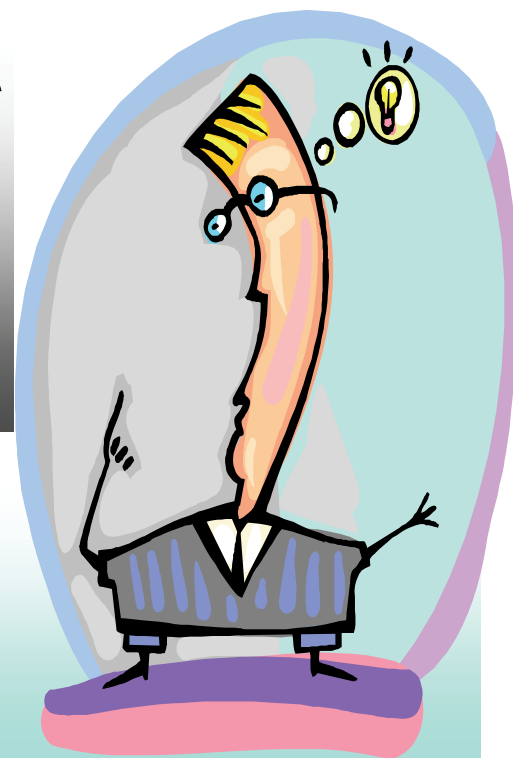


never underestimate
the power of
A GOOD IDEA!



Once upon a time, long before Grapevine got launched on this unsuspecting world, an idea was planted in our minds. It was just the germ of an idea at first, a tiny seed that was sown, a very small pebble that was dropped into a big pond. But that germ of an idea wouldn't go away. Instead, it grew on us, got bolder and brighter, and became one of the best ideas we'd ever stumbled on ...

I was reminded of those early beginnings just a few weeks ago, when I learnt that a long-time Grapevine supporter had died. Her name was Bev. She'd been one of Grapevine's most loyal and faithful friends. And it was her late husband, Trevor, who, three long decades ago, dropped that germ of an idea in our minds.

It's a story that not many people know. And it deserves to be more widely shared. So fasten your seatbelts, ladies and gentlemen, and read on ...

The day I met Trevor is a day I'll never forget. He phoned me at my office, said he needed to talk to me, said it was important, and insisted that it couldn't wait – it had to be that very day!

It seems now like a previous lifetime. But, back then, I was the 31-year-old editor of Reach Out – the “almost controversial” youth magazine that we'd been publishing for several years. We were all young, all crazy, full of wild ideas, convinced that we were gonna change the world. And I'd just got back from my first overseas trip (to a Christian youth conference in the States) – bright-eyed with new possibilities and busting to put them into action.

I remember trying to put Trevor off, offering to call him in a week or two. But he wasn't about to be put off. So, somewhat taken aback, I agreed to meet this total stranger that very afternoon at his home.

I drove across town, wondering what all the mystery was about, convinced I was wasting my time. Bev met me at their front door, and ushered me – not

into an office or lounge, but into their bedroom. At which point I was taken aback for the second time that day.

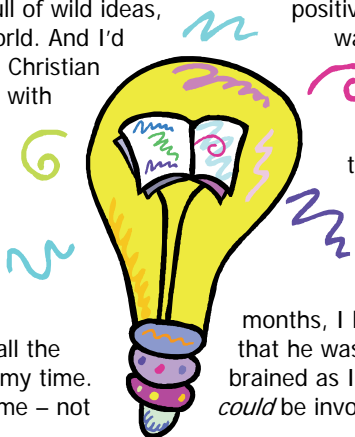
Trevor was in bed. And he didn't look well. He suffered, he told me (after shaking my hand), from kidney failure. Which explained why he was connected to this large machine that stood beside him in the bedroom, clicking and whirring and pumping his blood through what seemed to be countless tubes.

I remember thinking “*This is bizarre!*” – and wondering “*What on earth am I doing here?*” But finally Trevor filled me in ...

He was a businessman, forced by ill health to run his business from his bed. And he had a proposition to put to me. He owned a delivery company that put advertising material in letterboxes all over the country ... he wanted to launch a new nationwide community newspaper, something positive and wholesome and uplifting ... and he wanted me and my Reach Out team to write the articles.

I can't remember much else that was said at that meeting. But I know I went back to my office thinking the man was nuts – *how could someone that sick take on something that big?* – and seriously doubting that this hare-brained scheme was for us.

But, over the next few weeks and months, I had further meetings with Trevor. I discovered that he wasn't nuts, after all – his scheme wasn't as hare-brained as I first thought – and maybe, just maybe, we *could* be involved.



In hindsight, I realise, a seed had been sown, a pebble had been dropped into our 'pond', an idea had been planted in our minds ... and slowly-slowly-slowly it grew on us.

But then it all fell apart one day, when we got news that Trevor had suddenly died. And I remember hugging Bev, and offering our condolences, and thinking, "Well, that's the end of that!"

However, it wasn't, you see. Because bits of Trevor's scheme had taken root, stuck, and wouldn't go away. The possibility of publishing something positive and helpful, and putting it free into every letterbox – well, that REALLY appealed. And while we knew nothing about community newspapers, we DID know something ABOUT magazines.

We played with it, toyed with it, kicked it around, tried it on for size. And, gradually, it became one of the best ideas we'd ever stumbled on. A FAMILY magazine ... that would promote stable, loving relationships ... that would inject fun and hope and wholeness into homes all over the country –YEAH, THAT COULD BE EXCITING!

I remember lying awake night after night, tossing and turning it over, wondering if it would work. I mean, we had no money (not a spare cent in our bank account), no experience (with advertising or distribution), no brains (according to the sceptics) – and no Trevor.

But at some point, many weeks down the track, we took the plunge, bit the bullet, and made the Big Decision: "YES – LET'S DO IT!"

Nine months later, the very first edition of Grapevine Magazine rolled off the presses – to be delivered with love to every home in Auckland.

Trevor's gone. And, now, Bev's gone. But today, 26 years later, that good idea is still bearing fruit ...

Why have I told you this? I mean, is there a message here, something for us all to learn? Well, yes, I think there is. You see, if it wasn't for Trevor, Grapevine might never have happened. If it wasn't for his phonecall and his insistence, I might never have met him that day ... and that germ of an idea might never have captured our imagination.

Never underestimate the power of a good idea!

And never underestimate the difference YOU can make – and perhaps have ALREADY MADE – to a venture like Grapevine.

Your faithfulness and friendship ... your encouragement and love ... your notes and letters ... your regular, generous donations and gifts ... your reliable, count-on-able Street Sponsorship – NONE of these things are insignificant. They ALL matter, they ALL count ...

... and without them Grapevine might never have got this far – let alone be here FOR Kiwi families today or tomorrow or in 25 years time!

I hope this story has inspired you as much as it's re-inspired me. And I hope you'll continue to give Grapevine YOUR vote ... YOUR help ... and YOUR generous support each month.

We need you! We appreciate you! And we want to thank you for being on our team!



AND NOW A QUICK SIDEWAYS WORD FROM MIKE



It's hard getting my head around this one ... I mean, officially we're now over half-way through 2007 – and I'm wondering where on earth the time has gone! My kids are all getting older and I'm having trouble remembering exactly how many we've got, let alone their names and how old they all are! All this PLUS the fact that more than a year has passed by since I joined the Grapevine team ...

The year has gone quickly because we've been working hard on a couple of exciting new projects – our new online **LIBRARY**, and just recently, Grapevine's new **READERS FORUM** (more on that shortly).

If you haven't seen it yet, we've finally put on our website a new resource containing **all our main articles** since the beginning of 2000 – PLUS the entire magazine since 2005! These quality features and interviews deserve to be used – and are now available for download in the **LIBRARY** section of our website. There are more than 60 articles listed (with many more to come), and we've put them in categories to help you find the one you need. And best of all, these resources are available for FREE! So check it out and see if you can find an old favourite!

Grapevine's **READERS FORUM** can also be found online – is now live and ready to happen! It gives readers an opportunity to have their say ... respond to any article in our magazine ... share their own views ... or even provide some advice. We hope it will help foster a community of support and encouragement for Kiwi families.

Given that it's only just started, I want to encourage YOU to get involved – it's easy and it's fun! All you have to do is go to our website, click on the forum link (or go direct to www.grapevine.co.nz/forum) and register. All the information you need is there, so sign up today! Who knows, your involvement may really help someone out there ... and you just might find some encouragement for yourself!

Anyway, that's about it from me – my second year on the Team is well and truly underway ... I'd better go and enjoy what's left of it. Anyone for a surf? Cheers – **MIKE**



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