

the Encourager



evangelise equip educate

MARCH 2011 ISSUE 130



Magazine of the Christian Ministries With Disabled Trust



Nothing is impos

A DEVOTION FROM MATALENA MOLIOLA

I work as a teacher aide at a primary school helping in an ESOL unit with non speaking English students. Last year at the end of the term I was told by my Principal that my number of hours had been cut down by five because there was not enough funding. At the same time I got a call from Linda at the Centre asking me to call a social worker who is looking for someone who can speak Samoan as one of her clients wanted to find someone to help her with her Samoan language. I had been given Friday off from work every week, so I now have the opportunity to spend some time with this lady, and it is also an opportunity to reach out for Christ. Not only that, I can also have time to visit people in rest homes and have time to relax. There is an encouraging scripture in Psalm 61:1,2

Hear my cry, O God. Listen to my prayer.
I call to you from the ends of the earth
when my heart is weak.
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

This scripture tells me that it is only God who is our safe refuge in any time from the obstacles that come our way. He is the only One who can keep us safe from anything that harms us in this earth.



"A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST"

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (NIV)

Charles Duke walked on the moon. He had done most things that a man could wish for in life. First of all, he was selected to be a fighter pilot. Then he was chosen out of the squadron of fighter pilots to be a test pilot. After that he was selected to be an astronaut. He flew to the moon in one of the most powerful machines ever created. When he landed on the moon he drove the most

expensive four-wheel drive buggy ever built by man.

But, he said, the day that he gave his life to the Lord Jesus Christ, all those experiences paled into insignificance. When he met the Man from Galilee, the Creator of heaven, earth and the moon, and accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Saviour, it was the most awesome experience he had ever had in all his life.

Have you had that experience?
Have you ever asked Jesus Christ to be your Lord and Saviour? If

not, why not do it today? Just pray this prayer with me: "Dear Lord Jesus, I repent of all my sin. I acknowledge that I can do nothing without You and today I commit my life to You as my Lord and Saviour. I will serve no other God but You and I thank You for dying on the cross of Calvary for a sinner like me. I thank you, Lord, that after three days You were raised from the dead and are seated in heavenly places and I, too, though I die, will live forever. Thank you for saving my soul. Amen."

taken with permission from "A Farmer's Year" by Angus Buchan

possible to him who believes

Luke 1:37



Magazine of the Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust



A TRUST PRESENCE AT THE PARACHUTE FESTIVAL

A team of five worked four hourly shifts to man the Trust's stall. They are shown above.

Left to right: Kirsty Anderson, Jeanette Howden, Derek Young, Leila Corban and Rachel Burge.

They met a lot of new people and touched base with others. They networked with other organisations, gave out a lot of magazines, leaflets and a new booklet telling of our National Camp.

CAMPS STILL TO COME THIS YEAR

Auckland CFFD Camp
18 – 20 March at Carey Park
open for day visitors

**Connect Kidz Camp with
CBM Auckland**
25 – 27 March for kids with
disabilities

**The 2 Yearly Torch Camp for blind
and visually impaired**
Cambridge
14 – 17 April

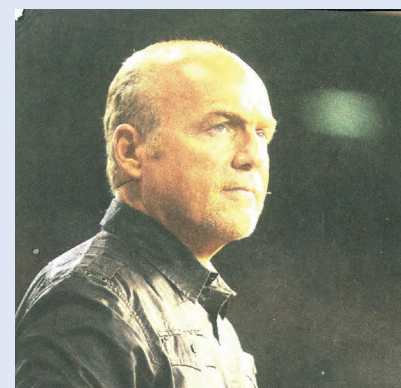
**The first ever Hawkes Bay Joy
Ministries Camp**
Riverbend
18 – 20 March

The Christchurch CFFD Camp
Blue Skies Kaiapoi
21 – 24 October

The CMWDT National Camp
Totara Springs Matamata
21-24 October

REMEMBER
**DISABILITY
AWARENESS
SUNDAY**
19TH JUNE

Contact your pastor now
to do something in your
church service.



THE GREG LAURIE CRUSADE

Auckland Vector Arena 25 – 26 June

Those in Auckland
need to pray – bring
friends, neighbours and
workmates who don't
know the Lord.

Get involved. Refer to the
web site
www.nz.harvest.org



Whatever is born of God over

1 John 5

DAVID GREEN

David Green is our new Trustee. You may well remember him from the Ansett air crash many years ago. Even though he was the most seriously disabled person from the crash he refused to push for the huge amount in damages he would almost certainly have been awarded. His message was one of forgiveness.

Recently he was asked to speak to the Manawatu CFFD, and here is part of what he shared:

You may not be physically able to join the NZ Army or Air Force or Navy - but have you considered being a front line soldier in God's army?

Let's look at what you need to be able to do this, and see if you have got what it takes to join God's army. In his book to the Ephesians Paul describes what we need in order to be **equipped** to be a soldier for God. Paul says you need to have the weapons of

- Truth
- Righteousness
- Peace
- Faith
- Salvation

Note that there is no mention of physical ability here! Paul goes on to say we must learn how to apply these weapons. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an indispensable weapon.

In the same way, **prayer** is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open. Keep each others' spirits up so that no one falls behind or drops out.



Do you think you have got what it takes to be an active soldier for God now?

Without a doubt - you can be a soldier in the front line as a prayer warrior!

I believe God has called you and me to be not only a soldier in His army - but in the attack infantry - one of His elite SAS troopers!

Lets look at Paul's writing again when he talks about who God chooses to confound the people in the world; to join His army - in 1 Corinthians 1:27

In The Message we read "Isn't it obvious that God deliberately chose men and women that the culture overlooks and exploits and abuses, chose these "nobodies" to expose the hollow pretensions of the "somebodies"?"

I am not saying we are second rate people - we are not, in God's eyes! You and I know what it is like to be ignored by people because we are different.

Have you been out in your wheelchair with another person when someone comes and talks to your friend, completely ignoring you as if you are not there?

This brings us to the word - **Evangelise**. I believe we have a special task in the world - to show people that it is possible to have real joy no matter what our circumstances are.

Here is Paul again with guidelines for living in Galatians - The Message reads:

"But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard - things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely. Legalism is helpless in bringing this about; it only gets in the way."

Among those who belong to Christ, everything connected with getting our own way and mindlessly responding to what everyone else calls necessities is killed off for good - crucified. Since this is the kind of life we have chosen, the life of the Spirit,



let us make sure that we do not just hold it as an idea in our heads or a sentiment in our hearts, but work out its implications in every detail of our lives. That means we will not compare ourselves with each other as if one of us were better and another worse.

We have far more interesting things to do with our lives. Each of us is an original.

So I encourage you to **Equip** and to **Educate** yourself so you can **Evangelise** effectively when an opportunity arises.

As Peter says in 1 Peter 3:15b

"Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you."

Do you have a caregiver who comes into your home? Are you ready to witness to them? They will be observing you. Remember the words of Jesus in John 13:35

"If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are My disciples."

In closing; I have found three practical Spiritual principles which work for me.

On a bad day these can help you to regain the joy you need as a front line soldier.

Let's read a well known Psalm – it's the 23rd. In The Message we read

"God, my shepherd! "I don't need a thing. You have bedded me down in lush meadows, You find me quiet pools to drink from. True to Your Word, You let me catch my breath and send me in the right direction. Even when the way goes through Death Valley, I'm not afraid when You walk at my side. Your trusty shepherd's crook makes me feel secure. You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies. You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing. Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life. I'm back home in the house of God for the rest of my life."

Tell your neighbour about something that is good in your life today.

Next time you feel you are flagging as a soldier in God's front line, stop, and

Give Thanks and focus on God
Look forward with Confidence
and Hope
Know that God is present.

You can do this, either when you are alone or when you are with other people - it only takes a moment to refocus and to get back in the front line and on duty!

Remember our aim is to **Evangelise**, to **Equip** and to **Educate**.



I can do all things thro

WHAT CAMP DID FOR ME

Hi, my name is Tarnya and I thought I would share how God has used CFFD to begin that work in me. In February I went to a church camp where Peter Townend spoke among other things about CFFD. It seemed like a worthwhile ministry and I thought, "Gosh, heaps of people are going to get involved!" I picked up a leaflet and thought about it. God kept prodding. I was sure that He was making a mistake and I was scared. A little while later I decided I'd just "pop" into the Centre. ("pop" meaning just in and out again.) I said, "OK God, if I go in for half an hour, can I have some peace?" Di's welcome put me at ease, and she didn't make me do anything I didn't want to. (Well not the first day!) I ended up staying the whole day and I became part of the CFFD family.

Since then there has been no looking back. My attitude has changed. I discovered I was the one who'd had the worst disability – I had lived 20 years without God. He chose the weak things to shame the strong. I didn't need to be superhuman – it is God's infinite grace, His patience, His love, His Kindness I needed to serve Him.

I have received more blessings through CFFD than I could ever give. While I was taking care of someone's basic physical need they were teaching me spiritually. I was able to serve the Lord. Didn't He say, "What you do for the least of my brothers you do for me?"

If someone was patient enough to repeat themselves several times then God gave me the patience to listen until I understood. If

someone was willing to have me spread food all over their face, table, floor ... then God gave me His perseverance to learn to feed someone. I have learnt that the joy that comes from God is not determined by circumstances. I know people whose circumstances on a good day are awful yet they shine with the Joy that comes from God.

I have learnt that God wants our availability. That is what my encouragement is to you all – give to God according to your abilities (Acts 11:29). God has given us enough eyes, ears, legs, arms... for His Body. We need to share them, that's all.



The above account was taken from one of our magazines 18 years ago. Through the fellowship Tarnya subsequently met and married David Burge. They had a wonderful marriage with Tarnya supporting David, who became a pastor, in his different parishes. They are shown here at National Camp with 7 of their 8 wonderful children. Sadly, early last year David died after a nine month battle with cancer. Tarnya has kept up her interest in CFFD, often bringing the family to the Centre. Amazingly, despite the financial hurdle, she brought the children to National Camp in October, and just last month became a member of the Auckland CFFD Committee. What an example of dedication to a call from God!



POWER SCRIPTURES TO BUILD FAITH

God has given you a Spirit of power, love and a sound mind 2 Tim 1:7

I am the Lord who heals you Ex 5:26

Fear not for I am with you
Be not dismayed for I am your God
I will strengthen you yes I will help you
I will uphold you with My right hand
Isaiah 41:10

Fear not for I have redeemed you
I have called you by your name. You are Mine. Isaiah 43:1

No weapon formed against you shall prosper Isaiah 54:7

All things you ask in prayer believing you shall receive Matt 21:22

When you pass through the waters I will be with you
When you walk through the rivers they will not overwhelm you
When you walk through the flames you will not be burned
the flames will not set you ablaze
Isaiah 43: 2

Thanks be to God who always causes us to triumph 2 Cor 2:14

Beloved I wish above all things that you prosper and be in health
as your soul prospers 3 John 2

I will never leave you nor forsake you Heb 13:5

Ask and you shall receive
Knock and it will be opened to you
Seek and you will find
Matt 7:7

All things are possible to him who believes Mark 9:23

Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world 1 John 4:4

If you ask Me anything in My name I will



NEW PEOPLE ARE THE LIFE BLOOD OF OUR FELLOWSHIP

We thought it would be encouraging to others to include here parts of an email just received from Jacqui Gardner, leader of the Northland Branch, after their recent picnic. There are lots of ideas here about reaching out to others to come to our groups.

"We had quite a few new people, including a lovely lady from Dargaville who has had a stroke some years ago. She was just such a joy and so full of deep Christian insights and experience. I think she had only become a Christian since she had the stroke. She said she used to be an announcer for a radio station. She is still able to speak, but her voice has changed significantly, so she cannot speak over the radio now.

"A family from Papakura came. They read the Pyle newsletter and are very keen to come to camp as helpers. They have four children from 16 up to 24 - just the most gorgeous young people, all totally enthusiastic and keen to help in whatever way possible. Boots and all! They were up staying with the Pyles for the weekend, and they all came to our picnic.

"There was another lovely couple that a physio in our group invited. He has had a stroke and his wife came with him. The physio also invited another lady who has MS, and to cap it all off brought along her own Aunt and Uncle from Aussi who were staying with her.

"Lynda who came to camp last year came with her Mum, and my dear friend Jeanette who has been my Home help for 6 years, came along and was really blessed!"

"A lovely older lady from our church came who knew three of our group from Scottish country dancing years ago. They had a lovely time talking, and ended up singing hymns, a lovely background to our fellowship."

Note the members of the Branch are not leaving everything to the leader to invite others. Every member of the group, including those with disabilities, needs to play a part in inviting people they know, or are passing through, or whatever. It's too easy to say, "I can't come this time because friends are staying." Bring them too! Note too the accent on young people. Steve and Jacqui have three lively youngsters who attend, and they take some of the photographs. Jacqui also occasionally invites groups of young people to bring an item such as the drama group of a local school who acted out the well-known "Hands." Another key is that the Northland Branch organise a very varied number of interesting items in their meetings.

MY DARLING MARIA

A father's dying words to his daughter filled her eyes with tears of joy! Ten year old Maria and her father lived in a mining town in Central Chile. She attended a little community church where she had met and accepted Christ some months earlier. Her father worked the night shift in one of the local mines. Maria had become the "woman" of the house, caring for her father after her mother's unexpected death.

When Maria asked Jesus into her heart, she found new strength to deal with her mother's death. But Maria's heart ached over the anguish she saw in her father's eyes. She often told him about Jesus and invited him to come to church with her, but he always refused and became more and more despondent as time went on.

One night, as Maria packed sandwiches in her father's lunch box, she also placed a gospel booklet inside that explained God's plan of salvation. That night she prayed a simple prayer: "Oh Jesus, please help my father read this message so that he might be saved."

Soon after she prayed that prayer her father left for another night's work in the mine.

Shortly after 1.00 am, a terrific explosion shook the small mountain village and sirens echoed across the valley floor. There had been an explosion and cave-in at the mine and a handful of miners were trapped. Maria's father was one of them.

Maria cried and prayed as rescue workers dug through the crumbling debris all night and into the next day, hoping to find survivors.

Finally they broke into a chamber where Maria's father and seven other men had been trapped. But they were too late—all the men had died of suffocation.

The rescuers were devastated. If only they had gotten there sooner! But, as they surveyed the death trap more closely, an incredible story unfolded that filled their hearts with awe.

They noticed something strange about the way the men had died. All eight of them were sitting serenely in a circle. The gospel booklet Maria had given to her father was in his lap opened to the last page where the plan of salvation was clearly explained. On that final page Maria's father had written his dying words to his little girl.

"My Darling Maria,
When you read this I will be in heaven. I read this little book, then I read it several times to the men while we waited to be rescued.

Our hope is faded for this life, but not for the next. We did as the book told us and prayed, asking Jesus into our heart. I love you very much Maria, and one day soon we will all be together in heaven."

The death of Maria's father and the seven other miners was a terrible tragedy, but God triumphed through that tragedy by inviting those eight men into His kingdom. And Maria has the comfort of knowing that her prayer for her father's salvation was answered, and that one day soon she will be reunited with both of her parents in heaven.

This story is also a dramatic example of how God can use a gospel booklet to reach and win the lost to Jesus.

If Maria's story has touched your heart I pray that you will send a gift to some group putting out tracts to help send Christ's offer of salvation to others, like Maria's father, who may be standing on the edge of eternity without Jesus in their hearts.

taken from the magazine of
"Every Home for Christ"

THE KNOTS PRAYER

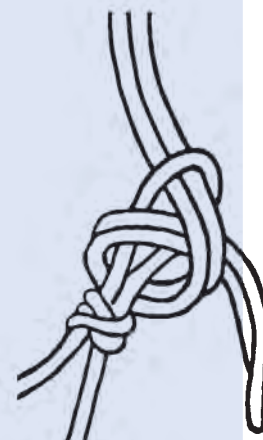
Dear God:
Please untie the knots
that are in my mind,
my heart and my life.
Remove the have nots,
the can nots and the do nots
that I have in my mind.

Erase the will nots,
may nots, might nots
that may find
a home in my heart.

Release me from the could nots,
would nots and should nots
that obstruct my life.

And most of all, dear God,
I ask that you remove from my mind,
my heart and my life all of the 'am nots'
that I have allowed to hold me back,
especially the thought that I am not good enough.
Amen

Author Known to God



EVEN SOME CHRISTIANS HAVE THIS ATTITUDE

A short while ago I visited Cape Town in South Africa where I had been invited to participate in a major Mission Conference. On arrival on a Sunday afternoon we needed local currency and we had to take a taxi and drive a little out of the city to a tourist attraction centre called Water Front where we could get open places that could provide the service. As we drove, my assistant kept explaining the places and landmarks on our way. She also asked the driver to tell us what there is for visitors to see in the city.

On reaching our destination she left me in the car with the driver as she went into a foreign exchange bureau. It would seem the driver, a white South African man, was all along thinking about my blindness. He struck up a conversation as soon as my colleague went away, and his first question was where I came from and why I was in South Africa. I innocently answered him without a clue as to what he was driving at. He wanted to know whether it was really necessary for me to have travelled. His next remark was very surprising to me. He told me that if he went blind he would kill himself. I asked him why. In a rather animated spirit he explained that he cannot imagine living without watching the television and visiting the stadium to watch sports. He could not perceive the purpose of life without being able to see what is around him let alone the beauty of nature. Just as he explained, my assistant came back. I thought the man would be shy to repeat what he had told me in her presence. I told her what the man had said. He was all the more dramatic in his emphatic affirmation of what he had said. I asked him how he would go about killing himself. He said that he would climb up Table Mountain, a tourist attraction site

nearby, and then throw himself down the cliff. I asked him what would happen if he tried that, fell down the cliff, broke his legs and did not die but got double disabilities. He did not want to pursue that line of argument, but was very firm that he would kill himself. This encounter explains a common attitude in some people that a life lived with a disability is not only difficult but also useless and not worth living.

Perhaps Christians will not manifest that boldness and speak their mind, but instead their approach will take the form of reminding the individuals with a disability that God owes them a cure. This has been at times the case with me, even after many years of blindness, adjustment and, I would say, living a fulfilled life. To them I am imperfect, and some quick fix is necessary, especially if I have to fulfill a yearning to serve God. Responding to this kind of pressure I did, in my early years of blindness, with all earnestness seek faith healing over a long time before I came to understand and accept that blindness had become a part of me, and in whatever condition, God had His own plans for my life. Today, it is quite clear to me that I have a role in service to God, and in His own way He has designed how I have to fulfil that role even without sight. There will be walls of resistance from society and walls of feelings of inadequacy from both within

and without, as the individual attempts to serve and as the church responds to its call to be accommodating and inclusive. One thing is clear; the church has a major part to play. It will need not only to be inviting, but also fully inclusive in its attitudes towards people like me to enable us to accomplish that mission.

The church as the conscience of society needs to take the lead and show by examples in removing attitudinal, physical, theological and structural barriers that keep us apart. It is estimated that some 650 million people the world over are persons with disabilities. The majority of them still find themselves isolated by walls of shame, prejudice, hatred, competition, fear, ignorance and cultural misunderstanding. The church is called to be an inclusive community and to tear down those walls.

written by Samuel Kabue and taken from the magazine EDAN





Adam* with part of his youth group

DISABILITY BRINGS A MINISTRY

Our son Adam* (not real name) has Down syndrome. He is the youngest of four children.

We have always been very involved in the church, but as Adam entered his teenage years we found there were no suitable activities for him at the church. After discussion with another parent from the church whose daughter also has an intellectual disability, we decided to set up a Christian youth group for young adults with disabilities in our local area.

We contacted ten other Christian families we knew who had children with a range of disabilities, and all were very keen to be involved. Over the years the numbers have slowly grown, though we have found that it continues to consist mainly of people with intellectual disabilities, even though our invitation is to young people with any disability.

We have worked to become better integrated with the church, and not be completely separate. One successful activity has been to run a church service during the year, with our young people involved in

welcoming, taking up the offering, giving out our weekly 'contact' leaflet, singing, offering prayers and providing morning tea after the service.

These are special people who have often brought many of the congregation to tears with their spontaneity and love. A number of the congregation have come forward and become involved in helping to run the group, including offering their homes and providing transport. We even had a "Dancing with the Stars" night last year with judges and all, and everyone had to come dressed in their finery ready to dance. It was a wonderful success and a video was made of the event.

We have seen Adam grow and mature and gain confidence in relating to others because of the group. The members of the group are naturally very caring and really look out for each other, which has been wonderful to see. They can really teach us about love and compassion.

It has been such a privilege to be involved with these young people. We know all this would not have happened if we had not been on the disability journey, so we are very thankful that God is using our tough situations for good.

* Name change
Article Supplied by CBM Australia

TURN THE SENTENCE AROUND

"The day that changed my life"

There is no doubt that lives are changed every day because of something achieved; however if that sentence is turned around to

"The life that changed my day"

it becomes an immediate tool for sharing a

testimony of how the life of Christ has actually changed every day that we live!

Why not try saying it that way around and see what reaction you get!

Jenny Edwards in "The Vital Link"



The Lord will give us
2 Tim 2:7

THE LATEST FROM THE PHILIPPINES CFFD



The 2011 SPED SENIOR SCOUTS CAMP (Jan. 12-14)

Forty-five deaf students took part in the scouts camp held at Hebron compound over three days which explored the skills, abilities and training that scouting can give. SPED (Special Education for Disabled) teachers were assigned to the five troops to assist and guide as the students built their quarters and made their food. The different activities of the camp helped each deaf student learn to improve creativity for survival, to respect and obey leadership, master endurance and patience in reaching goals, develop good and responsible citizenship, and share fun times together. There were eight different stations each of the troops needed to complete, and one is shown here as the scouts passed through the hoops.



Crowning Mr and Mrs Hebron SPED

Finally a BIG THANKYOU to all at the 2010 NZ CMWDT National Camp who donated over \$3,000 for our Summer Retreat. We are hoping to hold it in the last week of April, and that 200 will come. Please pray for this, and that God will provide for us to get the \$2,000 needed to have tiling put down on the upstairs area.

THE SPED FAMILY DAY 2011 (Feb. 14-18)

Held over 5 days, it covered sports, a family day, and a first ever Mr and Ms Hebron SPED. Contestants wore lovely, colorful sports shirts just as they did last year. A parent and child were partners in the different races, games and sports which included a tunnel race, tug of war, shift the stone and basketball for men and volleyball for women. The final event, our first ever pageant, was a search for Mr and Ms Hebron SPED for 2011. Outstandingly successful, it provided memorable moments for our 10 boy and 10 girl candidates. Each child had to dress in different costumes – casual wear, sports wear and formal wear, as well as producing a talent portion. We had four judges. Maybe one of the future Miss Philippines could be one of these deaf girls! Some parents went home with tears in their eyes after seeing their children handle themselves on the stage with confidence in their different attires. Even our staff found it hard to recognise their own SPED deaf students!

BLUE ROSES



I scurried around the store, gathered up my goodies, and headed for the checkout counter only to be blocked in the narrow aisle by a young man who appeared to be about sixteen years. I waited for the boy to realise that I was there. This was when he waved his hands excitedly in the air and declared in a loud voice, "Mommy, I'm over here."

It was obvious now, he had an intellectual disability, and he was also startled as he turned and saw me standing so close to him, waiting to squeeze by. His eyes widened and surprise exploded on his face as I said, "Hey Buddy, what's your name?"

"My name is Denny and I'm shopping with my mother," he responded proudly.

"Wow," I said, "that's a cool name; I wish my name was Denny, but my name is Hal."

"Hal, like Halloween?" he asked. "Yes," I answered.

"How old are you Denny?"

"How old am I now, Mommy?" he asked his mother as she slowly came over from the next aisle.

"Fifteen years, You're fifteen years old Denny. Let the man pass by."

I acknowledged her and continued to talk to Denny for several more minutes about summer, bicycles and school. I watched his brown eyes dance with excitement because he was the centre of someone's attention. He then abruptly turned and headed toward the toy section.

Denny's mom had a puzzled look on her face and thanked me for taking the time to talk with her son. She told me that most people wouldn't even look at him, much less talk to him. I told her that it was my pleasure, and then I said something. I have no idea where it came from other than by the prompting of the Holy Spirit. I told her that there are plenty of red, yellow and pink roses in God's garden, however, "Blue Roses" are very rare and should be appreciated for their beauty and distinctiveness. "You see, Denny is a Blue Rose, and if someone doesn't stop and smell that rose with their heart and touch that rose with their kindness, then they've missed a blessing from God."

She was silent for a second, then with a tear in her eye, she asked, "Who are you?"

Without thinking I said, "Oh, I'm probably just a dandelion, but I sure love living in God's garden."

Please, the next time you see a blue rose, don't turn your head and walk off. Take the time to smile and say Hello, because by the grace of God this mother could be you. This could be your child, grandchild, niece or nephew.

What a difference a moment can mean to that person or their family.

From an old dandelion!
taken from the Internet



With God all thin

OUR JOURNEY WITH PARKINSON'S DISEASE

by Don and Elizabeth Swift, keen members of the Northland CFFD



Our story starts in 1970 on our wedding day. When you are young you take your marriage vows of commitment, little realising that you have vowed to be with each other in sickness and in health. Sickness had not come into our young lives at this point, nor did we ever imagine it would, but eight years into family life with two lovely daughters Don was showing signs of fatigue and tiredness and was lacking motivation. Was this what they call "mid life crisis"? What should we do? Don had never been one to take holidays and he had leave owing him from the Lands and Survey Department, so we decided to take leave for three months in the summer of 1979 and go and do Euro rail for two months and Brit rail for one month. I had been to Europe on

my big O E before we had married, so I showed Don all the old haunts. It was a great holiday.

Our son was born in 1980 and four years later we transferred to Whangarei. This was a real blessing. Moving out of the stress of Auckland was refreshing and made life complete. Then something strange happened. Don could not get his index finger to hold and grasp with his thumb and pick up something off the desk. The messages were not getting through from his brain, just as Michael J Fox had described in his book "Lucky Man" when he shared about his "Pinky Finger" being in rebellion. What was wrong?

In January 1987 Don was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. What do you do with this information? Sit on it. It is such a bomb shell. The grief process steps in. Don kept it to himself for two years and did not want me to tell people. I found this so hard. The next six years at work for Don became more difficult. Stress does not go well with Parkinson's Disease. Eventually, after talking to his neurologist, it was decided a better quality of life would be found if Don retired from surveying at the end of March 1993. Don's retirement was an opportunity of sharing with staff and friends a little about this neurological disease. Parkinson's Disease is a slowly progressive condition which occurs when insufficient quantities of the chemical dopamine are produced in the brain. Don had been taking medication but many staff members had no idea. Time now allowed us as a couple to put all our efforts into the Parkinson's

Society in Northland. Don was the Treasurer and the Editor of our monthly newsletter and I was also on the committee. We both attended many Conferences in Wellington where we learnt about current research, how to live our daily lives with Parkinson's and how to care. A Parkinson's support group is not like a hobby which you can leave when you wish to try something else. You are there for life. No man is an island - we need each other. I became involved with the Carers Group and found everybody needs encouragement - a listening ear by someone on the same journey. Don and I had both been brought up in Christian homes and attended the local Presbyterian Churches where we lived. As a young Mum in Glenfield I had gone to a meeting in Takapuna where Margie Willers spoke and I never forgot this amazing lady. Years later Margie was invited to address a combined churches meeting in Onerahi. Don went forward for healing and the Spirit really touched him. He received spiritual healing and I do believe he was used by God in his ministry to others with Parkinson's.

Don was always one to be outdoors, surveyors are made like that. When an opportunity came to walk the Heaphy Track in 1997 we took it. I realized that if Don had difficulty, we needed others with us. Five of us went. It was such a success. Many more walks followed: Waikaremoana, the Otago Rail Trail for a day from Lauder to Ida valley, parts of the Abel Tasman but the best of all was being on the first Outward Bound course at Anakiwa for those with Parkinson's in 2005.

Cont. over page...

Things are possible

Matt 19:26



Magazine of the Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust



Exercise classes in the dark at 6.30am, canoeing, sailing a cutter, bush walks at night, running, swimming in the sea were just some of the challenges. We both found our personal boundaries were stretched, and for Don he thoroughly enjoyed sharing his shakes and rattles together with people who understood.

While our Church was looking for a pastor I contacted Jacqui Gardner, and for Disability Sunday she took the service. This was the start of re establishing CFFD Northland and Don and I joined the Committee. We still attend local outings but are unable to be on the committee.

Our walking over the last two years has slowed down but we are so grateful to the supervision of our neurologist over the 23 years since Don was diagnosed. He has been able to keep Don physically active and has always been there to encourage Don in his adventures. To have Parkinson's is not the end of life but just the beginning of a different journey. Don has learnt how to adapt and keep going. I have learnt that my first role was to be Don's wife, secondly Don's carer, and thirdly a supporter and encourager. He now suffers with tiredness, stiffness, balance problems, confusion and hallucinations, but with medication that has not stopped him. He enjoys meeting people, and with respite care he has many friends. His smile has never left him and his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is as strong as ever. I Thessalonians 5:16, 17 and 18 are three verses of Scripture which have meant a lot to us, "Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.(N.I.V.) The Lord has blessed us both, and by the Lord's grace we celebrated our 40th wedding Anniversary on the 27th August last year.

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I wish to give \$.....for the magazine

\$..... for general running costs

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Address:.....

ANOTHER STEP FORWARD

The Encourager started back in 1977 as a single sheet typed by mouth by Margie Willers on a gestetner stencil. It has moved through a series of stages – more pages, photocopied editions, a move to booklet form, printed commercially, an extension to 32 pages, introduction of colour etc. All the time as the numbers have been increasing from the 40 original copies to over 6,000 now, the collation has become more and more a huge operation, involving hours of work behind the scenes and an army of volunteers to put it together. Then again there has been a huge amount of time and energy in preparation even beforehand, and afterwards, even more hours in finalising, checking, correcting and mailing out.

Last month we received an offer from a Design and print agency, **Ultimo**, who are very keen to help us, and by cutting their costs down to the bare minimum they have taken away the burden of collating and mailing out the magazine. They have done all this for just a very small increase in price. This has necessitated a change in size for the magazine, but the space for the contents has not changed. No way was this firm seeking to get extra business. Their whole concern has been to help our ministry.

There are huge benefits that have come from this change:

1. A brand new-look magazine
2. Full colour print throughout
3. No more volunteer time for layup and design.
4. No more volunteer time for collation, postage and handling
5. A huge reduction of staff time

Some might prefer the previous size but we felt this was a step forward we just had to take.

LEZLEE ROSE TO THE CHALLENGE

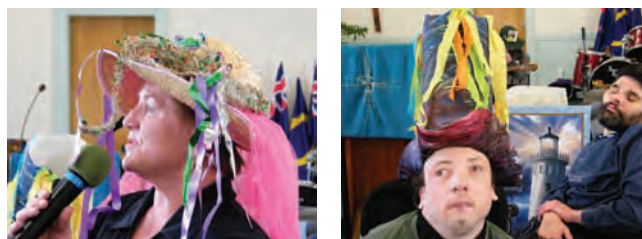


Dave Hayward writes from Canada: Lezlee (seen on the right) credits her first visit to New Zealand to awakening her to a ministry she could have. Now, 8 years later, she can count them on the fingers of her two hands and they mean so much to her. One she picked up in New Zealand, collecting and sending out used glasses to India. She looks back to the time when Joy Gregory took her to a "Joni and Friends" gathering. On meeting her Joni asked, "What ministries do you have?" At that time it was a

ENORMOUS THANKS

Enormous thanks to so many, but especially to Nigel and Angela Andrew for the hours of expert lay-out and design they have put in to zip up the look of The Encourager over the last nine years. Thanks to all the volunteers at the Centre and others who have come out to put the magazine together at the Willis's home, to Brian Spooner whose firm printed the magazine for years from early times, to Pan Print and to all who reduced their fees or gave free commercial services such as Spicers in supplying the paper and Fintech for collating and stapling.

DUNEDIN CFFD RUNS A MAD HATTERS PARTY



Brent is seen here along with the Branch leaders Patsy and Alasdair Morrison

brand new idea, and it bothered her that she hadn't much to say. But that has all changed.

Right now she is colouring a picture which she plans to send to Joni with an account of that first meeting and the question Joni asked. Lezlee is going to tell her of the jobs she now has in our Fellowship: stuffing envelopes for our mail-outs, visiting a group home with Rick, ushering at the door of the church every Sunday, and seeing that visitors sign the guest book each Sunday, serving in our signing choir and collecting used glasses for India.

The first time Di and Hugh met Lezlee and Joy was getting in a taxi with Joni to go to a seminar at the Friendship Centre. What a lot has happened since then! Four visits to NZ and another from Joy on her own. Lezlee fitted in so well in NZ. She has such a friendly caring personality, always enjoyed her visits to the Centre, loved the Joy Ministry and CMWDT National Camps she attended, took part in lots of skits, enjoyed the outings and was lots of fun.