

CARRY ON NURSE!

I never planned to be an editor. It just happened. And I'm not entirely sure how. I mean, I could've been an accountant. That's what my dad was, and that's what I assumed I would be when I left school. I could've been a youth worker or a minister, and I actually tried both of those for a few years. I could've been an author or a jazz musician or a wildlife photographer, and I'd still like to be, I think, one day, maybe.

BUT ONE THING I NEVER WANTED to be, never in my wildest dreams imagined I would be, is a nurse. Which is funny, really. Because that's what I was just recently, for three long weeks, when my wife got sick.

I wasn't just any old nurse. I was a Staff-Nurse. A self-appointed, unpaid, hard-working Staff-Nurse. And I didn't do a half-bad job, even if I say so myself. My only regret was, I didn't have a uniform!

What happened was, my fit-as-a-fiddle, normally-healthy wife came down with pneumonia – suddenly and without notice. And I, just as suddenly, found myself *having* to do things I don't normally do.

(What's this got to do with Grapevine, you're wondering? Well, keep reading, because there's a connection ...)

We both, at first, thought she had the 'flu. And we both, at first, expected her to bounce back. But as 24 hours became two days, three

days, four days, five ... my oft-repeated reassurances – *"Here, take some more Panadol, you'll feel okay in the morning!"* – were sounding more and more hollow. And, far from bouncing, she could barely stagger to my car for a Day 6 trip to the doctor.

By now it was obvious: she wasn't getting well – she was getting *worse*: weak and nauseous, feverish and ill. In fact, she'd never felt so crook in her life! But the cause of it all remained hidden. And it took more probing by the doc, more blood-tests at the lab, and, finally, admission to hospital, before the culprit was found.

With some powerful drugs now in her system, she began to



feel better. But my job as Staff-Nurse was far from over. Like any good husband would, I'd already spent a week picking up the slack, going the extra mile, carrying an extra load — and, like any good husband should, I just kept doing it: stroking her fevered brow ... changing her sweaty sheets ... delivering water and juice to her bedside ... and offering my frequent, free-of-charge diagnoses.

On top of these nursely duties, I somehow coped with the cleaning and the washing and the ironing and the cooking. No, not quickly. (It took me AGES to do stuff that she usually does in a flash.) And no, not *really* the cooking. Our friends took care of that. (But, once she came out of hospital, I *did* open some cans of soup and unfreeze some tasty dinners!)

It's over now, thank goodness. She lost six kilos in three weeks. I gained a new respect for the huge job she does at our place. And we both feel renewed sympathy for people who get sick for three *years* — not just three weeks.

She's up-and-about and back-in-charge — and I've put my stethoscope away.

Phew ...

PICKING UP THE SLACK, GOING THE EXTRA MILE, carrying an extra load: that's kind-of what Grapevine tries to do — for Kiwis who feel worried or weighed-down, parents who feel desperate or pooped, couples who feel stressed or broken.

We call it 'GIVING FAMILIES A LIFT' ... and we've been doing it for nearly 30 years. We do it willingly, because it's the least we can do — and because partners like you make it possible. And the feedback we get says "IT WORKS!"

- ♥ **TREASURES:** "I'm astonished to find such treasures in a magazine delivered free to my box. It's really heart-warming stuff" (Annette)
- ♥ **OASIS:** "Your magazine has become, for my family at least, an oasis of faith and hope and love in this cold modern desert." (Judy)
- ♥ **BALANCED:** "The most caring, loving, sensitive, balanced article on marriage I've read in a long time" (Brian)
- ♥ **FLICKER OF LIGHT:** "Your last edition was so positive and helpful and optimistic, a flicker of light at the end of the tunnel." (Lisa)
- ♥ **LETTERBOX TREAT:** "I find it impossible to read most things that come through my letterbox, but I never miss Grapevine. You reach me because you are real. Thank you." (Tessa)

- ♥ **PEACE:** "You've given me peace of mind and helped me change my ways. Thanks." (Joe)
- ♥ **RELIEF:** "Your magazine couldn't have come at a better time. I'm so relieved. I never knew anyone else felt like this" (Sharlene)
- ♥ **NO ONE ELSE:** "My partner and I have had a very hard 12 months, but you've been a great help. You've reminded us of God's presence when there was no-one else." (Carolyn)
- ♥ **FATHER-OF-THREE:** "My three teens always read Grapevine, and have since we began getting it. You've earned our admiration and hearty thanks." (Ian)
- ♥ **HIT THE SPOT:** "Your latest edition on DEPRESSION really hit the spot. Now I feel no longer alone with that lonely problem." (Valerie)
- ♥ **LIFE AND DEATH:** "Thank you all for what you've achieved for me. I was seriously contemplating suicide before discovering your magazine." (Stephaney)

GRAPEVINE'S NEW YEAR HAS STARTED WITH A hiss and a roar. We've got a great new mag about to hit the streets — and some very exciting ideas for the rest of 2010. But despite ending last year well, in the Dollars Department, our gift income through Jan/Feb has spluttered a little.

As you can see from the 'DONATION TRACKER' below, we're already \$7,000 below budget. Which is going to cause us problems if we can't fix it quick — and even bigger problems if it keeps getting worse.

The recession is still biting, I guess. And that's no surprise. Grapevine's friends aren't immune — and some supporters have told us: they've lost jobs, lost income, had to cut back.

Can YOU help? Are YOU able to pick up the slack, go the extra mile, carry an extra load?

Your generous March donation — \$50, \$100, \$500, \$1000 — could bring us back on track. Because every extra dollar counts, it really does.

Please accept a big "thank-you" in anticipation from the team here at Grapequarters!

Enjoy the next magazine, won't you ...

John



2010 DONATION TRACKER

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