



MEDICAL  
SAILING  
ministries Inc.

# MEMBER UPDATE

Taking medical services to where they are needed most.

December 2020



**MERRY CHRISTMAS** ... as we look back on a year of challenge and turmoil and forward to a new year of hope and promise!

Greetings from Medical Sailing Ministries Inc. and welcome to the latest MSM Member Update.

We are mindful that it's been a while since our last communication ... which on one level sounds a bit slack?! ... but it's not as if things haven't been happening.

In fact, despite the restrictions imposed by **COVID-19**, not to mention **TC Harold**, a lot has been happening and we encourage you to learn more by downloading the latest Annual Report at the MSM website, ([www.msm.org.au](http://www.msm.org.au)) or here ...

**MSM Inc Annual Report 2020**

In addition, there are many projects underway, and planned for the future as we support the Vanuatu Ministry of Health in their oral health program ... so we look to 2021 with great hope and excitement.

Thank you for your interest! And as they say in Vanuatu ... *Lukim Yu, and Tank Yu Tumas*

Rob Latimer & Mike Clarke  
MSM Inc.



## ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Whilst this MSM Member Update newsletter is a bit light-on for news ... for a comprehensive rundown on the past year click on the following link to read the **2020 ANNUAL REPORT**; it's a bumper issue!

[Download MSM Inc Annual Report 2020](#)

The **ANNUAL REPORT** has been prepared under the following key headings ...

### SECTION ONE – 2020 AT A GLANCE

Messages from the Coordinators  
Highlights from the past year  
Recognising volunteers  
Recognising supporters  
Messages from our Partners  
Where's the boat?

### SECTION TWO – FUTURE PLANS & PROJECTS

Projects currently underway  
Plans and dreams the future

### SECTION THREE – FINANCIALS

Financial Summary

## A gift that just keeps on giving ...

Buy a "Gudfala Tut Pikinini Pack" for a Vanuatu child today

If buying a ... "goat for a village" as a Christmas gift this year is out of your price bracket, why not give a "Gudfala Tut Pikinini Pack" for a Vanuatu child?

The Pikinini Pack contains all the key elements of the school brushing program – toothpaste, daily record book, tooth brush, oral health info., and more...all for just \$15! (ie 1,250 vatu)

It's an ideal way for children outside Kindy and Grade 1 (the current focus of the Gudfala Tut Skul Program) to participate. Buy one, or more, in multiples of \$15, via direct payment – and even get a tax deduction – 1 Pack = \$15, 2 Packs = \$30, 3 Packs = \$45 and so on ... check out the simple, 2-Step [ORDER FORM](#) ... or visit [www.msm.org.au](http://www.msm.org.au) There's even a Gudfala Tut Pikinini Pak Gift Certificate to download and complete

Not only is the toothpaste manufactured in Vanuatu – thereby creating local employment – , the paper bag is also handmade in Vanuatu!



## AWARD FINALIST

It's exciting to report that the MSM Inc. – DentaLife relationship, in developing the Gudfala Tut Project, has been recognised by the Australian Dental Industry Association as an Award Finalist in the 2021 "Oral Health Partnership" category. (In a field that includes Multi-national corporations)  
The winner will be announced on 7 May 2021 at the Australian Dental Industry Awards Dinner. (Held in Melbourne)

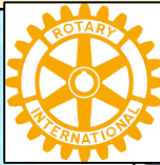
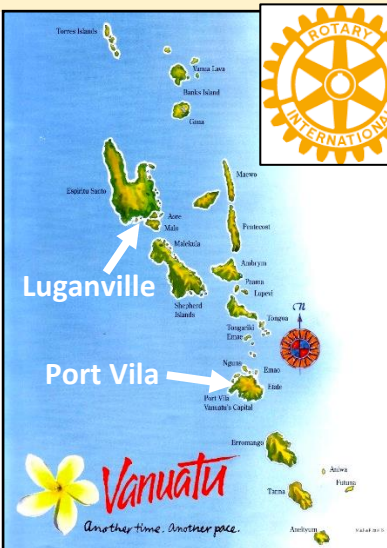


# Gudfala Tut Skul Program 2020

PCV Health staff, Bob Natuman, Morinda Kalmar, Sarafina Daniel and Dick Naket worked very hard during January/February making preparations for implementation of GTSP in schools on Efate and Santo...mixing and filling toothpaste into 500ml dispensing bottles, setting up toothbrush storage containers, numbering toothbrushes, preparing all the paperwork and teachers' classroom materials. Materials also had to be prepared, packed and shipped by Vanuatu Ferry in a large pallet and two large cardboard boxes to Luganville.

By the end of the first week in March the Port Vila Team comprising Program Leader, Dr Jenny Stephens, and Port Vila team members, Russell Olul (Ministry of Health), Bob, Morinda and Sarafina (PCV Health) had successfully implemented GTSP in four schools/kindergartens, Kawenu, Mele Maat, Central and Manua before implementation in another five schools was suspended as a result of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

In the meantime, the Luganville team comprising Dr Julie Tevi and her dental assistant, Lylon Nicholas stepped up the pace and implemented GTSP in six schools / kindergartens, D'Ocean Kindy, Santo East, Sarakata, Malsei Kindy, Kamewa and Rowhanie over six consecutive weekdays.



Rotary members and MSM Inc. supporters, David & Rufino

## Rotary Mates [Story by Dr Barry Stewart]

While visiting Luganville in March with my friend and fellow volunteer Dr David Goldsmith, a retired dentist and Ballarat West Rotary member, we met local businessman and Santo Rotary member, Rufino Pinedo. David had brought a young dental colleague from Ballarat, Dr Jackie Ansic, who is keen to offer her services as a volunteer dentist in Vanuatu.

Rufino picked up the three of us in his truck on Sunday morning and took us to Million Dollar View Beach House where we met the host

Gilbert, who is a collector of World War II artefacts, which regularly wash up on the beaches. The most profuse articles in his collection are the many Coca Cola and beer bottles disposed by members of the 200,000 US armed forces personnel stationed in Luganville.

Rufino was already aware of GTSP (Gudfala Tut Skul Program) and was keen to get as much information and copies of photos to support an application for Rotary funding to help introduce GTSP into more schools on Santo. Having lived in Luganville for more than 33 years Rufino explained some of the foods and beverages listed in the Food and Drink Diaries from GTSP 2019. For example, I was intrigued by the fact that many children indicated that their breakfast consisted of bread and hot tea, and was somewhat shocked on hearing Rufino's explanation that 'hot tea' is invariably prepared from one teabag shared among the family with each cup having 3-4 spoons of sugar!

Rufino was a regular visitor and also delivered our empty pallet on the back of his truck to the ferry terminal, moreover he secured a 50% discount on the shipping cost back to Port Vila.



Gilbert shows Barry, Ansic and Rufino some of his WWII artefact collection

## What do the teachers say?

Many of the Kinder and Grade 1 (4-6-year-old) children covered in GTSP have visible dental decay, which current dental services are unable to treat on a routine basis. Dental

Services are simply overwhelmed by patients seeking relief of pain and there is little hope of addressing the high prevalence of dental decay through the provision of fillings.

Therefore, one of the questions posed to teachers during GTSP team visits has been, "Are you aware of any children suffering toothache and do many of them miss school for this reason?"

The answers have invariably been, "Yes" but, without any further prompting, teachers involved in GTSP 2019 indicated that the frequency of absenteeism has been much lower since commencing the supervised toothbrushing using fluoride toothpaste together with distribution of home packs.

Here are a couple of photos of teeth in kindergarten children showing dental decay. The dye is used to reveal the presence of dental plaque on teeth. The pale blue colour is indicative of high sugar load in plaque.

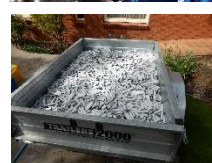


## Electrifying Team

For the Gudfala Tut Skul Program 2020 we had to prepare 5000, 10cm-long tubes for accommodating toothbrushes in the toothbrush storage containers. The cheapest source of tubing was electrical conduit available in 4M lengths from Bunnings. Then we had to figure a way of efficiently cutting the tubing into 10cm lengths. After consulting with "master builder", George Harvey, and ideas man, Neil Lawson, we came up with a jig that would clamp 6 full lengths of conduit together so that the pieces could be cut neatly using a band saw without having to smooth the cut ends afterwards.

Joy Harvey was the official feeder, George the cutter and I was the holder of the dangerous end and chucker into the bucket.

The next stage required gross washing to get rid of the sawdust followed by washing in soapy water, and then, with Evelyn's help, drying and packing into cardboard boxes ready for export to Vanuatu where they would be assembled.



Please include your comments or feedback, good and bad, regarding Gudfala Tut Skul Projek...

Thank yu long program ia from i helpem and ol  
Pikinini wotem ol teeth blong olgeta, mi glad from  
ei got jens long ol teeth. blong olgeta planti, mi  
hope se program ia bai i stop oltaem.

Reviewed by

*Barb*

Date: 26.09.2019

Thank you for completing this form

Dr Jenny Stephens,  
Head, Integrated Oral Health, Eye Care and ENT Unit, Directorate of Public Health

A typical written comment from teachers  
concerning the Gudfala Tut Program

...mi save brasem tut evri taem!

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