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# *The* ENCOURAGER

EVANGELISE EQUIP EDUCATE

*Magazine of the Christian Ministries with Disabled Trust*



*Praising the Lord at National Camp*

A devotion from Joni Eareckson Tada

## **MORE THAN YOU CAN HANDLE**

*No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

I Corinthians 10:13

Every once in a while I Corinthians 10:13 bugs me. At those times I'm prone to think God couldn't expect from me what He does from others, because mine is a "different story." I especially thought that way when I was lying on my hospital bed: How can You be putting me through all this? It's more than I can bear—even with Your help, God.



The truth is, my story is not different. Neither is yours. My quadriplegia hasn't earned me any Purple Heart medals with God. My bouts with pressure sores and lung problems haven't exempted me from I Corinthians 10:13. If the Lord allows crushing hardships to pile on top of all the other baggage that goes with being disabled, I can't whine. It never can be said of me, "she has good reason to let off steam every now and then."

Whenever I entertain stubborn, stiff-necked thoughts of resentment, I've noticed I go not forward but backward. The problems aren't easier to handle; they become harder. I must remember Hebrews 12:4, which warns complainers, "In your struggle against sin, you have not resisted to the point of shedding blood." What a good reminder! I'm not a martyr; nobody's drawn and quartered me, laid me on a rack, sawed me asunder, or run me through with a sword—so things can't be that bad.

True, I Corinthians 10:13 may bug you when you think you must disobey because the temptation is too great. But remember, we can never be forced to disobey. We don't sin because we have to; we sin because we want to.

God, thank You for the grace to endure the losses You have allowed in my life. Whatever the trial or temptation, enable me to look to You to provide the way of escape—and the grace to bear up under the load.

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### **ANOTHER WONDERFUL COLLECTION FOR THE PHILIPPINES CAMP**

Just on \$3,400 was given at National Camp to make a Philippines one possible next year. A great effort campers, reaching out to others in this way!

# A 9 PAGE PHOTO ACCOUNT OF THE NATIONAL CAMP 2008

## THE PRAISE AND WORSHIP WAS SO SPECIAL

“Humbling to see all the disabled worshipping with such abandon and passion”

“God says “Make a joyful noise”  
– that happened!”

“Awesome anointing”

“Amazing – often better than church”

“It was a new experience and  
inspiring to watch disabled  
people worship to such a level”



## JACK OPPENHUIZEN CAME AGAIN AS THE CAMP SPEAKER



Each one of Jack's messages gripped the campers. He was so practical, inspiring, full of insight, and his relating of his vision caught people's imagination. Around the camp he showed such interest and concern for all he chatted with, and this comment on an evaluation sheet was typical of many, "He must come back again!"



**THE SAMOAN DANCERS THRILLED THE ONLOOKERS**



**AND THE SIGNING FOR JUST A FEW WAS STILL A MUST**



**PARTICIPANTS CAME FROM THREE OTHER COUNTRIES**



*Five of Jack's team of eight seen here, two from Korea, two from NZ and Jack's brother Marc from the USA*

*From Australia came Lyndsey Gale*



*The Vilisoni family from Fiji seen here with Ruth Spencer*

AS ALWAYS SO MANY WONDERFUL CARING HELPERS



... Photo account continued on page 20

# LEARNING TO OVERCOME MY FEARS

Ric Hurrell

Labour weekend, 2004 was my first National Camp and it was also a personal nightmare. From the time I arrived until the time I left I was so uncomfortable that I was ready to leave and never have any more to do with disabled people again. I had had an easy, almost gentle introduction to Disabled Ministries. In March, 2004 some of my home group decided to help at the Wellington Regional Camp at Paraparaumu.

The camp was small, well run and for me easy. I was not exposed to any severe disabilities so there were no great personal challenges for me. My wife and I had also begun attending the Wellington CFFD monthly meetings which we really enjoyed, but then came National Camp.

This was an event that I had been personally looking forward to for some time and I was really keen to demonstrate just how good I had become with disabled folk. The saying that pride goes before a fall does not do justice to what I felt. The first shock I experienced was my bag disappearing from where I had carefully placed it. The number of disabled folk also got my attention. Di's speech for first time carers had me ready to leave as soon as she began. But for me, the icing on the cake was my first sight of Jason. I had never had any dealings with someone like Jason, and now I was expected to help care for him. How the mighty fall! I can remember being at the Saturday morning electives and asking why someone like me would be entrusted with Jason's wellbeing. The reply was that Di prays about each placement, and my instant response was, "Was she listening?"

Over the weekend I learnt that Jason was a lovely caring person, and by the end of the weekend I can honestly say that I was almost comfortable to be near him. We left camp with me vowing and declaring I would not be back. Over the next few weeks God began to show me how selfish I had been during the camp. I started to realise that camp was not all about me, and that was hard for me to admit, especially to myself. I took nearly three years to realise that I was afraid of Jason. I was afraid of failing him and therefore failing myself. I have since prayed about and had prayer for my fears. Arriving at National Camp on the first night and meeting Jason again brought back those fears. I confessed my fears to Jason and felt God lift them from me. I know that I still have a long way to go before I am as caring or selfless as God wants me to be, but in God I have a great training partner.





# IRREPRESSIBLE LIFE AND VITALITY

At our Centre we have a succession of interesting speakers. Hilary McDowell was one of these. She stands just 4 ft 6 in, and it is amazing the irrepressible life, vitality, determination and “get up and go” that is packed into her small frame. She has been described as a “God-working miracle”, and in addition is all of the following: counsellor, author (of 5 books), deaconess, radio broadcaster, dramatist, psychologist and poet.

Here is a part of what she shared:

“When I was born I came into the world with seven disabilities. I was damaged by the forceps being used, and the doctors thought I would be lucky to live even for three weeks. But God blessed me with the most amazing parents who were determined that I would get every opportunity to pull through. My mouth would only open a tiny amount, so they had to feed me with a fountain pen much as a mother bird does with her babies, but my system could only take just one drop at a time every quarter of an hour. It was necessary to keep this up night and day, and when mum and dad asked how could they do this when they would need sleep, the doctor’s reply was, “Well, that would save you a problem!” Yet such was my parents love and commitment and the hand of God, that at the age of three I could read and write, although I couldn’t get out to play with other children.



At five I started school at a normal school. They had never had a child with a disability before, and the headmaster was absolutely amazing, but the school made it clear that although the teachers would carry me around they would not be able to attend to my toileting needs, so for the next seven years my mother would have to not just take me to and from school, but also to come back two or three times each day to attend to my toileting. When it came round to my secondary education I was given the choice of going to a grammar school which would necessitate me being driven there every day, or attending the local secondary school, with a bus stopping right outside our home and stopping again right outside the school.

I chose this second school which had a great record for academic success, but it was situated right in the middle of a very tough Catholic area. There were many fights throughout the district. It proved to be a very hard time, and although I was bashed by one of the big boys on one occasion, most of the others proved caring and

considerate and carried my books from class to class.”

Looking back Hilary says God oversaw her being in that school so that she could develop what she now has – a strong ministry of reconciliation and mediation by His gracious love. Back in Ireland she is very involved in a project to prevent suicide amongst young people.



When she was seven her father took her on his shoulders across a bridge consisting of just two planks, and wires on either side for handholds. Hilary held onto him under his chin. Half way across a gale sprang up and Hilary’s mother called on them to come back. The father put it over to Hilary, “Do you want to turn back or go on? She chose to “go on”, and that seems to have been her motto ever since, no matter what obstacle she comes up against she pushes through it, not in her own strength but in God’s.

Yes, God has played a huge part in her life right from an early age. She was just eight when she gave her heart to the Lord. She had been told she’d never walk, but she did from that point on, and all the trials that have followed have served only to make her faith stronger. She says, “Whatever happens God doesn’t take us out of the circumstances, He gets inside the circumstances and brings us through. Nothing that ever happens is ever wasted in His purposes if we suffer trauma, as long as we give it back to Him. He will then take it and use it in His way.” At the end of her time at school Hilary got a scholarship to college, and later went to Scotland to study theology. Following this she obtained an honours degree in psychology, followed by counselling qualifications in England.

She said, “God is all about relationships”, and this came out strongly as she dealt so lovingly with the many questions being asked her, always thanking each person listening to her talk at the Centre, and encouraging them in her replies. “Developing relationships makes us vulnerable, but we must push through with this. Jesus wasn’t afraid to make Himself vulnerable to us, dying a horrible death on the cross, but it was this amazing sacrifice that enabled us to know personally a God who cares for us.” She got everyone involved in the first exercise she had learnt at college in which everyone had to move around the room, and as she named parts of the body such as a shoulder, an arm or a nose, she would get each person to touch others close by on those same parts. This was to make each one of us vulnerable to others. She finished by describing how when in Palestine she had gone early to the tomb in which Jesus had been buried. She was so wanting to savour that precious moment alone, and

confessed to even being slightly miffed when she found a man already there. As they stood together they saw over the entrance the words, "He is not here. He is risen!" Tears welled out of their eyes. All at once they were one, and God had given them an unforgettable experience that they, though total strangers, had shared together.

She has travelled all over the world, having many adventures in her little car, and has often been very grateful for her rich sense of humour that has helped her through many difficult situations. She told of one stop she made in Belgium when she was very tired, and spotting a marble slab, she lay down on it and was soon fast asleep. She later awoke to find herself surrounded by a throng of schoolgirls in stitches of laughter. She quickly discovered she was in fact lying on an altar!, but the funny side came out when she noticed the words engraved there, "Come unto Me all you who labour, and I will give you rest."

Hilary stressed we have such a "Big God", and she loves what Phil 4:11 says, "We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us." Everything she does is planned in partnership with Him. As John 10:10 says, "He has given us abundant life", but as she points out, He supplies our **need**, not our **greed**.

Hilary has written several books of poems and below we include one of these, telling of the time when she was born.

### **SOME DAY I'M GOING TO FLY**

Eight years we prayed--  
Father, Mother, me.  
Mum and Dad, I don't remember hearing in that time  
One regret expressed,  
Not one regret that love had brought me here.  
I learnt from you that nothing born of love  
Makes misery,  
And no architect on earth,  
Or any other sphere,  
Goes to his lathe  
Without a draughtsman's plan.  
And God, if architect and father both He is,  
Will not feed His children with a stone  
Or when He's asked for fish, serve up a serpent.

I aborted death  
When at the age of eight  
Accepted Yahweh, maker of the Jews.  
He brought His son to me  
And in gentle, spiritual, intimacy  
The one whose name is Jesus took my broken parts  
And proved to me that not one piece  
Had been abused.  
I walked that year.  
Doctors can't say how,  
I only know  
It was His touch that made me whole.

And here I am,  
To show a daughter's love,  
Offered to the world  
Tentatively in shaking hands,  
Holding out forgiveness in marked  
And resurrected palms.

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## **PASTOR'S BUSINESS CARD**

A new pastor was visiting in the homes of his parishioners. At one house it seemed obvious that someone was at home, but no answer came to his repeated knocks at the door.

Therefore, he took out a business card and wrote "Revelation 3:20" on the back of it and stuck it in the door.

When the offering was processed the following Sunday, he found that his card had been returned. Added to it was this cryptic message, "Genesis 3:10."

Reaching for his Bible to check out the citation, he broke up in gales of laughter. Revelation 3:20 begins "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Genesis 3:10 reads, "I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid for I was naked."

# RECEIVING FIRST, GIVING SECOND

Lindsey Gale from CBM in Australia

I've just had a stand-out week. Flying 'over the ditch' the Monday before National Camp, staying at Hugh and Di's home with Jack, Gloria and Mark Oppenheizen, and a constant flow of people dropping off meals or staying to help with camp preparations, listening to all the high-energy honest conversations, praying, enjoying laughter, cake, coffee, even managing to see a little of beautiful New Zealand.

I came to receive and to learn, and was also looking forward to the chance to talk through my own fledgling plans for developing church-based disability ministry in Australia.

Christian life is all about receiving before giving:

- being loved by God before we are lovable or able to love in return;
- needing to be died for before we can die to self and live for God and others;
- needing Jesus the Master to serve us before we are able to serve him and not ourselves with our service.

And this week has been a time of receiving before giving for me.

Judith Snow, a woman in Canada who only has movement in one thumb, talks about the gifts that build community as consisting of the things we have and the things we don't have. All of us have both of these kinds of gifts. At the Camp, I was the recipient of the community building capacity of both of these gift groups operating in new ways.

I think what happens is that in the space provided by the inability to do some things, relational gifts flourish – particularly the community-building gifts of vulnerability and trust. It caught me by surprise a number of times at the camp, that it was alright for me to be me. I know that in the main, when I have a choice to be vulnerable, my natural response is to choose privacy and self-protection. I think we probably all do this if we can, which is a shame, because vulnerable trust is so effective in forging bonds, building relationship, and enabling walls of privacy to come down for us all. I loved a quote before I came to Camp, which means more now; "In the shelter of each other, the people live".

Thank you so much for the chance to meet Jack and Gloria, and all the other people who crowd into your life with such joy and sense of shared purpose.

## **REMEMBER TO INCLUDE POST CODES ON EVERY LETTER**

The Post Office is sometimes not delivering mail when the post code is missing.  
The new Trust post code is 1643.

# MY HEROES

by Heather Vincent

In thinking of my hero, I thought not one, but three,  
My children are my heroes, as you will plainly see;  
In spite of all the suffering, their true courage shines,  
Trusting God to keep them, through the trials in their lives.

Each one's been affected by a disability,  
Each one's daily living with Muscular Dystrophy,  
Cherie and Karen our daughters, and David our son,  
One is now in Heaven, his battle here is done.

David was the first one when at the age of nine  
In spite of prayer for healing to a wheelchair was confined.  
Though he was the youngest, we watched him waste away,  
The disease ravaged his muscles, growing weaker ev'ry day.  
As he laughed and joked, and told me, "It's all right Mum!"

One day Cherie discovered - with her husband Sean -  
Both her sons Joel and Ben, with DMD were born.  
For she had inherited the faulty gene, like me,  
And now faced a future with muscular dystrophy  
With two boys now in wheelchairs, needing strength and energy,  
She cares for them believing, 'the best is yet to be',

Karen too had two boys, full of energy and fun,  
But as they grew she noticed that the youngest couldn't run.  
Back came the diagnosis, and they learned that day  
That Judah too has DMD, but Jordan was okay.

My daughters, Cherie and Karen found as their boys grew  
They walked a similar journey to the one I went through  
My little girls are mothers now and they bravely face  
An uncertain future with God's amazing grace.

Dave's suffering is over; his task on earth is done,  
With his Saviour up in heaven and the crown he has won.  
While his sisters keep on treading their road to heaven's gate,  
I watch and pray and wonder, knowing it's God who makes them great.

*Note : DMD stands for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy*



*Cherie*



*Karen*



*David*



*Joel and Ben*



*Judah and Jordan*

## THE OPENING OF THE PHILIPPINES McRAE CENTRE



*Ed Salonga writes:*

“As we celebrated the big day when the McRae Centre had its grand opening we thought of the parallel in Nehemiah 12:43, “When the city wall was dedicated... the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off.” About 600 attended as the Center was dedicated with much joy in our hearts. It was so wonderful that we had so many guests, and especially the four daughters of Uncle Charlie and Auntie

Beryl McRae – the founders of CBM. The ribbon cutting ceremony took place with the NZ Embassy Consul, the CBM Board Chairman - Mr. Manuel Wong, and the four McRae’s daughters. Everyone stood and applauded, as the banner entered with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to the music of “How Great Is Our God”.

Many will be blessed as God uses this building for our on-going High School SPED program, the Hebron Children’s Camp, a training Center for Children’s ministries, and hiring it out for church camps and conferences during summer.

It was here at the Centre where we held our last PCFFD camp back in June. Our SPED deaf elementary and high school are blessed to have nice classrooms here, we hold our special programs for people with disabilities here, and at present we hold our Friday Sign Language Class for parents in a training room.

Through the sponsorship of our local government, we had a whole day free hearing test and applications for free hearing aids. Over 100 hearing impaired children and adults were given this service.

New and different things are going on with our special education program. More new parents are coming in to inquire about our programs as a result of the word being spread by our present parents, and our parents are contributing towards some projects like a waiting shed and classroom improvement. Caregiver trainees come for a week or two to practice their course.

We continue to thank God for many things He is bringing about, such as the special seminars and sign language class for parents we’ve started running.

We have a new OT - Venus, who comes to Hebron from Monday to Thursday with 4 to 5 students daily on one-on-one sessions, and Edalyn, a trainee teacher for Grade I deaf is now with us after coming as a student earlier and praying to come back permanently.

# DAWN COLEMAN

I was born blind in London, England to a 16 year old solo mum who had been given abortion drugs by my father. She resisted after coming close, and so decided to have me adopted. She couldn't sign the papers and so was given some support to keep me till I was a year old when she would be required to work. I was then fostered out to a family. Before I was 5 my Mother married and had me returned to her. We all moved into a house my Grandmother owned, and she took care of me while my Mother and Step Father worked. Before I was 7 we all moved to New Zealand.



Nan started to take me to Salvation Army meetings where we both soon learned to enjoy reading the Bible and began some wonderful lasting friendships. Everyone knew I was independent and bossy, which often led me down the wrong paths and caused me to be badly behaved. I was also angry at times because my home life was not a happy one. My Mother brought me up to believe that my Step Father was my real Father and we didn't get on. I always felt in the way of their lives. Then as memories surfaced and I confronted them I learned they had lied to me, and this caused me to be very depressed. My answer to my woes was to become rebellious, and I broke every rule and then some – boys and alcohol among others. I justified myself because of my bad start in life, but these were excuses. Then I was sexually attacked on the street while alone, which resulted in a court case. My Nan became very ill with dementia, and it nearly broke my heart when she was put in a home.

Afterwards she passed away, but a Salvation Army Captain told me she had prayed to receive Christ. Later I also lost another close friend who told me she was born again, shortly before cancer claimed her. This caused me to think about what death really meant.

Then Stephen came into my life and we were soon married. We then had three daughters. One is sighted and the other two are blind from an inherited eye condition. Once again though, I found I'd been lied to, as I didn't know my eye condition was going to be passed down, but once we got over the shock we didn't let it make any difference in loving our daughters. Those early years of parenthood were a struggle at times, but very rewarding. I love being a parent and seeing my children grow. We have many happy memories over the years.



It was during this time that I felt a real need to find my birth Father. His name was not on my birth certificate, so I couldn't officially search, but we came up with the idea of using the London phone book to find his name. As a result we met him on the telephone in November 1999, and he twice came to New Zealand to visit us and also took us to visit him in London once.

I now felt I knew where I belonged, and a lot of questions on my background were answered after we were reunited. Somehow though I still had a lot of anger and resentment in me at how I had also lost contact with my Mother, and when I tried to get together again she seemed distant, and communication was difficult.



In 2004 a friend gave me the Left Behind books. I read them right through, checking out the scriptures. I now understood that I had broken every one of the ten commandments, and that God hates sin but has a plan to rescue sinners, and I became aware that if I didn't receive His free gift of grace by repentance and trusting in Him I was on my way to hell. What impressed me most was that He was so kind to save us when I had lied, stolen, lusted, coveted others possessions, disobeyed my parents, blasphemed the name of the One who gave me life, committed murder in my heart by my anger, and so on. On May 13 I began to pray and ask Him if he would forgive me all my sins and make me born again. My life began to change almost immediately. He has been slowly refining me since then, and what a task that is to break down my pride and stubbornness. I had a lot of forgiving to do as well. Thank you Lord Jesus Christ.

I shared my faith with my family, and try to share what Christ has done for me whenever I can. The Bible tells us to always be ready to give account of the hope that lies within us. My Dad has since cut off contact with us as he doesn't like Christians, and my other daughter has run away and is living with a boy because she didn't want to live by Christian morals, and the law says she can do what she wants at 17 years of age. Maybe God put us here to pray for our unsaved family. Maybe too he had a purpose in putting me in my strange early circumstances. God has shown me that He doesn't want anyone to suffer, and that it is because of sin that evil happens, but one day He is coming again to take sin, death and suffering out of the world. I only know that we long to see them all saved. God is faithful, and I trust Him, and pray they will all come to know Him as I do. He has worked a miracle in my life and can in their lives too. I trust him to draw them to Himself one day.

# A STORY OF FORGIVENESS

On June 8, 1972, a nine year old girl, naked and crying because her body was burning with the chemical agent napalm, was caught on film running away from her burning village 25 miles west of Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh), South Vietnam. That girl was Phan Thi Kim Phuc, now 45. The photograph became an icon of the Vietnam War and was so powerful the image was etched in the minds of millions of people worldwide.



A number of New Zealanders recently got the chance to meet and hear Mrs Phan Thi tell her story at venues in Wellington, Christchurch and Auckland. Mrs Phan Thi, who was invited to New Zealand by International Needs, told audiences about how she came to know God and how He healed her spiritually, and helped her let go of her inner turmoil.

Her message was one of forgiveness and reconciliation. Challenge Weekly caught up with Mrs. Phan Thi while she was in Auckland, to hear first-hand her testimony.

She told of how ten years after the bombing incident, while she studied medicine in Saigon, on the other side of the world a German photographer was asking the Vietnamese embassy how he could interview the girl in the famous photo. It took two years for the Vietnamese government to track the young student down. Once they found her, she was ordered to stop her studies and become a full-time on-call media subject for the foreign press.

Mrs Phan Thi says she became like a bird in a cage, always under government watch. With her plans for a medical career cut short, she felt hopeless. She tried committing suicide to end her hatred for everyone – the pilot who dropped the bomb, the man who ordered her to stop her schooling, and the people whose job it was to watch her. She hated her own life and asked “Why me?”

To occupy her spare time, Mrs Phan Thi would spend days in the library. She would read religious books to find purpose and meaning in life. One day she read the Bible and found the book of John, chapter 14, verse 6 fascinating – “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

This confused Mrs Phan Thi who was raised in the CaoDai faith (a universal faith with the principle that all religions have the one divine origin.) She believed in many gods,

yet the Bible was saying Jesus was the only way. Desperate for answers, she went to a Christian cousin, who invited her to church. On December 25, 1982 the pastor at a Saigon church asked his congregants about the meaning of Christmas. *“If anyone opens his heart to receive Jesus Christ and accept him as personal saviour, then He will come into his heart, bringing peace and taking away any burdens.”*

Those words hit Kim Phuc hard.

“It seemed to me that the pastor was talking to me directly. I was really seeking peace. I needed peace. I needed somebody to take away my burden. Then and there my heart was touched, and I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour.” She says. “That day I stopped praying to many gods and I just prayed only to the Lord. I also had to learn the difficult lesson on forgiving people.” When she read Luke 6:27-28 she cried out to God, “It’s impossible Lord because I am human. I suffered so much with my scar, my pain, and I became a victim from one thing to another. How can I love my enemies? How can I forgive them? God, You have the power, but for me it is impossible,” was her plea. “Then God gave me the picture,” she recalls. She says she had a vision in which her heart was like a black coffee cup. It was a cup full of bitterness, anger and hatred. The cup needed to be emptied everyday through God’s grace and love.

“Each time I emptied my cup, He filled it with His joy and compassion,” she says. “The more I prayed for my enemies the more forgiving I became. Thank God for His mercy.” Mrs Phan Thi never looked back.

She was sent by the Vietnamese Government to Cuba, where she studied Spanish. There she married fellow Vietnamese Bui Huy Tuan, and on their way back to Cuba after honeymooning in Moscow, Russia, they stopped in Labrador, Canada, where they were granted asylum. The couple who have sons, Thomas, 14 and Stephen, 11, have remained steadfast in their faith and are active in their local church in Ontario, Canada. She is UNESCO’s goodwill ambassador and heads the Kim Foundation helping child victims of war. “Napalm is very powerful, but faith, forgiveness and love are much more powerful. We would not have war at all if everyone could learn how to live with true love, hope and forgiveness,” she says. “If that little girl in the picture can do it, ask yourself: Can you?”



Mrs. Phan Thi today

*Taken with permission from an article by Joseph Lopez in the Challenge Weekly*

MORE ON THE NATIONAL CAMP  
THE MINI OLYMPICS INVOLVED NOT JUST THE COMPETITORS



*Nick Abplanalp was the “brains” behind the Games*



*Mark came to support his brother Paul*



*May McDonald in action*



*Nga Tauranga loves competing*



*Evelyn Churchill throwing the “discus”*



*Matalena Moliola always ready to give it her all*

## BUT ALSO HUGE SUPPORT FROM THE REST OF THE TEAM



The wet weather forced this outdoor activity indoors. It was very cramped and the noise level high, but the enthusiasm generated was unbelievable.

“Chaotic but brilliant”

“To see such joy was priceless”

“More, more, I can’t wait till the next Olympics”



## THE ELECTIVES WERE UNIVERSALLY POPULAR



*In the **Communication** elective Leon Prenter and Shannon Williams along with others demonstrated their communication aids.*



*On the right Evan Clulee is seen leading the elective on “Goal in reading the Bible”*



*Whilst below the geriatrician from the USA, John Choi, and his wife Monica brought their experience to bear in the elective on Healing Prayer.*



## PASTOR SAM FROM FIJI MADE A GREAT IMPRESSION

People at camp were very moved by the beautiful way in which Sam Vilisoni led the communion service. After camp he shared about his life:

“I was 15 when I lost my leg through falling from a coconut tree. I was confused in life until a friend shared with me about Jesus Christ and I finally gave my life to the Lord. For some time my Christian journey was a fluctuating one because the church was not able to understand people with disabilities, but I loved the fellowship with Christians, and as more and more of them came to know me this helped the church leaders to understand that I was just like every one of them. After some time I became the leader of the youth fellowship there, later a lay preacher, and finally a lay pastor.

“In 1988 I became President of the Fiji Disabled People’s Association, and eight years later joined the newly formed group that had started as a branch from CFFD in New Zealand. It soon became self supporting, changed its name to the “Disability Outreach for Christ”, and earlier this year changed yet again as it moved from a fellowship to a church—now the Horeb Christian Disability Fellowship that meets every Sunday morning, has 3 cell groups each week and a youth program on Fridays and Saturdays.

“Sadly my first wife died after 5 years of marriage, but I was blessed again in meeting and marrying Kesa, also an amputee, when I was 43. We have two boys, both with us at National Camp seen in the photo on page 6 with Ruth Spencer (who recently returned from Fiji where she taught at a residential school for the deaf). At present I am studying at a theological college where I’ve completed so far one year of the 3 years needed to develop a curriculum for disability studies to be taught in theological colleges, and one has already agreed to accept it as a core course.”



# GOD HAD IT ALL MAPPED OUT

My name is Adrian Baker. At the age of 18 I left my job here in New Zealand and went to live with my brother in Australia. I wasn't a Christian. My brother set me up in a job in a place called Springsure. One day when I was 19 my family and I went along to a Rodeo on one of the out back stations.



The person who was doing the commentary at the Rodeo (in a break time) asked if anyone would like to give their life to Jesus. I don't know why but I decided that day to do just that.

I was a smoker, drank plenty and was trying to escape these behaviours. I became a Jackaroo and mustered cattle about the same time. I thought maybe this would be a good start for me.

For the next two years I worked hard trying to do all the right things. Then one life-changing day at the age of 21 things were to change forever for me.

I was out rounding up cattle, and suddenly it all happened. A steer broke loose and gored my horse. The horse bucked me off and lashed out at my head. This left me in a coma for the next six months, clinging to every breath of life. Back home in New Zealand and here in Australia my family and friends were praying for me. It took six months before I woke and came out of the coma. I ended up in a rehab hospital for the next year and then was with my sister recuperating before I could come back to New Zealand.

My sister and family had to look after me and help me over the next 20 years. Was this to be all there was left for me in this life? I was going to church and had been baptised. I had been praying for 18 years for a wife. I moved to Wanganui to begin a work program that would look at me being able to be at least semi independent. I knew I would never be able to work full time, and might not be able to live on my own, but I did want to do all that was possible myself. I went to Faith City Church and started to attend a group called Bible Friends. This group was set up to help people like me (with a disability) find out the will and ways of God and develop friendships with like minded people. It was there I met my beautiful wife Roz, who continues the account:

I knew God when I was growing up in a Catholic environment. As I got older I got a bit lost out into the world, where so many of us seem to go when we think we are missing out on something or looking for things we don't really need, but often we don't know that till it's too late. God still knew me though. One night I went to a Christian concert that I had been invited to. At the end one of the pastors asked if anyone wanted to give their life to Christ. I did, and ever since then I have never looked back.

I also got baptised, and like my darling husband, had been praying for ten years and looking for the right man. I got invited to help do sign language at Bible Friends.



When I first saw Adrian I felt he was Mr Right, but I didn't quite know how God was going to match us up. But you know, I didn't have to fear. God has managed my life all the way through from the day of my conception, and within weeks of first setting eyes on this wonderful man God had it all mapped out, right down to the most incredible wedding one could ever imagine.

Not only did our wedding have the angels in heaven celebrating, but through our marriage Adrian's family were reconciled (which is a story on its own).

We have been married for almost three years now. If we had not been in the will of God we would probably still be out in the world right now—not happy and not married, and even if married, certainly not happy.

We both celebrate every day as a new day. Sure there are ups and downs, but we know that God has His hand on our lives, and that if we give to Him all we have (and believe me many times we don't have much), He is faithful and just.

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## REMEMBER

The next time you feel God cannot use you. Remember:

Noah was a drunk

Abraham was influenced by his wife.

The Samaritan woman lived with five men

Jacob was a cheat

David was an adulterer and a murderer

Disciples slept while Jesus prayed

Joseph was a dreamer

Moses was a stutterer

Mary Magdalene was demonized.

Gideon was full of fear

Samson was a womanizer

Rahab was a Prostitute

Jeremiah was a child

Elijah was suicidal

Jonah ran from God

Naomi was a widow in grief

Job was wealthy

Peter denied Christ

Martha was over-anxious

Zacheus was very small

Leah was unattractive

Lazarus was "DEAD"



**So ..... No More Excuses**

Dawn Bakker writes about

## **THE WARM WONDERFUL FEELING THAT WAS LIKE AN ENGULFING LOVE**

Nine years ago I went to a specialist who discovered I had cancer once again, this time in the lymph nodes and glands. Before, it had been found in my ovaries and later in the bowel. This time I didn't want anyone to know because I didn't want that look of sympathy again. The next day the others in the household went out, and I spent the whole day going from room to room, picking up a Bible, holding it and crying. Next morning when I awoke I had just finished saying, "Lord, I don't feel like getting out of bed", when a warm wonderful feeling, like an engulfing love, moved up from my feet to my head. It felt as though I was floating, and as I looked up I saw two feet and the hem of a garment. I looked higher and saw two outstretched nail-pierced hands. My eyes scanned up further to what I expected to be a face, but instead there was a brilliant glowing light. It was very bright, but so soft on my eyes. Then I heard His voice saying, "You are completely healed my daughter."

I then rang my specialist and he did all the tests again to show me that I was not healed as I thought, and found all the tests were good. He was surprised, for he said these things don't just go away.

Then for the next two months Waikato Hospital kept ringing me every Friday to say it was very important for me to start treatment on the following Monday mornings. "Will you be able to come?" and I kept on saying, "No, God has healed me." Finally the call came that said, "This is the last time we will ring. Otherwise we are going to shred your papers." I thought, "Thank heavens for that. I'll get some peace now!" That Sunday in church three different people said in different words but with the same meaning, "It's amazing how God completes a healing."



That night I asked God if He wanted me to go for the treatment. If so He would have to get them to ring before 8 am the next morning. At 7.55 the phone rang, "This is Waikato Hospital. We thought we would give you one last chance before we shred the papers." My reply just had to be, "Yes, I will come." I had chemotherapy and then radio therapy for the next 3½ months. When I asked the oncologist, "What is my prognosis?" his reply was, "I'm sorry to have to say, the usual time is three months at the most!"

From my experience there, in my heart I felt positive God wanted to use me so He could reach out to others. I was in a group of three, and to my surprise the other two

were both born again Christians, so we prayed together. They were more reserved, and God used me to do the speaking to others. At first we three sat together and said grace, but after about two weeks, slowly others wanted to join us, so we put all the tables together making one long table and said grace together. I had the opportunity to speak individually to many people about Jesus. A 21 year old man and I became close friends and we spent many hours together doing jigsaw puzzles and talking about Jesus. He was only in for a week for five treatments for a small cancer on his face. One night before he left he became a born again Christian. When I arrived home three weeks later I rang to see how he was and his brother told me he had died suddenly from an aneurism, but praise the Lord, he knew the Lord.

Selwyn Hughes in the latest “Every Day with Jesus” writes:

*If you already know Jesus Christ, if you have been born again, you are in the kingdom of God, and if you are not, then you are not in His kingdom. If you have not been born again I invite you now to open your heart to God and His Son Jesus Christ. Say the following prayer and you will receive the new birth as countless multitudes down the ages have done. You will be born again.*

*Heavenly Father, I want to be part of Your story. I come to You now to be born again. I surrender everything to You – my whole life, my heart ... everything. Accept me and make me Your child. In Jesus Name I pray.*

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## A FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Hi there, we're from Auckland, and we love coming to the CMWDT National Camp! In 2001, our oldest sister (Jessabel) was invited to come to camp by a church friend. This was the first we'd heard about CMWDT. She came home after the weekend raving about it and saying we all had to go. To tell you the truth, we were all rather sceptical. Anyway, the following year I (Julian) joined her and guess what...I came back raving about it too.

Since then, each year another brother or sister has been recruited and joined the group. This year there were six of us at camp. It's so hard to explain to others how impacting and life-changing taking part in this camp is. To be among people with such joy and passion despite hardships or holdbacks is so humbling!

We come from quite a large family—11 children, so we're thinking you might be seeing Kennerleys around for a few more years yet, and hey, maybe one day we'll even be able to persuade our parents.

*Julian and Erena Kennerley.*

# GREAT CHRISTMAS PRESENT IDEAS

(1) This year Graham Braddock has produced two calendars, one inspirational and one scenic, that between them feature 24 full colour prints of many of his best paintings. The two covers are shown here, and on page 29 a further two paintings taken from the inspirational



calendar. Graham so wanted to help our ministry that he has given a number of these calendars to the Trust at minimal cost so that when we offer them to you at \$15 each it helps our fundraising, yet they are still well below retail price.

(2) Give a copy of “On the Knife Edge of Faith” which is so readable as it gives a fascinating account of how God has led the ministry from the earliest days through difficult times to all that it is doing now. It spreads the word and inspires people, some of whom may even want to get involved.

(3) Graham Braddock cards that feature Christ and the disabled people

**Yes, I want to purchase at \$15.00 each:**

..... inspirational calendar(s) for \$.....

..... scenic calendar(s) for \$.....

Post and packaging \$ 2.00

**“On the Knife Edge of Faith” at \$20 each**

..... copies \$.....

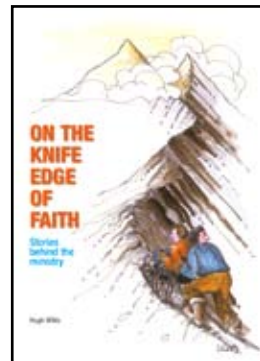
Post and packaging \$ 2.00

**Graham Braddock cards at \$10 per pack of ten**

..... packets \$.....

Post and packaging \$ 2.00

**TOTAL** \$\_\_\_\_\_



Make out cheque to CMWDT and send to PO Box 13-322, Onehunga, Auckland 1643

Name .....

Address .....

Two further paintings taken from the inspirational calendar



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### DO YOU WANT TO LEARN HOW TO SOLVE HARD SUDOKUS?

As a further way of fundraising, Hugh Willis is offering \$5.00 to the ministry from the \$10.00 sale price of a 52 page book he's written titled "**THE SECRET'S OUT - How YOU can solve even incredibly difficult sudokus.**" With each technique described there are some six sudokus given that have been taken to the stage where the technique described is the key to making further progress, and so you get practice at applying the technique. The purchase price covers sending you the book through the post.

Send a cheque made out to CMWDT to:  
PO Box 89-140, Torbay, North Shore City 0742.

# OH GOD, FORGIVE ME WHEN I WHINE

Today, upon a bus,  
I saw a girl with golden hair.  
I envied her, she seemed so bright,  
And I wished I was as fair.  
When suddenly she rose to leave,  
I saw her hobble down the aisle.  
She had one leg and used a crutch.  
But as she passed, she gave a smile.  
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.  
I have two legs, the world is mine.  
I stopped to buy some candy.  
The lad who sold it had such charm.  
I talked with him, he seemed so glad.  
If I were late, it'd do no harm.  
And as I left, he said to me,  
"I thank you, you've been so kind.  
It's nice to talk with folks like you.  
You see," he said, "I'm blind."  
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.  
I have two eyes, the world is mine.  
Later while walking down the street,  
I saw a child with eyes of blue.  
He stood and watched the others play.  
He seemed not to know what to do.  
I stopped a moment and then I said,  
"Why don't you join the others dear?"  
He looked ahead without a word.  
And then I knew he couldn't hear.  
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.  
I have two ears, the world is mine.  
With feet to take me where I'd go.  
With eyes to see the sunset's glow.  
With ears to hear what I'd know.  
Oh, God, forgive me when I whine  
I've been blessed indeed, the world is mine.



# HAWKES BAY CELEBRATE THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY



*These photos were taken at the birthday celebrations of the branch at the Equippers Church where a group of Cook Island people (shown here) put on a beautiful celebration dinner for 120 people. There was singing and music items as well as an illustrated talk by a local lady who had spent three years in Jordan. To end the evening there was some wonderfully vigorous dancing by a Cook Islands dancing team, seen in the photo below. Guitha Pendray was honoured for her years of involvement as an advisor to the branch committee and she it was who cut the cake along with Joan Parker. Earlier in the morning the Spiritual Advisor, Di Woods, had brought a message based on I Cor 9:24-27.*

