

## EECA and Prometheus in **Hot Water** together

**The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) has chosen Prometheus as the preferred provider for their solar water heating finance assistance programme for 2006/07. The programme, which has been running in its current form since 2004, has the capacity to provide loans for more than 1,700 solar panel installations in the coming year.**

We are very pleased to have been selected by EECA to be the sole finance provider for this programme. Prometheus has a solid history of participation in a number of EECA programmes over the past eight years aimed at encouraging the uptake of solar water heating.

Indeed, Prometheus was the finance provider in partnership with Synergex Systems Ltd when it secured the first EECA grant funding for solar water heating installations in 1999 under the then "Energy Saver" fund. This scheme offered the first low interest rate loans for SWH installations. When EECA expanded that pilot scheme to a dedicated SWH Grants scheme in 2002 we were finance provider for 5 of the 9 accredited suppliers that participated in that scheme.

Prometheus remained involved in the scheme through to mid 2004 when EECA restructured it by introducing the preferred provider approach. This is the first year that we have been successful in being selected under that competitive allocation approach. We are delighted to be involved in SWH financing again on this scale as it is entirely consistent with our aim to assist New Zealand's economy toward a sustainable future.

To secure a loan, householders need to first choose which solar water heating system they prefer from amongst those provided by the Solar Industries Association's 16 accredited suppliers. Loan application forms are available through the approved installation agents of each of these suppliers. With nearly 350 approved installers, the programme covers all regions in New Zealand.

Brian Cox, Executive Officer of the Solar Industries Association, welcomed Prometheus' selection as preferred provider earlier this year. "It's a good 'fit' because solar water heating has significant environmental benefits and economic savings and both our Association and Prometheus Finance share very similar goals in that respect".

"Water heating represents up to 35 percent of a household's power bill, so solar water heating offers significant potential for households to save electricity and money while also reducing their contribution to climate change," he explained.

Solar water heating installations in the past year were around 3,400 units, which is an increase of approximately 34% on the previous year's sales.

"The finance assistance programme is a significant help in building total installations towards our industry target of 10,000 installations per year," said Mr Cox.

Over the past three months under the auspices of this programme Prometheus has approved over \$1.3 million of solar water heating loans and has already disbursed more than \$600,000 of those as the installations have taken place.

**For more information about the EECA finance assistance programme householders can go to [www.solarsmarter.org.nz](http://www.solarsmarter.org.nz) or direct to the Solar Industries Association website [www.solarindustries.org.nz](http://www.solarindustries.org.nz)**

### LATEST NEWS

To help finance the loans that we will be making under EECA's finance assistance programme we have opened a new higher interest term investment account. The Energy Saver term account has a minimum deposit of \$10,000, an 18-month term and a fixed interest rate of 6.75% p.a.

Investors who wish to support the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency in New Zealand are invited to consider opening one of these accounts. Funds invested in this account will be targeted primarily toward solar water heating installations but may be used for household solar-electric, wind and micro-hydro projects and also for energy-efficiency and insulation retrofits.

**energy saver**  **TERM ACCOUNT 6.75%pa**

**Secured term investment • 18 month fixed rate**  
**Supporting solar water heating and other renewable energy and energy efficient projects**

# W A I O H I K I Community Arts Centre



Opening of Helen Mason House by Rt Hon Michael Cullen

In the late 1990's the Waiohiki Community Charitable Trust purchased a derelict dairy factory and several old cottages on land adjacent to the Napier Golf course, just south of Taradale in the Hawkes Bay. The Trust wished to renovate the factory and establish it as a

**Community Arts Centre to support both a cultural and economic revitalisation of their community.**

That goal has been phenomenally successful, with the dairy factory and adjacent buildings having been substantially overhauled and renovated over the past 7 years. The main part of the factory has for several years now been occupied by a large and well-equipped local wood-turning club and by the well-established Taradale Pottery Club. Both organisations have showrooms open to the public displaying and selling their work.

Other buildings in the complex are used by a variety of artists and artisans, including painters, sculptors and traditional Maori carvers. The Arts Centre has proven to be a significant attraction for both locals and tourists, the latter of which often come by in the busload.

Prometheus has provided finance for the Trust on several occasions over the past five years and was happy to approve their application for further finance late last year to renovate one of the cottages at the rear of the site which was badly in need of modernisation.

The cottage was renovated earlier this year for use as accommodation for artists-in-residence. The renovations included redesigning and rebuilding parts of the cottage to improve insulation, eliminate dampness and move the lounge to the northern side of the cottage to improve the passive solar gain. A deck was also added on that northern side along with a ramp to allow wheelchair access.

The cottage was officially opened by Michael Cullen, Minister of Finance, a few months ago and named after its first artist-in-residence, Helen Mason.

*Pictured Helen Mason (seated), Terry Creighton of Prometheus and Trust Manager Jenny Weichbrodt*



## Green Grocer Organics

**Jayne McCall used to work in advertising agencies but the birth of her children significantly changed her life path. This was not because she left the workforce and focussed on being a mother but rather because her children both suffered from food allergies. Facing this situation and looking for solutions for her children's health strengthened Jayne's existing interest in organic and natural foods.**

This interest then developed into a desire to offer the benefits of these food choices to others and led to her decision to start her own retail organic store in Kumeu. Jayne was strongly supported in this decision by her husband and business partner Ian McCarroll. Ian works in the film industry as a Director of Photography and has a strong passion for the earth and finding sustainable ways to live upon it. He is keen to see this business develop and give Jayne a rewarding work focus - especially when he is away on film assignments.

Green Grocer Organics was opened in September 2002 and has experienced strong community support from both the town and the large rural population it services.

In addition to fresh local organically grown fruit and vegetables, the store also stocks non-allergenic foods, chemical-free body care products, high quality vitamin supplements, environmentally-friendly cleaning products and organic gardening supplies. Jayne has worked with one of the key local growers, who also has his own farm store and box delivery service, to develop a relationship that works well for both.

Jayne is also committed to providing information and education to customers on healthy living. The store offers evening cooking classes, provides diet information to those with food allergies, promotes networking and support amongst local organic growers and has an onsite naturopath for those who need more in depth support.

As the customer base grew steadily over the first 3 years Jayne and Ian have found that there has been a growing need to hold both larger volumes of stock and a broader range. Consequently, they approached Prometheus earlier this year for a loan to finance that expansion of their business and to allow them to develop their internet marketing in conjunction with that.

Given the steady progress Jayne and Ian have made to date in developing the store, the benefits it brings to the Kumeu community and the well structured development plans we were pleased to provide the loan finance needed for them to take the next step in strengthening and expanding their fresh and organically growing business.

# Envirocar Ltd



**Cars that run on chip fat and used cooking oil? Seemingly the stuff of science fiction or pure fantasy just a few years ago is a growing reality in New Zealand now. It is a little known fact, however, that the designer of the diesel engine, Rudolph Diesel, designed his first engine to run on peanut oil.**

Many will have seen the media coverage several months ago of James McDonald's trip from Cape Reinga to Bluff in a vege oil powered car. He made this trip to promote his success in converting his diesel vehicle to run on recycled vegetable oils. He dedicated the trip to the late Rod Donald, MP in recognition of the encouragement the then Green Party co-leader had given him in his efforts to pursue this conversion technology.

Meanwhile, a Wellington based company run by Dave Renwick had, for several years, been quietly developing its own conversion technology kit to enable diesel vehicles to run on recycled and filtered cooking oil. However, in those early years vehicle conversions were only a small part of the core diesel maintenance business.

A new business partner and a significant capital injection last year gave a substantial boost to the vehicle conversion side of the business, enabled a major upgrade of the conversion technology and resulted in a renaming of the business to reflect its core activity. Envirocar Ltd has now developed a computer controlled technology which can be easily fitted to modern fuel-efficient diesels to enable them to run on bio-based oils and largely eliminate their contribution to climate change.

It is true that the bio-fuels these vehicles run on still contain carbon and hence still release that into the atmosphere when the fuels are combusted. However, that carbon content is entirely the result of carbon originally absorbed from the atmosphere when the oil plants were growing. Hence the fuel combustion process is simply part of a sustainable resource cycle and adds no net carbon to the atmosphere. The converted vehicles do, however, have a small secondary fuel tank for mineral diesel for initial start-up and run-down and so to that extent are not entirely climate neutral in their fuel use.

As part of the installation of conversion kits Envirocar supplies customers with a 1,000 litre fuel storage container that they deliver full of fuel to the clients property. Subsequent refills can be ordered from the company at 70 cents/litre. This compares well with a current mineral diesel price of around \$1.20 per litre.

Envirocar have established depots and trained conversion mechanics in Wellington and Auckland and are looking to expand, possibly through franchise operators, throughout New Zealand. They have some long-standing recycled vege oil supply arrangements but are looking to secure a significantly larger source of supply at present so that they can guarantee fuel supply to future customers.

Despite the appeal of this technology it does face limitations at present. Currently the most economic bio-fuel is recycled cooking oil, although this is in limited supply relative to total transport fuel demand. Outside of that there is the prospect of growing oil crops specifically for transport fuels, which is happening increasingly overseas. However, attendant on that are some very serious concerns about the environmental impacts of the tropical rainforest clearing in the third world that is making way for some of that biofuel cropping and the loss of productive food growing land as that is also switched over to fuelling the West's demand for transport fuels in preference to feeding third world populations. This is an area of significant debate and the jury is still out on how this will develop over time.

Nevertheless, there are some encouraging prospects in this regard in New Zealand. Envirocar is committed to exploring opportunities for sustainably growing biofuel crops on marginal land in New Zealand that is not currently in production. Another breakthrough NZ company in Blenheim is exploring growing biomass in the form of algae on sewage treatment ponds as potentially the most efficient way of converting sunlight into biofuel. Both of these prospects are, however, some way from commercial reality as yet.

When Prometheus was approached earlier this year by Envirocar for a modest working capital loan we were pleased to support this relatively new company. As noted in the last issue of Profile although there are no single or simple solutions to our looming

energy crisis and rapidly rising carbon levels in the atmosphere, Prometheus is keen to support any business that is working to reduce New Zealand's petroleum dependence and the ecological footprint of our transport system.

**For more information about Envirocar go to [www.envirocar.co.nz](http://www.envirocar.co.nz)**

*Dave Renwick with a modified SUV*



# Ceres Enterprises: Organic growth

**Prometheus has again played a supporting role in facilitating the development and expansion of Ceres Enterprises Ltd, one of the two largest wholesale organic distributors in New Zealand and one of Prometheus' longest-standing clients.**

**We have made a number of working capital loans to Ceres as they have grown over the past 20 years but the latest phase of their development is the most significant to date.**

The past five years have seen a substantial growth in sales of Ceres' wide range of organic grocery items as they have made steady inroads into mainstream supermarkets. This has been a challenging market for Ceres to enter, both because of the margin pressure that has brought and the requirements around ordering systems and supply response.

This growth created a need for higher stocking and staffing levels and had put intense pressure on both warehousing and office space over recent years. Ceres' management had a difficult time finding satisfactory alternative premises as they wished to not only meet the needs of the expanding business but also find a site with a similar exterior greenspace for staff breaks as they enjoyed at their previous location.

An ideal venue was finally located late last year and the move arranged for earlier this year, with all the attendant logistics of moving such a large operation smoothly onto an operational footing in a new location.

Prometheus provided the first part of a loan earlier this year to help with that relocation and to assist the build up in stock levels that was needed. A further stage of finance provision is due shortly to allow a substantial IT upgrade so that ordering and delivery systems can be streamlined and better managed with the existing level of staff.

We were very pleased to be able to support Ceres in expanding their organic and value-based business.



## Ceres: a value-based business philosophy

**Ceres is a unique company with a strong community-focused not-for-profit-only business philosophy.**

Managing Director Noel Josephson sees Ceres' role and mission to be one of service to the wider community and not to focus narrowly on the 'bottom-line'. Looking across Ceres' five divisions one can see that some of these are not only the source of most of the growth they have experienced over recent years but are also the major profit centres. As Noel comments:

"If we were really just financially focused we would chop the range (of products) in half and focus on the 'profit producers'"

Ceres maintains its full range of products simply because it sees that many of the less profitable parts of the business meet a community need. The NZ Business Roundtable would probably be horrified at this approach as it does not fit with their philosophy of maximising shareholder value. Noel, however, has a different view. He agrees that shareholders are an important part of any company's stakeholder group, but argues that they are not the only part and shouldn't be given priority over other stakeholder groups. As he explains:

"Shareholders need to get a fair and adequate return on their capital, just as co-workers need to get a fair salary, growers need a fair price for their produce and customers need to purchase goods at a reasonable price."

He notes that a profit-focused business which attempts to squeeze its suppliers on price not only puts growers under hardship but creates unhealthy long-term relationships and ultimately can work to the detriment of the business itself by weakening its supply chain.

This is a long-held view which seems rather ironic in current circumstances, as Ceres have increasingly found themselves on the rougher end of this kind of price-squeezing philosophy as they have ventured into the supermarkets over recent years. This has not been an easy market for Ceres. It has taken a considerable amount of work and persistence, and has brought a significant culture clash with the supermarkets' "hard-nosed" business practises.

Nevertheless, Ceres has benefited substantially from moving into this market as much of their growth in the past five years has been attributable to increased penetration of organic food into supermarkets. This has, of course, also significantly expanded the availability of organic food to NZ consumers.

# Community Tree Care

The Community Business and Environment Centre (CBEC) in Kaitia continues to

**develop and expand its range of activities and seeded enterprises. CBEC's objectives are to promote and establish community-owned businesses that deliver good outcomes for the environment, generate employment for their communities and foster sustainable economic development for their regions.**

In our experience to date CBEC has successfully established resource recovery and recycling joint venture companies on Waiheke (Clean Stream Waiheke established with the Waiheke Waste Resource Trust), in the Far North (Clean Stream Northland established with Te Runanga O Te Rarawa) and in Wanaka (Remarkable Recycling established together with Wanaka Wastebusters).

Prometheus has been privileged to have been approached by CBEC in each case to be involved as finance provider for these noteworthy community businesses. Not only have these ventures gone on to develop successful resource recovery and recycling operations in the respective communities, but they have also significantly advanced a positive model of community-owned and environmentally responsible business.

For some time CBEC has been looking at options to expand their own enterprise base in the Far North. One of the ventures they had been keen to establish for some time was a quality arborcare service, as they saw a lack of a tree care business in the region with a suitably qualified arborist to deal with more specialist work. This was made possible recently by the return to Northland of Brent McHardy, a very well qualified and experienced Arborist who had been working for the previous 13 years in this field in the Auckland and Waikato regions.

In typical CBEC fashion in their willingness to find the best solution for all parties they have established CBEC Arborcare as a joint venture between Brent and themselves. This arrangement enables Brent to employ his skills and experience in developing a business in which he is a partner, rather than just an employee. It also gives him a business partner that is well established in the region and can provide the machinery and equipment needed to get this venture up and running.

CBEC approached Prometheus for a loan to help finance the small truck and greenwaste chipper needed for the new business. They also sought additional funds to enable them to purchase the van they had previously been leasing for their CBEC Conservation Corp work. We again welcomed the opportunity to support the good work this community business is doing and wish them ongoing success.



# Hybrid Loans



**The title to this short story is not an indication that we've reneged on our commitment to GE free lending. Rather it refers to the further development of our business relationship with The Clean Green Car Company (CGCC) and its hybrid vehicle imports as reported on in our April newsletter this year.**

Following our agreement to provide working capital for CGCC's stock of hybrid vehicles owner Stephen Pollard approached us to see if we would be willing to provide loan finance for his customers as well.

Prometheus had been looking for a while at the possibility of setting up an easy "Eco-Purchase" loan application process to rival standard hire-purchase arrangements with affordable interest rates. The core of this idea was to be able to offer a simple stream-lined finance application process for smaller loan amounts of \$5,000 - \$30,000, where the product to be purchased fit within our criteria of being friendlier on the environment than conventional alternatives.

We saw hybrid cars as a good fit into this type of scheme. With our past experience of providing finance for the earlier rounds of EECA's solar water heating scheme we recognised that the risk profile for 'eco-consumers' appeared to be better than average. Consequently, we are able to work on a lower risk margin on these loans and offer a competitive loan rate as well as flexible repayment terms.

This scheme was established earlier this year and has resulted in loans to 13 purchasers of hybrid vehicles in the past few months. In following up with many of these people subsequently we have found a high level of satisfaction with both our simple loan application process and our interest rate for these loans. These new hybrid owners have also reported a very high level of satisfaction with the performance, fuel economy and cost savings they have experienced with their new low-emission vehicles.

The recent film festival release "An Inconvenient Truth" gives an excellent exposition of the potentially severe climate change consequences that will be faced over the next fifty years (in our children's lifetimes). In the action recommendations at the end of that movie people are strongly encouraged to assess their lifestyles to reduce their carbon footprint and one of the simplest steps to achieving that is to choose a fuel-efficient vehicle next time you buy a car.

**For information about the actions you can take to reduce your contribution to our pending climate disaster go to [www.climatecrisis.org](http://www.climatecrisis.org). For further information about second hand hybrid vehicle's go to [www.cleangreencar.co.nz](http://www.cleangreencar.co.nz)**



# ARTEMIS

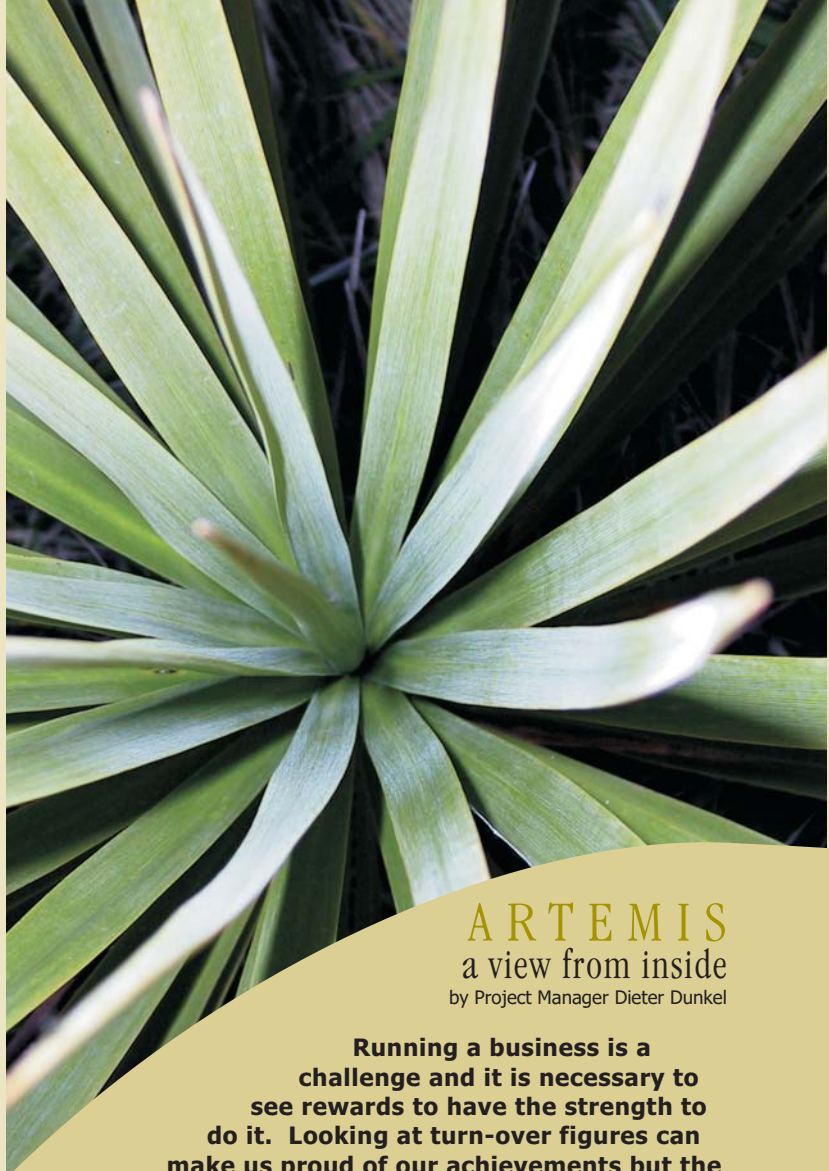
## Herbal Medicine

**ARTEMIS has just made another big step forward in its quest to bring the benefits of traditional European herbal medicine to more New Zealanders. A loan from Prometheus earlier this year enabled ARTEMIS to refurbish their newly acquired premises in Dunedin to the necessary production cleanliness standards. It also allowed them to import specialised weighing equipment for their range of therapeutic herbal teas, crafted with organically grown or wild herbs.**

Artemis founder Sandra Clair, a traditionally trained Swiss herbalist with an academic background in Ethno-medicine came to New Zealand 11 years ago. She made Dunedin her home and started a clinic for herbal consultation and body therapy. At that time, Weleda was the only company in New Zealand providing the therapeutic standard of herbal products that Sandra had used in Switzerland. However there were herbal products that Sandra wanted for her clients which Weleda weren't producing so she decided to start making some of her own on a limited basis.

Out of these roots ARTEMIS Herbal Medicine was born in March 1998. Sandra's synergistic herbal mixtures were based on Swiss recipes with several centuries of clinical experience behind them. When word about the qualities of these herbal medicines spread she was asked by management of the local Health Stores in Dunedin to supply them. The stock range included therapeutic herbal teas, fresh-plant creams (with complementary tinctures for internal use) and the therapeutic St. John's Wort Oil.

From then on it has been a story of continuous growth, with distribution expanding first across the South Island and then making the move further north, especially to Auckland. Today the ARTEMIS range is stocked in over 320 Health Stores and Organic Food Specialists, New Zealand wide.



ARTEMIS  
a view from inside  
by Project Manager Dieter Dunkel

**Running a business is a challenge and it is necessary to see rewards to have the strength to do it. Looking at turn-over figures can make us proud of our achievements but the deepest satisfaction comes from reading the letters and emails coming in daily from "real people" out there, whom ARTEMIS has helped to improve or restore their health. This is for us here at ARTEMIS the best medicine to carry us through.**

As an entrepreneur it is beneficial to keep in mind how one's own enterprise fits into a larger picture. That relates to many aspects, for example offering meaningful employment and running the business as much as possible on principles of ecological sustainability (e.g. recyclable or bio-degradable packaging).

A key element in this regard is the relationship to suppliers of raw materials. As a manufacturer of herbal remedies we see ourselves in an outstanding position to encourage and empower individuals and groups in rural New Zealand on their path to prosperity. All those people with green fingers and a personal interest in growing herbs are invited to put their thinking caps on.

However right from the start there should be a clarity that successful herb production does not stop at harvesting a crop of top-quality organically/bio-dynamically grown herbs. There needs to be processing facilities for drying, milling and sieving which, of course, won't necessarily be individually owned. In areas like the Hawke's Bay, Nelson or Central Otago, growers could, for example form clusters or co-operatives.

Finally on that note, a piece of advice for those with the skills and the drive to embark on such an enterprise but have a limited cash flow, you could pluck up your courage and talk to Prometheus about financial assistance. They are good people and will listen to your ideas.

**You can contact us at [www.herbalmedicine.co.nz](http://www.herbalmedicine.co.nz) for a list of herbs used in our therapeutic herbal tea range. At present we still need to import some herbs but if quality and price are right, we'd rather buy NZ produce.**

## New Developments

Being chosen by EECA as the preferred finance provider for their SWH finance assistance scheme for 2006/07 will give a significant boost to our loan portfolio with a sizable number of good quality renewable energy technology loans. Our total loan book has the potential to grow to around \$12 million over the next year as a combined result of this programme together with other loan business.

This expansion in loan business has prompted us to bring forward our plans to expand our staff and we have taken on Jenny Cave, whom many clients will have already spoken to when calling in to arrange transfers and withdrawals. Jenny is working alongside Geoff Burke in the management and administration of the solar water heating loans and is taking over other office administration responsibilities.

## Activity

Recent consolidated figures for Prometheus show a continuation of last years strong growth in deposits. In the five months to end August 2006 deposits had grown nearly \$900,000 to \$10.5 million.

Over the same period loans have grown more moderately to \$7.3

million. This is the net result of steady growth in new loans being substantially offset by a number of large loans that have been repaid early. The advantage in this situation at present is that it leaves a substantial pool of funds available for the large volume of solar water heating loans we expect to be making over the next 9 months.

## New Accounts

We recently introduced another new specialist term investment account, the Energy Saver term account (see front page). If you would like further information about this we would be happy to send that to you on request.

This account attracted strong interest from existing clients when details were included with our end-June statement mail-out. This account is further evidence that as Prometheus grows we are making good on our aim of offering more attractive rates to our depositors.

## Marketing update

We have chosen young Wellington marketing and design company Decisive Flow to manage our

process is our first ever marketing survey to help us develop an informed assessment of the NZ market for ethical and socially responsible investment. That on-line survey has been sent to a random sample of existing clients and distributed as widely as possible to others to try to capture a broad spectrum of responses.

The information gained from this survey will help us re-think our brand and image and re-assess our approach to marketing New Zealand's number one ethical finance organisation. We will also be looking at new name options with the aim of making ethical finance both more visible and more accessible to NZ investors. If you have strong feelings about that please send us an email or otherwise make contact with us to express your view.

## In prospect

Ever since the announcement of the Government's proposed Kiwi Saver superannuation proposal Prometheus has been investigating the possibility of establishing an ethical investment fund to participate in that. When we are further advanced with this we will be surveying a range of employers to gauge their interest in offering an ethical superannuation option to their employees. Watch this space.

## Loans in Brief

**Chris Wilson**, a long-standing investor with Prometheus, sought a loan earlier this year to help him purchase an investment and retirement property in Diggers Valley Road, Herekino, in Northland. He currently lives at 'Mara Whenua', a bush-enclosed community in Honeymoon Valley. As he wryly notes, "it's a great place to live when you're young and fit" but the "tough, hilly, wild and wet country" together with it's remoteness make it an uninviting retirement option when that time comes. Chris has plans to convert his new property gradually over the years ahead into a dynamic and productive organic smallholding utilising his years of experience in organic growing and tree nursery work.

**Jan Duncan** is an existing client who initially took out a loan with her partner some years ago to purchase a share in Awaawaroa Eco-Village on Waiheke Island. A dwelling has been built on the land and has been operating off-grid with a mix of independent energy systems. Household lighting has been powered by a small array of solar photovoltaic panels. Earlier this year Jan applied for a loan extension to expand her solar array and upgrade other elements of the system.

**Earthmaker Ltd** is a company established by Dr Lanne Johnson to manage the manufacture and distribution of his three-stage gravity fed household composting system.

The design allows for top loading of a vertically aligned three chamber system that breaks organic garden and kitchen wastes down to a friable compost. The well-aerated system allows a natural aerobic breakdown of material and limits greenhouse gas emissions that can result from older style composting systems if not regularly turned. The system is designed to be worm-friendly (but note that it is a very different methodology than a worm farm). As a result of last year's amalgamation with Recycloans we have taken over a modest loan to Earthmaker that was first made several years ago to help them with some establishment costs. [www.earthmaker.co.nz](http://www.earthmaker.co.nz)

# Aramitan Brazil

**Aramitan is a dream - of a Community Centre and Orphanage on the outskirts of Sao Paulo, Brazil for at-risk children living on the streets of that city. It is the dream of Santiago De Marco and Sandra Gamarano, and it is a dream that is taking shape.**

Santiago and Sandra are a young couple who have been living and working in New Zealand for nearly six years at Hohepa in the Hawke's Bay (a curative home for physically, intellectually and behaviourally challenged children and adults). Prior to this they had worked for many years in the slums of Sao Paulo with the Monte Azul Community providing food, medical care and education to the poorer residents of the city.

An anonymous donation enabled them to purchase a property with an unfinished building sitting on 3.800 square metres of land and surrounded by native trees. It is located next to an ecological reserve in Embu-Guaçu about an hour out of Sao Paulo, Brazil. Since then Santiago and Sandra have been dedicating their income at Hohepa to fund ongoing work on the property and have done some fundraising for that purpose as well.

The main aims of the project are:

1. To rescue children and young people in high-risk situations, providing them with the opportunity of growing and developing; acquiring physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual strengths that will prevail in adulthood and will allow them to lead a full, autonomous and caring life.
2. To awaken social awareness and provide the opportunity of exercising social responsibilities to young people from wealthier socio-economic classes from Brazil and other parts of the world.
3. To develop a community model that encourages people to work together with the principle of "family" as a nucleus, recognising it as an essential matrix in which the human being can develop fully.

As their website explains: "Aramitán tries to encourage other young people and adults who are willing to take responsibility and make a commitment to the knowledge and practice of social work. With the involvement of people from all around the world we are building another kind of globalization, the globalization of brotherhood, commitment and responsibility. We want to contribute to make the new motto "another world is possible" come true."



**Aramitan means  
'the child that unites Earth with Heaven'**

In line with this objective Santiago has organised several trips back to Brazil over the past few years with teams of young international volunteers to work on the property. The latest group of volunteers which went to Brazil earlier this year included students from the Taikura Steiner School in Hastings who enjoyed working with an internationally mixed group of young volunteers and enjoyed the social element of the experience.

However, one of the Taikura students, Anna Sunseri, had a distinctly pragmatic take when she reported that the main thing that struck her on arrival was: "a task list, which looked something like this: Remove interior and exterior brick walls with sledge hammer and industrial angle grinder, tile bathrooms and outdoor patio kitchen area, dig out embankment next to gate and build retaining wall, finish property boundary walls, move and install windows."

Though she did note the joys of being part of a multinational window-installing taskforce: "The task of moving windows deserves some elaboration ... observers and participants all voiced opinions on how to hold it, carry it, rotate it, flip it, look at it and set it down. All this communication had to go through the one man who could speak Portuguese, English and German!"

Another Kiwi volunteer, Craig Thorn from the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, summed it up for them all in his report which read: "...It's hard to understand the incredible amount of reward that one can gain from this type of social work. When we arrived here I wondered what on earth we were in for, now I know that any action taken to improve someone's life, in any small way, makes a huge difference. It's one thing to think or talk about it, but only truly beneficial when action is taken. I have really learnt a lot from the people here..."

When discussing the project recently, Santiago said that with 6 million children on the poverty line in Brazil it is easy to be frozen into inaction - though he knows he could not live at peace with himself if he did not do something.

His aim is to raise a further \$50,000 in New Zealand to help towards completion of the Aramitan project. If you would like to make a donation toward this amazing project you can do that via the Aramitan account at Prometheus.

**For further information go to [www.aramitan.org](http://www.aramitan.org) or contact [santi@aramitan.org](mailto:santi@aramitan.org)**



**PROMETHEUS  
ETHICAL FINANCE**

*Investors may obtain a free copy of our investment statement and registered prospectus from our office.*

27 TENNYSON STREET, PO BOX 969, NAPIER, NEW ZEALAND  
TEL 06 835 7138 FAX 06 835 1628  
EMAIL [ethical@prometheus.co.nz](mailto:ethical@prometheus.co.nz) WEBSITE [www.prometheus.co.nz](http://www.prometheus.co.nz)