



## Newsletter March 2013



Tena Koutou, Talofa Lava, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu,  
Malo e Lelei, Bula Vinaka, Taloha Ni, Kam Na Mauri,  
Greetings to all!

**Data base: 5294 Whanau Carers.**

**From the National Office:**

**Your voices:**

**The BIG day:**

She turned 5 over the school holidays, we did the school introduction in December to teachers and the school itself. And we had planned to visit the school many times over the holidays just to familiarize her with the layout, but the first week of the holiday's the school erected 6 foot fences around the perimeter with gates firmly locked! Our plan of visiting the school regularly over the holidays went out the back door. We could only stand at those fences and look in pointing out which building was which. A bad night's sleep ensued the night before the big-day, (for me) we were up early, bag packed with lunch, drink bottle and all of her books neatly covered. I tied up her blonde curly hair into a high pony tail. With much trepidation (on my part) we began our walk to school. Holding my hand she skipped, I trudged. For 5 years she had been my constant companion. My thoughts raced what would I now do, how would I fill in my day, would she be safe, would she be bullied? I stayed with her in the main assembly area. They called the names of the new entrants first. I looked into her bright blue eyes, tears oh yes there were tears, not hers though, MINE, hers were shining with excitement of what the wonders of what the day may bring. I quickly turned away so she could not see my tears and with a quick hug she was gone. As I wept walking away, a voice called from the distance "Bye Nan, see you after school, love you" But if I am honest this day also made me reflect what now seems like a million years ago when I took my daughter (her mother) on her first day of school and what she was missing out on. My walk home was a little lighter, not for my freedom, but for my grand-daughter, in the wonderment of her new learning journey.

*Nan P*



## Spiritual Seasons:

*"Sanibonani Ma." Good morning. She looked at me. "Sanibonani." I was unsure what to ask next. My knowledge of Zulu was very limited. "Njani." How are you? She smiled. "Sukona, wena wena njani." I'm well. I replied to her courteous answer. I smiled back. "Sukona." I'm well too. I was amazed at her long dress in that heat. My royal blue one-piece swimsuit was more fitting to the occasion and that environment. She was black with a well-worn face and I white and very young. "Yimalini Emazamban?" How much for the peanuts? I pointed to the cast iron pan over the open fire. She said something which I did not grasp. I realised it would be better to hold out my hand with the few coins. She took five cents without saying another word. "Siyabona Sala kahle." Thank you, Keep well. She waved at me. "Hamba kahle." Go well.*

*We were two souls from the same country, but from very different poles of life and different parts who connected over a pan of roasted peanuts. I felt good that I was able to manage a basic conversation in Zulu. I happily walked away as I popped the still warm peanuts from the little white paper bag into my mouth – one-by one. That was the summer of 1969. Inkwazi Beach Camp. Sodwana Bay, Kwazulu Natal.*

The little girl of then still exists but more seasons were added to that summer, even winter. The communication barrier with that woman was an important lesson at a tender age. It was only when I have lived past the half-century that the importance of life's obstacles had weathered me into a cast of resilience and self-efficacy; to withstand what sometimes seemed to be wet and slippery as forces beyond my control begged me to drown with them. Other problems presented me with a barren landscape as dead as the nothing of a non-existing tomorrow as I often asked "Where to from here?"

We are not the usual grandparents; we share the same platform in life. We were prompted to pick up the pieces of something that was created to be wholesome and an extension of oneself through genes, blood and heritage, but quite often broken down by our own through their illogical thoughts and actions. Those are the winters bestowed on us could leave us feeling like a tortoise with a broken shell.

Think: Do some introspection. Be still, rest and recover. Regain your strength before the next spring and summer. I know as only then am I able to live life to the fullest. The process to grow, blossom and play amidst the situation of raising a six, five and three year old never cease to amaze.

I feel and am at last comfortable in my own skin. I will wear a red jacket and deep purple scarf together to brighten my day. I have learnt not to back off or back down when my thoughts would be blanketed like a thick layer of snow. I always made an attempt to use the proverbial winter to my advantage in whatever I do, even if it does mean that I "need" to eat peanuts for breakfast.

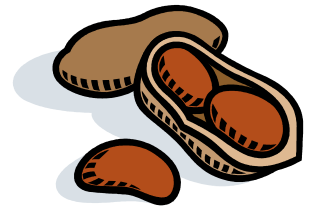
I have learnt to wait, rest and even to hibernate my thoughts, but God always re-energises me.

Isaiah 40:31 according to The Messenger version of the Bible says:  
He energizes those who get tired, gives fresh strength to dropouts.  
For even young people tire and drop out, young folk in their prime  
stumble and fall.

But those who wait upon God get fresh strength.

They spread their wings and soar like eagles, they run and don't get  
tired, they walk and don't lag behind.

*Love to all. Marlene*



### **Bee's:**

Poppy harvested the honey from the hive with young 7 year old watching from a safe distance. Job complete and a little master asks, 'what do the bee's do now, go on holiday?' You can guess his favourite DVD is "Bee Movie" From 7 frames we harvested 8 Kg's of pure liquid gold.



### **Grandparents Raising Members important news re Funding Nationwide**

You may be eligible for support for children in your care!

At Variety – The Children's Charity, we believe in helping children in our own backyard, and want to see each and every child given the same opportunities to reach their goals. That's why we have launched Kiwi Kid Sponsorship and as a member of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren we thought you might be interested.

This programme is designed to provide some of the basic needs for children who would otherwise miss out on due to financial pressures in the home. Grandchildren in your care may be eligible.

#### **Key points:**

- Children should be aged between 3-12 years-old and a New Zealand resident/citizen.
- Parents/Caregivers can access funding for your child's basic needs throughout the year, paid as and when the expense is incurred, to a limit of \$336 per year.
- Parents/Caregivers are financially disadvantaged with income (from all sources) of \$756 per week (after tax) or less for one child; two children - \$808 per week (after tax) or less; three children or more \$834 per week (after tax) or less.

We are open to many areas of funding, including but not limited to: medical fees, prescription charges, school related costs, e.g. stationery, school camps, school trips,

uniforms (excludes school fees/donations), essential clothing such as a warm jacket, shoes for school, underwear, pyjamas and bedding, optometry costs, books, transport, extra-curricular costs, e.g. sports fees, sports uniforms & footwear, music/dance/swimming classes, other agreed costs relating to the well-being, health and education of the sponsored child.

If you have any queries or are interested in this programme please contact:

**Chloé Boyes, Grant Liaison and Regular Giving Co-ordinator**

**Variety – The Children's Charity**

Email: [chloe@variety.org.nz](mailto:chloe@variety.org.nz) Phone: (09) 5223741

### **Napier GRG Support group:**

Has a new coordinator, we welcome Michelle Lark ph 06 842 2656 email [lark123@clear.net.nz](mailto:lark123@clear.net.nz) Meetings are held at the RSA 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month at 10.30 you are them more than welcome to have lunch there at a very reasonable cost.

### **Our heroes:**



#### **Lynn & John Falconer**

(Catching up)

Remember way back when you last posted a photo of John Tama & I on the web site. Tama was way shorter than me at about 10 or 11 years old I think, well at 17yrs he is now way taller than me by at least 10cm! Tama passed NCEA2 last year and is planning to gain level 3 this year so he can attend

University in 2014.

Last February John and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary and this year the day after our 51st anniversary John has celebrated his 77th birthday and his 50th year as an Ostomate. (He had ulcers of the colon, called ulcerative colitis) we are forever grateful for the talented Surgeons and Stoma Nurses at Waikato Hospital in Hamilton who have cared for him over the years. Today John is in hospital waiting for an ultrasound scan to see if it is necessary to remove his gallbladder.

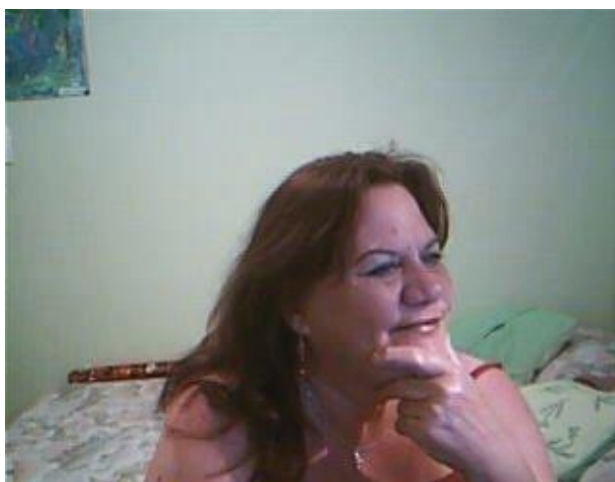
I am not as mobile as I used to be and take a raft of meds each day but still manage to keep up my Hosting duties at Hamilton Zoo. I love working there, promoting conservation and interacting with both people and animals is a huge privilege.

**Anne:** My husband Kelvin and I are GRG's we live in Rotorua. There are 7 of us in our household our two sons 15yr and 11yr and our three grandsons 9yr&,6yr and 4yr . yes it's a very busy household as all three of our grandsons have their own set of problems , 9yr has ADHD and 6yr has PTSD and anxiety and 4yr has cerebral palsy.



We got custody of our first grandson 9yr in 2006 after mum (our daughter) had some serious mental health issues and was neglecting him. She was later diagnosed with Bi Polar in 2011 . In 2012 after a lengthy court battle with the mother and the father of the 6yr and 4yr we were given custody of the two grandsons. My daughter is mum to all three grandsons. It's been a struggle for

us all emotionally and financially as we have gone from owning a three bedroom home ,which we had to sell for a very low price due to the market at the time. We now live in a 5 bedroom rented house, we had to pay back what was left of our mortgage, buy a van that could take all 7 of us but also meets the needs of 4yr olds cerebral palsy disability equipment. We also had to pay back the \$13.000.00 legal aid bill and now 9 months later due to the father of the 6yr and 4yr needing to have supervised visitation we are back in court once again to cost us more legal aid money. But we know it is all worth it, we go from day to day because the boys are amazing. I read recently "I may not be rich but my grandchildren are our jewels" that is so true, and despite all the stress etc. our 15yrs passed his NCEA. We are so proud.  
*Nana Anne*



**Tui:** I'm the very lucky nanny of Jaycob who has been living with me for nearly two years now. Jaycob's brother Daemin died 5 1/2 years ago aged 5 1/2 from an unexplained death which was a horrific shock to us all as Daemin had been a very healthy and happy child and if Daemin had lived he would of turned 11 years old today.

Jaycob has ADHD and Global delay and Micro deletion and his mental age is between 2 1/2 and 3 1/2 he has Behaviour problems due to abuse including sexual abuse. There are some days I just want to give up as he is forever hurting me and there are days where I'm in tears but when it gets so hard I just remember Daemin and realize how lucky I am too have not only Daemin's brother living with me but Jaycob is my only other grandson and amongst the tears and the pain and the frustration that I feel most days' Jaycob's words of love and his little arms that hold me tight each night and him asking me to keep him safe make everything worthwhile, although it is hard with just Jaycob and I, it is worth it.

### **Caring for your baby grandchild?**

- Do you know about safe infant sleep?



New Zealand is on a mission to end sudden infant death for good and grandparents are key to this effort.

We encourage you to campaign with us for safe sleep for every baby, every time and place they sleep, starting with your own families.

We need grandparents behind the advice to sleep babies flat and on their backs, be smoke free in pregnancy, be in smoke free families, attend antenatal care and prevent accidental suffocation. If you would like to join a network of Grandparents influencing safe infant sleep throughout the country or you would like more information on safe infant sleep then we invite you to **phone Sharon 03 353 9263** or email **Sharon@changeforourchildren.co.nz**



### **Unexpected arrival of Geoff CEO and Rosemarie for GRG's 14<sup>th</sup> birthday:**

They were sneaky under the pretense of coming round to discuss business and this was the result.

Caught me by surprise no make-up on and not dressed up, but Oh well that is how I work from home. Thank you all for your wonderful messages and wishes. We have done well. Very. Very well. ☺

**See what a community can do together!**



## **KidzaCool Adventures Holiday Programme Dates for 2013 Camps**

Quality support and respite for foster/kin/whānau carers.



Our KidzaCool Adventures programme gives children the opportunity to play and relax in a fun, safe and sociable environment while foster/kin/whānau carers work, relax or catch up with friends and family. We like to think we offer foster/kin/whānau carers peace of mind while offering children, aged 5-12, a piece of the action!! The programme is a free service for caregivers. Apply NOW!

**Whangarei** - Maunu Children's Health Camp,  
Phone 09 437 9050

29 April - 3 May; 22 - 26 July

**Auckland** - Pakuranga Children's Health Camp, Phone 09 534 4017

29 April - 3 May; 22 - 26 July

**Rotorua** - Te Puna Whaiora ki Rotorua, Phone 07 345 9097

29 April - 3 May; 22 - 26 July

**Gisborne** - Te Kainga Whaiora Children's Village, Phone 06 867 5614

29 April - 3 May; 22 - 26 July

**Otaki** - Otaki Children's Health Camp, Phone 06 364 8069

29 April - 3 May; 22 - 26 July

**Christchurch** - Te Puna Whaiora ki Christchurch, Phone 03 332 2541

29 April - 3 May; 22 - 26 July

**Roxburgh** - Roxburgh Children's Health Camp, Phone 03 446 8119

29 April - 3 May; 22 - 26 July

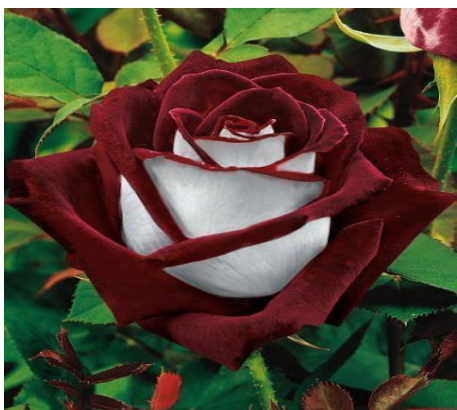
### Time:

You know. . . Time has a way of moving quickly  
And catching you unaware of the passing years.  
It seems just yesterday that I was young,  
Just married and embarking on my new life with my mate.  
And yet in a way, it seems like eons ago,  
And I wonder where all the years went.  
I know that I lived them all...  
And I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams...  
But, here it is... The winter of my life and it catches me by surprise...  
How did I get here so fast?  
Where did the years go and where did my youth go?  
I remember well...  
Seeing older people through the years and thinking that those  
Older people were years away from me and that winter was so far off  
That I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like...  
But, here it is...  
My friends are retired and getting grey...  
They move slower and I see an older person now.  
Some are in better and some worse shape than me...  
But, I see the great change...  
Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant...  
But, like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those  
Older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd be.



Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day!  
And taking a nap is not a treat anymore... it's mandatory!  
'Cause if I don't on my own free will... I just fall asleep where I sit!  
And so, now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared  
For all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability  
To go and do things that I wish I had done but never did!!  
But, at least I know, that though the winter has come,  
And I'm not sure how long it will last...  
Yes, I have regrets.  
There are things I wish I hadn't done...  
Things I should have done, but indeed,  
There are many things I'm happy to have done.  
It's all in a lifetime...  
So, if you're not in your winter yet...  
Let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think.  
Whatever you would like to accomplish in your life, please do it quickly!  
Don't put things off too long!!  
Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today,  
As you can never be sure whether this is your winter or not!  
You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...  
So, live for today and say all the things you want your loved ones to remember...  
And hope they appreciate and love you for all the things  
You have done for them in all the years past!!  
Life is a gift to you.  
The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after.  
Make it a fantastic one.  
**~ And, Remember ~**  
"It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold or silver."  
May you always have Love to Share, Health to Spare and Friends that Care!





This rose we send to you, for each and every one of you who holds the hand/s of a small child or children. God bless you all.

[Give A Little](#)



**Member Support Manager: Di & team (as a caregiver you are part of our team)**

heoi ano, na. *E te Atua, aroha mai..... O God shower us with love. Ka kite*

*Ka Whangaia ka tupu, ka puawai*

That which is nurtured, blossoms and grows



**Can we help you? Members ONLY Services Nationwide**

**Toll free line 0800 472 637 (Caregivers only please)**

**Members support Manager: Di Vivian New members and general information ext. 1**

**Field Officers:**

**Sharon ext. 2**

Sharon is a counselor with 25 years' experience. She has specific experience in working with families and the challenges of parenting, including children who have experienced trauma and issues of grief/loss for grandparent/kin carers and their families who are also parents, siblings of the original parents of the children in their care. She can assist with Family Group Conference's or Strengthening families as a support person when practical or give advice via telephone. **Auckland callers use 09 419 0045 11am - 5pm Monday & Friday only**

**Nola Adams: ext. 3**

Telephone advice can be given on the following topics Justice and Prison system, including Youth Court. Family Court applications: for persons wishing to self-represent: Child Youth and Family representation where practicable/advice. Disability advice and the Schooling system. Nola can be contacted on **06 845 3141 (Hawkes Bay callers) Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm.**

**Diana East: ext. 4**

In depth knowledge on issues impacting on grandparents raising grandchildren; has many years working with mental health consumers and carers. This gives her a very good understanding of a wide range of mental health issues and issues effecting grandparents raising. **Hours 9am – 5pm 04 970 8177 (Wellington callers)**

**Tricia Corin: ext. 5**

Is a Beneficiaries Advocate, If you are having problems with your Benefits from Work and Income / Inland Revenue or are unsure if you are on the right Benefit, needing advice on

UCB or DPB, Disabilities Allowance or recoverable and non-recoverable advances . **Hours**  
**11am 5pm 07 8685490 (Waikato callers)**

*Please note that our Field Officers are Part Time*

Disclaimer: Any article, services offered may not have an endorsement from Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ, discretion is advised.

Please feel free to send/email this report on to others whom you think may be interested.

Please pass this on to other grandparents/kin carers you know of.

GRG Trust Head Office hours are 9am – 2pm daily. (We raise grandchildren too)

Views expressed in this newsletter may not be the views of the GRG Trust.

We are a voluntary not-for-profit organisation.

All donations to the GRG Trust are tax deductible.

Abbreviations:

GRG – Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust

BOT – Board of Trustees

CYF – Child Youth and Family Services

Co's – Co-ordinator/s

UCB – Unsupported Child Benefit

WINZ – Work and Income NZ now DWI – Department of Work and Income

BPS – Business Professional Services Limited. Our secretarial service.

### **Are your children under CYF?**

Do you have trouble getting hold of your Social Worker? If this is the case then you can call 0508 CARER (0508 227 377) and they will then make sure you are spoken to by your Social Worker and if they are not available then someone else will talk to you.

[www.grg.org.nz](http://www.grg.org.nz) or [www.kin.org.nz](http://www.kin.org.nz) or [www.raisinggrandchildren.org.nz](http://www.raisinggrandchildren.org.nz) Email  
[office@grg.org.nz](mailto:office@grg.org.nz)

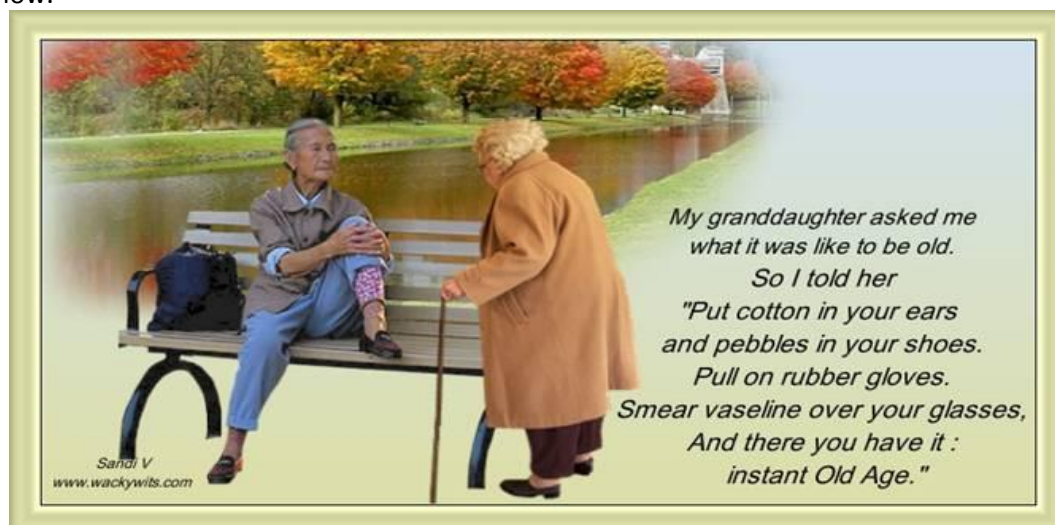
**Member Support Manager: Di Vivian**

Free Phone 0800 GRANDS or 0800 472637 ext. 1 (not for use for Auckland callers)

Landline users only. Auckland callers (09) 480 6530

Postal Add: PO Box 34 892 Birkenhead. Auckland 0742

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please contact the Trust Office as this is where the total mail out membership is kept. Moved home or planning to? Be sure to let us know.



**We are a Charitable Trust**