



## GFWA NEWSLETTER AUGUST

### IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2008 Cowboy Western Night
- 26<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> September 2008 GFWA Camp
- 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> April 2009 GFA National Conference
- February 2009 Leadership Training Day

Welcome to the August addition of the GFWA newsletter. We trust that you will be encouraged as you read about what is happening within the GFA community. This edition is packed with exciting news, encouraging articles, as well as information to keep you in touch. As you read, our prayer is that you will be "provoked to love and good works" both within your own families, as well as in the area of influence in which GOD has placed you.

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16th - 19th April 2009 | Stanwell Tops NSW

The GFA National Conference is fast coming up and fast filling up! Go to [familiesoffire.gfi.org.au](http://familiesoffire.gfi.org.au) to find all the information you need, including detailed costs, program, accommodation, activities, meals, transport, speakers and more. You'll also be able to register for the conference, and given they're already 35% full for people choosing to say onsite (people who pre-registered were given the first chance to register), make sure you get in quick. Gary & Anne Marie Ezzo, along with the Bill & Joan Grosser will be the Keynote Speakers for the conference. We look forward to seeing you there!!

## COWBOY /WESTERN NIGHT

DATE : 23 AUGUST 2008

TIME : Arrive 4pm, Dinner at 6pm

PLACE : 85 Cardup Siding Rd CARDUP

BYO Picnic Dinner (and utensils/cups/plates)

Tea/Coffee provided

RSVP (so we can have an idea of numbers)

95251032 or [jwieske@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jwieske@optusnet.com.au)

PLEASE COME DRESSED TO HAVE FUN (COSTUMES ARE ENCOURAGED)

BONFIRE, FELLOWSHIP, BUSH DANCING, Singing!

This is Open to the wider Christian community, not just GFWA, So feel free to invite friends.



As the month of August rolls to an end, so with it does the winter season. GOD has been very gracious to us as a state with HIS wonderful blessings in the rain that replenishes the earth and what a joy to see the new life displayed in the green all around us. For many the winter is a depressing, low time as it is cold and wet and the sun often does not shine, yet after every winter there is a spring. Now spring time is a time that you can't help but get excited about. Sure, it's still a bit cool in the mornings and it still sometimes rains, but the sun shines warm, the earth brings forth it's blossoms in a display of the majesty of our great creator GOD. Have you ever wondered what spring would be like if it followed a winter of no rain? I don't think it would be that exciting anymore. You see, all that 'depressing' winter weather, though often not enjoyable, has a purpose, which is realised in the height of spring as the earth brings forth the glory of GOD. We all know that GOD works HIS purposes in nature through the laws HE has established and as they work in harmony HIS glory is revealed and we get to enjoy it all around us.

I'm sure we all know of families that are right now going through that 'winter' period relationally. In their lives and families much appears to be cold and miserable, the sun hardly shines and they are surrounded by an air of despondence, hopelessness and lowness. Maybe that's where you are right now in your family. Actually, as we look back over our lives we have all been there at one time or another to some degree. There is good news as after winter comes the spring. As with nature, so with life and family, GOD has set in place HIS laws and principles which govern HIS purpose for us. Our prayer and encouragement to you is that as you faithfully work through GOD'S laws and principles for the family, despite the rain, we can look ahead to a joyous springtime of harvest 'if we faint not'. As faithful servants to the King of Kings we wish to provoke you all to reach out to others in need, even if it is just an ear to listen or a shoulder to lean on. Through your lives and families, continue to be salt and light that the name of our great GOD will be glorified.

There are many things happening within the GFWA community that you need to be aware of. We all know that a like minded community is a valuable asset to us in our effort to raise godly children. We pray that you will take notice of what is on and be encouraged to participate. In this newsletter we begin a new section which will include articles written by local people within the GFWA community. We know you will be encouraged by the first article which has been written by Steve Walker.

For those of you who don't already know, Bill and Joan Grosser have finally 'hit the road' in their new caravan. We will continue to update you on their progress as they prompt GFA and set about to encourage families.

As you continue to be about the our heavenly Father's business, may HIS peace be present in your homes, HIS word ever in your heart, HIS praise and blessings ever on your lips and HIS love ever lived out in your lives. To HIM be the glory.

Oh, did I mention the camp? You just have to be there!!!

The GFWA State Team  
Justin & Jane Warren  
Dan & Marina Ross  
Steve & Patrice Walker  
David & Charissa Scotford  
John & Tricia Wieske

## **BILL & JOAN HAVE A CARAVAN**

Although it's not fully paid for yet.

You will well remember our appeal to the GFWA community in the last newsletter to bless Bill & Joan with a caravan as a small token for the many years of labour (let alone the money) they have invested into GFA to the honour of GOD. We are excited to be able to announce that, although it is not yet fully funded, we as a community have proceed to step out in faith and have purchased Bill & Joan a caravan. We commissioned Bill & Joan to look around for a van that they felt would fulfill their needs, while a couple of people in the community were commissioned to investigate all the available options. After looking at more caravans that you care to remember, GOD worked a miracle (again). Bill & Joan had their heart set on a particular caravan, however, some considered this to not be the best option and Bill & Joan where encouraged to keep looking. Even though this was a bit frustrating for Bill & Joan, they did keep looking. It was then that Bill found a caravan for sale in the Quokka which turned out to be just the one. It was being sold by a pastor who Bill & Joan knew. It was only 18 months old (the other one was 8 years old) and it was being sold at a very reasonable price. After much prayer and consideration and not yet having the money, the community decided to step out in faith by arranging bridging finance to purchase the caravan.

As you hear of Bill and Joan in their travels and you see their caravan, give GOD the glory for the gift which you as a community have given that will be used to advance GOD'S kingdom. We will continue to appeal to you on this behalf that if GOD is calling you to chip in then we would encourage you to do so.

Contributions can be made by cheques payable to "Growing Families WA"  
Sent to: 38 Brookside Square CANNINGVALE WA 6155 or you can deposit your gift online to...

Account Name : Growing Families WA

BSB : 086 - 509

Acct No : 010393092

Please add in the reference line "Grossers"



## **THE TRAVELS OF BILL & JOAN**

On Saturday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August Bill and Joan 'hit the road'. Their first stop was in Kalgoorlie (Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> August) where they encouraged families who have been involved in GFA for many years. They met up with a family who were one of the first to do Prep for Parenting and their daughter is now 18. Bill and Joan have not caught up with them for 13 yrs and they themselves went away excited and encouraged as to what GOD is doing in families.

From Kalgoorlie it was off to Alice Springs via the Nullarbor, Ceduna and Coober Pedy. They arrived in Alice Springs on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> of August and they are right into it. They plan to be in Alice Springs for several weeks as they minister in churches, schools, facilitate a Teenwise course, encourage facilitators and just to be a blessing to all they meet. Please remember to pray for them as a family, for safe travel, good health and for GOD to prepare the way and hearts before them. We will continue to keep you informed of their travels in future newsletters.

*“Children’s children are the crown of old men,  
And the glory of children is their father”*

(Proverbs 17:6) NKJV

I’ve always entertained happy thoughts about becoming a grandfather. As a teenager I thought that being a grandparent was something that would just happen by itself, and like Hazel in *Watership Down* I would be called home at a ripe old age, surrounded by respectful descendants <sup>1</sup>.

It’s been a while since I was a teenager though, and these days there is a lot of uncertainty about even becoming a grandparent. Recent ABS statistics show that the proportion of Australian couples without children grew from 35% in 1997 to 40% in 2007 <sup>2</sup>. I recognise that many couples who would like to start a family remain childless because of infertility. However, these figures also reflect the fact that much of our culture views having children as an option, a hindrance, or even downright irresponsible. If you don’t believe me, read this:

*“According to a 2007 Schools Environment newsletter, written by the government sustainability officer in New South Wales and sent to schools in this program, teachers are encouraged to lead children to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation’s Planet Slayer website and use Professor Schpinkee’s Greenhouse Calculator. The newsletter refers to the calculator as a “great game for kids.”*

*In the calculator game, children and grownups are represented as pigs, with the child playing the game as a little pig in the middle of two bigger pigs. Then, presumably with the help of their parents, the children are asked to answer 11 questions involving their living habits – that is to say, their greenhouse-gas generating habits. After answering the questions, a press of a final button results in the little pig exploding into nothing but a little squiggly tail quivering in the middle of a pool of blood. A message above the blood pool informs the child at which age he or she should die. An elaborating message explains: “Based on your emissions from your greenhouse usage, you used up your share of the planet by the time you were xx years old.”*

Putting carbon footprints and pigs to one side, you may be wondering why I would even be thinking about my children’s children now. Do I just have too much time on my hands, or are things going so well with the current generation that I can already start thinking about the next? Not really, I’ve come to realise that what I am doing right now is affecting generations to come. If I really want to be a positive, lasting influence, I need to figure out how to do that, come up with a plan and then get working to make it happen.

For a start, I can do something in response to the kind of cultural issues that were mentioned above:

Showing and telling my children that they are a blessing to me, so that they will want to seek the same blessing and reward of having children <sup>4</sup>;

Teaching my children about God’s plan for generational faithfulness, and kindling a desire within them to be part of that plan <sup>5</sup>; and

Praying that when the time comes, the Lord will open the womb for my children <sup>6</sup>.

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Like many of you, we are also heading into a phase of life when decisions need to be made about our children's education, vocation, courtship and marriage – decisions that will affect our grandchildren's generation. We can't make all of those decisions for our children, but we can do two things. First, we can develop a relationship with our child that enables us to coach them through their life decisions. Secondly, as part of our Ephesians 6:4 training we need to help our child establish a biblical worldview, so that they can make those decisions wisely. In the epilogue to *Growing Kids God's Way*, Gary Ezzo emphasises the need to establish and maintain this kind of thinking in our families:

*“What children become in the future will largely be a reflection of what their parents believe today. The family is the value generating institution of our society. Once it becomes secular in it's thinking, there is little likelihood that it will return to the values that formerly made it strong.”*

If, like me, you need some inspiration from time to time, take a look at a man called Jonadab, whose descendants were named after his father and were known as the Recabites<sup>7</sup>. Jonadab was a visionary father; he saw where the rest of society was headed and realised that his family needed to live differently if they were to successfully maintain their covenant relationship with God. So he commanded his family that neither they or their descendants must ever drink wine, build houses, sow seed or plant vineyards; they were to live as nomads in tents.

250 years later, the Recabites were temporarily staying in Jerusalem, because the King of Babylon had invaded Israel: as Jonadab had anticipated, Israel lost their way and now judgment had arrived in the land. God had a purpose for the Recabites though; He instructed Jeremiah to invite them to the temple and give them wine to drink.

*“Did they join in? Did they relax their rule for the moment so as to not offend their new friend? Did they realize that they were living under emergency war conditions and that it was only courteous to adapt to the customs of their protectors? Did they take a realistic view of the situation and share the common cup, showing appreciation for being treated so generously?”*

*They did not, as Jeremiah knew they would not. “They answered, “We will drink no wine, for Jonadab the son of Recab, our father, commanded us, “You shall not drink wine”” (Jer 35:6). The Recabites lived life not on the basis of what was current with the crowd but on the basis of what had been commanded by their ancestor.”<sup>8</sup>*

Jonadab must have had a pretty good method of passing his vision on, because 250 years or about 10 generations later, his descendants knew who he was and they followed his instruction; they were faithful. And Jonadab's family were blessed for it, because the Lord said,

*“Jonadab son of Recab will never fail to have a man to serve me”.*

(Jeremiah 35:19) NIV

I hope and pray that we can have that kind of a positive, lasting influence on our families.

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*"May the Lord bless you from Zion  
all the days of your life;  
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem,  
and may you live to see your children's children."*

*(Psalm 128: 5 & 6) NIV*

Steve Walker, July 2008

Richard Adams, "Watership Down"  
Weekend Australian, June 7-8 2008, "Childless Families on the Increase"  
Globeandmail.com, July 1 2008 "How long do you deserve to live?"  
Psalm 127: 3-5  
Psalm 78: 5-8  
Gen. 29:31 & 30:22, 1 Sam. 1:5-6 & 2:20-21  
Read Jeremiah 35  
Eugene Petersen, "Run with the Horses", 1983 Intervarsity Press



We are looking forward to a fantastic **long weekend** of fellowship with like-minded families. There will be some great teaching and discussion; an exciting softball match; learning experiences for the primary age children and lots of free time and opportunity to relax and chat over a cuppa too!! Activities include games, fellowship, teaching, fellowship, sport, fellowship, meals together, and more fellowship!!

Along with this newsletter you should have also received an attachment titled 'GFWA Camp Registration Form', to register please fill this out and send it to the appropriate places listed on the form, along with your deposit. The deposit is \$80 per family, with the full amount due to be paid by the 18/09/08.

Please note that the Serpentine Camp schedule has no limit on the number children included in the family package.

There are only 4 caravan sites available, so if you wish to use this facility please get in quick (first in best dressed). There will be a discount of \$20 per caravanning family.