



Jenni Parsons

2010

and other lovely numbers

'Twenty ten' sounds good to me. I have a quirk when it comes to numbers – some have more of an emotional appeal than others, and some irritate me by their mere existence. It is something to do with their shape, or their symmetry. Sometimes the appeal, or lack of it, is symbolic. I dread being 49 years old. To me it's a duplicitous sort of number and makes me suspect the person is really 50 but unwilling to admit their true age! Seven is an appealing number so 7 x 7 would be cool. When I (eventually!) get to 49, I could start using a numerical system based on seven. That will mean my age would be written as one-zero-zero (100)... a significant milestone!

Daniel Tammatt, in his memoir 'Born on a Blue Day', about his childhood and early adulthood, describes how numbers appear in his mind as a particular colour, texture and shape.¹ When he does calculations in his head, he sees the shape of the solution... and instantly knows the number it represents. Each day has a colour and, as he was born on a Wednesday... it was a blue day.

While this makes day-to-day living very stressful, Daniel's mind is capable of extraordinary mathematical and linguistic feats. He perceives the world in a very different way to most people. For him it is just the way the world is. For me it seems wonderful. It is a reminder that the way we see things is not necessarily how things really are, or even how they should be, but just one of a range of possibilities.

My new year's resolution for *Australian Family Physician (AFP)* is to try to publish articles that see our professional roles from a new perspective, or look at medical issues from a

fresh angle, or perhaps even make us question what we consider self evident truth.

As a symbolic representation of this striving for a fresh look our talented graphic designer, Jason Farrugia, has given *AFP* a design makeover. The new look is clean, sophisticated and accessible. Articles will be grouped to make it easier for you to find your favourite, must read part of *AFP* before you venture out to explore the rest of the offerings. 'Up front' will contain editorials, viewpoints and letters; 'Focus' will contain articles on the issue or topic *AFP* is exploring for the month; 'Clinical' will contain review and educational articles; 'Research' will follow, taking up its rightful central place; 'Professional' will explore the way we work, our health system and how we educate GPs; and finally, the 'back pages' will include regulars such as our continuing professional development articles clinical challenge and *AFP* practice challenge, book reviews, product information and classifieds.

We have engaged Dean Gorissen, a Children's Book Council award winning illustrator, to visually represent the month's 'Focus' on the cover. Those of you with young readers at home may be reminded of Dean's illustrations in the 'Wicked' and 'Deadly', series written by Paul Jennings and Morris Gleitzman. Perhaps in the pages of *AFP* we will be brave enough to occasionally take a lead from these rollicking and deliciously subversive texts!

One of the innovations in the *AFP* editorial team that has brought us new ideas, fresh eyes and a registrar's youthful perspective has been the role of *AFP* Publications Fellow. This is an academic registrar role in which the registrar combines teaching and involvement in a research project with work at *AFP*. We have been fortunate to have had three excellent registrars over the

first 3 years of the program in Kath O'Connor, Jennifer Presser and Rachel Lee. Kath and Rachel have both chosen to continue to include a writing and editing role in their professional mix and remain a vital part of the *AFP* team. In 2010 we are pleased to be able to expand the program to include two academic registrars, Deepa Daniel, who is from the University of Melbourne and Kate Molinari, from Australian National University. We were delighted with the level of interest in the position for 2010, and with the excellent calibre of the candidates we have chosen. Welcome Deepa and Kate!

On a sad note we are saying farewell to our wonderful manager Sally Kincaid, who has supported, encouraged and nurtured our small team, respecting our creativity, diverse talents and ability to get the job done well and on time. Thanks Sally!

So welcome to *AFP* 2010. I hope you will find your general practice journal multicoloured and textured, and one which occasionally enables you to see your professional world in a new, fresh light.

Author

Jenni Parsons MBBS, DRANZCOG, FRACGP, is Editor in Chief, Australian Family Physician.

Reference

1. Tammatt D. Born on a blue day. London: Hodder and Staughton, 2006.

correspondence afp@racgp.org.au