

# Life Cycles



NOVEMBER 2001

The newsletter of the Philadelphia Natural Family Planning Network (PNFPN)

## Sharing NFP with the World Community

Susan Fryer

*The following statement was read to the 25th special session of the general assembly for an Overall Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Istanbul+5) presented to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole, June 7, 2001, by Non-Government Organization representing WOOMB International Inc., on behalf of the Caucus for the Advancement of the Billings Ovulation Method, C.A.B.O.M.*

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for this opportunity to tell you about the World Organization Ovulation Method/Billings, (known as WOOMB International) and to explain how its work is relevant to this conference. WOOMB is an entirely volunteer, non-profit organization, incorporated in Los Angeles in 1977. Its objective is to teach every woman in the world the facts of her fertility and how to use this information to achieve or avoid pregnancy. This is a basic skill, like knowing how to feed a baby, which is passed down from one generation to the next. Studies all over the world have demonstrated that, with this basic knowledge, couples can plan their families naturally with confidence and without mechanical or chemical use.

The Billings Ovulation Method was developed over several decades by an international team of medical researchers and clinicians, led by Drs. John and Evelyn Billings of Australia. It is based on a woman's vulval observations of what she feels and sees and is not to be confused with the rhythm or temperature methods. Where it is known and practiced it is acclaimed as both the most effective way of avoiding pregnancy, even when cycles are irregular, and as a primary treatment of infertility. Professor James Brown, an internationally renowned endocrinologist, has used the method to achieve pregnancies in more than 50% of couples whose infertility is of undetermined cause without prior investigation or the expensive intervention of fertility experts.

The spread of the Billings Ovulation Method throughout the world has been remarkable. It is now taught on an organized basis in over one hundred countries on every continent. Dr. Evelyn Billings' book "The Billings Method" has been translated into 22 languages and over 50 million copies have been sold. The most frequent reactions to the method are amazement at its simplicity and bewilderment and even anger at not having heard of it before!

A dramatic example of the way this natural method has spread in recent years

*Continued on page 2*

## A Message from Your President

This month's issue of Life Cycles features the Billings Ovulation Method of NFP. Oldest among the current NFP methods that utilizes one fertility indicator, Billings is still practiced worldwide and in many regions of this country. Here on the East Coast, most Diocesan Programs have traditionally offered only the sympto-thermal method, but many are seeing the advantages of offering courses in other methods. Indeed, it is in the couple's best interest to decide what works for them. Dr. Evelyn Billings is quoted as saying that the method itself is "Knowledge that every woman ought to have". Might we add that it is knowledge every married couple ought to have before they are married, regardless of their race, ethnicity or creed. We hope the information provided in this issue is of interest to our readers as it is in keeping with the PNFPN's philosophy to promote all methods of NFP.

*Barbara Rose*

# Life Cycles

The newsletter of the Philadelphia  
Natural Family Planning Network  
(PNFPN)

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*Life Cycles* is a planned as a quarterly publication.

Articles may be submitted to Barbara Rose at

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Life Cycles can be viewed online at [www.pnfpn.org](http://www.pnfpn.org)

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## In Memorial

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Mr. Arthur Delaney, a founding member of PNFPN and the president of the Philadelphia-New Jersey chapter of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. Art left this earth on February 6, 2001. Please pray for the repose of his soul and for the consolation of those who loved him.

## Remember to tell everyone:

**Our WEBSITE:** [www.pnfpn.org](http://www.pnfpn.org)

**Our phone number:**

**(215) 885 - 8760**

*Sharing NFP with the World Community*  
*Continued from page 1*

is its adoption in China. China carried out its own trials of the method and concluded that it is more effective than the most widely used birth control technique, the intra-uterine device. They also found that it was effective in helping sub-fertile women in China achieve pregnancy.

So how is the Billings Ovulation Method relevant to the objectives of the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements? Human Settlements by definition denote people living together in harmony. The basic unit of settlements is the family, and the Billings Method acts as a bonding agent for the mutual support and physical and psychological well-being of all family members, transforming a house into a home.

a) It empowers the woman with knowledge of how her cycle works and so lifts her self confidence, self esteem and status to equal partnership in marriage;

b) It fosters communication and love between parents who can make responsible informed joint decisions on the number and spacing of their children.

c) It emphasizes the value of the child, the planned as well as the unplanned.

d) It leads to parents recognizing their responsibility for the sexual education of their children. The mother who understands her own fertility communicates more easily with her daughter before puberty why menstruation occurs. This communication is then ongoing. Adolescents need to know that nature's sign of their health and fertility is a normal event. The knowledge, together with discussion of all aspects of sexuality, strengthens their resolve to resist peer pressure and to realize that waiting until marriage to engage in sexual intercourse is not only a challenge

they can undertake but is the way to avoid sexually transmitted disease.

Since 1980 school programmes have shown that a third to two thirds of sexually active teens return to chastity with the knowledge of the Billings Method. (Hanna Klaus, M.D., F.A.C.O.G., USA) Women have embraced the Billings method regardless of their socio-economic status, culture or religion. It is easily understood by all—the blind, the illiterate, those living in absolute poverty and those members of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups identified in the Habitat Agenda. There is no cost to health or purse in the teaching or practice of this natural, eco-friendly method. Women and governments are free of the costly complications of contraception.

The philosophy of WOOMB is to recognize and endorse the innate dignity and freedom of the individual. It rejects imposed solutions to meet external agendas that fail in this basic test and lead to such aberrations as forced sterilization and blackmail aid linked to population control programmes which show cynical disregard for the dignity of the individual. This is consistent with the Istanbul Declaration that states that “human beings are at the center of our concern for sustainable development, they are the basis for our actions.”

In conclusion, the Billings method presents to those concerned with human settlements a tool that meets the criteria of the Istanbul Declaration and is worthy of endorsement and promotion. To quote Professor S.Z. Qian of the Jiangsu Family Health Institute, “The Billings Ovulation Method is the safest and most effective method so far available for fertility regulation”. Thank you.

For further information visit online:  
[www.woomb.org](http://www.woomb.org) or  
[www.billingsmethod.com](http://www.billingsmethod.com).

## *New position at the Archdiocesan Family Life Office*

Our very own PNFPN member, Lisann Castagno, has joined the Philadelphia Archdiocese Family Life Office staff as assistant Natural Family Planning Coordinator. In this part time position, Lisann will assist with coordinating all Archdiocesan NFP class schedules, training new teachers, and keeping us all up to date with any new developments in NFP instruction.

Many of you have not had the opportunity to meet Lisann, and so we'll introduce her to you. She has been married to our PNFPN treasurer, Michael for 7 years and she is the mother of two beautiful girls, Rebecca and Sara. She has a bachelors in mathematics education from Temple University and a masters in mathematics education from Arcadia University (formerly Beaver College). She and Michael have been teaching NFP for the Archdiocese for the past five years and they both assist with the Archdiocesan Regional Marriage Preparation Program. Lisann is currently a part-time mathematics teacher at St. Basil Academy in Jenkintown.

Says Lisann, "I completely believe in NFP and what it stands for. The Pope talks about responsible parenting and it makes sense. We are working with the Lord and the way that He created our bodies. Practicing NFP makes for a strong marriage because of the enhanced communication between spouses and the mutual self-sacrifice they engage in for a common goal."

Lisann's position comes shortly after the reorganization of the Philadelphia

Archdiocesan NFP program. In March of 2001, all volunteer NFP instructors underwent a training program led by Stella Kichen of the Harrisburg Diocese. "I was very excited when we signed on board with the Diocese of Harrisburg and their NFP program" Lisann states. "It will be very interesting how we will be able to adapt it to work in the Philadelphia Archdiocese."

Lisann is hopeful for the future and believes whole heartedly in the promotion of NFP. "I feel that the word about NFP is getting out there slowly but surely. More people seem to know what NFP is and what it stands for," she relates. Her own personal goal is to "talk to anyone who will listen about NFP." She believes it is "one of the best kept secrets." Responding to the negative publicity NFP has received in the past she reports "Hopefully soon, we will get more doctors to take a good look at this method and see that it truly does work."

Eleanor LeGates, director of the Family Life Office, describes the new position in the following written statement, "Having someone on the staff, even part-time, to deal exclusively with NFP has been a dream for a long time. We are very happy to have Lisann as part of the staff and believe that her enthusiasm, charisma and background in education will do much to enhance and advance the good news of NFP."

The PNFPN wishes Lisann well as she settles into her role as assistant NFP coordinator. It is hoped that this new appointment brings an even greater level of cooperative activity among the NFP service providers in our region.

### **Have you seen our new brochures?**

They certainly are beautiful and free for all network members. To order your stack today, please call (215) 885 - 8766.

## *Dr. Kahlenborn's book available through Barnes and Noble*

Yes, it's true! Your copy of *Breast Cancer; Its Link to Abortion and the Birth Control Pill* is as close as your nearest Barnes and Noble. All one needs to do is approach the information desk with the following ISBN: 0-9669777-3-4 and ask to "special order" the book.

"This will enable the book to be seen on the national inventories for Barnes & Noble and may encourage their retail stores to order stock of the book for their shelves," says Dorothy Dugandzic, editor of the book and managing director of the St. Augustine Foundation in New York. "With the book on the shelves, more women will be able to be reached with the book's important information about breast cancer. Lives are at stake. Please help!"

After you've read your copy, you may wish to donate it to your local public or college library. This will be an additional way to get the book into women's hands.

## *Kudos to:*

*To Stephanie Schoenleber for volunteering to serve as the PNFPN secretary.*

*To Dr. Lester Ruppberger for his NFP radio program aired on 1570 AM every third Friday of the month from 4 to 5 pm.*

*To Linda Hortan, RN, Sister Diane and the entire parish community of Assumption BVM in Feasterville, PA for hosting our November Road Show.*

## Hot Items in NFP promotion

In this issue we feature the latest edition of the classic book by Evelyn Billings and Ann Westmore entitled *The Billings Method: Using the body's natural signal of fertility to achieve or avoid pregnancy*. The following is a press release from the World Organization Ovulation Method Billings (WOOMB).

Since it was first published in 1980, *The Billings Method: Using the body's natural signal of fertility to achieve or avoid pregnancy* has become a classic health book for women. Worldwide, it has sold more than a million copies in 22 languages. It is estimated that more than 50 million couples worldwide use the Method, across all cultural boundaries.

Melbourne doctors, Evelyn and John Billings met over a dead body while they were studying anatomy as young medical students. She went on to study pediatrics and he neurology. In the 1960s they became interested in looking for a natural alternative to the notoriously unreliable Rhythm Method and discovered the Billings Method.

The Billings Method itself has been hailed as 'Knowledge that every woman ought to have'. This book is an invaluable guide in that knowledge. It explains—clearly and simply—how a woman can observe her body's own natural signals of fertility and use that knowledge to achieve or avoid pregnancy. It also taps into the ever-increasing demand by women for natural ways of dealing with issues of health and contraception.

Dr Billings was fascinated to learn that the Billings Method—observing

changes in a woman's mucus as a signal of when she is fertile—is actually ancient knowledge that we had lost. She discovered that this method of contraception was taught by grandmother to grand-daughter in some African tribes, and was also known to some Aboriginal people.

Dr Billings is internationally renowned for her work and the Billings Method has proved particularly invaluable in Third World countries. In these countries, where birth control is a critical, and even live-threatening issue, this natural method is widely taught and practiced, with excellent results. Dr Billings travels overseas regularly and visits China several times a year at the invitation of the Chinese government to teach the method.

An unexpected bonus has been its success for Western couples wanting to conceive, as it pinpoints precisely the time of ovulation. Twenty years on from its original publication, The Billings Method is as relevant today as it was on publication.

Dr Evelyn Billings is available for interview and talkback.

Contact: Billings Family Life Centre,  
27 Alexandra Parade, North Fitzroy,  
VIC 3068 Australia  
Phone: International +61 3 9481 1722  
Fax: International +61 3 9482 4208  
E-mail: billings@ozemail.com.au

## God's little blessings

Jason Bonaventure  
Born on August 15, 2001 to  
Marie and Joe Hare.

## The "Net" works

*In this column, our readers will be informed of NFP promotional events, seminars, lectures and classes scheduled. Please check this column regularly for volunteer opportunities.*

### NFP CLASSES SCHEDULED

#### Pennsylvania

*At press time there were no classes in Pennsylvania scheduled after November. Please remember to call the NFP phone line or check the website for the latest class information.*

#### November 7 — Oreland

An Ovulation Method class sponsored by the Family of the Americas will be held starting at 7:30 pm. Private follow up counseling available after the first introductory class. For directions and registration please call the PNFPN phone line at (215) 885 – 8760.

#### November 9 — Media

A Sympto-Thermal Method class sponsored by the CCL will be held at Nativity BVM parish starting at 7 pm. This is a series of four classes with the additional dates of 12/7, 1/4 and 2/1. For directions and registration please call Joe and Maria at (610) 544-2349.

#### November 12 — Wynnewood

A Sympto-Thermal Method class by the Philadelphia Family Life Office will be held at St. Charles Seminary starting at 7:30 pm. For directions and registration call the Philadelphia Family Life Office at (610) 660-9002.

#### New Jersey

*The following courses are all taught by CCL instructors in a series of four classes and are held in the evenings from 7 to 9:30 pm. For directions and registration call 856-756-7900, ext. 6315 or email: camdennjfp@cs.com.*

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November 12 — Camden.

A Sympto-Thermal Method class will be held at Cathedral Ministries Office.

January 15, 2002 — Haddonfield.

A Sympto-Thermal Method class will be held at Christ the King Parish.

January 24, 2002 — Blackwood.

A Sympto-Thermal Method class will be held at St. Agnes Parish.



## Opportunities for Education and Training

Billings Ovulation Method Teacher Training in Santa Rosa, CA from Dec. 5-9, 2001. Participants from other methods welcome! For details, please contact Sue Ek at: boma-usa@qwest.net or call (651) 699-8139

CCL Clergy Seminar in Cincinnati, Ohio November 6-8, 2001. Contact Ginny Niehaus by phone: (513) 471-2000

## Mercedes Wilson to visit Pennsylvania in February

Mercedes Arzu Wilson has been invited to give a presentation for the annual Celebrate Life Banquet of the Pennsylvanians for Human Life. She is the foundress and president of the Family of the Americas and the author of several books, including *Love and Family* and *Love and Fertility*.

In 1968, Ms. Wilson studied the Billings ovulation method under its originators Dr. John and Evelyn Billings. She became fascinated with the accuracy of the method and wondered why this basic knowledge wasn't taught to all women. Today she is well known for her untiring efforts to promote the ovulation method worldwide.

The fund raising dinner will be Sunday, Feb. 10, 2002 at the Springfield Country Club on Route 320, Springfield, PA. For more information call (610) 667 - 1191.

## Tips for NFP Activists

George Finnin, VP

While the PNFPN is embarking on its fourth year of existence, there are members like my wife Eileen and me, who have been promoting NFP for close to twenty-five years. Sometimes it seems like we make little headway in getting people to understand the benefits of NFP. We see young people still using artificial means to plan their families and meet health care workers who don't have knowledge of what NFP is.

The publicity against us is amazing. I found that Planned Parenthood (PP) has made proposals to the United Nations that all children need to have contraceptives so they will not be inhibited in acting out their sexual desires. I have seen figures stating PP receives over \$187 million from US tax funds (I may be off by a few 10's of millions) and performs 182,854 abortions a year. PP has been putting advertisements in local newspapers that are cryptic but keeps their name in front of people. I encourage all NFP users and supporters to start doing whatever you can to spread the Good News. Here are some tips for NFP activists.

- **Pray that the benefits of NFP be communicated to a much wider audience.**

Have this prayer be part of a daily intention and ask others to pray with you.

- **Distribute NFP literature**

The PNFPN has free brochures

available. Call or write us today and order a stack for your local library, clinic waiting room or physician's office.

- **Offer to give presentations on NFP or arrange for a presenter from our speakers bureau**

Don't limit the speaking engagements to churches. Consider groups that meet at college campuses in classes, seminars, or student organizations. Some other places may include libraries, community health clinics, or holistic health centers.

- **Write to your congressman or state representative**

We gave you information back in May about HB 25, the bill that would mandate prescription coverage for contraceptives in employee health plans.

- **Enlist the support of others.**

Speak openly with others about the importance of a sacramental marriage union, which includes NFP. You may be surprised how many people will inquire about NFP when they realize that you are knowledgeable. If you don't have all the answers (and who does?) you can always refer them to the website or our phone line for additional information.

- **Send *Life Cycles* your NFP activist ideas and accomplishments so that we can share them with others.**

There is such a long way to go. I am committed to spreading the good news of NFP as long as I can. I estimate that I have about 20 more years to devote to the cause. The PNFPN can use all the help you can give. Thanks for being a member.

## Our Ongoing Appeal

Please support the PNFPN. May God bless you for your generosity.

\$5      \$10      \$15      Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Send your contribution to the following address: P.O. Box 220 Jenkintown, PA 19046

## Become a Member of the PNFPN

If you are not registered in the PNFPN, please join us. We need your talents and support if we are to be successful. Consider what would be possible if more people understood the gift God gave us in our cyclic fertility. If you know of someone who is dedicated to the promotion of NFP in the Philadelphia region that is not currently a member please snip this out and send it to him or her. Feel free to make as many photocopies as you wish.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Profession or association with NFP: \_\_\_\_\_

(Clergy, laity, couple, health care professional, promoter, pro-life advocate, etc.)

Are you a member of an organization that provides instruction in NFP?  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Archdiocese Family Life Office, C.C.L., Family of the Americas, or other)

Would you agree to have your name, address and phone # listed in a directory for PNFPN members only?       Yes       No

Mail to: George and Eileen Finnin  
3842 Lywiski Road  
Collegeville, PA 19426-1025

## Welcome New Members

*Barbara Roque - Philadelphia PA*

*Peter Schlear, Jr - Philadelphia PA*

*Celeste Mattia - Elkins Park, PA*

*Leonie S. Watson, M.D. - Elizabeth, NJ*

*Doris Duncheskie, RN - Oreland, PA*

*Pat Cabill - Green Lane, PA*

*Rev. David A. Fernandes - Collingdale, PA*

*Darla Rowley - Camp Hill, PA*

*Dorothy Dugandzic - Yonkers, NY*

*Michael and Kristin Suda - Upland, PA*

*Chris and Maria Meredith - Ardmore, PA*

*Mary Lettieri, RN - Havertown, PA*

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