

YOU HAVE A FRIEND INC

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ISSUE 8 ~ February 2011

P.O.Box 637, Tweed Heads, NSW 2485

Our website www.youhaveafriend.org.au

A homeless person is homeless
Because they do not have a place to live
.....Think about it.....

Brisbane Star
Cruises



Island Style
Promotions



***"People are not homeless because they are physically disabled, mentally ill, abusers of alcohol or other drugs... or unemployed.
These conditions do not explain homelessness....
Homeless people are homeless because they do not have a place to live".***



From The President!

2010 was a very happy and successful year for our charity. We never lost sight of the welfare of the Friends we help on a daily basis. Our sponsor base increased markedly with many "big named" corporate sponsors supporting us

throughout the year and in particular over the Christmas period when we need that little extra with donations, produce, meals and essential items. There is an exciting sense that the general public in Tweed have embraced us as their own with so many offers from the public by way of clothing, tinned food and finance for the homeless and marginalised. A major goal was constant lobbying for crisis accommodation and a drop-in centre for the many homeless men and women in the Tweed. Success is not possible without the wonderful support from our volunteers whose numbers totalled over 60 this year. It is so encouraging that many volunteers have come to know our Friends and the circumstances of their situation as they embrace them as personal mates and family. Our volunteers or "vollies" are from all walks of life and unselfishly give up their time to assist with serving food, packing vans, sorting and distributing clothes, supporting our many fundraising events and much more. Our local school sponsorship has increased with many schools embracing us as "their charity" donating food items and volunteering with us on the streets. No longer are we forced to use our own vehicles at the many locations or "outreaches" we support as we have now two outfitted vans with a third about to be purchased through most generous sponsors.

Outreaching is our term for "reaching out" to our friends and providing them with love, food, clothing and necessities at locations they are able to travel to and join us. This year we consolidated our meal outreaches limiting them to Coolangatta, Tweed Heads, Chinderah and Murwillumbah. However, we did begin new successful "food drop" services to four caravan parks and also a large housing commission estate. This was made possible when our charity was selected by Tweed Heads Woolworth branch to distribute their day old unsold bread and produce. The weekly Murwillumbah BBQ is also a favourite and much talked about by our Friends. This successful BBQ would not be possible were it not for our dedicated "Murwillumbah team" of helpers. The sorting and distribution of donated clothing is a mammoth task. Once again, one of our dedicated volunteers has taken on this task and is doing a wonderful job ensuring many needy people in the district get the clothes so generously donated. Our Court Support outreach in Tweed Heads court, provides much needed funding for fuel for our growing fleet of vans. It is testament to the three ladies who run that service that their "gold coin" fundraising weekly efforts at the court for delicious sandwiches, hot drinks and the sale of cold drinks, has almost doubled in 2010.

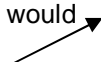
Fundraising in any non profit organisation is essential for insurance, registration, fuel, audit fees and supplies

to name just a few. 2010 saw many major fundraising events undertaken and supported by our wonderful band of volunteers. It is a legal requirement that registered organisation's books are audited annually. Our two dedicated volunteers who tend the books throughout the year in preparation for the audit are to be highly commended for their wonderful efforts. Close scrutiny, attention and recording of finances applies to not only the weekly income and expenditure, but very importantly to the many fundraising events we undertook this year. Events such as the "Cards on the Table", our "Monster Christmas Raffle", the ongoing sale of chocolates, the distribution of collection tins in shops, are examples of successful projects run and organised by our volunteers, with a "no fuss, no accolades, just get down and do it" attitude. Not to forget the planning and organisation that went into major events such as our National Homeless Week and the Christmas period celebrations.

National Homeless Week in August is now firmly etched into our calendar. This year saw the first of a regular "Inter Schools Surfing Competition" held between six local schools with the inaugural event won by Kingscliff-High. The successful school's pancake and breakfast BBQ was also a first during the week and a fitting lead up to our fast becoming popular "Jimbo's Sleepout". The number of sleepers on the St. Joseph's College Oval doubled this year with more families joining us to experience a night of sleeping in a cardboard box in the cold and rain with only a meagre basic evening meal and BBQ brekkie. Other events of note we celebrated were Easter, Australia Day, Mother's and Father's Day where we provided special items for our Friends at our regular Sunday Breakfast Outreaches. The Murwillumbah Banana Festival was once more a highlight with our own Kirsty Luken taking out the title of "Miss 2010 Queen" and in the process raising much needed funds for us. There were though other events during the year that were not of a fundraising nature, rather an effort to raise awareness of requirements for the homeless.

In November we held an "All night vigil" at the Catholic Church in Tweed Heads. This involved remaining all night at the church with a number of our homeless friends who sleep on the streets. It was our effort to raise much needed awareness of lack of crisis accommodation and an effort to lobby the authorities for a "drop-in centre". Such a centre need not be expensive to maintain or outfit. Just a place our homeless can shower, wash clothes, perhaps make a cup of tea or coffee and relax for a while and a place the community services can come to them. A place seriously required considering that Tweed Heads has the highest number of homeless persons per capita in NSW – with over 120 people sleeping rough on any one night (Census 2006).

This report would not be complete, were it not for a special THANK YOU to our wonderful volunteers or "our vollies" as I call them. Without their dedication, tirelessly giving of themselves and always ready to support the charity and what it stands for, You Have A Friend would



not be as successful as it is today. Your support at our outreaches, packing and sorting of clothes, rosters, driving vans, working at courts, accounting, food collection and most of all your love, kindness and dedication to our major cause of supporting those less fortunate than ourselves, is what makes our wonderful charity – Thank You. In addition a special thank you to our Board members who have given such wonderful support to both me and the charity this year. I sincerely look forward to working with you again this year – Thank you.

LET THEM GO

The bible said that, they came out from us that it might be made manifest that they were not from us. For had they been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us. **[1 John 2:19]**

People leave you because they are not joined to you. And if they are not joined to you, you can't make them stay.

Let them go.



PONDERISMS

Can you cry under water?

How important does a person have to be before they are considered assassinated instead of just murdered?

Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?

*What disease did cured ham actually have?
Can a hearse carrying a corpse drive in the carpool lane?*

If the professor on Gilligan's Island can make a radio out of a coconut, why can't he fix a hole in a boat?

*Why does Goofy stand erect while Pluto remains on all fours?
They're both dogs!*

If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, what is baby oil made from?

Squatters

In *Southwark London Borough Council vs Williams* [1971] Ch 734 (CA), the defendants were homeless families who squatted in empty houses owned by the council. The council regarded the houses not worthy of repair and unfit for human occupation. Nearly 9000 people were on the council's waiting list for housing. The council's policy was that individuals should not get priority by squatting in empty houses. The council applied for an order for immediate possession. The Court of Appeal rejected a defence of necessity. Lord Denning MR said:

"... if homelessness were once admitted as a defence to trespass, no one's house could be safe. Necessity would open a door which no man could shut. It would not only be those in extreme need who would enter. There would be others who would imagine that they were in need, or would invent a need so as to gain entry....The plea would be an excuse for all sorts of wrongdoing. So the courts must for the sake of law and order, take a firm stand. They must refuse to admit the plea of necessity to the hungry and the homeless and trust that their distress will be relieved by the charitable and the good" (at 744)



Christmas 2010

Christmas is a time of giving. Giving of one's self to others to fulfil what Christians all over the world strive for at this very special time of the year. Christmas 2010 I will not forget and was privileged to experience the true spirit of Christmas when so many of our volunteers, sponsors, local schools and many of the Tweed citizens came together to make our homeless and marginalised friend's Christmas an occasion I am sure many will never forget.

In October 2010, a group of our volunteers began organising the You Have A Friend Christmas "bash". To this day, I have no idea as to the amount of work and organisation that went into the

planning and organising of our three Christmas Lunches. All I asked this dedicated group was that we hold three lunches and that each lunch be held on a different day at our 3 major support locations – Coolangatta, Chinderah and Murwillumbah. And so started a series of meetings between these wonderful volunteers whose sole aim it was to provide a very special day for our special friends. A "monster raffle" was organised, sponsors were sourced, catering organised and very importantly presents obtained. It is not easy catering for a large group when one has no idea as to the number of people involved. No idea as to how many children or men and women will attend. And yet, our dedicated

group of volunteers achieved the unthinkable, with no fuss and to the best of my knowledge, with no hitches whatsoever.

On the 12th December we held our Chinderah Christmas party on the banks of the beautiful Tweed River with approximately 45 of our friends and their children attending. The 19th December the heavens opened up as we were preparing to set up in the park in Coolangatta. As fate would have it, our local Catholic Church kindly allowed us to use their hall to provide a wonderful meal, games and presents for approximately 60 guests. With no letup in the weather, Monday 27th December, we supported almost 50 friends in the local Community Centre most generously provided by Wendy and her team in Murwillumbah. They were memorable occasion and each so very different with many organisations and schools making Christmas

cards, putting together toiletry packs and donating towards the food and children's toys, which a very hot and sweaty Santa so generously gave out at each location. Our lunch consisted of ham, beef, chicken, salads and a variety of puddings. The happiness on the faces of so many men, women and children was something I will not forget as in many cases, this was all they had for Christmas and many will not eat as well until Christmas 2011.



To all the wonderful volunteers, sponsors, parents, families and schools who worked so tirelessly to make this such a special time, please know your love, care and concern brighten the day of the wonderful friends and children we support as a charity in the Tweed District. I hope you got as much out of it as our friends did and rest assured your efforts have made so many people's lives happy at a time they are often forgotten and cast aside. You provided the true "Christmas Spirit" so many in our world are seeking for.

Thank you and God bless you and your families.

John Lee ~ President

Reflections

Dom's Poem

Imagine while you're watching your telly
Or snoozing on beds for an hour.
Imagine whilst filling your belly,
Or bathing in a nice warm shower.

Imagine as you talk to your family,
Or put on some nice ironed clothes,
Imagine a fridge of cheese and meats,
A cupboard of tins, tea and loaves.

Imagine your house's safe locked door,
Keeping out the evils of the night.
Imagine your fear and loneliness,
Being cured by the switch of a light.

These things that we take for granted,
To the homeless are a world away.
Food, a job, friends and clothes,
A purpose and a place to stay.

So whilst we go living our comfortable lives,
The homeless go on without end.
But, hey! A cuppa, a chat and a bite to eat,
Remember at least, "you have a friend".

By Dom Bennett



The Eagle and the Wolf

There is a great battle that rages inside me.
One side is the soaring eagle.
Everything the eagle stands for is good and true and
beautiful, and it soars above the clouds.
Even though it dips down into the valleys,
it lays its eggs on the mountain tops.
The other side of me is the howling wolf.
And that raging, howling wolf
represents the worst that's in me.
He eats upon my downfalls and justifies
himself by his presence in the pack.
Who wins this great battle?

.....The one I feed.

-unknown-



Mother Teresa's *Anyway* Poem

People are often unreasonable,
illogical and self centered;
Forgive them anyway.
If you are kind, people may accuse you of
selfish, ulterior motives;
Be kind anyway.
If you are successful, you will win some false friends
and some true enemies;
Succeed anyway.
If you are honest and frank,
people may cheat you;
Be honest and frank anyway.
What you spend years building,
someone could destroy overnight;
Build anyway.
If you find serenity and happiness,
they may be jealous;
Be happy anyway.
The good you do today,
people will often forget tomorrow;
Do good anyway.
Give the world the best you have,
and it may never be enough;
Give the world the best you've got anyway.
You see, in the final analysis,
it is between you and your God;
It was never between you and them anyway.

From The Veggies !

'A Great Bunch' ~ By Melissa Furnell

'You have a Friend' is an amazing organisation that helps the less fortunate in more ways than one. Those involved in running 'You have a Friend,' the President John, who is always on the move and his enthusiastic volunteers are a diverse, friendly, compassionate and caring bunch of people who on many occasions go out of their way to help our friends on the streets. The age of volunteers ranges from young school children to young adults, adults and the elderly, all whom share a desire to help those in need.

I began volunteering for 'You have a friend' several months ago and since joining the group of volunteers I have found the experience personally rewarding and very enlightening. Seeing the smile on someone's when you had them a plate of food and knowing you can make a difference in someone's life makes the job worthwhile.

Since joining 'You have a friend' my view of homelessness and the homeless has completely changed and I have come to understand why some of these people are living the way that they are and it saddens me to see that there are not enough people to help or even care for them. Being a part of this organisation has given me a new outlook on life and seeing the great lengths John will go to help our friends on the streets makes me want to do more with my life, and to help others where ever and whenever I am able or needed.

Share a Great Joy ~ By Elizabeth Goller

Let me tell you about this 'Joy'. It was a very wet and windy Sunday before Christmas 2010. I was helping setup and decorate the hall to bring Christmas to the folks that live on our streets that is without permanent residency.

We trimmed the tree, decorated the tables, put out the chips and lollies and the beautiful Christmas food was being delivered, ham, chicken, salads, wonderful desserts that can only be dreamt of. Gentle sounds of music was being heard all over the hall, the feeling was one of 'Love and Joy' as the folks from the street started to arrive.

After a little time, one of the regulars that I had become fond of arrived, a little late but that did not matter, he was here taking part in this wonderful day. 'Giving Joy and Laughter' was the main event, as he walked into the hall I hugged him and said 'It's about time you showed up'. At which he smiled and hugged me back and then delved deep into his shoulder bag and pulled out a Christmas card for me, the words he had written touched my heart and filled me with great 'Joy'

"This is what Christmas is about"

"This is what life is about"

Bringing a 'Great Joy' to someone we know or don't know every day and letting people know

"YOU HAVE A FRIEND"



Computer Tech Support ~ This ought to make you feel better about your computer skills!

=====

Tech support: What kind of computer do you have? Female customer: A white one...

=====

Tech support: What's on your monitor now, ma'am? Customer: A teddy bear my boyfriend bought for me at the 7-11.

=====

Customer: Hi, good afternoon, this is Martha, I can't print. Every time I try, it says 'Can't find printer'. I've even lifted the printer and placed it in front of the monitor, but the computer still says he can't find it...

=====

Customer: My keyboard is not working anymore. Tech support: Are you sure it's plugged into the computer?

Customer: No. I can't get behind the computer. Tech support: Pick up your keyboard and walk 10 paces back.

Customer: OK Tech support: Did the keyboard come with you? Customer: Yes Tech support: That means the keyboard is not plugged in. Is there another keyboard? Customer: Yes, there's another one here. Ah...that one does work...

=====

Tech support: How may I help you? Customer: I'm writing my first e-mail.

Tech support: OK, and what seems to be the problem? Customer: Well, I have the letter 'a' in the address, but how do I get the circle around it?

=====

A woman customer called the Canon help desk with a problem with her printer. Tech support: Are you running it under windows? Customer: "No, my desk is next to the door, but that is a good point. The man sitting in the cubicle next to me is under a window, and his printer is working fine."

=====

And last but not least...

Tech support: "Okay Bob, let's press the control and escape keys at the same time. That brings up a task list in the middle of the screen. Now type the letter "P" to bring up the Program Manager." Customer: I don't have a P. Tech support: On your keyboard, Bob. Customer: What do you mean? Tech support: "P".....on your keyboard, Bob.

Customer: I'M NOT GOING TO DO THAT



Judging Our Homeless



Around a church in Tweed Heads are many homeless people confronting the parishioners on a daily basis. Each night they are

there. During the day a pile of possessions neatly stacked in a Woolworth's shopping trolley is all we see of these people. These people? The majority are women, all over 40 years old, sleeping in the doorways of the church at night and during the day, seven days a week, no matter the weather, forced to sit for 12 hours at bus shelters! How is it that in our beautiful Coolangatta/Tweed Heads there are now more women sleeping on the streets or in cars, than there are men? And only two of these homeless are under 30 years old with many into their 50s and 60s.

Over the last few years I have seen a welcome change of attitude toward the homeless and marginalised by



many people, both young and old within the Tweed. A change to one of greater acceptance and understanding. There are always those who are offended by homeless women and

men sleeping around the churches, sitting at bus shelters or around the BBQs meant for the "holiday makers". In the Tweed Heads district average accommodation costs more than fortnightly social benefits. Besides that there is a 16 year waiting list for housing in Tweed Heads and those suffering mental illnesses, addictions or lack of work are expected to support themselves while on prescription drugs for mental or other issues.

Contrary to what many believe, mental illness is not always caused by drug and alcohol misuse. Under children

are born to parents, addicted to alcohol and/or illegal and legally prescribed drugs. Do we ever consider these children are more than likely born into a life of mental issues and addictions? A life which often leads to loneliness and isolation as they struggle with imagined friends or voices that only they see and hear as they aimlessly wander the streets on their own. I have no doubt this is the case for so many of those we are so quick to label alcoholics or drug addicts we piously claim are responsible for their lives.

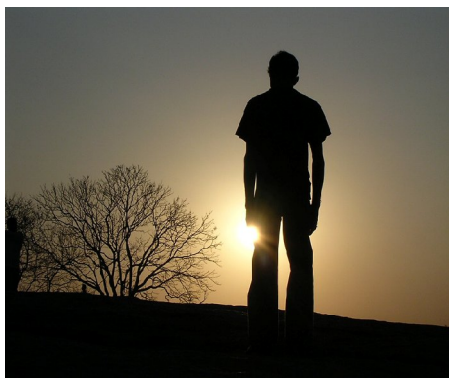
The legal drugs many doctors readily prescribe to people suffering all sorts of mental anguish and aches, if used for periods of time



are also addictive. In many cases, legally prescribed drugs have side effects often causing more pain and suffering to those with no homes to retreat to as they live out their complicated, painful and lonely homeless wandering lives. Sadly, addiction to legally prescribed drugs is, to a certain degree accepted by society. The institutions supporting our mentally affected people have over the last few decades been radically scaled back as more and more people are left to fend for themselves with the notion that medication will take the place of human kindness, love and support.

Every man, woman and child has a story to tell and no person's path through life is the same. For many, without support when developing as a child, social skills, education and life choices are not taught as the child develops perhaps in a dysfunctional family, often abused and left to care for themselves as marriages break up.

Let us therefore be aware that not all homeless people are products of their own destiny. Let us see them in a new light. Very importantly are we really qualified to judge the lives of those we see sleeping around churches and park benches? Do we really know the circumstances of their life and their upbringing?



"May today there be peace within. May you trust that you are exactly where you are meant to be. May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith in yourself and others? May you use the gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you? May you be content with yourself just the way you are. Let this knowledge settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love. It is there for each and every one of us.

~ Mother Teresa

A Drop In Centre For Tweed Heads

It is hard to imagine a life with no place to call home. No place to rest, wash clothes, perhaps watch a little television, have a cup of coffee, take a shower or just sit and talk to someone who cares. And yet, to a number of homeless and marginalised people in Tweed Heads, that is all life offers them. A life of total boredom, sleeping on dangerous streets at night and the morning finds them heading for the bus shelter or park bench. It is here many will spend the entire day, perhaps with a bottle of cheap liquor, which they hurriedly push into a grubby bag at the sign of police. Such is life for our homeless people, regardless of the weather, the season and the time of year. Today is the same as yesterday. Today will be the same as tomorrow and potentially the same for the rest of their life. Sadly, for many they see no way of ever climbing out of the hole they are in. The 2006 Census identified Tweed Heads as having the highest number of homeless people per capita in the state of NSW and no doubt the homeless numbers have since increased.

Over the last two years, we at "You Have A Friend" have endeavoured to obtain crisis accommodation or at the very least a "drop-in centre" for the many homeless and marginalised people in Tweed Heads district. If we are not in a position to provide crisis accommodation, then we should provide at least a "drop-in centre" for these people who after all are Australians, many having fought for their country in the last war or Vietnam.

"Drop-in centres" are nothing new and in fact many country towns and cities have them. If drop-in centres were of no use, there is no doubt they would already have been abandoned. They are places not to be feared, are inexpensive and very importantly, places the homeless can once more obtain some dignity and turn their lives around for the better.

In Tweed Heads, You Have A Friend is actively seeking support from all forms of government for a drop-in centre. A place the homeless can seek out and obtain vital information important for their wellbeing and a place the



many charities can provide meals from. All that is required is a building no bigger than an average house, with a toilet, shower, a washing machine, iron, microwave oven, a fridge/freezer and a place to sit and relax. It is important that the clients have access to a computer to assist in seeking work or emailing family. Very importantly, the centre needs the support services to operate from there on a weekly basis. It is important for example that Centrelink, drug and

alcohol, housing etc. regularly attend. In this way, the services are concentrated in one location. At present homeless services in Tweed Heads are spread over a 4 kilometre range and for those without transport, this is often impossible.

It has been indicated to You Have A Friend by the authorities that "drop-in centres" are not popular with council as "no one" wants such a place near their homes or offices. There is an imagined fear that it will attract drug and alcohol addicts and other undesirables. This is not the case if the centre is properly run. In Murwillumbah their drop-in centre has operated for years in regular office hours with a qualified staff, most of which are volunteers and most importantly, the clients who access the centre know the rules and are only too grateful for a central place they can obtain information, rest and shower if needs be.

You Have A Friend has been advised recently by the authorities that a Drop-in Centre for Tweed Heads presents many complications and our charity needs to source the location and present a proposal suitable for council. In the meantime, the many homeless people in Tweed Heads are left wandering aimlessly or sitting around areas the council and police would prefer that are left for "tourists". Without support and no place to shower or use toilet facilities, the council must face the fact that Tweed residents will have their gardens and properties used as public toilets. As we have always maintained, "Where do you go when there is nowhere to go"?

"People are often unreasonable and self-centred. Forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway. If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway. If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway. The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway. Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway. For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway."

~ Mother Teresa



Have a Laugh!



Did you ever wonder why there are no dead penguins on the ice in Antarctica- where do they go? Wonder no more!!! It is a known fact that the penguin is a very ritualistic bird which lives an extremely ordered and complex life. The penguin is very committed to its family and will mate for life, as well as maintaining a form of compassionate contact with its offspring throughout its life. If a penguin is found dead on the ice surface, other members of the family and social circle have been known to dig holes in the ice, using their vestigial wings and beaks, until the hole is deep enough for the dead bird to be rolled into and buried. The male penguins then gather in a circle around the fresh grave and sing: **"Freeze a jolly good fellow."**

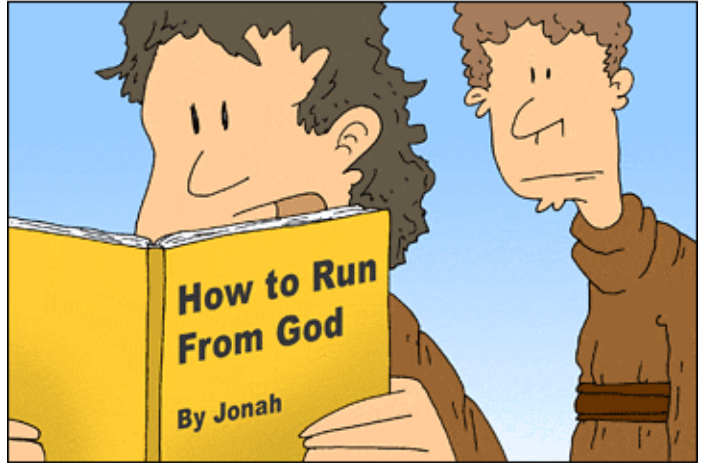
Someone had to remind me, so I'm reminding you too. Don't laugh.....it is all true. Perks of reaching 50 or being over 60 and heading towards 70!

1. Kidnappers are not very interested in you.
2. In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.
3. No one expects you to run--anywhere.
4. People call at 9 PM and ask, did I wake you?
5. People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
6. There is nothing left to learn the hard way..
7. Things you buy now won't wear out.
8. You can eat supper at 4 PM..
9. You can live without sex but not your glasses..
10. You get into heated arguments about pension plans.
11. You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.
12. You quit trying to hold your stomach in no matter who walks into the room.
13. You sing along with elevator music.
14. Your eyes won't get much worse.
15. Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.
16. Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the national weather service.
17. Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.
18. Your supply of brain cells is finally down to manageable size.
19. You can't remember who sent you this list.

Forward this to every one you can remember right now!

And never, under any circumstances, take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night.

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Thanks to Richard Germain (See Jonah 1-4)

09-19-2008

IT JUST SAYS "DON'T"

Thank you for your support!
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 St Joseph's College 07 55249002
 St Joseph's Primary 07 55362519
 St James Primary 07 55249404
 St Anthony's Primary 02 66741368
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Spar Supermarket, Tweed Fruit Exchange
Austral Café, Murwillumbah Bakery

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Brisbane Star
Cruises



I would like to support 'You Have A Friend' with a donation.

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Please post donations to ~ P.O.Box 637, Tweed Heads, NSW 2485
(A Tax Receipt will be forwarded to you)

Please visit us at: www.youhaveafriend.org.au