

Contact Details:

Janette Frawley

PO Box 8155

Camberwell North VIC 3124

Australia

jfrawley@highergroundaustralia.com

Higher Ground Australia



www.highergroundaustralia.com/

Volume 3 – Edition 4

HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER – April 2006

Welcome

Welcome to our April newsletter. Welcome to the new members who have joined Higher Ground Australia since our last newsletter. We hope that you enjoy being part of HGA and we look forward to meeting you either in Queensland this year, or in Aspen in the future.

Have fun reading this newsletter.

Remembering...

Since our last newsletter, a couple of our HGA members have lost family members. My brother, Paul Kelsey died on March 25, 2006 at just 49 years of age. He died at home after a short illness.

Our good friend, Carolyn, lost her husband, Frank on the 1st April, 2006.

Carolyn and I would like to thank HGA for their thoughts and prayers during this time of bereavement. There are two extra shining stars in the sky.

“Why is it thus we are here and so soon we are gone?”

Happy Birthday Carmel

All of us at HGA wish Carmel a very happy Birthday. We hope that your day is something very special.



Happy Passover/Easter

Passover started on Thursday evening (13th April). We wish all our Jewish friends a very happy Passover.

We would also like to wish you a very happy Easter, which also started on Thursday. For the Orthodox Christians, we wish you a very happy Easter for next week. Easter arrives in the Northern Spring, so there should be plenty of

signs of new life as flowers and trees emerge after a long winter.

Holiday in Perth...

Margaret and Maureen have returned home from Perth after two weeks seeing the sights that Western Australia has to offer. They are home safe and sound and I am sure they will have a lot of stories to tell us in October.

Thanks from Genie...

We received a lovely thank you note from Genie, who recently became an Australian. She also sent a photo of the native Australian flowers we sent to her.



Max Moore

Max is currently recuperating after heart surgery. He has had a pace maker successfully fitted and will spend the next few weeks with his sons and daughter before he flies north for the winter. Max, we all wish you a quick recovery and we look forward to seeing you in Boonah, if not before.

‘I’ve Been Everywhere...’

Remember when John Denver and Susan St James sang this song? Alistair and Carmel have kindly offered to sing it in Boonah this October as they would have not long before arrived home from a trip ‘around Australia’. They leave Cessnock on 22nd April. The first leg of their journey is a relatively short trip to Sydney, then they will be hitting all the country roads in their (Almost Heaven) Winnebago (affectionately called the Lumbago).

Good luck and safe travelling and we hope to hear of your progress during your trip, and don’t forget the camera – we love photos!

Cyclone Larry

As many of you know, cyclone Larry, a category 5 cyclone hit the north coast of Australia recently. Although the storm had about the same intensity of Hurricane Katrina, the impact did not seem to be as severe due to the lower population in that area. The banana plantations were all destroyed as were many mango and avocado orchards. The bananas will take about 8 months to recover, but the damage to the mango and avocados may take up to seven years to recover if trees need to be replaced. The damage to the individual towns and homes has been great and many areas are still without permanent power and water. The fact that the army was sent in quickly to assess the damage and to help the individual people has assisted greatly in the recovery process. Many houses will have to be demolished and rebuilt and the co-ordination of this mammoth task has already started. The people affected by this cyclone need our thoughts and prayers. If you have a few dollars to spare, the Queensland Premier's Cyclone Fund is probably the best charity to donate to. However, I must say I was rather disappointed in Coles supermarkets using the cyclone to raise the price of bananas recently. The biggest problem is that the bananas that have the higher prices are not the North Queensland Lady Finger variety, but the Northern NSW Cavendish variety. This is clearly exploitation of a situation and I urge the Australians to please buy their bananas from fruit and vegetable shops where they will be getting what they are paying for.

John Denver Weekend Oct 2006

The John Denver weekend will be held from Friday 13th – Sunday 15th October, 2006. We will be returning to the friendly town of Boonah, approximately one hour out of Brisbane. We will be returning to the Outlook Training and Resource Centre, Ipswich-Boonah Road, Boonah, Queensland.

The accommodation has been booked and a deposit paid. Because we are not asking for a deposit for the accommodation (you will pay the full amount on arrival in Boonah), we will ask that all numbers are finalised by the 29th September. People who commit to coming and then pull out at the last minute cause problems with the members who are organising the event.

Our weekends are self-catered. We ask everyone for a **NON-REFUNDABLE** deposit of \$15, which will be a deposit for the food only.

Costs for the weekend are as follows:

Accommodation: **\$36.00 per person per night**

Food: **\$30.00 per person for the weekend (\$15.00 deposit, plus \$15.00 paid at the beginning of the weekend)**

The total cost for food and accommodation for the weekend is **\$102.00 per person**

Please contact Margaret and Maureen on marjo@powerup.com.au to organise payment of your food deposit.

NOTE: Margaret and Maureen have returned from Perth, so please contact them now regarding the deposit for the John Denver weekend in October..

I will be attaching a poster to the end of this newsletter. For the Australians who think they could advertise our weekend in Boonah, please print out the number of copies you need and distribute them.

Earth Day – April 22nd

It would be very easy to organise something to do on Earth Day this year as it occurs on Saturday.

'Since the first Earth Day in 1970 people around the world have sought to celebrate the planet through a variety of individual and community activities. But Earth Day is about more than observing the beauty and vitality of nature; it is also about renewing your commitment to saving our living planet.'

This is the 37th year of celebrating Earth Day, and whilst our circumstances are all different, there are some simple ways in which we can change our habits to help save our planet – you never know, they may just help save you some money as well.

1. Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth. If you are permitted to wash your car (we are not permitted to wash cars in Victoria due to ongoing water restrictions), fit a trigger attachment to your hose so that water is not needlessly running down the street.
2. Switch off the light if you are leaving the room. This will save you money.
3. Hang your clothes on the clothes line outside instead of using your dryer.
4. Wash your clothes in warm or cold water. It works just as using hot water in your washing machine and reduces the energy you use.
5. Print on both sides of the paper where possible. You can use up to half the amount of paper you are currently using. Any reduction of paper on a global basis is good – trees are one of our most important renewable resources.
6. Stop using paper or plastic cups. Bring your own glass to work instead of using the ones supplied with the water cooler.

7. Check your appliances and use the correct setting for the job you need to do. For the washing machine and dish washer, use the energy-saving cycles.
8. Turn off your computer and monitor at the end of the day. Although your computer is in 'sleep mode' it is still using energy.
9. Read labels and purchase goods that are in recyclable packaging, wherever possible.
10. Separate your garbage into recyclable, green, compost and regular garbage. You will be really surprised at how little goes into your rubbish bins each week when you make an effort to separate your rubbish.
11. Compost all fruit and vegetable waste. Even if you do not have a compost bin, dig a hole in the ground and bury your veggie peelings, fruit skins, coffee grounds and tea leaves. All these will attract worms and you will have the best soil in your neighbourhood.
12. Use public transport for one day of the week instead of using your car. You will be surprised how much fuel you can save. You will also have some stress-free time to read and to listen to John Denver while travelling to your destination. The walk to and from your transport stop will do you the world of good and you will feel fit and healthy enough to try using public transport more regularly.
13. Say **NO** to plastic bags at your local stores.
14. Listen to John singing Earth Day (Celebrate).

Main source of this information was derived from <http://www.worldwildlife.org/earthday/>

As I was going through some sites, I found this lovely story entitled St Francis and the Birth of Earth Day, written by the founder of Earth Day, John McConnell, who is now 90 years of age. I have decided to reprint the story as follows:

St. Francis and the Birth of Earth Day

By John McConnell, 90 year old founder of Earth Day

WHAT WOULD ST. FRANCIS DO NOW?

The global celebration of Earth Day on March 20, the first day of Spring, is a matter directly related to St. Francis and the amazing results of his vision and life. Were he here today, he would undoubtedly focus all his prayer and effort on achieving Earth Day's original purpose.

A little about Earth Day history will illustrate this.

Earth Day is on the March Equinox, which determines the annual date of Easter. (Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon following the March equinox.)

Not only that, the equinox is also the New Year in Iran and other Islam countries, which makes possible attention for a common purpose - the sustainable care of Earth, with justice and peace for all.

This will help us show real love for our world neighbours and the web of life that covers our globe.

ST. FRANCIS AND THE BIRTH OF EARTH DAY

The first Earth Day was inaugurated in San Francisco - The City of St. Francis. I had long been familiar with the Prayer of St. Francis: "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love..." In 1969 we obtained backing of the Mayor, city officials, churches, schools, businesses - a really all out event with massive coverage in media. While the event was backed by Franciscans and Catholic churches, participation included synagogues and many other denominations. The Red Cross delivered plants to schools for children to take home.

In succeeding Earth Days at the United Nations, we demonstrated that people of diverse creeds and cultures can leave room for their differences and come together for "peace, justice and the care of Earth."

A factor in the choice of the date was my own history. In 1957 I obtained global attention for an editorial in my weekly North Carolina "Toe Valley View" newspaper. The first Sputnik Satellite had just been launched on October 4th. None of the media seemed to note that this was the "Feast Day of St. Francis." And launched by the then Godless USSR! (The person who chose the date must have been a secret Christian.)

My editorial called for a visible "Star of Hope" satellite. It would be launched as a symbol of hope to further understanding and peace on our planet. It obtained front page attention around the world.

My own study and prayer life led to the conviction that we needed a common purpose that would appeal to people of all creeds and cultures - and a way to get attention for it. We needed something that would end history's terrible record of war and injustice.

These thoughts planted the seeds that led to Earth Day.

Another factor was my efforts in 1963 to get global participation in a daily "Minute for Peace." I was responsible for the Minute for Peace on radio world-wide, which followed the period of mourning for President Kennedy. "Peace begins in the mind." We asked for a one minute radio spot on all stations that would carry the sound of a bell and a thought or prayer for peace. We invited all listeners to join in this special minute - to deepen

their commitment and increase their efforts for world peace.

Minute for Peace became the centrepiece of Earth Day. When we ring the UN Peace Bell we invite people world wide to join in two minutes of heartfelt prayer that we will overcome "doubt with faith" and strive to be a responsible Trustee of Earth.

Pray that every year St. Francis Day and Earth Day will bring a new sense of identity with the whole human family and a commitment to see peace through understanding and love -- the love that Jesus revealed. And may we put feet to our prayers with action to help make it happen.

John McConnell

www.earthsite.org

SAINT FRANCIS PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury...pardon,
Where there is doubt... faith,
Where there is despair... hope,
Where there is darkness... light,
And where there is sadness... joy.
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
St. Francis of Assisi

Other worthwhile websites to visit are:

<http://www.cleanup.com.au/main.asp?RequestType=MediaReleaseIn&SubRequestType=Detail&MediaRelID=238>

<http://earthday.wilderness.org/>

<http://www.earthday.gov/>

http://au.dir.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/Environment_and_Nature/Events/Earth_Day/

For those people having difficulties clicking the links included in this newsletter, try the following tip: Hold down the Ctrl Key on your keyboard. Hover the mouse over the link until you see the cursor become a hand symbol. Click with the left mouse button.

John Denver's Car

As many of you know, one of our members from Queensland bought a Mercury Cougar car from eBay only to find later that John was the original owner of the car.

On the 29th April, 2006, John's car will be displayed as part of a country music festival in

Caboolture, Queensland. Our member, also called John says:

I hope it will be a good day as there will be country music people coming from across the world. This is the first real major display we have been invited to so it should create a lot of publicity. This is one of many events we have been asked to attend in the next few months. I will keep you up to date it just depends on what we can afford to go to as we are not charging to display. I just want people to be able to see the car and its connection to John. I know it has also reminded people how much they enjoy John's music. The radio stations [in Queensland] are playing John's songs heaps more frequently now than they have for years.

Thanks John and we look forward to hearing from you after the event in Caboolture, Queensland. I wish I could be there.

Cousteau Family Continues 'Undersea' Legacy

Unfortunately we have not yet seen these documentaries in Australia, but we would love to hear from anyone who has seen them. Jacques Cousteau's documentaries were much-loved here in Australia during the 1970's.

From the mid-1950s into the 1980s, French explorer Jacques Cousteau was an iconic figure on American television.

Until his death at 87 in 1997, he opened up the mysterious and beautiful world beneath the seas to millions of TV viewers with his documentary films, most prominently on ABC's "The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau" and PBS's 'Cousteau Odyssey'. Sailing the oceans in the ship Calypso (made famous in a John Denver song), he often was referred to as the father of the environmental movement, pressing ecological concerns with presidents and prime ministers. But toward the end of his life, his films and exploration gradually faded from television as the networks pulled back from prime-time documentaries.

Now, his son Jean-Michel Cousteau is returning the family name -- and the family's concerns with the environment -- to series television with 'Jean-Michel Cousteau: Ocean Adventures'. Produced by Cousteau's Ocean Futures Society and KQED, 'Ocean Adventures' will explore the worlds of such endangered species as the shark and grey whale, as well as the underwater parks of the National Marine Sanctuary System and, in the first two episodes, the Northwest Hawaiian Island archipelago. 'We know more about the 'dead seas' of Mars than our own ocean,' says the French-born Cousteau, 68. In the new series, 'we are charting the course of human adventure and

discovery of our real life support system -- the planet's oceans'.

'What we are going to do is to continue reaching out to the public in a very entertaining way and showing them some of what we're doing to ourselves.' Cousteau, who sailed regularly with his father on the Calypso, clearly understands he is carrying on a legacy that had a significant impact on public awareness about the damage being done to the world's natural resources.

'When we started airing our shows, a generation of young people at the time had very little choice on television and, because of the quality of the shows, were made to watch the shows either by their parents or by their schoolteachers', he recalls.

'Those people, 30 years later, are the ones who are running the country. And I can knock on the door. I can visit anybody in this industrial world or in government, locally or globally, and the doors open because they remember. I believe our shows have had a very, very strong impact on the decision makers of today'.

(Case in point: 'Ocean Adventures' will be screened at the White House for President Bush and his wife, Laura.)

'But', Cousteau adds, 'we're into highlighting to the public the issues that need to be addressed today. The ocean is in trouble, which means we are in trouble. We're still using it as a garbage can.'

What has changed since the days of the Calypso is the technology Cousteau and his crew -- which includes his son Fabien and daughter Celine -- have at their disposal. 'Ocean Adventures' is being shot entirely in high definition, giving the visual aspect of the series a richness and clarity that was unachievable for 'Undersea World'. The first two episodes, called 'Voyage to Kure,' are positively stunning in the way they capture life under the waves and on the islands that are part of the archipelago. Cousteau's main vessel, the Searcher, is loaded with state-of-the-art technology that would have seemed like science fiction to the Calypso crew. (The Calypso, by the way, was sunk and heavily damaged in 1996 when hit by a barge in Singapore harbour.) In addition, improvements in equipment make it possible for much longer dives and underwater filming.

During the making of 'Voyage', Cousteau notes, the crew 'shot the equivalent of two hours of film - finished product -- when in the past we probably would not have been able to do one hour.'

One thing that has raised eyebrows about 'Ocean Adventures' is its major sponsor: the Dow Chemical Co., a chemical-plastic corporation not

often associated in the public mind with environmental concerns.

'I grew up in an environment where our sponsors have never attempted to dictate what should be or should not be on the shows', insists Cousteau. 'And I have to say that in my 50 years of experience, we have never bent to any kind of pressure, whether our shows were on networks or on PBS.'

'We've had no conversations at all, to my knowledge, with the sponsors about what's in these shows,' adds John Boland, chief content officer for KQED.

Despite the evidence presented on 'Ocean Adventures' of the devastating impact of pollution and development on the oceans, Cousteau remains optimistic about the future.

'Otherwise I would have retired a long time ago,' he says. 'I really believe it's not too late.'

'If we can make the connection between the oceans and people's lives in the minds of people, we'll change our bad habits. It's by lack of understanding and knowledge that people make mistakes. And that can be changed.'

Jean-Michel Cousteau: 'Ocean Adventures' (first two episodes). Narrator Pierce Brosnan

Christopher Westfall

Christopher Westfall will be playing at the **Churchville Nature Center in Churchville, PA** on **April 22nd 7pm**. To celebrate Earth Day, Chris will present '**An Evening of John Denver and Chris Westfall Music**'. Reservations are requested at \$10 per ticket by calling 215-357-4005. Make a day of it and explore all the center has to offer! Visit them at www.churchvillenaturecenter.org

And if you are still thinking about joining Chris on this summer's **Alaskan cruise**, the cruise is fully booked, but spots are available on a waiting list. Sailing through the Inside Passage on the Princess Cruise Line from **July 15th-22nd**, 2006, Chris will be performing several private shows. A spectacular journey with unforgettable music! For information, please contact newbeginningtour@aol.com or visit their site at www.newbeginningtour.com.

April Happenings across the World

April 29, 2006 - UK - Friends of John Denver Spring Denver Day 10:00am - 5:30pm Village Hall, Walton on the Hill, Stafford, Staffordshire ST17 OLD lookingforspacerg@yahoo.com / Send a SASE to Rose Gwilt /29 Oldcroft Road / Walton on the Hill / Stafford ST17 OLS Tickets: £6 each

April 29, 2006 - UK - Friends of John Denver - Steve Brook Concert 7:30pm Steve will be joined

by Rene Wingelaar, Arno Cornelissen and Klaas Christian Schukken of the "Nickels and Dimes" band. <http://www.nickels-and-dimes.com> Tickets are £7 Send a SASE to Rose Gwilt / 29 Oldcroft Road / Walton on the Hill / Stafford ST17 OLS lookingforspacerg@yahoo.com <http://www.stevebrook.com> <http://www.fojd.org.uk>

GSL Marketing Promotions

For those people who would love to record a song, but do not have enough material for a full album, please consider joining other country music stars on Volume 6 of the Australasian Country Artists Series. These are for world distribution and will be recorded in time for the Mildura Country Music Awards for 2006

GSL Marketing & Promotions Australasian Country Artists Series Vol 6 needs more singers to complete the album. There are only a few spots left for recording artists, singers and songwriters to join us in time for the Mildura Country Music Awards, which close off on the 30th of June. We are looking to close volume 6 of this series on the 1st JUNE to allow for the manufacture and distribution by the end of June and need a few more country music artists to join us. The cost is still at the best price in Australia of one song **AU\$385** or two songs **AU\$550** Compare this to what else is available and you'll see the value in being with GSL.

This is possibly the last time at this price and you will have to be quick. The first in will be on the album.

Contact Stephen R Cheney mobile 0417 420858 or Tony Martin on 0412251854.

PLEASE SEND ALL YOUR CDS TO TONY MARTIN AT PO BOX 443 CAMPBELLTOWN NSW 2560

Just A Dream Away:

A Solid Gold Memory" by Michael Miller

Out of all the performers I've worked with over the years, I was most touched when my song, "Just A Dream Away" was selected to be the song which opened the 1984 Winter Olympics from Sarajevo. John Denver sang it while standing in the snow during the ABC-TV Opening Ceremonies broadcast in February of 1984 - a very special month in my life. Since then, both Placido Domingo and Dionne Warwick have recorded the song.

I originally composed "Just A Dream Away" in 1977 (while a student at UCLA) for the Frank Sinatra Awards Concert for which I won the Composing/Arranging Award. Besides being able to perform at this concert hosted by Gene Kelly, I was given a check for \$2000 by Frank Sinatra.

Many years later-10, to be exact-we had Mr. Sinatra on Solid Gold as a special guest host with Dionne. On the day of taping, when I first appeared in his dressing room to go over the music we had recorded for him, he looked up with a grin on his face and said, "You again? Did you spend all that money already? Well, I'm afraid I can't help you this time-I'm flat broke!!" Needless to say, I had great fun spending the day with him...that's for sure!!

On that same day, we also had Joe Piscopo on doing his infamous Frank Sinatra impersonations. It was amazing having the both of them on stage together!!

Back to John Denver: After not seeing his performance of "Just A Dream Away" since 1984, I recently found a video copy of it in my storage. Hearing it again after all these years-and after his passing-I was deeply moved by how beautiful and hauntingly ominous his rendition was. He was-and, I'm sure, still continues to be-a very dear Being.

Just A Dream Away Music by Michael Miller (ASCAP) Words by Monica Riordan (ASCAP)
When a dream is born

A dreamer has to live for more
Believing what he's never known
He stands alone.

Where a chance begins
Wherever secret hopes pretend
Like daybreak on the darkest night
He'll see the light...

It's JUST A DREAM AWAY

You'll know it when you're there one day
Keep reaching for the world somehow
There's nothing that can stop you now,
Dream your way...dream it all.
Years of hope within
Then feeling what it's like to win
This dreamer's gonna find a way
To see that day.

It's JUST A DREAM AWAY

You'll know it when you're there one day
Keep reaching for the world somehow
There's nothing that can stop you now,
Dream your way...dream it all.

© 1984 -- Hook, Line and Singer Music/Cherry Mountain Music (ASCAP)

Some material included in this newsletter has been derived from the public domain, such as the internet and printed media. Articles and reviews are the opinion of the individual writer and as long as the content is of a reasonable nature and it is appropriate, it will be included. Organisations mentioned or featured in this newsletter are included to educate and inform people of their role and purpose. HGA does not profit from including the names of any organisation in this newsletter.

This song is for Earth Day 22nd April, 2006

Earth Day Every Day (Celebrate)

John Denver

Celebrate morning,
The cry of a loon on a lake in the night
Dreams that are born in the dawn's early light
Celebrate morning.
Celebrate living,
The laughter that sings in the heart of a child,
Freedom that flies to the call of the wild,
Celebrate living.
Celebrate evening,
The stars that appear in the loss of the sun,
Whispering winds, We are one, we are one

Celebrate Earth Day, every day,
Celebrate Earth Day, every day
Celebrate land and sea
Celebrate you and me
Celebrate Earth Day, every day
Celebrate Earth Day, every day,
Celebrate Earth Day, every day
Celebrate land and sea
Celebrate you and me
Celebrate Earth Day, every day
Every day every day
Celebrate Earth Day, every day,
Celebrate Earth Day, every day
Celebrate land and sea
Celebrate you and me
Celebrate Earth Day, every day
Celebrate Earth Day, every day,
Celebrate Earth Day, every day
Celebrate land and sea
Celebrate you and me
Celebrate Earth Day, every day
Every day Every day Every Day
Happy Earth day,
Happy Earth day
Happy earth day

IF YOU ENJOY THE MUSIC OF JOHN DENVER

COME JOIN US AT THIS YEAR'S CELEBRATION GATHERING AT
"BOONAH, QLD"

"HIGHER GROUND AUSTRALIA"
THE FRIENDS OF JOHN DENVER
WILL BE HAVING THEIR SIXTH ANNUAL GATHERING
IN THE TOWNSHIP OF "BOONAH" QLD

**ON THE WEEKEND OF
THE 13TH, 14TH AND 15TH OF OCTOBER 2006**

THE WEEKEND CONDENSED

FRIDAY EVENING

MEET AND GREET ALL MEMBERS AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

SATURDAY EVENING

BBQ AND SINGALONG, SILENT AUCTION OF JOHN DENVER MEMORABILIA, eg CDS
DVDS AND BOOKS ETC.

MUSICIANS "PLEASE" BRING INSTRUMENTS

ALL MONEY RAISED TO BE DONATED TO SUPPORT LOCAL WILDLIFE

SUNDAY MORNING

TREE PLANTING AND LAYING OF COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE AND DEDICATION
READING TO COINCIDE WITH ASPEN USA AND AUCKLAND NZ.
BBQ LUNCH

ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE \$35.00 PER NIGHT IF YOU WOULD LIKE
TO STAY

ALSO \$30.00 PER PERSON FOR WEEKEND FOOD.

SATURDAY EVENING BBQ \$10.00 PER PERSON

EVERYONE WELCOME
FOR A WEEKEND OF FUN AND SONG

www.highergroundaustralia.com

CONTACTS

Janette Frawley jfrawley@bigpond.com.

Margaret Gilby marjo@powerup.com.au