughly seven percent of the total population of New Zealand. Samoans are the largest group, followed by Cook Island, Tongan, Niuean, Fijian, and lastly, Tokelauan.





AUTHOR  
Bridget Kerr

# Star student Akanesi leads the way



**Busy mother of four, Akanesi Havea, proved that all it takes is determination, courage and a lot of hard work to fulfil her dreams of pursuing a tertiary education.**

Naenae resident Akanesi, the youngest of 15 children, was top of the class and head girl at school in Tonga. But after the death of her father in her final school year and financial pressures, her long-held hope of continuing into tertiary study seemed a long way off when she first arrived in New Zealand in 2001, pregnant with her fourth child.

It wasn't until her eldest child, Loisi, then finishing school, told her mother that tertiary education was out of her reach, the then housewife decided it was time to make a difference – for herself and her children.

Beginning with the year-long New Zealand Diploma in Business from the Pacific Training Institute, the straight A student was awarded the Outstanding Adult Learner Award by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

Within two years she gained a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration (BCA) degree from Victoria University in Accounting and Commercial Law.



Akanesi Havea celebrates graduating with her family – PHOTO COURTESY OF DOMINIONPOST

In her third year, she went on to complete a Graduate Diploma in Professional Accounting, which enables her to practise accountancy and help businesses in her community grow and prosper.

Akanesi says she originally chose to study business after she witnessed family members fail in business, not because they didn't work hard enough, but because they didn't understand the relevant accounting and tax laws.

Inspired by seeing her mother lead the graduation capping parade in 2009, Loisi and three of her cousins are now also pursuing tertiary studies.

Akanesi says being seen as a role model is an "awesome privilege".


"If all that hard work and sleepless nights could help my people and my community it was well worth it," she says.

"We make our own choices and decisions about where, what and

who we want to be, and our determination to make a difference and to see results, will see us through."

Akanesi is grateful for the years of subsidised rent she received with her Housing New Zealand home, and encourages other tenants to look after their homes as though they were their own.

"Being a good tenant is infectious," says Akanesi.

She hopes to own her own home in the future – and is set on the one she has raised her family in for the past 10 years. And with job opportunities on the horizon, this is now a very real possibility. Well done Akanesi! 

## PACIFIC FACT

The Pacific Ocean is the largest of the five oceans on earth.



# BE WAI-WISE



*DID YOU KNOW THAT WAI IS THE MĀORI WORD FOR WATER? WATER IS ONE OF OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCES BECAUSE WE ALL NEED IT TO LIVE. AND YET EVERY YEAR, MILLIONS OF LITRES ARE WASTED.*

Sometimes this can be a big problem, particularly in the dry summer months as various locations around the country start to run out. The good news is, it's really easy to avoid wasting water. Teach your family the Wai-Wise Top 10 Tips to help make sure there's plenty of water for everyone this year.

1. Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving.
2. Take shorter showers – try singing a short song and finish showering by the end.
3. Flush toilets less often.
4. In the laundry, don't turn on the washing machine until you have a full load. Each load uses about 150 litres of water!
5. In the kitchen, keep a large bottle of water in the fridge. It will be lovely and cool and will avoid running unnecessary water from the tap while you wait for it to run cold.
6. Put the plug in the sink while you wash vegetables or rinse plates.
7. If you have to water your garden then only water once every few days in the evening. Remember to water the soil, not the leaves.
8. Use a bucket to wash and rinse the car – or leave it dusty!
9. Sweep your paths rather than hosing them.
10. Check your taps for drips or leaks and call us on 0800 801 601 if any require fixing. A dripping tap wastes a whole bath full of water every week!



## THOUGHT ABOUT OWNING A HOME?

  
Welcome Home  
**First Steps**

Our **FREE** online course will help with all the things you need to know before making the big move.

Visit [www.welcomehomefirststeps.co.nz](http://www.welcomehomefirststeps.co.nz)  
Freephone 0508 935 266

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Housing New Zealand Corporation



AUTHOR  
Ros Fogel

# Happy families



The Siliili family are enjoying the warmth and space of their brand new six-bedroom home in Northcote, Auckland.

The family of nine is finding life much easier after moving from a four-bedroom house where they were overcrowded a few months ago.

Katerina Siliili says it's great for her seven kids, aged one to 19, to live in a warm house. The kids are healthier and happier. Having the kitchen and dining room together is a godsend – not to mention having two stoves, which has made cooking for the whole family a lot easier.

"I can talk to my kids while cooking," says Katerina. "I also love the shower and toilet close to my bedroom downstairs."

Their home is part of the \$15.2 million project to build 44 brand new state homes in Tonar Street, Northcote, Auckland. The new homes replaced 15 rundown homes, and range in size from two to six bedrooms.


Through the project a further 60 homes have been refurbished and 218 have received energy retrofit insulation upgrades. There are new playgrounds for children, a well established community garden, toy and tool libraries, computer and cooking classes and an after school programme. 🏡



'Happy families': Space and warmth for everyone – (from left) Lavernder, Katerina, Monson, Elia, Vaeluanga, Itulagi, Lose with Malofou in front.

**"I can talk to my kids while cooking... I also love the shower and toilet close to my bedroom downstairs."**

**Katerina**

**PACIFIC FACT**  
The name 'Pacific' is derived from the latin name 'mare Pacificum' which means 'peaceful sea'. 



## Pacific Events Calendar



# 2011

### FEBRUARY

#### Saturday 26 February 10–4pm

Positively Pasifika Festival  
Waitangi Park, Wellington

### MARCH

#### Monday 7–Saturday 12 March

Pasifika 2011  
Western Springs Lakeside Park, Auckland

#### Saturday 12 March

Creekfest  
Cannons Creek, Porirua, Wellington

#### Wednesday 16–Saturday 19 March

ASB Polyfest 2011  
Manukau Sports Bowl, Manukau City

#### Weekend of 26 March

Neighbours Day Aotearoa

#### Sunday 27 March

Auckland International Cultural Festival  
War Memorial Park, Mt Roskill, Auckland

### MAY

#### Sunday 29 May–Saturday 4 June

Samoan Language Week



## Neighbours' Day Aotearoa

SATURDAY 26 & SUNDAY 27 MARCH 2011



**Turning streets into neighbourhoods:** Mā te whakakaha i ngā tātai-hono ka hurihia ngā tiriti hei pā-nohoanga kē.

Neighbours' Day Aotearoa is about celebrating the value of neighbourliness in our New Zealand communities. Knowing our neighbours helps make our neighbourhoods healthier, safer and more fun places to live for all of us.

Neighbours' Day Aotearoa is a time to get together with your neighbours in a way that suits your neighbourhood – fill the gas bottle, put the jug on, get cooking or just put on your most welcoming smile and head out to chat with those you live closest to.

Anything happening in your street or building on Neighbours' Day Aotearoa? Get the ball rolling! **Check out** [www.neighboursday.org.nz](http://www.neighboursday.org.nz) for ideas and tools.

Got questions or want to share a story about your neighbourhood? Please email: [kiaora@neighboursday.org.nz](mailto:kiaora@neighboursday.org.nz) or contact Citizens Advice Bureau for information.

#### PACIFIC FACT

The Samoan language is the third most commonly spoken language in New Zealand after English and Māori.





HEALTHY TIPS FOR 2011 TAKEN IN PART FROM  
Pacific Heart to Heart Issue 01 2010

# Healthy tips for 2011

**Make a New Year's resolution today. All these things will help you to be in good health so you will be around to watch your kids and their kids grow up.**

## Eat healthily

Set yourself a goal to get your weight down. Get a group together, set a challenge and support each other to lose weight.

## Exercise more

Walking is a great way to stay active and it's free. Get off the bus a couple of stops before you need to, walk the rest of the way.

Plan activities that encourage people to keep fit. There may be elders in the community or church who could teach some traditional games or dance – while the younger members may have a few not so traditional dance moves of their own to share.

## Be smokefree

Smokefree families and communities are very important for the health of our babies and children.



## Get a flu vaccination and get on with life

**There's nothing worse than being stuck in bed for days on end feeling lousy with the flu when you'd rather be out at work or school or having fun.**

Influenza or flu can be a serious illness – it's much more than a "bad cold" – and anyone can catch it. It doesn't matter how fit and healthy you are, you can still get sick.

Some people can end up in hospital and some die because the disease can make other conditions, such as breathing or heart problems, even worse.

### So what can you do to keep yourself and your family/whanau safe from flu this winter?

- Get an influenza vaccination – it's free for many people. Talk to your doctor or nurse about whether a seasonal vaccination is free for you.

- Wash and dry your hands often.
- Stay away from people who are sick.
- Stay away from work or school if you're unwell.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.

The 2011 seasonal influenza vaccine will include protection against three types of flu, including H1N1 (swine flu), which is expected to be back again this winter.

Influenza vaccinations are free from March to the end of July for New Zealanders in these groups:

- People aged 65 and over



- Anyone under 65 years of age (including children) with long-term health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, respiratory disease (including asthma), kidney disease and most cancers
- Pregnant women.

**For free health advice, call Healthline 0800 611 116. For advice about influenza immunisation visit [www.fightflu.co.nz](http://www.fightflu.co.nz) or call 0800 466 863**



4  
KIDS

TREEHOUSE IS THE  
'KIDS ONLY' ZONE FOR  
CLOSE TO HOME.

# TREEHOUSE!

## ARTWORK ON THE STREETS OF CANNONS CREEK



Destiny putting her name to the 'happy house' she painted.

In September last year, residents of Porirua's Hampshire Street joined Housing New Zealand staff and many other agencies to give their street an eagerly awaited week-long makeover.

The makeover was held in the school holidays so children could join in and the street was a flurry of activity, with green-shirted people hard at work. Local artist Tupe Rodgers transformed, with the children's help, a 25-metre long grey fence with the 'Happy Hampshire Houses' mural. The painting featured brightly coloured houses, like the 'happy house' painted by local girl, Destiny.

The happy houses theme was continued recently when children from the Cannons Creek holiday programmes helped Housing New Zealand staff paint a section of a nearby walkway. The activity was part of a project – whaia te ara tika – follow the right path. The project aimed to clean up the walkway by involving the local community in a huge art project. The resulting artwork is fabulous and the walkway has certainly been brightened up.

And for those of you wondering, the Hampshire Street fence is still looking fantastic. Maybe we have the Graffiti Grannies to thank for that, or at least the graffiti protection surface!



# PACIFIC PUZZLES

## KIDS IN THE KITCHEN!

Fill in the gaps to complete the capitals for each island

PACIFIC ISLAND	CAPITAL
Cook Islands	_ A _ _ _ O _ _ _
Samoa	_ _ _ A
Niue	_ _ O _ _
Tonga	_ U _ ' L _ _ _
Fiji	_ _ _ A
Kiribati	_ _ U _ _ _ R _ _ _
Tuvalu	F _ _ _ _ _ _

### Make and decorate your own cupcakes

**You will need:**  
24 small paper patty cake cases

**Cakes:**  
3 eggs  
1/2 cup castor sugar  
3/4 cup plain flour  
1 tablespoon boiling water  
1/2 teaspoon vanilla essence

**Chocolate icing / decorations:**  
1 cup icing sugar  
1 tablespoon of cocoa  
1 tablespoon of butter – melted  
Boiling water as needed

Preheat oven to 180°C.  
Use a mixer or hand beater to beat the sugar and eggs together until pale and thick – about 5-8 minutes.

Using a metal spoon, fold in half the flour, when that is done, fold in the remaining flour.

Lastly, add the hot water and vanilla.  
Spoon the mixture into the prepared patty cases and bake for 10-15 minutes, or until golden and springy when gently pressed.

Allow to cool completely before decorating.








**The fun bit – icing and decorating**  
Mix the ingredients, using only as much boiling water as you need to make a spreadable icing. Ice the top of each cupcake and decorate as you wish.

© Adapted with permission from Healthy Food Guide Magazine.

Match the greeting to the island

PACIFIC ISLAND	GREETINGS
Cook Islands	Malo e lelei
Samoa	Bula Vinaka / Namaste
Niue	Mauri
Tonga	Talofa lava
Fiji	Kia Orana
Kiribati	Fakatalofa atu
Tuvalu	Fakaalofa lahi atu

Number the right flag for each island

1		2		3		4		<b>FLAG NO.</b> Cook Islands <input type="radio"/> Samoa <input type="radio"/> Niue <input type="radio"/> Tonga <input type="radio"/> Fiji <input type="radio"/> Kiribati <input type="radio"/> Tuvalu <input type="radio"/>
5		6		7				



# Repairs to your home?

At Housing New Zealand we are constantly looking at ways to improve our service to customers – that is you.



A few years ago we introduced our Contact Centre so that you may get in touch with us at any time, day or night. If you need to get any repairs done to your house, calling the Contact Centre on 0800 801 601 is your best option. Our friendly, trained staff will try to identify what the issue is, and provide you with the best solution.

When something goes wrong or needs repair in your house, it is bound to cause some inconvenience. Though we try to get repairs done in a timely fashion, not all repairs are attended to on an “urgent” basis.

**Below are some of the jobs that our contractors will attend to as an urgent priority:**

- Repairs to external doors or windows to ensure security
- Fixing roof leaks or major plumbing leaks
- Problems with leaking toilets
- No elements working on the stove
- Sewer or drain overflow
- No hot water / cold water supply
- Electrical faults that disrupt power supply.

If you are calling the Contact Centre to get any damage fixed – for example a window broken by children – you may be given the option of fixing it yourself. Our staff will also advise you on how much approximately it would cost you, if we were to repair it on your behalf.

To get damages repaired, it may be a good idea to get quotes from tradesmen in your local area. You will find their details in the business pages of the telephone directory.

If you need to know more about the above, please call our Contact Centre on 0800 801 601 or get in touch with your Tenancy Manager.

## Help!

### I have a dispute with my electricity or gas company...

**If you have a dispute with an electricity or gas company, the Electricity and Gas Complaints Commissioner may be able to help you.**

The Commissioner runs a scheme for resolving disputes with electricity and gas companies. Common issues include billing, meters, disconnections and customer service.

You do not have to pay to use the scheme.

The scheme covers electricity and gas companies that have joined as members. You can ring the scheme to ask if your company is a member.



### Contact the Commissioner

The office is happy to discuss any enquiry or complaint about electricity and gas companies. If it is not something covered by the scheme, the staff may be able to tell you who else can help you.

Freephone **0800 22 33 40**

Freefax **0800 22 33 47**

Email **info@egcomplaints.co.nz**

Or visit their website **www.egcomplaints.co.nz**



# Palusami

TAKEN IN PART FROM  
Pacific Heart to Heart Issue 01 2010

This is just one version of the dish. It is traditionally made with taro leaves, and not everyone uses all these ingredients. It is also traditionally baked in an underground oven called an umu (or lovo).



## Ingredients

- 1 large bunch of spinach

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- A 250-300ml can of low fat coconut cream

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- An onion, finely chopped

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- A clove of garlic finely chopped

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- A tomato, in small cubes

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- A small bunch of coriander or parsley, finely chopped

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- A can of corned beef or lamb\*

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- Salt and pepper

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- Tin foil

## Method

1. Heat oven to 180°C.
2. Wash and drain the spinach well. Chop the spinach roughly and divide in to four portions. Tear off four large pieces of silver foil, large enough to neatly parcel the spinach in to little packs. Place the spinach in the centre of the foil.
3. Mix the onion, garlic, tomatoes, parsley or coriander and drained corned meat. Divide the mixture in to four and place each portion on the four packs of spinach. Season very lightly as the meat is already salty.
4. Open the can of coconut cream and mix well. Pour around quarter of a cup on each parcel then package up the parcel carefully to ensure it does

not leak. Place the parcels side by side in an oven proof dish.

5. Bake the parcels in the oven for about 20-30 minutes. Carefully remove from the oven and eat while still hot or warm.
6. Serve with a green salad and some boiled new potatoes, taro or cassava. It is also nice on boiled rice.

**HEALTH**

**01**

\*Put canned meat in a pot of boiled water to melt the fat then safely pierce the lid and drain the fat before use)

.....

## COST BOX

Spinach (from the market)	1 . 99
Onion	0 . 50
Garlic	0 . 20
Herbs (home grown)	0 . 00
Tinned meat	5 . 76
Coconut cream	1 . 99
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10 . 44</b>

## How shop smart are you?



Shopping for food can be expensive, especially when families are trying to eat healthily and stay within a budget. Take a look at these smart shopping tips:

- Set yourself a budget – how much can you afford?
- Use a shopping list – don't get distracted with items you don't need.
- Eat before you shop – everything looks good on an empty stomach.
- Buy in season – fruit and vegetables are cheaper when they are in season, so make the best of better prices when your favorites are at their best. Ask a friend or family member if they know how to bottle fruit.
- Cut back on takeaways – takeaways cost more than home-cooked meals and they usually contain more fat and salt. Keep takeaways for an occasional family treat.

# Garden diary



## March

### Kitchen garden – March is the time for planting the winter vegetable garden

- Plant seedlings of beetroot, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, spinach and silverbeet.
- Sow seeds of carrots, parsnips, radish, lettuce, spinach, silverbeet, beetroot (mild climates only), swede and turnip directly into the garden.
- Seeds of broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and brussel sprouts are best sown in trays for planting out later.
- Plant herbs in pots or the garden. Parsley can be grown from seed and sown now. Perennial herbs such as chives, mint, thyme, rosemary, sage and marjoram can be divided and replanted.



### Flower garden – It's bulb time

- Plant daffodils, tulips, irises and freesias in the garden or in containers.
- Spray your roses to help control pests and diseases.

## April

### Kitchen garden

- Harvest late summer vegetables – pumpkins, marrows, potatoes, onions. Store in cool dry place.
- Sow seeds of beetroot, broccoli, broad beans, cabbage, carrots, onions, radish, spinach, swedes and turnips.
- Transplant seedlings of broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, leeks, lettuce, silverbeet and spinach.
- Plant potatoes in frost-free areas.
- Plant parsley and perennial herbs.



### Flower garden

- April is the time to tidy up the summer flowering annuals.
- It's also a good time for planting trees and shrubs.
- Dead head roses as autumn flowers finish. Plan new rose plantings and give existing roses a side dressing of fertilizer.
- Mulch all trees, shrubs and roses.



### Lawns

- This is the best month for sowing new lawns and rejuvenating existing ones.

## May



### Kitchen garden

- Plant seedlings of broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, silverbeet, spinach and spring onions.
- Feed citrus with fertiliser.
- Plant garlic, shallot bulbs and strawberries.



### Flower garden

- Last chance to plant spring bulbs.
- Start collecting autumn leaves for composting.



### Lawns

- Feed lawns to boost growth and suppress weeds.
- Bare areas of lawn can be raked over and reseeded.

## June



### Kitchen garden

- Raise vegetable beds as the weather cools and the rain arrives, so you can plant a wider range of vegetables.
- Plant seedlings of cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, winter lettuce, spinach and silverbeet.
- Sow seeds of pea, onion and lettuce.



### Flower garden

- Plant pots with pansies, polyanthus and primulas for winter colour.
- Prune hydrangeas. Apply garden lime to improve pink colours and aluminium sulphate for blue.
- Slow down watering of house plants and move them away from draughts.

**Contact** Publication enquiries should be made to [closetohome@hnzc.co.nz](mailto:closetohome@hnzc.co.nz) [www.hnzc.co.nz](http://www.hnzc.co.nz)

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