

## Gossip At The Office

### From John's office.....

The highlight of 2009 so far has been Nic's graduation in March. After 4 years of hard work Nic has graduated with a degree in business technology and innovation. We all attended his graduation ceremony at the Christchurch Town Hall and are very proud of his achievements.

The last few months has gone extremely fast and with daylight savings now finished the cooler months are upon us. Family time together has been high with Jo and I having not spent a weekend home for the last 6 weeks. I and the two boys Nic and Brad have spent a lot of time entering a number of road riding

events in the Canterbury and Nelson areas plus in February the Buller marathon. Jo did the half marathon walk while I did the Buller Half run and recorded my best time of 1 hour 42 minutes. Brad did a fantastic time in his first marathon in just over 4 hours. This is a superbly run event and a credit to the people of Westport who get right behind it. One of the biking events Nic and I competed in was the 107 kilometer Grape Ride which starts in the beautiful Forest Estate Winery at Renwick, travels up the road to Picton, around the Queen Charlotte Drive to Havelock and back home to the winery. This is a really nice ride.

However the highlight and most anticipated event was the Around Brunner cycle race. My event did not start off too well as coming down to the start line I came off my bike while crossing a very slippery railway line. Road and skin are not a great combination. The body hung together for the race with getting around in just under 4 hours and Nic recording a very fast time of 3 hours 45 minutes. Jo's enthusiasm has increased for the race and she intends to do it as a team next year.

The road bikes get hung up now for the winter months with the mountain bikes coming out. The running shoes will be back on trying to improve our times in the Christchurch marathon over Queens Birthday weekend and may go up and see Brad in Wellington and enter the Wellington event in late June.

Natalie is having a good 12<sup>th</sup> Year at Nelson Girls College and is turning into a lovely girl who we are very proud of. She has attended a tourism management careers course in New Plymouth over the holidays. Great for young people to have this career experience and opportunity before they decide on exactly what they want to do.

So as you can see life has been busy and exciting for us all. Not sure what the rest of the world thinks about life at present but we think its pretty good.

### From Anne's sunny office..

In our house Garry and I have been busy little squirrels, boiling up our blackberry jelly and putting it in jars after having them in the freezer from the Summers picking. We enjoy the hot Sundays in Summer finding and collecting the berries and find it rewarding when the labels are on the jars, and it's ready for giving as a gift or using at home.

Easter was spent at the batch in Punakaiki with my elderly mother and my sister, we had a quiet and relaxing time with plenty of walking and some knitting. I have just about completed a jersey for my niece who requests a jersey annually as she attends University in Dunedin.

I have recently become chairman for a group called New Coasters. The group is helping new people coming to the West Coast to settle, by giving advice on schools, doctors and the local community. For new residents from overseas sometimes

just what to do with the rubbish can be confusing. The group has a coordinator and anyone with some spare time could join them at coffee mornings or just saying hello to a new resident over the fence can make a big difference. When families move into a new area the person who is employed goes off to work and makes friends, the children go off to school and the homemaker can often be left very lonely and isolated in a new community.

New Coasters organised a Teddy's Bears Picnic recently where over 400 people attended. It was a fun day and it was amazing to see where all our new coasters are coming from.

### A Message from the Office team...

We not only took part in the Spring into Action healthy eating challenge, but we have been in a weight loss challenge based on the Biggest Loser programme involving 11 people in total. The final results are not in yet, but we are pleased to say that neither

one of us got last! For the most part it has been a fun and interesting journey for us.

There have been no sausage rolls, pies, scones, hot chips on a Friday and definitely no cream buns entering this office in the last 10 weeks!! It's all been about salads, fruit and vegetables, and now that the cooler months are here we have been making and enjoying Homemade soup

Kirstie went to New Plymouth and Palmerston North for the first time recently and Penny has just returned from taking her 5 year old son a much awaited train trip to Christchurch and back.

