



# Connections

◆ A Journal by & for Women in Ministry ◆

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## It's a God Thing!

By Sherry Heber

"It was a God thing!" my friend enthusiastically proclaimed as she told me of God's miraculous intervention in a family situation. It was a wonderful testimony with a happy ending. You've probably heard many of these kinds of stories and thought, God was there. Only he could have done this!

As a girl in Minnesota, I remember my mom driving our family to church on a winding, icy road. As we came to a bridge overlooking a treacherous river, we began sliding sideways down the hill. Within seconds, we were wedged between an iron railing and a huge tree, with us kids looking straight down at the icy water. We knew God's hand held our car in place until help could come. It was a happy ending—definitely a God thing!

But another time my 13-year old nephew died from a ruptured appendix. Hundreds came to the funeral. Throughout the following days, those kind people ministered to my grief-stricken brother and his family. Help came in numerous ways at just the right time from friends and strangers alike. Although a sad event, we knew God was there and that this, too, was a God thing.

From these experiences, and many more in my life, I have come to believe God is in every situation, good, bad or ugly, right where he needs to be, working out the details in his supreme way and timing. And because he is intimately involved in everything, I believe *everything* is a God thing!

In those situations close to home, the illnesses, the marriage problems, the loss of finances or job, God says he is with us. "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5, *NIV* throughout); "For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you" (Isaiah 41:13). Again, in Isaiah 49:15-16: "I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands."

And what of the affairs of this world, good and bad alike, taking place in our towns, communities and countries? God says he is also involved. Psalm 75:6-7 says, "It is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another." Proverbs 16:33: "The lot is cast into the lap, but its

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## It's a God Thing!

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every decision is from the Lord.” Psalm 33:10-11 pronounces: “The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.”

I don't know about you, but it comforts and soothes my anxious soul to know God is sovereign over all. He loves us and is right there with us in every facet of our lives.

I was glad God was there when our family nearly lost our lives on that wintry day. And I was glad he was there to comfort us, as only he can, in the death of my nephew. We may not always like what is happening to or around us, but it is comforting to know an all-powerful, almighty God in heaven is absolutely in control of it all. He misses nothing. There is nowhere on this earth he is not present; no situation, good or bad escapes his attention.

Where is God? He is everywhere and in everything, and that truly is a God thing!



*Sherry works as part-time receptionist for a Baptist church, and also serves with her husband Lynn in their GCI church in Ozark, Missouri. “We are retired, our children are grown and life is very peaceful. That’s about to change because our oldest son just announced his engagement—exciting!” She can be reached at [gracefamily@gmail.com](mailto:gracefamily@gmail.com).*

## CONNECTIONS

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## *Connections*

### Mission Statement

**Primary:** The Connections for Clergy Support Department provides intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual support and encouragement in the personal lives of GCI ministry families.

Three primary means of serving are the *Connections* journal, the Connections for a Successful Ministry and Life web pages, and the Nurturennet forum. We highlight women in ministry but are inclusive of the needs of the entire family.

**Secondary:** To promote respect, understanding and support for women, their personal ministries and ministries that serve them.

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• CALIFORNIA •  
TAM 2 U

## My One Word

Words are powerful. With them, we can paint mental pictures of everything from time travel to space travel, from scenic vistas to life stories. A single word can bring up memories, feelings, aromas and even tastes.

I stumbled across a blog dedicated to helping people find their one word for the year. It's not a resolution, rather an alternative to resolutions: one word that boils down something you'd like to change or remind yourself of during the year, with a focus on spiritual transformation.

Last year I chose the word *immerse* to remind me my life is immersed in the life of Christ. Every time I sat in a hot tub or bath (and lots of other times!), I thought of how the life of Jesus is all around and in me and I am in him. It helped me realign my focus to what's really important.

My one word for 2013 is *breathe*. I don't remember why I chose it, but it could have something to do with my fascination with Acts 17:28: "For in him we live and move and have our being." When I say my word, I picture myself breathing in the life and Spirit of God, breathing in his love, grace and mercy and breathing it all back out to others.

My one word is helping me turn all the moments of my life into God moments and to really practice his presence. And as I do a lot of breathing, it's easy to remember!

My word also helps me stop and think, to act instead of react when I would usually be inclined to react first and think later. It's a

little like counting to 10, but better because I'm reminded to breathe out God's grace which he lavishes on everyone I see.

Living with one word is so much easier in a way than making a resolution. At the same time, it's difficult, because it's a single word that will shape a whole year of your life. Somehow it's more compelling too—your one word isn't a mantra but more like a butterfly the Spirit sends to flutter around in my head and heart, drawing me close to God as I follow him toward greater intimacy.

If you'd like to read more from the people behind My One Word, visit their blog at [www.myoneword.org](http://www.myoneword.org). You can see other's words and post your own. If you choose a word and would like to share it, post it to [nurturen.net](http://nurturen.net). It will be interesting to see how God works in each of us through the year with one word from him.



Tammy

Could we with ink the ocean fill  
And were the skies of parchment made  
Were every stalk on earth a quill  
And every man a scribe by trade  
To write the love of God above  
Would drain the ocean dry  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole  
Though stretched from sky to sky.

—Frederick M. Lehman  
*The Love of God*



## Macy, the Mall Kitty

By Joyce Catherwood

Several months ago when my husband Carn reached the entrance to Macy's department store at our mall, he heard the plaintive cry of a kitten. Peeking out among the shrubs near a garbage bin was an adorable calico cat that appeared to be about 4 months old and desperately wanted some attention. Carn attempted to approach her but she scurried away into the depths of the greenery.

It was obvious she had been abandoned, left to survive on her own. Carn often walks in the mall for exercise, so being both a cat lover and soft-hearted, he used the same entrance to the store over the next few days to see if he might encounter her again. It was spring and the weather was pleasant enough for her to be outside, but he wasn't sure how she was getting food and water.

Some days Carn saw her and other days she was nowhere to be found. He didn't want her to starve, so twice he bought her a sandwich from a fast food place. I convinced him it would be much more economical to bring her dry cat food, which he started to do, leaving it where he had last seen her.

Spring turned into summer and to his surprise, she began to turn up as soon as he put a bowl of food down for her. They became



well acquainted. But even though she would come close when he had cat food in his hand and greeted him with a loud meow, she wouldn't let him touch her.

My husband soon discovered others shared his concern and they too fed her from time to time. But none as faithful as he. She became his mall kitty and he carried food for her in the trunk of his car. As colder winter weather approached, he had serious concerns about her survival. Through a cat rescue center friend, an arrangement was made with the city animal shelter for the kitty to be captured and given a home as soon as possible.

An employee at Macy's, a young woman named Blair, was also worried about the little calico's welfare and was trying to gain her trust so she could catch her. One day after Blair had finished her shift, she stopped to check on the kitten. By chance, my husband walked up at the same time with his bowl of cat food. When he told her of the impending rescue she was thrilled because she had already decided to adopt this sweet little creature.

A few weeks passed. Then one day when Blair stopped by to see the kitty, she noticed the animal rescue group trying to trap her. The frightened cat hid under the store's trash bin and couldn't be persuaded to come out.

Blair sat beside the bin for two hours talking to her and calming her down, until the kitten felt safe enough to crawl out. As a reward for her helpfulness, Blair was allowed to adopt her quickly and inexpensively from the shelter. Within days, the homeless kitty had a name (Blair thought *Macy* was appropriate) and a warm and loving place to live. And my husband breathed a sigh of relief.

I've heard people ask if spending time worrying about and rescuing animals makes

Faith means believing in advance  
what will only make sense in reverse.



—Unknown

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## Macy, the Mall Kitty

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sense when so many humans in the world are in drastic need of help. That's a valid question. The needs of people should never be neglected. However the rest of creation is not unimportant to God.

I'm reminded of Jesus' words in Matthew 10:29: "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care" (NIV). Jesus goes on to say we are worth more than many sparrows. With an added touch of tenderness, this scripture also shows the Creator's concern for diminutive sparrows. He knows when each one falls to the ground and dies. Though insignificant and monetarily valueless, they are within the Father's care.

The helplessness of abandoned and abused animals draws kindness and compassion from us and softens our hearts. An act of kindness is an act of kindness, no matter what the circumstances. Not only is it beneficial for the recipient, whether human or animal, but also for those who show it.

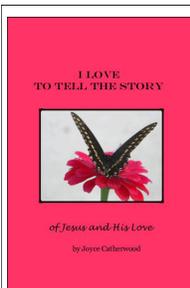
Rescuing an animal brings a feeling of satisfaction and helps fulfill our innate desire to be helpful and useful. I volunteer at the Texas Siamese Rescue Center near my home and have come to realize there's a significant ripple effect. I'm not only helping the "Meezers" as the cats are affectionately called, but also helping people.

I go to give TLC and attention to the kitties, but also I'm helping ease the workload of the two generous women at the center who selflessly devote all their energy to rescuing and providing a safe haven for homeless cats. When the center finds "forever" homes for these kitties, the new owners then become recipients of the pleasure and companionship these adoptees bring. It's a beautiful cycle of God's goodness reaching out far and wide and a poignant reflection of the Father's care.

Little Macy, the mall kitty, now has a lovely caring owner and Blair has an amazing pet. Macy's fuzzy presence brings warmth and fun to her new home. And my husband is as pleased as he can be to have been a part of her rescue. Now what's wrong with that? Any time we are able to help ease the world's suffering, even if it comes in the form of a kitten with a cute orange nose struggling to survive under a department store trash bin, it's all good.



*"One of Blair's rescue cats fell ill and the vet suggested the energetic Macy was stressing out the older kitty. So Macy moved in with my granddaughter Jayci and her new husband Alex. Macy now has their undivided attention and admiration and her own princess bed." You may email Joyce at [joyce.catherwood@gci.org](mailto:joyce.catherwood@gci.org).*



### *I Love to Tell the Story*

To purchase Joyce's e-book for \$7.99, go to [www.blurb.com](http://www.blurb.com) and type *Joyce Catherwood* on the search line. Scroll down to the e-book. A hard copy is also available. Contact her by email [joyce.catherwood@gci.org](mailto:joyce.catherwood@gci.org) for a discounted price.

## It's a Matter of Perspective

By Anne Gillam

My daughter, a teacher at our elementary school here in Bonanza, was approached by a colleague who said, "If I were you I would move." My daughter asked why, and her colleague pointed out all of the happenings on our dead-end street.

It had been an eventful year. I usually walk out back along the irrigation ditch. I love looking at the fields ripe with grain or alfalfa hay. I feel blessed by the well-maintained fields around me and I do not have to lift a finger to enjoy them. I love watching the farmers plow, plant and cut the hay. I love the steady sound of the irrigation. I can see the miracle of God in progress, how out of the bleak and barren ground comes the miracle of life given by our Maker.

For some reason this year I did not feel safe taking my usual walk. My fears were confirmed when the neighbor stopped by to chat. He talked of killing a rattlesnake on the other side of our garden fence and spotting a cougar and her cub. We have seen a rattlesnake near our home once, and as for cougars, they do come through every once in a while. I avoid walking at dawn or dusk be-

cause of this, but a mother protecting her cub is even more dangerous.

Then my neighbor spoke of the black bear sighting. In all of the 30-plus years I have lived here, I had not heard of a black bear coming down this far. The bear was preying on the neighbor's cattle and was eventually shot and killed. It was thought to be one of the biggest black bears shot in Oregon. That cinched it; I was going to put off my walks this year.

Later I was curious as to why so many helicopters were flying around and why the traffic on our road had suddenly increased. I found out a double murder occurred not far from us. I am not sure if the case has ever been solved.

Cougars, black bears and murder; this is what my daughter's colleague saw as a red light. She saw the dangers and her thoughts were about fleeing the area. She saw the negative, focusing on the dangers, but I tended to see the positive and focused on the protection I had from them. It was a classic example of the half-glass-empty vs. half-glass-full way of thinking. I wonder how many times God intervenes in our lives and we don't recognize his protection? How do you see something that has not happened to you, unless God gives you a glimpse of his protective hand?

Paul survived the storms at sea on his way to Rome. The hand of God protected him and his shipmates. They arrived on the shore of Malta safely, but as Paul helped to build a fire on the beach, a viper latched onto his hand. Half-glass-empty thinking by the island's residents saw Paul's eminent death, but Paul shook off the snake. He had faith in God's protection; whether or not the snake was deadly mattered not. No matter what

Say not my soul, "From whence can God relieve my care?" Remember that Omnipotence has servants everywhere. His method is sublime, His heart profoundly kind. God never is before His time. And never is behind.



—Charles Spurgeon

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## Perspective

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happened, in the long run, he knew he was safe in God's hands.

We are surrounded by many dangers and are wise to avoid them if we can, but we can't live our lives in fear of what might happen. This doesn't mean we should be careless or foolish, but we must place our fears and concerns in God's capable hands, trusting him to guide us, asking for his direction and protection and living our lives for him always. The world sees through different eyes. We have the eyes of Jesus.

Heavenly Father, help us not to live in fear, but to live to your honor and glory, help us to be examples of your promises, windows of your mercy and demonstrations of your grace. Amen.



*Anne says: "It has been a winter of illness for me. I picked up a virus in early December and it led to bronchitis and asthma. I am looking forward to spring so I can begin my walks again. I enjoy the alone time with the Lord. He truly is my shield and strength." You may email Anne at [webbass@aol.com](mailto:webbass@aol.com).*

## Small Miracles

*By Sharie Meyer*

How long do we remember the points in a sermon? Generally not that long. If we are lucky, an occasional thought sticks long term. One of those thoughts has been with me now for some 25 years. It was point No. 6 in the minister's sermon: "Expect small miracles daily." Oh, I forget and I don't do that every day. And then every so often, something happens, some small miracle bursts through my complacency and I remember point No. 6.

I had one of those recently. Embarrassing it had to happen to me but I am so grateful it did.

It was time for my reading group's annual dinner and book-related gift exchange. We plan a special time with various dishes and courses assigned to each member. We start with champagne followed by appropriate wines. There is laughter and conversation and fun and giggles and general jollity afoot.

The evening ends with the gift bag exchange. We set a dollar limit, contents are to

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## Nurturenet

Nurturenet is a computer forum for women in ministry. Its purpose is to help you stay connected through digest-mode communication (each day's messages compiled into one email). You may use it for requests for information, prayer requests, to share ideas and resources, to receive updates on *Connections* news or just to stay connected!



**Do we  
have  
your  
email  
address?**

To join or update your email address, please send Tammy a message at [tammy.tkach@gci.org](mailto:tammy.tkach@gci.org). Please do not reply to a post unless you want to address the entire list.

## Small Miracles

*(Continued from page 7)*

be relevant to reading (tea, book marks, whatever), and the expectation is there will be gobs of books purchased for 25 cents at the Friends of the Library sale.

I really look forward to this each year. Oh yes, it does take place at my house and I get the fun of decorating the table and using good china. As I have to prepare only one dish for this somewhat formal dinner, I can put more time and energy into the table decorations. This year, I decided to use my mother's antique china. I found the perfect place mats on sale. I removed the protective pads to reveal the mirrored table top that reflected the decorations of glass and gold. I was so excited!

The evening was to start at 5 p.m. Shortly beforehand I am doing the finishing touches to my appearance. Hair done? Check. Makeup good? Check. New outfit donned? Oh, yes. Black bolero top trimmed with black sequins over black-sequined top. I was lookin' goooooood.

Fifteen minutes and people will start arriving, time to light the candles, start the music, dim the lights and—

Down the road a truck clips a power pole and we have a brown-out followed by a full power outage. When contacted, PG&E (the power company) says it will be two hours (!)

before they can fix the problem. During the brown-out I forget the stove still has power and my marvelous meat dish begins to scorch.

I dig out candles and call one of the nearby members to ask if we can move everything to her house. My CD player (set with appropriate music) blows out. Half the group is now at my house, the other half is at the substitute house. What to do, what to do?

Other than the beginning-to-burn meat, none of the other food has been heated and candles can do only so much. And then, and then, we go from no power back to brown-out and, and, and (breath being held), there is power! Full power is back and stays on.

Yea, yea, yea! Turned out to be one of our best ever dinners.

A small miracle, but, oh, it was so important. A daily miracle like our God does for us all the time. Sometimes, those small daily miracles are made obvious to us as a reminder God is in our lives and he is taking care of us, whether we are aware of it or not.



*Sharie has just celebrated another birthday (not one of the biggies) and is about to celebrate another wedding anniversary. To her every day and every year of life are gifts to be treasured. You may email Sharie at [smeyer1@mindspring.com](mailto:smeyer1@mindspring.com).*



Once we begin to flee the things that threaten and burden us, there is no end to fleeing. God's solution is surprising. He offers rest. But it's a unique form of rest. It's to rest in Him in the midst of our threats and our burdens. It's discovering as David did in seasons of distress, that God is our rock and refuge right in the thick of our situation.

—Mark Buchanan, *The Rest of God*

# Zorro and Me

By Barbara Dahlgren

## For Better or Worse

Carn and Joyce Catherwood just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Fifty years of marriage is quite an achievement—even more so if the whole 50 years were spent with the same spouse. Zorro and I are fast approaching 44. Not as impressive as 50, but an accomplishment just the same.

Zorro and I have what I like to call a yin-yang relationship—two polar complementary opposites interconnected and bound together for the greater whole. How else would you explain how two totally different people can stay married for more than 40 years? And when I say different I'm not just talking about male and female. It goes way beyond that. Our likes and dislikes are so varied one wonders how we got together in the first place. Oh, yes, now I remember! It was hormones!

We enter marriage thinking we have found our soul mates and they will bring us bliss.



But a cartoon I saw has a more realistic point of view:

The myth: Your soul mate will bring you bliss.

The truth: Your soul mate will bring out all your unresolved issues.

Truth be told, a soul mate can be quite irritating. Zorro has a few irritants I could live without. For example, if he knows a particular song he will sing out loud during a live musical theater performance. Fortunately he doesn't hop on stage, but it's just loud enough to make me wish I were sitting somewhere else—like across the room. It might be better if he actually knew the lyrics.

Zorro can't be bothered with such trivialities as lyrics. When we listen to music in the car Zorro makes up his own. Instead of singing, "Just call me angel in the morning, just touch my cheek before you leave me," he sings, "just scratch my feet before you leave me."

Even if Zorro does know the words to songs he still prefers to improvise and add "shooby-do" and "boopie doop" here and there. To this day our children can't sing the chorus of "This Little Light of Mine" without adding "oh baby" at the end of each phrase—and they are middle aged. It goes something like:

"This little light of mine—oh baby;  
I'm gonna let it shine—oh baby."

Zorro likes to nap. Just once I'd like to go to a movie he doesn't sleep through. When driving, he will sometimes catnap at a red light and depend on the car behind him to honk when the light turns green. What can I say? Zorro has the uncanny ability to fall asleep anywhere. He's not narcoleptic; he just needs a 2 o'clock nap no matter where he is. We've done a bit of traveling and I've made it my mission to take pictures of him

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## For Better or Worse

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napping, such as at Disneyland, near a canal in Venice, at the Great Wall of China.

Years ago we took our church teens to the World's Fair in Vancouver, Canada. We split off into different groups and planned to meet at a designated spot a couple of hours later. As my group neared a park bench the kids were saying how sad it was to see a bum lying asleep on the bench. As we got closer they were shocked to find it was not a bum; it was their pastor—my husband Zorro.

Driving with Zorro can be an adventure (providing he can find his car keys so we can leave), because Zorro loves short cuts and never takes the same route twice. If he dies on the way to the grocery store I won't be able to tell the police where to look for him. I won't know which way he went even though it's only a few blocks away.

Conversation on a road trip with Zorro can be stimulating. He can't pass a gas station without commenting on the price of gas and the government conspiracy to control it. He can't pass a body of water without commenting on how high or low the level is. He can't pass a billboard with a person's picture on it without telling me who he or she looks like.

Zorro has never met a stranger—that's because everyone looks like somebody else to him. If we are in a checkout line, he thinks the cashier looks like someone we know. Just once I'd like to eat out without him saying: "Look at that woman at the next table. Don't stare. Just casually glance. Who does she look like?"

Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.



—Martin Luther

"I don't know," I say.

"Oh, come on. Look closer. Doesn't she look like your mother?"

I look again. "No, she doesn't."

"Yes, she does. Look closer."

And don't get me started on his fanatical attachment to his iPhone. This list of irritants could go on and on, and I'm sure Zorro's list of what irritates him about me would probably be much longer. I've even been known to irritate myself on occasion. But you see, there is a difference between irritants and issues.

Marriage is not about never getting irritated. It's about focusing on the more important issues of life, learning to live together in spite of differences and allowing personalities to exist.

One of my favorite scriptures is Philippians 4:8, *NIV*: "Whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." All in all this is great advice, and I repeat it often, especially when those spousal irritants grate against my last nerve.

Another cartoon caption comes to mind. A happily married couple says, "We've learned to adore more than irritate." I'm thinking that might be a form of love and one reason some marriages last 50 years.



Barbara and Zorro love going to live theater performances.

They saw *Wicked*, a musical about the pre-Wizard of Oz story of the friendship between the wicked Witch of the West and Glinda the Good Witch. Fortunately Zorro was unfamiliar with the songs and couldn't sing along. You can check out Barbara's blog (*Barbara's Banter*) at [www.barbdahlgren.com](http://www.barbdahlgren.com) or contact her at [bydahlgren@pacbell.net](mailto:bydahlgren@pacbell.net). She loves hearing from you.

## Thoughts at the Start of 2013

By Priscilla Krupp

At the start of this new year, I'm looking out on a rainy, gray and gloomy day. Thoughts of our national government and the inadequacies of our leaders in reaching agreements over the fiscal cliff, along with the declining ethics and morals of our nation seem to match the gray outside.

We've experienced terrible tragedies during the last few months—the Sandy Hook School shootings in Connecticut, the firemen gunned down responding to a fire in Webster, New York, and shootings in other areas. The deep pain of the families involved has become our collective pain and has shaken the nation.

I pick up a newspaper and read about a probate judge in our own county (an acquaintance) who has pleaded guilty to abusing her office for her own gain. It's sad, heartbreaking and yes, even discouraging.

I pray for our nation, our leaders and the

advisers to our leaders and for direction for our nation. I know my Father “hears the cries of his people,” yet I still feel heaviness of heart for our nation's state of affairs and a heaviness of heart for the hurting families. While outside my window the rain continues to fall, inside tears fall from my eyes.

I turn on the CD player and hear Michelle Tumes singing the song, “Healing Waters.” Looking out at the rain I think how our heavenly Father's love is like healing water. His love can heal and restore my soul and take away this heaviness in my heart. After all, our Father sent his Son to be the Savior and Redeemer of the whole world!

So my heavy heart, take care on this rainy gray day, the sun will come out tomorrow and most important, I have God's love (healing waters) to restore and brighten this day!



*Priscilla says: “I'm a Georgia girl in the truest sense, having lived here most of my life. My husband Dan and I attend Christian Family Fellowship in Woodbine (just a block from home). We have one daughter, a son-in-law and the sparkles in our eyes—two grandchildren.” You may email Priscilla at [dpkrupp@tds.net](mailto:dpkrupp@tds.net).*

### Being a Light...has a lighter side!

Our 6-year-old daughter, Terra, has a need to ask questions—lots of questions. Finally, one day, my wife had had it.

“Have you ever heard that curiosity killed the cat?” my wife asked.

“No,” replied Terra.

“Well, there was a cat, and he was very inquisitive. And one day, he looked into a big hole, fell in, and died!”

Wide-eyed, Terra whispered: “What was in the hole?”

—clean laffs



## Fragrances and Colors

*By Denise de Moei*

When I catch the scent of a flower, I catch your fragrance  
 When I see a deer in the wild, I see your beauty  
 Eating a delicious jam croissant, I have a taste of you  
 And having fine conversation with my friend, I talk with you

You made all the colors, the different tastes and scents,  
 You gave us love and friendship, and  
 You made people to share all of that with,  
 You created our tremendous nature

While I dizzily whiz around in a roller coaster, I'm excited about you  
 Engineering, physics and mathematics; any intelligence comes from you  
 The fulfillment of my job, I am filled up by you  
 And laughing because of that good joke, I can laugh with you

You created speed, numbers and technology,  
 Every natural law originates from you  
 You taught us to work and enjoy achievement,  
 You gave us the gift of humor  
 You even taught us how to laugh

It is impossible not to know you,  
 As your gifts are everywhere,  
 And they tell us who you are,  
 In fragrances and colors

If we love all those gifts,  
 Then, without knowing, we already love you.



*Denise, her husband Hans and their two children, Yvonne, 18, and Maarten, 14, live and serve in the Netherlands. She spends most of her time at home with the children, as they have ADD and ADHD, which requires much structure and love. From home she produces Lifeline, a magazine of the Dutch GCI used for evangelism. She loves singing, reading and crafts. You may email her at [denise@gemeentedehoeksteen.nl](mailto:denise@gemeentedehoeksteen.nl).*



## Briefly Speaking...

### A Clean Slate

The dark colt was the first one born this spring at the Broken B Ranch. Every time I drive past I slow down to check out the pregnant mares at the ranch. For me, it's not spring until the first foal appears at the Broken B. Sure enough one morning there he is, four long legs on a skinny little body. I mentally remind myself to have my camera with me next time.

It wasn't long before he was trotting alongside his mother, starting to investigate his world. The mare made sure the other horses in the pasture didn't interfere. If curiosity got the better of any and they got too close she charged, teeth bared. They got the message.

The next day, I saw him standing stiff legged, ears alert, as a strange two-legged animal slowly approached—his first sight of a human being. His mother continued grazing, unconcerned with the intruder. She didn't seem to resent the stranger's presence.

Not sensing danger, the baby was startled when a hand reached out for him to sniff, but he didn't run away. When the hand began scratching the itchy spot under his neck, he decided the stranger might even be a new friend.

He wasn't born suspicious and fearful. He's a clean slate ready to be written on. Prejudice, discrimination, hate—those behaviors have to be taught.

—Sheila Graham  
[sheila.graham@gci.org](mailto:sheila.graham@gci.org)



The abundance of God is like a mighty ocean, so vast you cannot possibly exhaust it or cause a shortage for others. You can go to this inexhaustible ocean with a small cup and bring away only that small cup of bounty and blessing. Or, if you have faith, you can take a bucket and bring away a bucketful. It makes no difference to the ocean. Nor does it matter how often you go...God's abundance is always there.



—Henry T. Hamblin

### Blog Roll

Sue Berger:

[www.onepilgrimsmusings.com](http://www.onepilgrimsmusings.com)

Joyce Catherwood:

<http://i-love-to-tell-the-story.blogspot.com>

Barbara Dahlgren:

[www.barbdahlgren.com](http://www.barbdahlgren.com)

Sheila Dela Peña:

<http://velvetconfections.multiply.com>

Leslie Howard

Sister Circle Prayer Network on Facebook

Tammy Tkach:

[www.gemsofgodsgrace.wordpress.com](http://www.gemsofgodsgrace.wordpress.com)

Send us your blog address and we'll publish it here.

# Ministers' Wives Conferences 2013

## Registration Information

Full Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone

Email

*Please mark the conference you wish to attend and mark which type of room you need.  
The following prices are for accommodations, meals and registration fees.*

### ONTARIO, CA

Hilton Ontario Airport  
Aug 30 - Sept 2, 2013

- Double (\$417/person)  
or 3 payments\* of \$139
- Single (\$555/person)  
or 3 payments\* of \$185

If you should cancel,  
the registration fee of \$150 is not refundable.

\*If you are making 3 payments the due dates are:  
1st payment—April 12, 2013  
2nd payment—June 14, 2013  
3rd payment—August 3, 2013

**If final payment is not received by August 3, there will be an additional charge of \$50.**

I plan to share accommodations with the following person/people: (No need to send forms together.)

- 1.
- 2.

Please indicate if you have any physical limitations that would require wheelchair accessibility or limit your stair use:

Yes  No (If yes, please explain in comments below)

Please indicate if you have any dietary needs:

Yes  No (If yes, please explain in comments below)

Comments:

If you have questions, contact Jannice May at 626-379-0505 or [conbond@acninc.net](mailto:conbond@acninc.net)

Please send completed form to:

Connecting and Bonding, 300 S. Highland Springs Ave, Suite 6-C #156, Banning, CA 92220