

# *the* **Encourager**

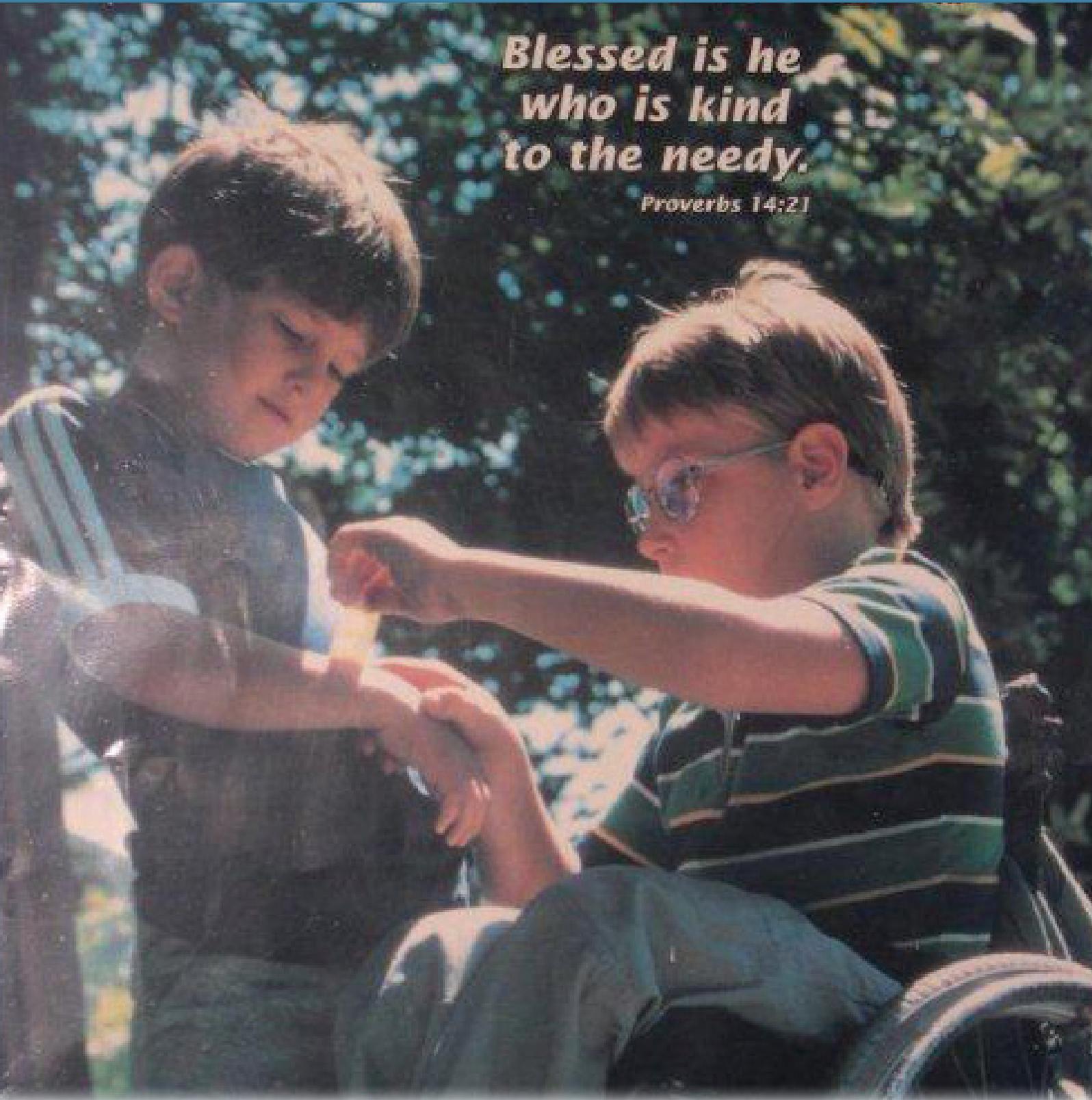


*evangelise equip educate*

AUGUST 2011 ISSUE 132

**Blessed is he  
who is kind  
to the needy.**

*Proverbs 14:21*



*Magazine of the Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust*



We don't change God's m

## THE PEOPLE YOU DISLIKE

*A devotion taken with permission from Joni Eareckson Tada's "Diamonds in the Dust."*



**Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.**

**Philippians 2:3**

When someone read that verse out to me in the hospital, I replied "Is that so! you mean that obnoxious jerk at the medical clinic who sits by the elevator, smokes like a chimney, and taunts me because I have to use a power wheelchair and he doesn't? I'm to consider him better than me? Loving God means....serving him?!"

My problem with my paralysis was wrapped up in my problem with others. Especially others with disabilities. Somewhere along the line I finally had to humbly nail every snobby sentiment to the cross and become obedient to death. Dying to death would open the door to loving, really loving God. Only then would my attitude to other disabled people change; only then would I love and serve as the Lord did. Only then would I accept my wheelchair.

Many years have passed since that revelation. Most of them I've spent serving God by serving the very people I used to dislike. I now enjoy bantering with the militant disabled activist. My heart breaks when I sit at the bedside of a ventilator-dependent quadriplegic. I relish a hug from someone who is blind. I'm inspired by the cerebral-palsied person who hangs onto God's grace despite a dreary routine in residential facility. I marvel at the grace of a world-class wheelchair athlete.

Passion for God will result in passion for people. Deep and abiding devotion to Jesus will give you a new perspective on people you dislike. Affection for God that is warm and heartfelt will give boundless joy in difficult relationships. Fervent love for the Lord will give you love for needy people. Love God, and you can't help but love people....*Lord, give me passion for You!*



*Don Watson of Thames-Coromandel CFFD tells of his*  
**LOVING, LIVING, PROTECTING PROVIDER**

What an amazing, loving, living, protecting provider, King and Father we have as His children. Our job for the day was just a normal helicopter work site in the Coromandel hills. Our job was to secure the incoming wire and cutting to allow the chopper to go and get the next cable drum loaded. The afternoon flight involved a 900 m run down from the top of a ridge to us pulling one cable at a time.

The first wire had been flown past us and was being pulled up by the helicopter ready for Roy and myself to receive, secure and cut. The Iroquis was about 20m past us when we looked up and saw the coupling under the chopper twist. We let go, ducking for cover behind 2 feeble crossarms (our only protection.) The rest of our bodies, arms and legs were fully exposed. All we heard was the whisssh as 200 kg plus of steel frame, cable drum and chain flew past our heads, impacting the ground 5 m behind us and rolling 15 m down a hill in a very shattered state. We counted fingers, legs and toes and discovered not one part of us was touched. The wire I had my right foot on for balance had been ripped into useless lengths. The cable roller by my head had been twisted by the impact of the missile.

I personally stand and thank God for His shield and His angels that covered us that day and am reminded of His wonderful promise in Psalm 34 v 19,20.

## BUILDING OUR IDENTITY AND FUTURE IN GOD

**CMWDT NATIONAL CAMP 21 – 24 OCTOBER 2011**

30 years at Totara Springs - that's something to celebrate!!! We do encourage you to come; young, older, students.

No experience necessary. If you are near Auckland come to the seminar - see notice. Prepare to be a servant, to meet God in a new way and to be changed, as well as having a wonderful time and meeting old friends and making new ones.



**Calling all those that have been before – we need you! Calling all new ones – we want you!**

Adults 15 and over	\$145	(only pay \$135 if paid by 1 September)
Young People 11 – 14	\$105	
Children 5 – 10	\$ 70	

Registrar Andrew McLay,  
PO Box 6207, Wellesley St  
Auckland 1141

His phone number is **(09) 480-0076**  
The camp email address is **cmwdtcamp@gmail.com**  
**Sadly we are unable to provide online registration.**

## A CARNIVAL AT CAMP !

We have a great afternoon planned on Saturday with a CARNIVAL open to ALL. We do hope the local community of Matamata will come and celebrate with us. There will be rides and attractions, stalls and activities for all ages. We've had great support from the local businesses, churches and schools. If you live in or near Matamata or further afield, even if you've never been to one of our camps, why not come from 3 to 6 pm on the Saturday.



## HOW A NEW HELPER FROM OVERSEAS SAW AN EARLIER CAMP

It was an amazing time that I will never forget in my life. Many warm and beautiful smiles marked deeply in my heart. I could feel the way we take care for each other and honour and love each other. It was like a big happy family. I was so excited when playing competitive games together. People didn't care whether they won or not, they cared about how to encourage those with disabilities and getting everybody to play their best. Lining up for food we were treated all the same, no matter where you came from, young or old, we are all at the same level. I learnt how I can help and encourage others. And what a memory – singing together, "We will sing sing..."**as hand in hand we jumped around and around in the hall!** - Vien

### A SEMINAR ON HOW TO HELP PEOPLE WITH DISABILITES

An ideal preparation for National Camp and useful for all to experience

<b>WHEN</b>	Saturday 8th October
<b>WHERE</b>	'The Centre', 173 Mt Smart Rd, Onehunga, Auckland
<b>TIME</b>	9.30am - 3pm
<b>COST</b>	\$10 ( bring your own lunch) Coffee and tea will be provided
<b>CONTENT</b>	It covers different types of disabilities, testimonies, skits, practical demonstrations and a time for questions. This seminar will introduce you to the world of disability and will show you how you can help and encourage those with disabilities to reach their full potential.
<b>CONTACT</b>	CMWDT at the Centre 09-6364763



# Compassion is difficult to give away

Merv Piaggi (who has been involved with CFFD for many years) writes,

## GOD DRAMATICALLY SAVED ME!

Our youngest son Anthony was born in 1961 not long after we arrived in Palmerston North. He seemed a perfectly normal child and it didn't register much with us when my wife's mother on a visit to us when Anthony was in his third year commented that he wasn't walking properly. When he started school at age five reports came back that "Anthony had a tendency to trip up all the time." He looked as though he was trying to run on his toes. The family doctor sent us to the paediatrician at the hospital, Mr Des Woods, who had a biopsy done and confirmed Anthony had Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy. We began a steep learning curve. He got us to borrow a book from the library about the condition. We learned that there were forty nine types of dystrophy. The type Anthony had kills boys.



Today sufferers are able to live longer than they used to because of medical help but there is still no cure. Grant, born four years after his elder brother, had learned to walk by this time, and Des Woods asked us to bring him in with Anthony. I can still see him taking Grant for a walk down the corridor and coming back to say that Grant, too, had the disease. It begins with the weakening of the Achilles tendon and works its way up the body. Grant appeared okay except for the fact that he was losing his ability to walk. Anthony was in a wheelchair when he went to Hokowhitu Primary School. Things were rough for him there. After six months the school informed us that they could not afford the time required for a teacher to attend to his toileting needs. The elderly caretaker at the school, a Mr Blain, approached the principal and offered to start work thirty minutes early each day and finish thirty minutes late so that he could take up the responsibility to attend to Anthony's special needs. His offer was accepted. Grant was schooled at home.

The Crippled Children Society was a great help. Their headquarters in the centre of town had facilities where Grant could go during the day. There was no system of respite care that is available today. However, we did hospitalise the boys once so we could have a break from the constant demands. They were put in a children's ward. When we went to pick them up Grant was lying on his bed doing nothing and Anthony was crying on his. Their toys had been taken by mobile patients in the ward. We did not do that again.

It was Des Wood who first suggested we think about adoption. He asked to be involved because he wanted to make sure the child was healthy. We agreed on a daughter. It seemed a long wait, however. Many a time I came home from work to hear Joan's first words, "He hasn't rung yet." Hope was born in 1968 and joined us when she was a few months old.

Each night the last thing I did was to make my son Anthony as comfortable as possible in his bed. Anthony had muscular dystrophy, and now at age 17 he did not have enough strength even to turn over in bed. I knew that when I came back in the morning he would be just as I had left him a few hours before. I arranged pillows so that he could rest through the night. He had to have one below his rib cage to support his ribs. I recall a doctor coming to listen to Anthony's heart and I told him that he was listening in the wrong place. His internal muscles no longer kept his heart in its normal position but had allowed it slip down inside the rib cage. I finished making sure Anthony was as snug as possible and turned out the light. That night in December 1973 was the last time I would do that for my oldest son. When I came in to check on him in the morning he had died. His eyes were wide open as though he were loathe to remove his gaze from what he had seen. What was most amazing was that he had turned over in bed to look. It was as though he had been called and he had turned to see. It would be years before I would be able to understand.

My wife Joan and I were both born in Wellington and lived in the same street. After a stint in the Royal New Zealand Navy in World War Two I married her and in 1955 we moved to Palmerston North to live and work. Flash forward some twenty two years and Joan is invited by her friend Eileen to a Woman's Aglow meeting. All I could say is that the Joan that came home was not the Joan that had gone out, but for the next three years I continued on my merry way ignoring whatever it was that had happened to Joan. Joan and Eileen eventually concocted a plan. Eileen invited me to a dinner not saying what sort it was, but she added that she had a problem. She was a widow and wanted to invite a widower, Noel, who lived close to us. She did not want to invite him herself for fear of giving the wrong impression's but would I help her out and invite him? I had some misgivings as the dinner was on a Friday night and that was a busy night for me when I picked my horses for the TAB, had a few beers at the pub and took a half gallon pitcher of beer home to finish off in the course of the evening! However, I agreed, and instead of the beer I made do with a couple of vodkas before heading off with Noel and Joan to the dinner.

*"The Joan that came home was not the Joan that had gone out"*

The dinner was in the Barber Hall with a couple of hundred guests who had come for a Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International meeting. After the meal a local group got up to perform some music. They were followed by a soloist. I was jazz pianist myself and was involved with local musicians doing gigs at pubs and private functions. At that point something happened to me. Later I came across the scripture that said "in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye." (1 Corinthians 15.52). To this day I cannot recall what he sang, nor do I remember the guest speaker and what he said, but I went forward on an altar call. Well, my legs went forward, but my mind was still

hanging back. Joan later told me how funny I looked. "Your face was saying no but you were pushing people out of the way to get there!" They were praying for people who were all falling over onto the floor except me. A man called Sean took one look at me and got Colin Campbell to pray for me. Colin took me into a curtained off portion and asked if he could pray for me. I recall looking at his wrist watch as he laid his hand on my forehead. I opened and shut my eyes a few times, and then I thought that Colin was taking his hand away from me, but in actual fact it was me heading for the floor. As I lay there I thought that I would be getting a blast from my wife for lying on the floor in my best suit. When I rejoined the crowd I saw lots of people with big grins on their face looking at me.

In the following week I realized I still had a problem: booze, cigarettes, foul mouth, seven nights a week. I couldn't see how I could give up as I had tried several times. Although I drank every night I still said a prayer when I went to bed, perhaps because of my Catholic background. Then one night I didn't pray but said to the Lord. "I can't give up drinking and smoking and swearing and if You want me to do it You will have to do it." A week went by without much changing, and then I had a dream in which a voice said to me: "I don't buy cigarettes and booze but you do. I don't choose what your eyes look at but you do." I told Joan about the dream. "That would be God," she said. I had it again the next night – same dream, same voice. "What do you think, Joan?" "You'd better start listening!"

I realised that nothing would happen until I decided. The man with the withered arm in the Scriptures had to stretch out his hand when the Lord asked him to do so. He had to decide to do that and was healed. I decided to finish the packet of cigarettes I was on and not to buy any more. I also decided that I would no longer take home a half gallon peter of beer every night. The moment after I co-operated the Lord took away my booze, cigarettes, cough, and dirty mouth, and gave me a peace which I had never experienced before.

*the Lord took away my booze, cigarettes, cough, and dirty mouth, and gave me a peace which I had never experienced before.*

About this time I went to another FGBMFI meeting at the Chalet and recognized the singer who had been at the Barber Hall. I still didn't know his name and went up to read his name tag. In a moment I felt myself high above the Chalet looking down on those below. I felt incredibly peaceful, warm. Then a voice said, "You have witnessed all the pain and grief down there, have a little taste of what I've got for you." I was next aware I was back on the floor of the Chalet saying, "No! No! I don't want to come back." There is no warmth on earth to compare with what I had experienced. Our bodies are a burden, our flesh is sinful – it doesn't belong in His presence.

The Lord had given me a taste of what He has in store for us which Anthony had caught a glimpse of as he died, and that both he and Grant enjoy now. What was it Anthony turned to see on his death bed? I too was beginning to catch a glimpse.

# God promises a safe landing,

## LOVE WON THROUGH

Carl was a quiet man. He didn't talk much. He would always greet you with a big smile and a firm handshake. Even after living in our neighborhood for over 50 years, no one could really say they knew him very well.

Before his retirement, he took the bus to work each morning. The sight of him walking down the street alone often worried us. He had a slight limp from a bullet wound received in WWII. Watching him, we worried that although he had survived WWII, he may not make it through our changing uptown neighborhood with its ever-increasing random violence, gangs, and drug activity. When he saw the flyer at our local church asking for volunteers for caring for the gardens behind the minister's residence, he responded in his characteristically unassuming manner. Without fanfare, he just signed up.

He was well into his 87th year when the very thing we had always feared finally happened. He was just finishing his watering for the day when three gang members approached him. Ignoring their attempt to intimidate him, he simply asked, "Would you like a drink from the hose?" The tallest and toughest-looking of the three said, "Yeah, sure," with a malevolent little smile.

As Carl offered the hose to him, the other two grabbed Carl's arm, throwing him down. As the hose snaked crazily over the ground, dousing everything in its way, Carl's assailants stole his retirement watch and his wallet, and then fled. Carl tried to get himself up, but he had been thrown down on his bad leg. He lay there trying to gather himself as the minister came running to help him. Although the minister had witnessed the attack from his window, he couldn't get there fast enough to stop it. "Carl, are you okay? Are you hurt?" the minister kept asking as he helped Carl to his feet. Carl just passed a hand over his brow and sighed, shaking his head. "Just some punk kids. I hope they'll wise-up someday."

His wet clothes clung to his slight frame as he bent to pick up the hose. He adjusted the nozzle again and started to water. Confused and a little concerned, the minister asked, "Carl, what are you doing?" "I've got to finish my watering. It's been very dry lately," came the calm reply. Satisfying himself that Carl really was all right, the minister could only marvel. Carl was a man from a different time and place.

A few weeks later the three returned. Just as before their threat was unchallenged. Carl again offered them a drink from his hose. This time they didn't rob him. They wrenched the hose from his hand and drenched him head to foot in the icy water. When they had finished their humiliation of him, they sauntered off down the street, throwing catcalls and curses, falling over one another laughing at the hilarity of what they had just done. Carl just watched them. Then he turned toward the warmth giving sun, picked up his hose, and went on with his watering.



# not a calm passage



*Magazine of the Christian Ministries With Disabled Trust*

The summer was quickly fading into autumn. Carl was doing some tilling when he was startled by the sudden approach of someone behind him. He stumbled and fell into some evergreen branches. As he struggled to regain his footing, he turned to see the tall leader of his summer tormentors reaching down for him. He braced himself for the expected attack. "Don't worry old man, I'm not gonna hurt you this time."

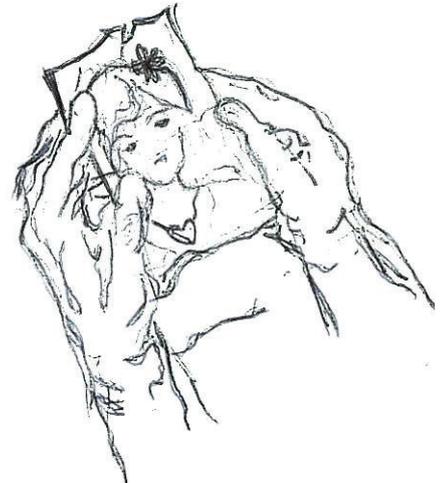
The young man spoke softly, still offering the tattooed and scarred hand to Carl. As he helped Carl get up, the man pulled a crumpled bag from his pocket and handed it to Carl. "What's this?" Carl asked. "It's your stuff," the man explained. "It's your stuff back. Even the money in your wallet."

"I don't understand," Carl said. "Why would you help me now?"

The man shifted his feet, seeming embarrassed and ill at ease. "I learned something from you," he said. "I ran with that gang and hurt people like you. We picked you because you were old and we knew we could do it, but every time we came and did something to you, instead of yelling and fighting back, you tried to give us a drink. You didn't hate us for hating you. You kept showing love against our hate." He stopped for a moment. "I couldn't sleep after we stole your stuff, so here it is back." He paused for another awkward moment, not knowing what more there was to say. "That bag's my way of saying thanks for straightening me out, I guess." And with that, he walked off down the street. Carl looked down at the sack in his hands and gingerly opened it. He took out his retirement watch and put it back on his wrist. Opening his wallet, he checked for his wedding photo. He gazed for a moment at the young bride that still smiled back at him from all those years ago.

He died one cold day after Christmas that winter. Many people attended his funeral in spite of the weather. In particular the minister noticed a tall young man that he didn't know sitting quietly in a distant corner of the church. The minister spoke of Carl's garden as a lesson in life. In a voice made thick with unshed tears, he said, "Do your best and make your garden as beautiful as you can. We will never forget Carl and his garden."

The following spring another flyer went up. It read: "Person needed to care for Carl's garden." The flyer went unnoticed by the busy parishioners until one day when a knock was heard at the minister's office door.



Opening the door, the minister saw a pair of scarred and tattooed hands holding the flyer. "I believe this is my job, if you'll have me," the young man said. The minister recognized him as the same young man who had returned the stolen watch and wallet to Carl. He knew that Carl's kindness had turned this man's life around. As the minister handed him the keys to the garden shed, he said, "Yes, go take care of Carl's garden and honour him." The man went to work and, over the next several years, he tended the flowers and vegetables just as Carl had done.

During that time, he went to college, got married, and became a prominent member of the community. But he never forgot his promise to Carl's memory and kept the garden as beautiful as he thought Carl would have kept it. One day he approached the new minister and told him that he couldn't care for the garden any longer. He explained with a shy and happy smile, "My wife just had a baby boy last night, and she's bringing him home on Saturday." "Well, congratulations!" said the minister, as he was handed the garden shed keys. "That's wonderful! What's the baby's name?" "Carl," he replied.

**That's the whole gospel message simply stated, Source unknown**



Things turn out best for people  
who make the best

## VOLUNTEERS A BLESSING AT CENTRE



**Michael Hamilton who dropped in to a centre for people with disabilities recently was impressed with the dedication of the volunteers.**

Laurie Chatfield loves working as a volunteer at a drop-in centre run by Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust (CMWDT) for people with disabilities in the Auckland suburb of Onehunga.

The 67-year-old, who drives the van that provides transport for the disabled to and from the centre, and also helps with building maintenance, says he finds the work easy "because of and with the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit in you, you cannot do this sort of work effectively.

The Spirit helps me to be able to pray for people, listen to people and concentrate on their needs for the lengthy time I am involved, 21 hours a week," says Mr Chatfield.

"You get rid of your self-centredness when you are helping people with disabilities."

Mr Chatfield was just one of a number of volunteers I chatted to while I was at the centre for a couple of hours one Tuesday. Joining in worship, sharing, and talking to a number of people at the centre gave me the opportunity to see just how much it depended on volunteers to keep it running. I was truly impressed with what I saw and sensed at the centre. All there were genuinely caring and compassionate. People were encouraging and positive in their attitudes; there was a real maturity in the volunteers.

Di Willis, national director for CMWDT, told me that the volunteers were "very caring, helpful, interested in people and encouraging others." And it is their dedication that enables a group of people with a range of disabilities to meet from Tuesday to Thursday in school term time at the centre. There are usually about 40 people at these meetings where everyone enjoys worship, short inspirational

or Biblical messages and Bible studies. Sometimes they get to hear from a visiting speaker. There are also craft days, and occasional outings.

The meetings are one of several activities organised by CMWDT, which also produces various types of literature for people with disabilities such as The Encourager magazine, and brochures or booklets for people who wish to give assistance and support to people with disabilities. Jiaea Kim, of Hanouri Korean Presbyterian Church in Glenfield, Auckland, has helped at the centre for four years. "It is good to help, and to pray for the people. I enjoy talking with them. I think it is good to come here because I can meet and talk with Kiwi people, it is good for my English, and for friendships," said Ms Kim.

Lesley Chesters, a volunteer at the centre since May 2010, said it had been beneficial to her. "I'm very much a people person. God has taken me on a journey. God is using this to expand my vision of different people — God

# out of the way things turn out

Magazine of the Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust

does not put people in boxes. "The disabled community loves God," said Ms Chesters. "God sees people's hearts and faith. The smiles on the faces.

Helping them has opened the door for me. It's helped me to see that I am a person who is an encourager of people. It has helped me to see more of who I am. I thank the Lord there is somewhere where people with disabilities can come because here people feel they can belong and be accepted the way Christ accepts them."

John Anderson, 55, who suffered a brain haemorrhage 11 years ago, helps most days. "I lead worship and teach Bible verses for people to memorise"

Mr Anderson, who used to work for Children's Bible Ministries, said, "At first when I was recovering I got confused, and I couldn't remember things. But now it is easier. I feel fulfilled in being able to serve other people, and the people are getting something out of it. It is a good thing when Christian people serve other people with an open heart — not thinking this is just a physical thing but an opportunity to connect spiritually to a person"

It is clear that the care and help from the volunteers, as well as the fellowship and friendship offered, is appreciated by everyone. Some of the folk I spoke with told me how much they enjoyed being at the centre and how they deeply appreciated all that the volunteers did.

Mrs Willis said, "More and more of our volunteers are being our folk's arms, legs, eyes to enable them to reach their full potential and are leading worship, Bible studies and Bible quizzes, being in charge of nametags, holding books, feeding some who need help to eat, reading for someone. Some do painting, repairing or gardening.

Ladies in the kitchen make morning and afternoon tea and lunch. We have crafts and make cards, and sometimes assist with admin work and answering the phone. The people learn to pray in a group, and if they are non-verbal they indicate when they have finished praying or say Amen if they are able, then slowly others say a word sentence in an accepting, non-judgmental atmosphere. They love doing devotional times on a one-to-one

basis. It is definitely a win-win situation as the volunteers feel needed and wanted, and they learn. We are so grateful for all their help and could not manage without them," said Mrs Willis.

Korean Baptist pastor John Kim, who leads the Auckland Light and Agape Baptist church in Pakuranga, and his wife Gloria, have helped every Tuesday since August 2008. Mr Kim, whose mother and father were social workers, told me he was very interested in social work. "A church pastor is always teaching people, but we often don't have opportunity to serve people like the poor or disabled. I don't have a lot of time because I am busy as a pastor; however I want to keep in mind people with difficulties or problems.

When I prayed about this, God showed me that I was to come here and help CMWDT. I was introduced to it by a Korean social worker," explained Mr Kim. "I very much enjoy helping the people here and I have been helped by them because I thought when I settled in New Zealand eight years ago I had a disability in that I had limited English ability. I had a feeling of empathy for the people I help here."

To sum up with the words of two anonymous volunteers: "There is an atmosphere of love and caring. People feel safe to discover and run with their God-given potential. Everyone entering this place has a part to play in God's eternal place."

"I have experienced the love of God through people with disabilities and those who journey with them. It has challenged me and left a deep impact on how I view life, serve others and love them."

**Taken with permission from an article in Challenge Weekly.**



## THIS GRATEFUL, LUCKY GUY COUNTS HIS MANY BLESSINGS



by Paul Antrobus

I am the luckiest guy in the world. For 50 years I have had a wonderful partner, Kay. For almost that long I/ we have watched our three kids become competent, mature and responsible adults, and their five children take on the challenges of being human. For decades, I have been allowed to teach and listen to people's lives. How lucky can one guy be?

For 100 years, thousands of people have joined science and artistry in putting together North America's No 1 inner city park, Wascana Centre. Hundreds of shades of green all spring and summer, and in the fall, thousands of shades of gold, creating Regina's real "golden miles." That's where I live. How lucky can one guy be? I can wheel for 25 kilometres through the park on beautifully smooth pavement occasionally peppered by goose bumps left by thousands of our lawnmowers." Thank you for the wonderful pavement around the west end of the lake. And thank you for upgrading so much of the path in the park to make it wheelchair-comfortable. How lucky can one guy be?

Twenty-five other varieties of water-fowl share the lake with turtles, musk rats, occasional beaver, enough fish to feed the pelicans, rabbits, gophers and a host of other life forms, in addition to canoeists, kayakers, dragon-boat paddlers and sailors.

And a wonderful variety of people share the park, also. What a great feeling to wheel around, smile, say hello and chat with so many friendly park users. How great to share the park with the people who lived here long before we did. How lucky can one guy be? Thanks to city council, I can also wheel north and south on bicycle lanes, to dine on great food at any one of our several ethnic restaurants. And thanks also to the families from other countries who brought their exciting recipes, customs and clothes to our prairie planetary mosaic. What interesting people! How lucky can one guy be?

This has given me time to contemplate the billion people all my relations, suffering extreme poverty, hunger and disease, while I live in quadriplegic comfort. How can one guy be so lucky?

I often wonder why.

## I DECIDED TO OBEY THE LORD AND TRUST HIM FOR MY STRENGTH

Idowu Agboola has just completed a 16 week training course in Auckland with Children's Bible Ministries as he is responsible for training people from many West African countries and came to be upskilled in his vital task. He was greatly challenged by the weekend camp CBM conducted with CMWDT and looks forward to imparting a vision for working with children with disabilities in Nigeria.

He writes:

I was born with sickle cell anaemia a disease only found among African people. Because of the sickle shape of the blood cells it is difficult for the blood to get through the vessels, hence great pain that can occur anywhere in the body, although often in the chest area.

Because of extreme tiredness and pain my school life was greatly affected due to the amount of time spent in bed. Thankfully my scholastic ability was such that even though I often missed exams, I was put up to the next class. At the end of high school I really wanted to go to university, even though no one else in my village in Nigeria had attended. I was blessed by the fact that I had given my life to Christ as a child and came from a Christian family. My father told me that he felt I should follow my heart's desire and that the Lord would help me.

In university I met up with members of Children's Evangelism Ministry who were challenging graduates to minister to children, initially for one year. I felt the Lord told me to offer myself, but wondered how I could do it. I could never guarantee to keep a speaking engagement because I never knew when I would suddenly be in too much pain to do so.

After a battle in my heart I decided to obey the Lord and trust Him for the strength. I have worked with CEM for over 20 years and have never failed to keep an appointment because of ill health. In fact, since I committed my life to reaching children with the gospel the sickle cell anaemia has been healed. None of my 3 sons have inherited the disease and I am now 49 years old. Most sufferers die by the age of 40."



## THE 33RD NATIONAL DISABILITY PREVENTION AND REHABILITATION WEEK

Every third week of July is declared as National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation week. This year it was the 33rd. The celebration aims to stimulate public awareness of the problems of disability and encourage every citizen to take active responsibility in uplifting the economic and social conditions of the disabled members of the society.

In the sports Briccio, Leslie, Larry, and other deaf students competed with success, Briccio coming 2nd in a chess like game, Leslie came first in the wheelathon for women, and our deaf boys got 2nd place in basketball.

Briccio was cheered and recognized as one of the inspiring pwds in Bulacan and Leslie is shown coming in first. We are continually proud for Briccio and Leslie for their untiring service for the ministries and for being an encouragement for other persons with disabilities.

Urgent finance is required to overhaul the motor of the car used by Hebron, with \$NZ1,500 needed.

Can you help? **Write to Ruth Beale, 39 Durham Cres, Eponi, Lower Hutt, 5011**

## LUKE 14



A joint venture between CBM and CMWDT. A **MUST** for churches who want to open their doors to people with disabilities. The package includes DVDs, testimonies, six Bible studies on people with disabilities as a starter, and the vision plan to continue to reach people with disabilities.

See the web site [www.luke14.org.nz](http://www.luke14.org.nz)

### ***A Prayer of Accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour***

*Lord Jesus, I believe You are truly the Son of God. I confess that I have sinned against You in word, thought, and deed. Please forgive all my wrongdoing, and let me live in relationship with You from now on. I receive You as my personal Savior, accepting the work You accomplished once and for all on the cross. Thank You for saving me. Help me to live a life that is pleasing to You. Amen.*



# Worry is the darkroom... in



**James Lynch**

*New Zealand's longest ever hospital stay patient.*

Pauline Grogan writes: Take a moment to think of any young man of 14. You may find yourself thinking of his boundless energy, physical activities, learning, plans for the future, adventures to be had, relationships to be experienced and options for marriage and children. James Lynch was such a 14 year old. On this particular day he was excited because his class was going to visit the HMS Veronica that was berthed in Tauranga harbour. James was curious and keen to learn as much as he could about the ship.

As he wandered around he saw a door saying 'gun room.' His curiosity led him to open the door. At that very moment a sailor in the room touched a live cable. As he was being electrocuted the sailor started jerking. James was startled. He didn't hesitate. He rushed into the room. The door slammed behind him. James grabbed the sailor from behind to pull him away from the live cable. Then he found he couldn't break free from the sailor. Nobody knew where he was. By the time he was found and the electricity disconnected, his nervous system was permanently damaged. His brain was not affected but he could no longer control his body. His whole world changed in that moment of reaching out to help someone in need. He was now dependent on others for everything. He was still a 14 year old filled with hopes and dreams but none would be realised in the way he had anticipated. For 26 years family and friends looked after him. When his needs became too great, at the age of 40, James was admitted to the geriatric ward of Tauranga hospital. It was thought that he'd soon die. He was put in a cubicle in the far corner of the ward, with the curtain drawn because he didn't want his appearance to embarrass people.

## 30 years later 1986

A friend, who knew I took my daughter to Tauranga hospital every day for therapy, asked me to go and visit a man she once nursed called James Lynch. She said he was in ward 15. I didn't want to visit anyone as I was facing big challenges of my own. The next day I felt resentful as I walked through ward 15 to visit him. When I drew back the cubicle curtain I was completely taken aback by what I saw – the man looked to be in his late 60s. It was obvious he was completely paralyzed. His mouth was gaping. His face was twisted. He had no teeth. His tonsils were visible. He was wearing dark glasses. I felt uncomfortable. I had never seen anyone so physically disabled. I moved toward the bed and gave him my friend's message. He just looked at me. No response. In a rush of words I told him my 10 year old daughter was in a wheelchair and couldn't walk or talk anymore. I said she had recently had a brain haemorrhage and stroke and I hated it. I wanted my able bodied daughter back. He just looked at me. I was embarrassed. I wanted to get out of that cubicle as quickly as possible. As I backed out of the cubicle I had a sudden desire to kiss him. I hesitated before moving forward and kissing him on the forehead. When I touched him I experienced a rush of warmth in my body. I was bewildered. I looked at him but he had no expression. On my way out of the ward I asked a nurse about him. "He's been here for 30 years!" she said. She showed me a cutting from the Bay of Plenty Times. It told the story of James, a 14-year-old boy, who went on a school field trip to visit the HMS Veronica in the Tauranga Harbour in 1931. The nurse told me that many people knew about James. She said Prime Ministers like Jim Bolger, Jenny Shipley, Helen Clark and different All Blacks had visited him over the 30 years. I couldn't get James out of my head. I felt irresistibly drawn to him. At first I would just sit beside his bed and say nothing. Over time I began to tell him everything that was happening. Sometimes I would cry or be angry about the impact of the brain haemorrhage on each of our 4 children and on my husband and me. When I felt I couldn't cope I would simply sit by his bed. I would just sit there and hold his hand, and say nothing.

# Which negatives can develop



Magazine of the Christian Ministries With Disabled Trust

The first words he ever said to me were, "I love you I pray for you." It was difficult to understand him but it didn't matter. James became my still point. Every time I left his cubicle he would muster all his strength and call, "I love you I pray for you." He became my best friend over the next 17 years.

With the collapse of the kiwi fruit industry we had to leave our orchard in 1989 and start again in Auckland. I was devastated to be far from James. However, we arranged that the nurses would prop the phone to his ear with pillows and leave us connected. On many occasions the only words were, "Are you still there, James?" He would reply ahhhh which meant 'yes'. Whenever I talked to James I felt connected to something much bigger than me. He listened as no one else had ever listened. When I was worried about Penguin books publishing my autobiography, 'Beyond the Veil' he said, "Tell the truth." I did tell the truth and he gave me the strength to take the criticism and condemnation that followed.

On Easter Sunday, 2001 when I went to see him he had been moved. A nurse told me they'd restructured. When I found him I knew he was unhappy. He hated being moved after 44 years. I tried to cheer him up. I saw an old bag sticking out from under his bed. "Hey James, are you going somewhere, what have you got in this old bag?" He said to open it. It was full of letters that had been sent to him over 44 years. There were hundreds of letters. I was surprised that all these people had confided in him too. I told him I thought I was his only friend! He asked me to read some of the letters: "We love to share our secrets, joys and worries with you. You know of our good times and bad. I loved coming to your cubicle on my wedding day, and bringing our new born babies to see you on the way home from the hospital. You are one of the family." What makes you one of my heroes James is your absolute strength of character. As a young lad you sacrificed your physique for a heroic deed. As a man you have the spiritual strength to impress an army of carers over 44 years. As the pohutukawa blooms again I think of you." James and I reminisced that Easter Sunday afternoon 2001. We talked about the brain haemorrhage and stroke, the money problems, the 4 children and what they were doing, the success of my books and the harsh repercussions. I told James I wanted to write about his life. He grinned and said, "Nothing to tell." Then he nodded "Ahhhhh, Ahhhhh." I stayed with him in the silence that Easter Sunday afternoon - in the silence where I had found so much strength over 17 years.

The time came for me to say goodbye, and yes, I cried. As I left with tears streaming down my face, he mustered all his strength and called "I love you, I pray for you." Ten days later James died of pneumonia. Over 200 people came to his funeral. Little children sang, "You are my sunshine."

A few months later I put a press release in the paper asking if anyone had been encouraged by James Lynch. Over 100 people wrote to me. I decided to self-publish a book telling his story called, 'A View From Within,' and printed 2000 copies. In 2005 I had an unexpected phone call from the Aotea Performing Arts centre in Auckland. They wanted to turn my life story into a One Woman theatre play. I was stunned as I was over 60 and had no acting experience. However, I decided it would be a good way to tell more people about James. A new challenge began. They developed the stories dramatically using singing, music, piano, puppetry and extraordinary backdrops. We called the play '500 Letters'. Over the next 3 years I acted in more than 50 centres throughout NZ. James' life encouraged and inspired hundreds of people.

James found meaning and purpose in his life despite the fact that he was totally dependent and in hospital for 44 years. In the 10 years since his death on May 3rd 2001, his story has continued to inspire others. Some may think his accident was a tragedy. The truth is he was a hero. His legacy will live on. His life was a gift.

CONDOLENCES to family and friends of:  
Clem Relf, the founding chairman of Rotorua CFFD,  
Krystal Stevenson, Auckland CFFD, Joy Mins,  
the Centre and the Deaf Ministries,  
Hugh Waldin, a founding member of Hawkes Bay CFFD.



# My faith is strong or weak in proportion to

## SUFFERING THAT REDEEMS

Sheridan Voysey

Some believe that sickness and pain are signs that you're out of step with God. If you just believed more, prayed more and trusted more, God would reward you with health, happiness and financial abundance.

Well, I'm not so sure. In fact, suffering can be the very sign that God is using us in His redemptive plan.

I once spoke to a returned Aussie missionary names Harry Leasement, who'd spent a good portion of his overseas time working in the European country of Estonia. Harry shared a remarkable story of the gospel's spread among Estonia's hearing impaired community.

It all began when two young deaf men applied for the first year intake of Leasement's newly established Bible College. One of them had only partial hearing while the other was completely deaf. Hesitant at first but sensing God's guidance, Harry enrolled the eager students and began the lengthy process of adapting source curriculum to their unique needs.

From these small beginnings – just two keen deaf disciples – came a tremendous movement of spiritually hungry souls finding the love of God. Within two short years, more than 300 of Estonia's deaf had become followers of Jesus. They began their own specialist school and have since established a college especially for the training of deaf missionaries. With zeal the movement has spread into Russia, Mongolia and the Ukraine, the number of deaf Christians now reaching into the tens of thousands.

Inspired yet intrigued by the story, I asked Harry the obvious question: why didn't God heal them of their deafness? He must have thought that through, I suggested. Harry smiled and replied, 'We more than thought it through. Being Pentecostal in our leanings, we prayed it through and we preached it. In fact, both of these guys are skinny from fasting and seeking God. They sought the Lord {for their healing} for several years.'

Through this seeming silence from God comes a lesson in God's use of suffering. 'Actually,' Harry continued, 'one of the interpreters we have now was healed. But as soon as she was healed, she found herself on the outer with the profoundly deaf. It seems as though they received a grace from God to recognize their deafness as the key to the deaf community.' Harry quoted the statistics: there are 8.7 million profoundly deaf living in Russia and 75.2 million in China alone. 'When they received the concept that deafness was a gift, a key to reach people whom no one else could reach, there was a joy that came into their lives,

*The walk of faith is a life of expectation. We believe that God rewards those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6)*

and so we expect to see our prayers answered. But sometimes our suffering has in it a redemptive benefit for others and our rewards come in a different form. The Estonian Christians remain deaf to reach their hearing-impaired friends, the apostle Paul suffered his 'thorn in their flesh' so that he could experience God's power in his weakness (2 Corinthians 12:8) and Jesus Christ died so that might live forever. If we are to experience a season of suffering God will use it for our ultimate good (Romans 5:3-5) and others' benefit (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Suffering is that bit easier to handle when we can see God's purpose in it.  
taken from "Australian Stories of Life"

# What I believe that God will do what He has said He will do.



Magazine of the Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust

## HOW OUR CHRISTCHURCH FOLK FARED

Fortunately none were injured and just one suffered property damage. Much of the city is destroyed, but many areas are unaffected. Some of the churches CFFD have used in the past have been damaged, but the group are meeting mostly at Spreydon Baptist church, which is undamaged.

Mountains of silt appeared in many of the eastern areas after the February quake. Allan and Margaret Palmer-Healey got busy in their community helping neighbours shovel silt, and clearing their own property, and Margaret got her photo taken with Phil Goff (below) when he too was helping clear away the silt.



Philip and Christine Haythornthwaite coped without power and water for over a week, and their carers couldn't get to them for a few days. Philip collected water from the water tank in their street, and set up a small gas cooker and dish-washing operation in the garage.

Yanny Webb-Walker, the speaker at the CFFD meeting in April, dealt with earthquake issues in a wonderful way, allowing people time to acknowledge what has happened, and to be reassured of God's faithfulness and presence with us. Truly the peace of God passes all understanding.



### Contact Addresses

Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust  
PO Box 13-322, Onehunga,  
Auckland City 1643, New Zealand  
Phone 09-636-4763, Fax 09-636-5307  
Email Address: info@cmwdt.org.nz  
Web page: www.cmwdt.org.nz

The Centre, 173 Mount Smart Road, Onehunga, Auckland.  
Magazine Editor and Ministries Director  
Hugh and Di Willis  
87 Deep Creek Rd, Waiake,  
Auckland City 0630, New Zealand  
CFFD Branches or Contacts\*

Northland - Jacqui Gardner	09-438 4952
Auckland - Jean Griffiths	09-525 5415
Coromandel-Hauraki - Don Watson	07-862 7174
Hamilton* - Atheline Morris	07-855 7008
Bay of Plenty - Ken Miller	07-579 3003
Gisborne* - Sandra Crashley	06-868 8827
Hawkes Bay - Joan Parker	06-877 8026
Taranaki - Beth George	06-758 7295
Manawatu - Lyn Spencer	06-357 0045
Wellington - John Hawkins	04-569 9096
Nelson* - Lyn Harris-Hogan	03-547 2337
Christchurch - Dave Palmer	03-313 2201
Dunedin - Patsy Appleby - Morrison	03-482 2505
Southland* - Mike Hamill	03-217 2665

### Ministries

**Emmanuel** - Nigel & Penny Shivas 09-846 2046  
**Joy Ministries** - Debbie Kennedy 09-627 4398  
Branches: Auckland (3 areas), Whakatane,  
Hawkes Bay, Taupo, Masterton and Blenheim

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# ACTION AT THE AUCKLAND CFFD CAMP

