



MARCH 2010 ISSUE 126

# The ENCOURAGER

EVANGELISE EQUIP EDUCATE

*Magazine of the Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust*



*CMWDT Centre and Hauraki Coromandel CFFD Groups meet at Hunua Falls*

**The Trust is believing this year will be “A Year of Significance”**

A devotion from Geoff Wiklund, CMWDT Spiritual Advisor

## **STEPPING OUT IN OBEDIENCE AND FAITH**

At National camp two years ago I spoke about some of the significant moments in Abraham’s life and how they were recorded by his building altars. I believe that what sets us up for a significant year is obedience and faith. We have to step out in obedience to what the Lord is speaking to us, and that requires faith.

Abraham’s significant time began with a “Go” from the Lord. He went, and it all continued from there. Can I suggest to you that Jesus told us to “Go and He would be with us”. If you want a significant year it will start with you moving in response to the prompting of the Lord to move out in faith. I encourage you to “Go”.



The most significant year in my life was when I responded to the Lord and went to Bible College. I left my job, my home, my family and made the Lord my source. It was the best year of my life. I encountered God in ways I had never experienced Him before. I grew at such a rate and discovered so much about myself.

So much of what I do today in ministry is based on what happened in that very significant year. As I observe people, I am aware that many people have had a significant year when they surrendered all and went in obedience to God. Does this mean that you can’t have other significant years? Oh no. You can move out in faith again and experience significance beyond where you were.

If you want to be a disciple then you have to follow Jesus. His call was clear “follow Me”. Maybe you need to just sit quietly and ask Him what He would have you do. Maybe you were following, but took time out to rest, and now is the time to get back onto the path. Get going, there will never be a better time. Or maybe you have come across a roadblock. Inside of you there is a mustard seed of faith that will move the mountain and make room for His purposes through you.

Lord, speak to each one of us and let this be a significant year of faith and obedience leading to great things for Your glory, in Jesus name.

## DISABILITY AWARENESS SUNDAY CELEBRATION

**Sunday 20th June**  
**Services in all denominations**

Ask your minister early to have a part in the service that will show the church that **People with Disabilities are Part of the Body of Christ.**

There is a very helpful booklet **IDEAS FOR DISABILITY SUNDAY** that can be sent to any minister on request by their writing or ringing The Centre.

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### **WHAT OTHER CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE TAKING PLACE AROUND N.Z.?**

We know about **THE BIG CHOCOLATE** held at the Bethlehem Baptist Church, Tauranga on the 2nd Sunday each month. Contact Phil Taylor 07-576-2314 *and*

**ABLE 2 WORSHIP** at the Methodist Church in Warkworth held every 2 months. Contact Sue O'Brien 09-422-9419

Could you let us know of others.

Email Jeanette Howden at: [jeanette@cmwdt.org.nz](mailto:jeanette@cmwdt.org.nz)

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### **CFFD GROUPS MEET TOGETHER**

These photos were taken when 70 members of the Wellington, Hawkes Bay and Manawatu groups had a combined meeting along with others from Wanganui. David Green, a former CMWDT Trustee (shown on right), was the speaker.

Another combined meeting took place when members of the Coromandel Hauraki CFFD joined with a large group from the Centre (see photos on the front and back covers.)



# “GOD HAS GIVEN ME STRENGTH!”

The testimony of Alastair Nicoll

I am 41 years old and live at Laura Fergusson Trust Centre in Greenlane. My early life was inauspicious. When I was ten months old I was incorrectly diagnosed as being severely mentally retarded, and I went to live at Kingseat. But by the time I was 3½ years old it was decided that I wasn't, and I moved to the Wilson Home on the North Shore. I was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy when I was five. I moved back home with my family and went to Carlson Cerebral Palsy School in Three Kings. This was when the speech therapist discovered I was profoundly deaf and got me my first hearing aids. I was then able to learn to speak – up until then I had no language! From there, I went to Mt Roskill Intermediate and Mt Roskill Grammar.

My journey with God began at an early age, and as I look back I can see some significant points in my life that deepened my walk with Him. I first heard about God from my mother when I was a young child. One day I read the Christmas story about Mary and Joseph. I told one of my teachers, Miss Mintram, about it, and she suggested that I join the school's Christian Fellowship. This really helped me in my faith and to grow as a Christian. Then, when I was 19, I was deeply impacted by a message I heard in church. This was about holiness, and how I could be holy. God did something in my life at this point and I felt strong on the inside. He gave me an internal strength that has not left me, and from that time He has built in me a deeper understanding of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

It is that strength of God in my life that gave me the ability and confidence to pursue and achieve my goals. When I was 18, I left school and also moved out of my home to Laura Fergusson Trust. I attended Carrington Polytech and did a few courses, including computing. Over the years, I have used my computing skills in various work experience and voluntary jobs, and have taught computing to other people with disabilities.



For most of my life I have been a walking C.P. and have been able to take care of myself. In 1988 as a 20 year old, I moved to Ellerslie to live on my own. I enjoyed living independently, and tended my own garden there for many years. However, in 2006 I injured my neck in a fall. This contributed to the compression of the vertebrae onto my spinal cord which had been getting worse for some time, and meant a new phase of my life - dependency. I am now in a wheelchair and live at the Laura Fergusson home. However, recently there has been significant improvement in my physical condition due to physical therapy, and I can feel my body getting stronger.

Since 1983 I have been involved with CFFD. I love attending the meetings and talking to people and getting to know them better. I have also attended most of the annual camps since 1983. For the last two years I have come every Thursday to the CMWDT Drop in Centre. I really enjoy the fellowship, teaching and food, and appreciate being picked up and dropped off each time by the ministry's van. Sunday is a difficult day for them to arrange help, but they tried and tried to get someone to take me to Green Lane Christian Centre, without success, so last year I determined I would take myself down the road and have been going there every Sunday since then.

Because of the Trust's ministry to me I felt I wanted to give back, and although I am on a limited income as a disability beneficiary, I enjoy contributing regularly from my finances. I know that God takes my offering and blesses it, to help meet the needs of the Centre and others like me.

God has given me a talent for playing chess. I first discovered this when my brother Roger taught me how to play when we were at intermediate school. Not long after that, I joined the Howick/Pakuranga Chess Club, and over the years my skill increased. At the CMWDT Camp I beat the North Island chess champion, Don Eade - twice! God has given me a love for people, and playing chess on the internet gives me the opportunity to interact with people from all over the world. I enjoy the contact, and particularly the encouragement that we players give each other. Aside from chess, my other main interest is cricket. As well as being a spectator, I am a statistician. My family are constantly amazed at the amount of facts I can remember, not only about the Black Caps but about ANY cricket worldwide.

In Philippians 4:12-13 Paul says, **"I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength"** (NIV). Like Paul, I have found strength in God to be content no matter what my circumstances – independent or dependent, able-bodied or not.

I was asked recently why I always seem so happy. I replied that it is because I feel loved and accepted by so many people. I also know that my joy does not come from my external circumstances but from what is inside of me, and therefore I cannot be robbed of it when my circumstances change. My joy comes from knowing that God is always with me. **He is my refuge and strength, and an ever present help when I am in trouble.** This is from my favourite chapter in the Bible, Psalm 46. And with that thought I leave you now along with another of my favourite verses; Ephesians 4:32. **“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you”** (NIV).

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## THE BELL

### I KNOW WHO I AM

I am God's child (John 1:12)

I am Christ's friend (John 15:15 )

I am united with the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17)

I am bought with a price (1 Cor 6:19-20)

I am a saint (set apart for God). (Eph. 1:1)

I am a personal witness of Christ. (Acts 1:8)

I am the salt & light of the earth (Matt 5:13-14)

I am a member of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27)

I am free forever from condemnation ( Rom. 8: 1-2)

I am a citizen of Heaven. I am significant (Phil 3:20)

I am free from any charge against me (Rom. 8:31 -34)

I am a minister of reconciliation for God (2 Cor 5:17-21)

I have access to God through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18)

I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:6)

I cannot be separated from the love of God (Rom 8:35-39)

I am established, anointed, sealed by God (2 Cor 1:21-22 )

I am assured all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28 )

I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16 )

I may approach God with freedom and confidence (Eph. 3: 12 )

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13)

I am the branch of the true vine, a channel of His life (John 15: 1-5)

I am God's temple (1 Cor. 3: 16). I am complete in Christ (Col. 2: 10)

I am hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3).. I have been justified (Romans 5:1)

I am God's co-worker (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor 6:1). I am God's workmanship (Eph. 2:10)

I am confident that the good works God has begun in me will be perfected. (Phil. 1: 5)

I have been redeemed and forgiven (Col 1:14). I have been adopted as God's child (Eph 1:5)

I belong to God

Do you know

Who you are?

You may have a  
disability, but

**NEVER UNDERESTIMATE WHAT GOD CAN DO WITH YOUR LIFE**

Len Thomas writes in the “New South Wales Crossroads” magazine:

Recently I read a book titled *Warriors of Ethiopia*, written by an ex-missionary who served in Ethiopia for many years. The book is a collection of experiences about Ethiopians he knew and loved. I am sure that anyone who reads it will never be the same again. There is one particular chapter I want to tell you about:

During a district Convention among the Wolaitte people, a call was given to the young Christian men and women to become missionaries to the tribes in the furthest part of the country. This was a calling where they would be required to leave their families and live with people of a different culture. It would not be an easy life! They would have to travel long distances, learn new languages and experience strange customs.

A young man stood up who was well known amongst the community and volunteered to go. He was shouted at to sit down and told that he was not capable of going. Why the outburst? Well, Fanta was severely crippled. He was completely paralysed down one side of his body, and with the aid of a stick he dragged his useless leg after him. It took a long time for him to cover any short distance, and he would have to travel hundreds of kilometres through dangerous territory.

Against all the advice of the village he went alone into the wilderness because he felt that God was calling him. It took him five days to travel a distance that an average person would cover in two days, but eventually he found himself in country that nobody would go to because of the danger. Many people had been murdered over the years by a very hostile tribe who hated strangers. Strangely though, the tribe welcomed him, and gave him respect by caring for him.

The Lord blessed Fanta, and many of the tribe became Christians because of his witness among them. Five churches were commenced in the area.

This is just a small example of what God can do for us. Never underestimate what God can do with our lives. No matter what our disability is, there is something we can achieve. Ask God to show you what talents you have. We all have something that we are good at. When you discover it, don't be put off because of what someone may say. God can do much with our lives if we let Him.

# JENNY CONGDON Christchurch secretary/chairperson

*A tribute from Sandra Crashley*

As South Island Coordinator for Christian Fellowship for Disabled, I met Jenny in 1981 – Christchurch was trying to establish a branch and Jenny had volunteered as Secretary. Many people presumed that Jenny was quiet, I came to know her as a behind the scenes woman, who could and would get the job done. She would go anywhere and organise anything to serve her beloved Lord and Saviour.

In those very early days Jen was the backbone organiser of CFFD, just quietly getting the job done; racing around Christchurch in her specially designed car. Jenny was always a safe driver but she liked speed and would hoon around to rest homes and other facilities where people with disabilities lived and encourage them to come to CFFD meetings. She was always ready to share her faith but never pushy with it. Jenny had the rare gift of accepting everyone where they were at and in that she was then allowed to share her faith because she had a great respect for her God and for people.

In those early days Jenny used crutches to get around; from an early age she set her will to overcoming, and thus her physical disability was not allowed to be her handicap. She was told as a child that she would not walk; in the end they had to give her crutches so that she could walk. Sometime later she had her toes surgically removed, after which they said she would not walk without them – a balance thing; Jenny just carried on walking with her crutches.

Jenny was born with a disability and in her childhood it was normal for children with disabilities to be sent to special schools; to learn to take their place in society as one of the “handicapped”. That meant supposedly not living a normal life; but Jenny was a trail blazer and when she met her Brian nothing could stop their marriage plans. Together they surmounted all protests; thirty years ago they married and set up their home together. Jenny and Brian have been a great example of married life because they loved each other and allowed each other to be - their marriage is an amazing success story at a time when the social norm is for marriages to fail.

Being a mother - this is where Jenny excelled. It was such a privilege to know this family when Pete was small. He has always been Jenny’s complete delight – she adored Pete and we joined her in that because he has also shown his mother’s courageous genes. Pete has inherited the best of both his parents and with his mum’s example is giving life his best shot.

What an example Jenny Congdon has been in these modern times of being too busy to care for the elderly. As Brian’s mother Ruth aged Jenny did all she could to care for her often providing a ride for Ruth to get to medical appointments. Ruth was always accepted as part of the Congdon household, always welcome as Pete’s Gran,



and as she aged was treated with care and respect by a loving daughter-in-law, for Jenny knew what life was like when your body fails.

Jen was always a willing volunteer and we had successful tours of the South Island with the CFFD drama because Jenny was willing to take her car full of people and be the other driver of our team. When she arrived at the various venues she not only participated as an actor but would play the piano for us too. As a very able musician in later years Jenny went on to accompany worship for her church each Sunday. Jenny had a huge servant heart and was always ready to volunteer, she would travel miles to serve others, and drove all the way to Nelson, Dunedin and Central Otago to help establish the CFFD drama there too.

In 1985 Jenny was told that her knees had cracked, meaning that she would not be able to walk even with the aid of crutches – Jenny needed to use a wheelchair and her first journey was to be part of an 8000 kilometre tour of Europe in just 6 weeks in a Campavan. That was a heroic journey for Jenny to take. There were six of us in that van and it was not a tour for the shy and retiring types; in those days people in wheelchairs did not travel; there were no air bridges and Jenny and our other travel companion in a wheelchair had to be carried on to the Jumbo Jet up all those steps by the baggage handlers! But all that did was cause hilarity as jests were thrown around about Jenny and Liz being right baggages!

I have known Jenny for about 30 years and our friendship was closer than most and enduring. Jen always had an ear to listen; if you were hurting she would always come forward with a squeeze of the hand or a caring touch and she would always greet you with that beautiful smile. Over the years every time I have pictured Jenny it is her smile that comes to mind – those wonderful eyes would light up and the whole face would beam out a greeting from a friend who obviously loved you with all her heart.

She has given life her best shot and put more into really living what truly matters in life than many able bodied people I know. Margie Willers recently sent us the following few words that aptly describe the way Jenny has lived her life.

Life is not  
a journey to the grave  
with the intention  
of arriving safely  
in a well preserved body,  
but rather  
to skid broadside,  
to the Lord's feet,  
thoroughly used up,  
totally worn out  
and loudly proclaiming  
**WHOA - WHAT A RIDE!**



We are all glad that we have been part of your journey Jenny and we will miss you but never stop loving you.

## EXCITING NEWS FROM THE HOREB DISABILITY MINISTRY IN FIJI

This ministry was birthed in the 1980s with a vision by the current president Setareki Macanawai to facilitate the spiritual need of people with disability in the Suva area. He was inspired on visiting our Centre in New Zealand, and on returning to Fiji formed a branch of the CFFD in Suva. Two years later they decided to become autonomous and changed the name to the Disabled Outreach for Christ and later to the Horeb Disability Christian Fellowship. They now have an office, manned 5 days a week by a volunteer full time staff and an elder of the Fellowship on a part-time basis, and hold services every Sunday from 10am to 12.30pm. Setariki is one of their 3 pastors, and so too is Sam Vilsoni who came with his family to our National Camp in 2008.



*Setariki leads in worship*

*Setariki writes:*

This is just a quick update on the goings-on here in Fiji:

1. We are prayerfully believing that 2010 will be a year of harvest for the Fellowship and we are recognising this as a theme for this year.



2. Outreach programmes will be a major focus of our activities this year. We have 3 cell groups in Suva and each group is tasked to organise visits to designated institutions such as rehab hospitals, old people's homes, mental health hospitals, etc. Our youth group will visit young people with disabilities at their homes and assist in various chores, etc.

3. We will be starting a monthly Sunday fellowship close to Nausori town where the airport is, as

well as with a local church fellowship eager to promote inclusion of persons with disabilities in their church services and activities.

4. We have contacted 2 hostels for young people with disabilities to conduct Sunday worship in their hostels as this is not presently available.

5. Our Sunday fellowship, weekly prayer and cell group meetings will also continue this year.

6. Finally, we are currently negotiating with a van owner to buy his vehicle worth around NZ\$12,000.00. As you well know, transportation is a big expenditure item for a group like ours, more so in a developing country where persons with disabilities have very limited access to financial resources.

We have raised NZ\$6,000.00 over the years for our transport project. Whilst I have shared with you our activities and plan for the year, we request you to prayerfully consider how you might be able to assist us in this endeavour.

## **TRUE WORSHIP**

*by David Peters*

“I appeal to you therefore brethren,” said the apostle Paul, “by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship.”

This verse pictures all of our lives offered to God as an act of worship, bending our will to His. Without sacrifice, there is no true worship. The cross of Jesus Christ was the ultimate act of worship. In some Bible translations, ‘spiritual worship’ is translated ‘reasonable service’. It seems these phrases are interchangeable. Worship and service are connected.

Some time ago, I planned a day of fasting, prayer, and study. I wanted to get close to God and enjoy intimacy with Him. That morning, as I shaved, my mind started to wander; this is not uncommon when shaving, as it is an extremely mindless task. It was about my twelve thousandth shave, so I was on autopilot. As my thoughts drifted to the day ahead, I looked forward excitedly to spending time with God. Then I realised that I would first need to help my wife Jane (she has multiple sclerosis) shower and get dressed, which would take about an hour and a half. Frustration swept over me. I wanted to get into the ‘spiritual’ activity for the day, and helping my wife would hinder that. Then the Lord interrupted me. What He said would forever change the way I view worship.

“Your service to Jane is worship to Me.”

This astonished me – helping my wife was as meaningful and valuable to the Lord as fasting and prayer! This is no doubt what Jesus meant when He said, “I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to Me.” I related to Jane what had happened and apologised for thinking the way I had. Early in my care-giving role I saw, but all too often forgot, that my service to her was service to the Lord; now I understood that my service to her was also worship to Him, and that is something I have never forgotten. It fills me with even greater hope that what I do for my wife is truly valuable work to God. Since then, I have seen work and worship as being intimately connected.

Our work can be worship to God. When we see little value in what we do, it erodes dignity and encourages despair. When we see value in even the most menial task and offer it as worship to God, work and worship intertwine, and hope – the expectation that no act of reverence is worthless or will go unrewarded – soars in our souls.

*This article and the one on page 16 were taken (with permission) from David Peters’ outstanding newly released book Hope, and can be purchased for \$20 from Christian Bookshops.*

*Permission was kindly given by CBM in Australia for us to include this testimony by Wendy Stepkovich and the one on page 18, both taken from their production “Luke 14”.*

## **GOD HAS TURNED MY SUFFERING INTO JOY**



*Anna*

My daughter Anna was born with fluid on the brain. She suffered a lot of seizures, and as a result of these she has a severe intellectual disability and also has autism. Life has been very challenging, but the most difficult part has been as she's reached puberty and become a teenager – with the autism she has lots of challenging behaviours and these have been the hardest to deal with. As a result of all this, I've suffered with depression from the time Anna was about six, and now she's seventeen. It's only in the last year or so that things have changed for me.

My husband and I run our own business. One of our long-term employees is a Christian, and in early 2005 she invited me to an Alpha course. Another Christian friend had done the course and told me she'd found it helpful. I thought “I'd be an idiot not to go and find out what this is all about.” It was also a chance to get out of the house one night a week.

All I knew about Christianity at that stage were the words “Matthew, Mark, Luke and John”, so I knew I was in for a steep learning curve.

Towards the end of the course we had a weekend away together, and there the speaker talked about the Holy Spirit. What I learnt was wonderful – that in the Holy Spirit I have a friend who is with me all the time.

My situation is that most of my friends and family don't live close by, and in my times of trouble this has been very hard. Now I understood that God was offering to be with me always. I was overjoyed, and that weekend I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.

The next thing was to find a church to belong to. I had no idea how to do this, so I went on the internet and did a search for churches near me. I found one whose name I recognized from ads about it in the paper. I emailed the minister and he responded, welcoming me along. So one Sunday evening I went with Anna. We were made to feel so welcome. The person we sat next to happened to be the Kids Church leader. Anna now thinks he's the best thing out.

So my life has changed dramatically. I don't worry like I used to, because now I pray. I have this new family that is always there – all these friends that understand our situation. It's been so easy to talk to people who have a true love for others. I can tell them things that I haven't told anybody. I'm learning to do what the Bible tells us to do – to cast our burdens on Jesus, and not to keep struggling under them. The Bible tells us that God will never give us more than we can cope with, and that when there is a lot to cope with, He will give us the means to manage. I'm finding this to be true.

Before I became a Christian, when I struggled with the exhaustion and depression and hopelessness, I would question, "Why does everything have to be so hard?" Maybe I would use my situation as an excuse sometimes, and wallow in a bit of self-pity, but now it's like I have a whole new focus. There's such a difference between worrying about things and letting them crush you. It's like I've walked through a totally different door into a different world filled with hope.



Wendy

Things are different for Anna too. I don't know what she understands about the Christian faith, but I know she loves to pray. She knows that there's Someone special that we're talking to. I rejoice now that God has made my daughter as she is for a purpose. I can see that she makes connections with people that a normal 17 year old girl wouldn't make. She is so loving and accepting of people. She has taught us a lot about not judging people. And just by being herself, Anna is educating the church about the way some people are, so they are benefiting from having Anna around.

One of my favourite songs now is a Colin Buchanan song called 'Press On Mums'. There's a line in that song: "*When all your human energy is gone, look towards your Jesus and press on.*" And I just grab onto that. God has come into my life and turned my suffering into joy.

Do you long to have the difference in your life that Anna's Mum experienced. You can too. It all starts with this simple prayer:

*Jesus,*

*I acknowledge that I am a sinner. I believe that You died in my place, paying the debt of sin I owed, and then rose from the dead.*

*I receive You as my personal Saviour and surrender control of my life to You.*

*Please show me how to live for You, Jesus, walk with You, and know You better each day. I pray this in Jesus name. Amen*

# THE CHOCOLATE SELLER ON BROADWAY

How did this guy severely disabled with cerebral palsy, get out on the streets with his chocolate bars in the first place? Well, it all started when Mark was at school, when he was twelve, and my wife Joce triggered the 21 years (so far) chain of events.



Any parent of school-aged children has to do some fund-raising with their kids: selling pizzas, raffle tickets, sponges, sweets – or chocolate. Joce was secretary of Wellington's Kia Ora School board of trustees and organised a supply of fund-raising chocolate bars, rather grandly known as The World's Finest Chocolate. The 30-odd kids of Kia-Ora were each offered a box of 20 with instructions to come back with the cash – from neighbours, grandparents, assorted aunties – plus – of course, the cash from the not inconsiderable number of family-consumed bars. As a family we were rather short in the aunties and grandparents department in our home town of Wellington, and the neighbouring houses were mainly up and down non-wheelchair-friendly steps. But hey, downtown Cuba Mall was flat – and peopled – so why not give that a spin? Consequently we took Mark to Cuba Mall on a Saturday morning, put a pile of chocolate bars on his wheelchair tray, and he enthusiastically sold the lot. So we got some more: sold them. Business was booming.

Mark was the most enthusiastic kid of his school in the venture. Some of the other families struggled to sell their allocation, and ended up forking out (and eating) remaining stock so they could do their bit. A couple of well-meaning do-gooders rang the principal, lambasting the school for putting 'those poor crippled children' out on the streets to beg for their educational money. 'It's dreadful!' one protested. Never mind that every other kid in New Zealand has to do it, these kids shouldn't have to. We should treat them like, I don't know, a sort of endangered species maybe?

On the basis of a couple of such complaints, the principal decided it wasn't a good look having the kids out there being possibly seen to beg – it wasn't dignified; it further demeaned the disabled. Mark was not permitted to thus raise funds in the school's name. The problem for us was that Mark loved doing it. What to do? Simple – keep selling chocolates, but not for school.

So, Mark decided to raise funds for some of the groups he was involved with, including Scouts and Boys Brigade (yes, he was a member of both of these 'competing' organisations simultaneously). Somewhere along the line he met Paul Vinl, Wellington



director of the Christian youth organisation Youth for Christ. Mark was impressed with Paul's work, so he sold some more chocolates, and sent \$100 to YFC. To Mark's delight, Paul turned up at our place to thank him personally.

'I want to make a difference in the world,' thought Mark. 'How can I help those who are less fortunate than me.' Through television, Mark became aware of the work of World Vision, an interdenominational Christian development organisation that funds most of its work through child sponsorship. 'I'll sponsor a child,' Mark decided. We wrote to World Vision, and the beginnings of a long-standing (well, long-sitting, actually) relationship were established.

Over the last 20 years, Mark has sold more than 20,000 chocolate bars (surely a world record for an individual retailer of chocolate bars?). For three of those 20 years Mark supplied the Wellington market, trading mainly from outside the Farmers store in Cuba Mall. Bad weather saw him trying out Johnsonville Mall one day, till he got thrown out from what (the management told us) was in fact private property, on the basis he was unfairly competing with their tenants. Fair enough – I guess Mark was a big threat to the profitability of the supermarket (selling scores of chocolate bars a day must be very threatening). He later got thrown out of Coastlands Shopping Town at Paraparaumu, 30 minutes up the coast from Wellington, for similar reasons. But an unexpected spin-off developed that day. It was a holiday weekend, and traffic was scarcely moving on its crawl back along the highway towards Wellington. We pulled over to the side of the road, set up 'shop', and provided a chocolate refreshment to appreciative customers whose cars were moving slower than well, a motorised wheelchair.

Auckland became the family's new home from 1992. Mark needed a new business location – and the careful scouting around began. The first day's trading was on

the footpath outside Westfield's 277 Shopping Centre in busy Newmarket. Good foot traffic, an ideal spot, you would think. But the shopping centre's management was less than impressed – that particular bit of footpath was theirs, they explained. And, of course, same as before, he represented a threat to the profitability of their retailers. The upshot: evicted, again. Other purveyors of various goods and good causes have since frequently grabbed the same spot – but with the advantage (denied a wheelchair with a tray piled with chocolate) of being able to relocate quickly when irate management approaches.

A call to the council established a location 100 metres further down, on the road-side edge of the footpath. The appointed spot was, however, exposed to the sun (not a good influence on bars of chocolate) and rain ( a regular and suddenly-arriving aspect of Auckland life). So we established the business under the verandah, thus gaining protection from sun and water, outside Hallensteins and the Emma Lee Linen shop. Seventeen years later and Mark is still there, an established feature of the streetscape.

*The above account about Mark Grantham (written by his father, Chris) was taken with their permission from the first 3 pages of Chris's new book, The Chocolate Seller on Broadway, and may be obtained for \$30 online from [www.cocoabeanpress.com](http://www.cocoabeanpress.com)*

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## **FROM TRAGEDY TO TRIUMPH**

It was the early 1950's. The young couple had just been married. On their honeymoon both contracted polio, which left them paralysed and confined to wheelchairs. Despite the difficulties, they had a family, raised their children, worked and ran a business. As the couple's two sons, Trevor and Wayne, grew, they observed the difficulty their parents faced when having to enter and exit vehicles. An idea dawned of creating a vehicle in which disabled persons could travel more easily.

Inspired by a vehicle customized overseas, the brothers designed and engineered a vehicle that a wheelchair user could access as either a passenger or driver, without having to leave his or her wheelchair. Their business, Vehicle Adoption Services, has gone on to produce many such vehicles, one of which is the vehicle my wife Jane and I used to keep our ministry mobile. This gave us a freedom undreamed of a few years ago. Out of their parents' misfortune, these two brothers have created something that is dramatically changing the lives of many disabled people.

*taken with permission from David Peters book, "Hope"*

# YET WILL I TRUST HIM... AND FORGIVE

## The story of Vicky Olivas

This wasn't how she'd planned her day. But as the Bible teaches us, *"We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps"* (Proverbs 16:9, NLT)

So, unbelievable as it seemed at the time, God was indeed walking with Vicky Olivas down that long dirty alley. He was with her as she sat down in the secluded office the employment agency had sent her to.



He was even with her when the boss grabbed her from behind and threw her against the wall, wanting to rape her. And God was certainly there when the man accidentally shot Vicky. She's now a quadriplegic, and that boss, who had tricked the employment agency into sending a young woman, got just three years in jail. It's easy to lose yourself in questions about that day. What about true justice? Why would God allow this to happen to a single mother who already had enough struggles? And those are all valid questions. But Vicky didn't have any answers to them... until God started to work His way into her heart. He used another young quadriplegic to do it – Joni Eareckson. Vicky and Joni met at the Center of Achievement for the Physically Disabled in California. It was 1980, and Joni had just moved out West.

Together, Vicky – who wasn't a Christian at the time and Joni worked through some tough issues. Vicky never allowed her questions to push her away from God; instead, her search for answers pushed her deeper into the Bible. It seemed that every time she said, "Oh yeah, God? Well, how do You expect me to handle never being able to hug my son again?", God would point her to a new Scripture that would help her face her hurt. Like 1 Peter 1:6. *"In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials."*

Or 2 Corinthians 4:17. *"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."*

Eventually Vicky came to see that day she was attacked and shot as part of God's plan for her life... because it gave her an eternal perspective. A perspective that allowed her to forgive the man who attacked her, and a perspective that has made her faith rock solid.

God is always walking beside us – even if you can't walk, and even if your life feels trapped in tragedy. God is with us... that's the truth Vicky lives out every day, and that's the truth you help Joni and Friends share.

*taken from the newsletter of Joni and Friends*

# WHAT WAS GOD DOING?

A story about Narelle...

The local church I attend conduct a Holy Communion Church Service twice a month at a nearby Aged Care Facility. I was the only volunteer assisting at this service, and when the numbers grew I knew some additional helpers were needed to run around the rooms and assist the residents who wished to attend the service at a common meeting room.

I approached our vicar who agreed I could make a plea for some help at the main church at the next Sunday service. This I did with great passion.

To my amazement only one person came forth! I should have been pleased but this person was nothing like what I had been praying God would send. Instead of being a very fit and agile person, Narelle suffered from multiple sclerosis and was in a wheelchair, and she also would have to bring along her young pre-school daughter (*above*). All I could see was that I was getting more problems! What was God thinking?

I went home feeling very despondent and a bit angry with God for sending me a person that I thought would need lots of help and assistance too which would only add to my desperate situation.

However, when I arrived at the Aged Care Centre for the next service I found Narelle and Alison all ready and waiting for me. Narelle was looking a bit anxious but very bright and cheerful and looking forward to beginning her new venture.

I was soon shown what a blessing God had sent. How could I have been so wrong? Narelle and her Alison were a wonderful help to me, the clergy and the residents. While I raced around the corridors reminding and assisting the residents Narelle would cheerfully sit in her wheelchair and chat with the early comers, and of course everyone warmed to little Alison and loved her cuteness.

It soon became evident that Narelle was a very valuable asset to the ministry team. She blessed everyone with her patience, cheerfulness, and willingness. Narelle's skills to just listen and share stories with the residents as well as taking an active part in the service with Bible readings and prayers. were such a blessing. The residents looked forward to Narelle and Alison each fortnight, and they became very special friends that they dearly loved.

I learnt a number of valuable and humbling lessons from this experience. Firstly, to always put your trust in God no matter how He answers your prayers, and secondly to remember that people with disabilities have special gifts and skills that God wants to use, and these should be encouraged and embraced with great enthusiasm and thankfulness.



*Bev Ward*



A must for Di Willis on her recent visit to Tanzania was to call on Christina, who has cerebral palsy, shown here with Ezekiel and his mother. Ezekiel was the one who first had the vision of having a Christian school at Magugu which the Joshua Vision Trust has set up . He came across Christina on a mat in her hut, and graciously invited her to his house where his mother is her caregiver. She has her own room, adapted toilet, meals and the love of Jesus. They need \$50 a month to help with her food and clothing, and a further \$20 a month to get someone from the school to teach her for 1 hour a week. If you can help with this, contact Di Willis at “The Centre”.

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## A SISTER MINISTRY IN LATIN AMERICA

*In a recent issue of Edan magazine we came across the work of the Bartimaeus Ministry of Latin America in raising awareness of the integration of people with disabilities into the church and community. Their description of their ministry adds a fresh insight to a famous passage of scripture.*

Our belief is based on that beautiful passage that we find in the Gospel of Mark, chapter 2:1-12. Here we see the story of the paralytic of Capernaum. From this story we may draw some conclusions that have to do with the aims of our special ministry.

The paralytic is a person who can't move on his own and needs to have an encounter with Jesus. His four 'friends' represent our ministry. The Bible doesn't say if these four persons are friends, relatives, neighbours, or if they were persons who were moved to do 'the good deed for the day'. This last option is surely not the case. We can also deduce from this story that these four men felt great love for that soul who needed an encounter with Christ, they also were convinced that the best thing for this man was to be at Christ's feet, and they also had great faith.

There goes the special ministry, those four men carrying the paralytic man, moved by love and faith, but they find an insurmountable barrier: the multitude! Christ's followers! Those who already knew Christ were the very ones who didn't permit this person with physical limitations to get in contact with the only possibility of healing.

Where did they take him? To have fun? No! They took him to Christ's feet. Jesus, seeing the faith of these four men, is deeply moved, and He says to the paralytic man: 'Your sins are forgiven' This is the objective of our ministry! The conversion of souls!

# THE AUCTION

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art.. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. More then 200 millions dollars the price of these paintings! They would often sit together and admire the great works of art.

When the Vietnam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands. He said, 'Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art.' The young man held out this package. 'I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this.'

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture.. 'Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me.. It's a gift.'

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection.

On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. 'We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?'

There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, 'We want to see the famous paintings.. Skip this one.' But the auctioneer persisted. 'Will somebody bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?' Another voice angrily. 'We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Gogh's, the Rembrandts. Get on with the bids!'

But still the auctioneer continued. 'The son! The son! Who'll take the son?'

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the long-time gardener of the man and his son. 'I'll give \$10 for the painting...' Being a poor man, it was all he could afford. 'We have \$10, who will bid \$20?'

'Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the masters.' The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. 'Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10!' A man sitting on the second row shouted, 'Now let's get on with the collection!'

The auctioneer laid down his gavel. 'I'm sorry, the auction is over.'  
'What about the paintings?'

'I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time.. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings.

The man who took the son gets everything!

God gave His son 2,000 years ago to die on the cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is: 'The son, the son, who'll take the son?'

Because, you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything.



**FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH SHALL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE...THAT'S LOVE.**

*You make a living by what you get,  
but you make a life by what you give.*

*Winston Churchill*

# AUTISM'S LEGACY:

## IN SEARCH OF THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

When one's only child is afflicted with a medical condition, particularly one as mysterious as autism, ones blissful idealized view of pregnancy and motherhood can be replaced with fear and insecurity. This is how things were at the start of Fela's life. Autism is a brain disorder which affects communication and behaviour. Prevalence has been calculated to be as high as 1% of the UK child population. The syndrome is characterized by a triad of symptoms – lack of imagination, lack of speech and lack of social understanding. Some of the everyday behaviours are mood swings, lack of or echolaic speech, hyperactivity, lack of eye contact and sleeplessness.

We received the unfortunate diagnosis months before his third birthday, but had suspected it for some time. I recall asking the Community Paediatrician if he would ever be able to say "I love you". Her prognosis was not hopeful. She no doubt did not want to give false hope, but under such circumstances hope would have been like giving much needed oxygen to someone in the middle of an asthma attack. As a mother, this was a shattering prospect – it was as if Fela had been emotionally amputated. As if to prove her wrong, and a sign of motherly denial, I made a point of showering him with hugs, kisses and countless "I love you's. It's a habit I continue to this day, and it has paid dividends. He's a happy, emotionally secure thirteen year old, able to share with others the love he is so confident of himself.

*Under such circumstances hope would have been like giving much needed oxygen to someone in the middle of an asthma attack.*

I recall my son, Fela, as a three year old – full of vitality, a keen observer and imitator, except he didn't speak (though he sang in monosyllables), found difficulty relating to other children, could hardly sit still, couldn't sleep through the night or indicate when he needed to use the toilet. Quite an exhausting list! At eight years old, he was an overgrown, easily excitable boy with the face of an angel and the manners of a Neanderthal. He couldn't understand that it was not acceptable to hit people in public, pull their hair, spit or defecate on the floor.

The medical establishment have placed the tag "incurable" on a syndrome which has defied their understanding since it was first identified in a report by Leo Kanner in 1943. There is only speculation as to what may cause it – birth difficulties, a virus such as through immunizations, genetic defects, food allergies – but as yet no publicized breakthrough in causation or cure. Raising my son has forced me to flex my faith muscles. He has extracted from me patience and selflessness I never knew

was possible, and in the process has made me a better human being. There's a line in a Stevie Wonder song which has always stayed with me: "If given a chance to live again, I'd change not a single thing/for that very change could sadly mean/ that to me You Fate wouldn't bring." Thanks to Fela I met my wonderful husband Michael. Fela, I was told by my former pastor, scared off many an admirer who couldn't cope with his bizarre behaviour. Were it not for him, the 'Time for me' perpetual calendar for carers would never have come into existence. Throughout my years as a full-time carer, I chronicled many of my heartaches and the lessons learned, and the scars were indelible. It is my prayer that this calendar will uplift and inspire carers like myself who have been battle-worn from the challenges of caring.

For me raising my son is a daily fight, but one I wouldn't exchange for the world. I have found in my son someone extremely loveable, a gentleman both helpful and patient, and living proof that the words of Romans 8:28 are indeed true - that good can always unfold beautifully from something bleak and unattractive, just as a butterfly emerges from a chrysalis. I travail in prayer for wisdom as to how to steer the life of this precious soul entrusted to me by our Heavenly Father, and for a miraculous breakthrough from the limitations of autism. I fight for all his needs to be met at the specialist residential school for autism he attends, and continue to believe that "with God all things are possible".

*Carla Cornelius in the English Carers Christian Fellowship newsletter, included with permission*

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## **LESSONS OF LIFE**

- The best way to get even is to forget
- Feed your faith, and your doubts will starve to death
- God wants spiritual fruit, not religious nuts
- Sorrow looks back, worry looks around, faith looks up
- Standing in the middle of the road is dangerous – you will get knocked down by the traffic from both ways.
- A successful marriage isn't about finding the right person – it's being the right person
- The mighty oak tree was once a little nut that held it's ground
- To forgive, is to set the prisoner free, and then discover that the prisoner was you
- You'll notice that a turtle only makes progress when it sticks its neck out
- If the grass is greener on the other side of the fence, you can bet the water and fertilizer bill is higher.

# CAR JACKING - WITH A DIFFERENCE

*(This is supposedly a true account recorded in the Police Log of Sarasota, Florida.)*

An elderly Florida lady did her shopping and, upon returning to her car, found four males in the act of leaving with her vehicle.

She dropped her shopping bags and drew her handgun, proceeding to scream at the top of her lungs, "I have a gun, and I know how to use it! Get out of the car!"

The four men didn't wait for a second threat. They got out and ran like mad.

The lady, somewhat shaken, then proceeded to load her shopping bags into the back seat of the car and got into the driver's seat. She was so shaken that she could not get her key into the ignition.

She tried and tried, and then she realized why there was a football, a Frisbee and two 12-packs of beer in the front seat.

A few minutes later, she found her own parked car four or five spaces further down. She loaded her bags into the car and drove to the police station to report her mistake.

The sergeant to whom she told the story couldn't stop laughing.

He pointed to the other end of the counter, where four pale men were reporting a car-jacking by a mad, elderly woman described as white, less than five feet tall, glasses, curly white hair, and carrying a large handgun.

No charges were filed.

Moral of the story?

If you're going to have a senior moment... make it memorable.

## A HUGE INCREASE

We were shocked when we heard that our printing firm has changed ownership and the new owners have increased the printing charges each time from \$2,250 to just on \$4,000. They have been very good to us for many years putting out "The Encourager" at a price below what it costs them, and we are very grateful for this.

But this is a huge increase and will bring the yearly cost of the magazine for printing and postage to \$24,000. We don't want anyone to stop receiving the magazine, for this will not bring the price down, but because this \$24,000 needs to be covered from donations we are asking those who have been receiving "The Encourager" for quite some time but have not donated to its costs to see if you can help with our costs.

# MAX COMER

My life to date has been quite a mixture of occupations because of my sight deterioration. I was diagnosed at 3 years old to have Herodo macular degeneration, and back in those days in the 1920s, opticians would travel round from house to house. At that time we were living in Raetihi. My mother was a woman of faith and would take me to the little Methodist church in both Raetihi and later Whakatane.



Like many young men in their teens I kind of drifted away from going to church. However, while in Whakatane, an evangelist named Colin Graham had a series of tent meetings. Because my girlfriend went along I did also, and got to know Colin very well. He recognized that I had organizational skills so asked if I could help. I still really wanted to go to my ballroom dancing and be with the boys, and this was not in Colin's plan. I was baptized in the Awakino Hot Springs mainly because my girlfriend was baptized, but many years later I realized this was not the reason to be baptized. We broke our friendship in time and I was off to Wellington. I had two jobs there, but unfortunately lost one because of my eyesight deficiency. A few years later while attending the Baptist Church in Rotorua I was baptized for all the right reasons, and have enjoyed the fellowship of others of like mind over the years.

It was 24 years ago that I got my first hearing aid and went from being visually impaired to deafblind. For a lot of deafblind people, acknowledging the fact that they have a double disability is a difficult process, but it's important to try and get them to admit that they are deafblind. It's to their benefit to carry a white cane and to wear their hearing aids. I myself have faced discrimination throughout the years because of being deafblind, but this has made me more determined to be an advocate, and I have spent over 20 years promoting blind and deafblind awareness in New Zealand.

My age now is 88 years and I am still working the pilgrim road, enjoying fellowship even though my hearing has deteriorated with deafness in one ear and a hearing aid in the other. A walking frame keeps me steady and prevents falls. To communicate, I'm also learning hand on hand communication.

# CULTURAL IDENTITY

## Jean's Pilgrimage back to Hong Kong

I have an opportunity of a lifetime to join other Chinese adoptees for a reunion in Hong Kong, in September this year. For me it is a time to rediscover my roots and to plant my feet back on the soil of my birth place, a place where I was raised for my first six years in an orphanage before being adopted into a NZ family. From then on, I was no longer Chinese, and denied my race. For me I was a white kiwi and I hated my slanted eyes and flat nose, let alone having straight black hair. The trauma of identity issues became a problem throughout my life, and I had many emotional dealings which prevented me moving forward.



Getting rheumatoid arthritis at the age of 17 was another set back. Even though people saw me as a happy person, I was in fact very unhappy and depressed.

Years later when I became a Christian, I began to understand the significance of being made in His image, our character forming and even our features. God made me and me alone, to His specific requirements. Only recently have I taken an interest in my heritage and culture, and I truly believe God has put this in me, as I begin to reunite with more Chinese adoptees and accept my race.

Ten years ago I met a number of girls from my orphanage which brought some healing as we shared our stories of emotional difficulties. Now we aim to go back to Hong Kong to meet up with two of the missionaries who brought us up and now run an orphanage for abandoned and disabled babies, but hopefully also for me to connect with my roots. I will be taking my sister Bronwen who has understood my struggles as she grew up with me, but she will also be my caregiver - therefore I will be paying her airfares too.

Please keep me in prayer as I prepare this exciting journey back to my homeland. Thank you. Blessings

Jean Griffiths

*If you would like to help Jean with the expenses of her visit, you could send it to her at 49 Edmonton Ave, Onehunga, Auckland 1061. She is also holding a fund-raising concert at 3.30pm on Saturday 29 May at Pakuranga Baptist Church, 219 Ti Rakau Drive, Pakuranga. Suggested donation \$15. Please advise her by phone on 525-5415 if you will be coming.*

## A SEQUEL TO “THE MASTER’S TOUCH”

An earlier edition of the “Encourager” contained a wonderful poem we had come across - “The Master’s Touch”, relating how as the bidding flagged at an auction, the price of an old violin was increased a thousandfold when an old man came forward and brought forth beautiful melodies from the battered old instrument. The poem finished with the words:

And many of us with life out of tune,  
And battered and scarred with sin,  
May be auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crows,  
Much like the old violin.  
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd  
Never can quite understand  
The worth of a soul and the change that’s wrought  
By the touch of the Master’s hand.

The magazine “Wholeness” saw the poem in “The Encourager” and reproduced it in a later edition. One of their readers, a man in prison, was moved to write the following poem,

‘Twas a masterly touch, that thought  
To send me the message within.  
The old violin was out of tune,  
With the years of battling sin.

I’d been like that old violin,  
And they tried to auction me short,  
But thanks to the Master, He rescued me,  
From my prison of sin, He bought.

The ways of this world do not care  
What happens to those who fall.  
But the Heavenly Master is gracious and fair,  
And comes down to touch us all.

Thanks for the touch of the Master’s Hand,  
Many will ne’er understand.  
My soul has worth! He wrought a change!  
By the touch of the Master’s hand.

Isn’t it wonderful that God can work in people’s lives with articles that start in one publication but then move on to a much greater readership.

# PCFFD REPORT

## 1ST SPED SENIOR SCOUTS CAMPORETTE 2009

Our 36 high school deaf students had their Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts Camporee December 2-4, 2009 within the Hebron compound (they are probably the only deaf troop in Philippines). PCFFD staff and SPED teachers helped make it a learning experience to these hearing impaired people. Parents were encouraged and challenged to let their children be away from home for three days training in survivals. On the last hours of parting away, the deaf just don't want to finish their training at Hebron but they know they really need to face who they are in real life outside.

### LEARNING, FRIENDSHIP, and FUN

The program explored their self-confidence, knowledge, skills, interests and hobbies. Nathan, the scout master, and staff aim for them to learn survival in times of need; to be self-reliant, helpful to others and to the community, as well as, to be good citizens who will be contributing members of the nation.

Friendship developed as these young people helped each other cooperating for their team's goal, and applying the Scout's Laws and Mottos. It was also fun as they enjoyed their experiences like building a tent with a kitchen, cooking their own food, playing games, etc. And everybody participated in the camp fire ceremony, scouts relay competition, the talents presentations, Patrol's Drills, and putting their creativity to work for where to sleep, cook, and eat, all the time searching out who was to be Senior Boy Scout & Senior Girl Scout of the year.

Other activities included:

Transporting a person with a compound fracture of the forearm; head injury; spinal column injury.

A fire building race. Each team was given little pieces of bamboo and with just one match they had to build a fire until it reached the main thread, and the winner was the first team to burn this through.

A race crossing the river by rope.



## A WORD FROM BRICCIO AND LESLIE

Briccio Aguilar writes,

Praise GOD for the opportunities God has given me to become involved in the disabled sector nationwide under KAMPI – a government agency (partner in development) working for the welfare of disabled person like me. Even though it was an additional commitment, it enabled me to be of help to others, and the strength and grace of the Lord was always with me. I



*Marina & Briccio*

I enjoy representing disabled people, advocating their rights and being involved in the planning and implementation of the programs. It also enabled me to promote PCFFD ministry; to meet other disabled people who are Christian from different part of the Philippines; and then encourage their potential to be an active leader of disabled people in their region. I met one person name Erickson Sabanal, who got polio when he was a six months old baby. He is a good Christian and is in-charge in KAMPI Region 12. I challenged him to start a CFFD ministry even it is a small group in his area. My aim is to continue to promote and expand the ministry for disabled people to other regions or provinces. It is a ministry similar to church planting, with Hebron Center for Disabled as the base.

Leslie Dela Ganar writes:

I would like to express my warmest thanks to God that He answered my prayer to visit New Zealand and attend the National Camp. Let me say a million thanks to all the people who prayed for me and generously contributed to my air fare. I appreciated the kindness and hospitality of families who accommodated me and my co-staff, Amy, in their respective houses. I have wonderful, fruitful and unforgettable experiences in New Zealand that I will treasure for the rest of my life. The people I came to know nourished my spiritual life. Please pray that I can apply here at PCFFD all the good things I have learned, and to be used more for the glory of our God.

### **WE NEED TO GET THE ENCOURAGER OUT TO MANY MORE PEOPLE**

This is the way for our outreach to expand.

You are the ones who can bring this about, but you must be sensitive.

You **MUST ASK** for the permission of shops, doctors, rest homes etc if you can leave a copy. Here are suggestions drawn up by those who attend the Centre, for places where you can possibly give out our magazine:

Doctors waiting rooms	Your family	Hairdressers or barbers
To your own doctor personally	Your friends	Rest homes
Pastors	Others at a prayer meeting	Citizen Advice Bureaus
People at church	Fish and chip shops	Christian bookshops
	Community Centres	

## **Ruth reports - THERE ARE NOW 90 CHILDREN ON THE SPONSORSHIP SCHEME!**

The PCFFD Sponsorship Programme is going well with many dedicated sponsors who have been with the Programme for years, but there's always room for more sponsors. We now have 90 children who have been or are currently in the system, which is pretty amazing when you think that 15 years ago the programme started with 2 needy families.

There are always children that need sponsoring at \$25.00 per month, **but the greatest need at present is to find new sponsors for three new Staff Workers. It is imperative that the Staff Workers get sponsors as without workers to run and administer the programme in the Philippines, there wouldn't be a child sponsorship programme.**

The new Staff Workers that need sponsors are:



### **TERESITA ESPLANA (022 Staff)**

Teresita is a SPED teacher and is teaching Grade 5 Deaf Class. She is single and living by faith. She lives on the Hebron Compound but still needs support to meet expenses like power, water, food and transportation. She also is responsible for providing for her elderly parents. There is no superannuation in the Philippines.



### **EDALYN SAN JUAN (023 Staff)**

Edalyn is an SPED teacher and is teaching Grade 1 Deaf Class. She is a solo mum with a 5 yr old son who lives with her on the Hebron Compound.



### **VENUS SARMIENTO (024 Staff)**

Venus is an Occupational Therapist. She is a solo mum with a 6 year old son who lives with her parents in the province, and has to travel for 2 hours each way every day to get to and from Hebron..

Edalyn and Venus need support to meet expenses like power, water, food and transportation., and both are responsible for providing for their son's needs. There is no DPB in the Philippines. The sponsorship payment for a worker is \$50.00 per month. If you wish to sponsor a child or a staff worker, please contact Ruth Beale, 39 Durham Crescent, Epuni, Lower Hutt 5011. Ph: (04) 934-6785

## URGENT PRAYER NEEDED FOR DAVID BURGE

Please pray for David Burge, one of our Trustees, who was diagnosed with leukemia four months ago. He has had to stop all his activities, including resigning as Pastor of the Takanini Church of Christ. Pray for Tarnya, his wife, and their 8 children. After a long search a compatible donor for a bone marrow transplant has been found, and prayer is needed that this operation will be successful.

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## A REPLACEMENT FOR EVAN HAS BEEN FOUND

Jeanette Howden brings to this role a wide involvement with our Trust over nine years with different parts of the ministry, having been the Director of the recent National Camps at Labour Weekend, a regular helper at the collation of "The Encourager", and a keen helper at the meetings of the Torch Outreach.

She has had extensive experience in the corporate world, and has quickly identified many areas which need change to make them more efficient, and a start has been made on carrying these out.

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Coromandel-Hauraki  
    - Don Watson  
Hamilton\* - Atheline Morris  
Bay of Plenty - Ken Miller  
Eastern Bay of Plenty\*  
    - Claudia Barnes

Gisborne\* - Sandra Crashley  
Hawkes Bay - Joan Parker  
Taranaki - Beth George  
Manawatu - Lyn Spencer  
Wellington - John Hawkins  
Nelson\* - Lyn Harris-Hogan  
Christchurch - Dave Palmer  
Dunedin  
    - Patsy Appleby - Morrison  
Southland\* - Mike Hamill

## Ministries

Emmanuel -  
    Nigel & Penny Shivas  
Joy Ministries - Dianne Wall  
    Branches in Auckland (3 areas),  
    Whakatane, Hawkes Bay, Taupo,  
    Masterton, Blenheim  
Torch -  
Carers - Cheryl Schischka (husbands/wives)



▲ Leslie Dela Ganar, front left, (featured on page 29), with a group at the Centre.



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