

VINE AND BRANCHES
The Monthly e-Newsletter of Rachel's Vineyard Ministries
April 2007

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Rachel's Vineyard is on the web at: www.rachelsvineyard.org
Our national toll-free hotline is (877) HOPE-4-ME.
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Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreats for emotional and spiritual healing after abortion are held internationally. Rachel's Vineyard welcomes, women, men, couples, grandparents and abortion providers. Our retreats are held in both Catholic and Interdenominational settings. Rachel's Vineyard Ministries is a resource for clinical training, education, and healing models.

Rachel's Vineyard is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. All contributions are tax deductible. We work in partnership with Priests for Life and Gospel of Life Ministries.

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Help us spread the Good News! Pass along this newsletter to friends and colleagues. If you are receiving this newsletter because a friend forwarded it to you, details on subscribing (or unsubscribing) appear at the end.
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Can Dry Bones Live Again?

To join in the following reflection, you are invited to first read the scripture passage of [Ezekiel 37:1-14](#); [Mark 5:21-24](#), and [Mark 5:35-43](#)

A Scripture Reflection
By Richetta Lobban

Can dry bones live again? Not too long ago, I would have thought not, but I had hope. Can the heart of a dead girl beat again? I wasn't so sure, but I prayed that in my case, it would.

Although I didn't know it at the time, my heart had been traumatized by poor decisions. A major one killed it. However, I find it interesting that something as dead as my heart was, could feel so much pain.

I remember reading or hearing somewhere that pain is the body's way of letting us know that something isn't right and that we should tend to it, instead of ignoring it. Maybe God sent that crushing pain (the pain that made me wish I was dead) to tell me that it was time to deal with the wounds in my life. Those wounds had caused me to build a thick wall of anger, hatred, distrust, and resentment.

It has taken me a while (a good while), but this year I have been able to tear down some of that wall. I have been able to let some of those negative feelings go, though I constantly battle myself not to pick them up again. And because God was finally able to soften my heart (even though I fought Him long on that one) He recently brought me back to life! He put a new song in my soul! I haven't felt this excited about a desire for more than 20 years. I have a dream; I have a goal to strive for. It feels good. It feels right.

Can dry bones live again? Yes. Can the heart of a dead girl beat again? I'm a witness. Despite my rebellion, God was patient with me. Despite my fears, He works on me. Despite me, He loves me. He loves you, too.

Richetta Lobban attended a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat in the Archdiocese of Newark

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The soul would have no rainbow had the eyes no tears.
John Vance Cheney
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A Note from the Pastoral Director

Friends,

Some people are literally afraid of success. They fear that if they really push hard at whatever task God has given them, the results will overwhelm them and they will prove inadequate to the task. For example, a pastor may hesitate to invite back to Church those who don't go, for fear that he will then be too busy due to all the people coming to Church!

The same temptation can come to those who offer post-abortion healing. "If we extend the invitation too loudly and clearly," the temptation goes, "we won't be able to respond to all those who will come forward."

Friends, we don't have any choice in the matter. God has put into our hands the ministry of reconciliation, and commands us to proclaim repentance and forgiveness to the ends of the earth. The choice is not between ministering to small numbers or ministering to large, overwhelming numbers. We are already responsible for the large, overwhelming numbers. The choice is between ministering to them with confidence or ministering to them with cowardice. God has already entrusted them to us – it's not up to us to decide whether we will be responsible for them. We already are.

That's why it's so consoling to see God's people join together to provide so many different resources for healing after abortion. Let's rejoice in the diversity of these ministries, let's strive to increase the interaction and support between them, and let's never grow weary of serving more and more of God's wounded, beloved children.

With prayers,
Fr. Frank Pavone

National Pastoral Director and Chairman of the Board
Rachel's Vineyard Ministries

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"Fear imprisons, faith liberates; fear paralyzes, faith empowers; fear disheartens, faith encourages; fear sickens, faith heals; fear makes useless, faith makes serviceable."
Harry Emerson Fosdick
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Help Support Our Work

It's hard to believe that Easter is already upon us! When the weather turns warm and we start seeing the evidence of new life all around us, we prepare for one of the most solemn, powerful, and joyous celebrations on the liturgical calendar. Throughout the Lenten season, many of us have striven to come closer to God through fasting, prayer, and taking on additional spiritual responsibilities, or giving back to the community. Now we come to the culmination of those good works and personal sacrifices.

We want to thank all of our supporters for the generous contributions you have made that enable our ministry to continue to be a success. We are in need of your continued support to bring healing to those who suffer after abortion. Thank you again to all who make this wonderful healing work possible.

Please help us to continue serving by offering your prayers. Second, we ask you to help us serve by offering your time. If you are interested in volunteering for Rachel's Vineyard in any way, please feel free to contact Andrea@RachelsVineyard.org Third, we ask you to please aid our ministry by giving financially. A tax-deductible donation of \$1000, \$500, \$100, \$25 or any amount can be made by calling us to donate using your credit card or donate online, through this link: [Support Our Work](#), or by sending us an e-mail at Andrea@RachelsVineyard.org to receive a postage-paid envelope or just sending us your donation to this address:

Rachel's Vineyard Ministries
808 N. Henderson Road
King of Prussia, Pa. 19406

May the Risen Christ fill you with every Grace and Blessing during this Easter Season and always!
Kevin and Theresa Burke
Founders, Rachel's Vineyard Ministries

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The horizon leans forward -- Offering you space to place new steps of change.
Maya Angelou
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Post-Abortion Outreach in Media: The New Frontier

A professionally dressed woman is bent over her desk, head in hand as a voice-over tells how she attempted suicide after her abortion. A mother sits in her kitchen and tells of her difficulties bonding with the child she bore after aborting her first. Drink in hand, a college-aged girl talks about drowning her pain. A coach shares how she had wished someone had warned her of the risks related to abortion, as she now faces breast cancer almost 15 years later.

Welcome to the new face of media dedicated to post-abortion healing and awareness. As you read this article, ads are being aired on television and radio all over the nation which reveal the closely guarded secret of post-abortion trauma. This campaign is being led by Virtue Media, a non-profit ministry that has been providing high-quality commercials for the past 10 years, to groups wanting to share the truth about abortion and how it affects women.

Virtue Media began in 1998 as a grassroots movement dedicated to outreach through mass media in an effort to educate the public about the reality of abortion, and other life issues that impact Americans every day.

Today, Virtue Media is an international organization that produces and airs professional, high-quality ads on television, informing the public about the devastating impact of abortion. All the ads can be licensed for public use and are available for viewing at www.VirtueMedia.org

The ads are designed to be easy to access and cost-effective to use. According to statistics brought in from past advertising campaigns, every \$50.00 spent on these ads represents the lives of a mother and child saved from abortion. Every \$10.00 spent helps a post-abortive mother or father find healing.

Tom Peterson has laid out three goals to achieve through the commercials produced by Virtue Media:

- To inform the public about the dangerous effects and terrible impact of abortion
- To inform women contemplating abortion about the humanity of their unborn children, and the real dangers of abortion
- To reach out to those wounded by abortion, bringing them healing and hope

“We are simply a voice for babies, women and healing,” says Peterson. In almost every mix of ads aired, the message of post-abortion healing is featured prominently. Anyone can easily and affordably bring these ads to be aired on television networks in their own communities. Tom Peterson extends a special invitation to those who have experienced healing after abortion, to reach out to those who are still in need of help. He can be reached by phone at **1-877-7VIRTUE**, or through e-mail at tom@virtuemedi.org

By bringing Tom Peterson or another representative of *Virtue Media* to your community, you can help increase awareness by helping to educate about these important life issues. The power of the message in VirtueMedia’s ads cannot be disputed - they are poignant, moving, and informative. But if no-one hears them, no minds will be changed, no lives will be saved, and no hearts mended.

For more information contact Virtue Media www.virtuemedi.org

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Beauty is but the sensible image of the Infinite. Like truth and justice it lives within us; like virtue and the moral law it is a companion of the soul.

George Bancroft

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Let’s Pray together

We remember Father Paschal Honner O.S.B, a monk of St. Procopius Abbey, who went to eternal life on Sunday, March 4, 2007. He was from St. Patrick Residence, Naperville, Ill. In his last years, he derived great satisfaction in taking part in Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreats where he served faithfully on the Joliet Retreat Team. All who knew and loved him will truly miss him.

We pray for Dr. Vicki Sheppard LaBrecque, who recently suffered a heart attack. Vicki helped start the Rachel's Vineyard site in Asheville, North Carolina, where she continues to serve on the retreat team. We pray that God will grant her strength and a swift recovery.

We continue to pray for all those who are suffering illnesses, especially Janet Miller in Winnipeg, Canada and Joan Marie Reiley in Philadelphia.

We pray in thanksgiving for all the men and women throughout the world who have dedicated themselves to the ministry of Rachel's Vineyard. We thank you Lord for their passion for peace and their gift of service and love.

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Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks.
I Thessalonians
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E-Cards for Healing After Abortion
Comfort and Compassion, or Justification and Avoidance?
By Andrea Staargaard

"I think you're strong, smart, thoughtful, and caring. I believe in you and your ability to make the best decision. I think you did the right thing."

This is the wording of an e-card designed by Exhale, an organization funded by advocates of choice. The cards were designed to be sent to a woman who has chosen to abort her child. These cards were recently offered on their website. There are four other designs, only one of which features an ambiguous reference to the recipient's loss. All the rest deliberately avoid discussion of actual grief, and simply try to reinforce the 'positive', if difficult, nature of the woman's choice. Without allowing women to experience and mourn the loss of their child, the grieving process can never be completed, and resolution of this trauma is almost impossible to attain

Sending an e-card to justify the decision made by a friend might seem like an appropriate way to help 'smooth over' any negative feelings she may be experiencing. However, these cards are too shallow to help a woman confront her true feelings of grief, and simply serve to reinforce the idea that abortion, though it may cause temporary 'blues', is imminently just another experience. This is echoed in a statement on Exhale's website:

"They [the founders of Exhale]...wanted to participate in creating a service that could meet women's after-abortion needs, provide an alternative to politically motivated counseling agencies and *create awareness that abortion, and having feelings afterward, is normal in the reproductive lives of women and girls.*"

Abortion is not a normal experience for women. It is experienced by many as a form of sexual abuse and violation. Many individuals are coerced, manipulated and pressured into unwanted abortions. It is also interesting to note that at no point on these materials are the feelings of the

father ever discussed. It would be interesting to see how the hotline offered by Exhale, (which operates only on evenings and weekends), would receive a male caller in distress. Though the founders see the emotional pain of women after abortion, they ignore the root cause and perpetuate the idea that abortion is good - or normal - for women.

Organizations that recognize both the trauma that abortion causes to the mother (as well as father, grandparent, and sibling), and the loss of a child's life, have begun to offer their own cards that offer healing and support to those suffering after abortion - but they are designed to further encourage the healing process, not dismiss negative emotions with a hallmark-like greeting and a pretty picture. An example are the cards issued by the Life Issues institute, which can be viewed at: <http://www.lifeissues.org/eCard/>.

With this resource, women and men are directed towards the path towards healing and wholeness, by acknowledging the depth of their loss and encouraging they seek further help. In contrast, the empty messages contained by Exhale's well-intentioned by sadly misguided cards are just an echo that perpetuates the denial and sadness of abortion.

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As a whole part of "psychological education" it needs to be remembered that a neurosis can be valuable; also that "adjustment" to a sick and insane environment is of itself not "health" but sickness and insanity.

James Agee (Novelist, Poet)

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Rachel's Vineyard Leadership Training Conference 2007

“Carry the Vision - Illuminate the World”

With a mere three months between us and the Rachel's Vineyard Leadership Conference, "Carry the Vision - Illuminate the World," we're putting the final touches on the course schedule, preparing registration packets, and looking forward to what promises to be a fun, productive, and educational experience. If you haven't had a chance to look at the Conference brochure which is available on the front page of our website, www.RachelsVineyard.org we invite you take this opportunity to check it out! Pre-registrations are still being accepted, and can be mailed to Andrea at Andrea@Rachelsvineyard.org

If you're wondering what to expect at this year's conference, here's a sneak preview of some of the exciting programs that will be offered this year:

A series of keynotes and classes that will address issues regarding personal spiritual growth, courtesy of Neal Lozano. Neal has spent the past thirty years working in Christian communities to help individuals address the influence of evil in their lives, to enjoy the freedom and love promised in our relationship to Christ. His books include Unbound, The Older Brother Returns, and Will You Bless Me? His workshops will provide further guidance that can be applied to both personal and ministry work. Neal has helped many Christians improve their relationship with God and free themselves from spiritual bondage.

Theresa and Kevin Burke, the founders of Rachel's Vineyard Ministries will present on a variety of issues ranging from facilitation skills; leadership; recovery from sexual abuse; relational wounds caused by abortion as well as outreach to couples and family members.

The "Carry the Vision - Illuminate the World" conference is also proud to host speakers from a variety of other organizations united to our cause. Fr. Frank Pavone from Priests for Life, and Janet Morana of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign will also be presenting classes that will illuminate leaders regarding important post-abortion issues.

Listen to your fellow retreat leaders as they share with you their thoughts and inspirations cultivated by facilitating retreats at the Rachel's Vineyard Bazaar on Wednesday evening! A variety of skills, resources, music ideas and retreat items will be shared by your peers in the post-abortion community. Come prepared to take notes and learn from your friends as you network with facilitators from all over the world who are involved in the work of Rachel's Vineyard.

More updates about programs will be available as we continue to move forward in planning. Just as a reminder, the retreat will be held at the beautiful Malvern Retreat Center in Malvern, PA. Flights should be scheduled into Philadelphia International Airport if you will be flying in to join us. Check-in time on Tuesday, June 26th, begins at 3PM. The "Come Aside and Rest Awhile" Retreat being offered directly following the "Carry the Vision - Illuminate the World" conference will run until 1 PM on Sunday afternoon. Join life affirming ministries and post-abortion leaders as we come together to reflect on our common goals, common spirituality, and common hope!

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No one has yet fully realized the wealth of sympathy, kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child. The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure.

Emma Goldman

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Upcoming Clinical Training and Speaking Events:

April 18-21, 2007 St. Louis, Missouri
Heartbeat International Conference
Equipping Ministers, Empowering Ministries
with special post abortion track coordinated by ARIN
(Abortion Recovery International Network)
Form more information: www.heartbeatinternational.org

April 21, 2007 Danville, Kentucky
Pregnancy Loss & Unresolved Grief
Contact: Sharla Wells
Sponsored by Cliffview Retreat and Conference Center
The Catholic Diocese of Lexington
Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church
E-Mail: sharlaky@alltel.net

+ Continuing Education Credits Available

May 15-16, 2007 Palm Beach, FL
Kevin will be presenting at a Seminarian Training on post abortion
healing for Diocese of Palm Beach
Contact: Vocations Office (561)775-9552.

June 26- 29, 2007 Rachel's Vineyard Leadership Training Conference
Malvern Retreat House, Pennsylvania

Theme: "Carry the Message – Illuminate the World."
Contact: Andrea Staargaard
Phone: 610-354-0555
E-Mail: Andrea@RachelsVineyard.org

June 29-July 1

Come aside and rest awhile Retreat
A Retreat for Leaders in Life Affirming and Post Abortion Ministries
Led By Fr. Michael T. Mannion, Fr. Frank Pavone & Theresa Burke
Malvern Retreat House, Pennsylvania

July 21, 2007

Rachel's Vineyard Clinical Training in Cork, Ireland
Contact: Bernadette Goulding
bergoulding@eircom.net

July 22, 2007

Cork, Ireland
Regional Skills Building Clinic for facilitators in Rachel's Vineyard
Contact: Bernadette Goulding
bergoulding@eircom.net

Sept 25 – Oct 1, 2007

Rachel's Vineyard Conferences in Australia
Melbourne, Hobart, and Sydney
(Keep posted for details and contact information in upcoming Editions of Vine & Branches)

October 12, 2007

Tampa, Florida
Clinical Training Sponsored by Diocese of St. Petersburg
Contact: Emma Boe (813) 631-4370 ext. 222
eboe@ccdosp.org

November 30, 2007

Tulsa, Oklahoma
Pregnancy Loss and Unresolved Grief Seminar
Sponsored by Saint Francis Health Systems and Catholic Charities
Contact: Theresa Valento (918) 494-1096 trvalento@saintfrancis.com

*** Continuing Education Credits Available

Keep posted for additional trainings in upcoming issues of Vine and Branches!

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A sense of curiosity is nature's original school of education.
Smiley Blanton
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Upcoming Rachel's Vineyard Retreats: April - May

April 13-15, 2007 -- Fairfield County, Connecticut
Contact: [Clarissa Cincotta](mailto:Clarissa.Cincotta) 203 218 0291

April 13-15, 2007 -- Kelowna, British Columbia
Contact: [Janet Kormish](mailto:Janet.Kormish) 250 762 2273 or 877 683 CARE

April 13-15, 2007 -- Arlington, Virginia
Local host: Diocese of Arlington

Contact: [Myriam](#) 703 729 7998

April 13-15, 2007 -- Portland, Maine

Contact: [Sandra Thompson](#) 207 879 1130 ext 770

Contact: Annette 207 879 1130 ext 771

Toll-free in Maine only: 800 CARE 002

April 13-15, 2007 -- San Jose, California

Contact [Mary Peter](#) 408 426 7343 or 888 467 3790

April 20-22, 2007 -- Long Island / Uniondale, New York

Note: Spanish

Contact: [Donna Crean](#) 631-243-2373

April 20-22, 2007 -- Asheville, North Carolina

Contact: [Shelley Glanton](#) 828-670-8192 or 828-230-4940

April 20-22, 2007 -- Cincinnati, Ohio / Northern Kentucky

Contact: [Peggy Feirstine](#) 513 588 0080

April 20-22, 2007 -- Omaha / Lincoln, Nebraska

Contact: [Heather](#) 402 871 4812

April 20-22, 2007 -- Scottsdale, Arizona

Contact: [Magdalin](#) 602-358-8709

April 20-22, 2007-- Wheeling, West Virginia

Contact: [Jackie Hamilton](#) 304 230 2229 ext 104

April 20-22, 2007--Pittsburgh (Western), Pennsylvania

Note: Interdenominational retreat

Contact: [Kathy or Dan Hawk](#) 412-257-3120

April 20-22, 2007 -- Janesville, Wisconsin

Contact: [Cheryl Ryan](#) 608 755 9739 or 608 754 0309

Local host: [Pregnancy Helpline of Janesville](#)

Note: Interdenominational retreat

April 20-22, 2007 -- Dallas (English), Texas

Contact: [Caryn Stevens](#) 214 544 2273

April 20-22, 2007 -- Wilmington, North Carolina

Contact: Judy or Kathy 910 799 0270

Sponsor: HOPE a Ministry of Life Line Pregnancy Center

April 20-22, 2007 -- Uniondale, New York

Note: Spanish

Contact: [Donna Crean](#) 631-243-2373

April 27-29, 2007 --Richardton, North Dakota
Contact: [Carol Kling](#) 605 374 5639

April 27-29, 2007 -- Minneapolis / St. Paul, Minnesota
Contact: [Nancy Blom](#) 952 882 2072

April 27-29, 2007 -- Edmonton and Rural Area, Alberta, Canada
Contact: [Marlene Javorsky](#)
Contact: [Carla Houston](#) 780 963 4048
Note: Interdenominational Retreat

April 27-29, 2007 -- Tampa, Florida
Contact: [Emma Boe](#) 813 631 4370
Retreat Location: Clearwater, Marian Servants of Our Lady of Divine Providence

April 27-29, 2007 -- Helena, Montana
Local host: CSSM - [Rachel's Hope](#)
Diocese of Great Falls, Billings and Helena
Contact: [Susan Gliko](#) 888-456-4673

April 27-29, 2007 -- Steubenville, Ohio
Contact: [Sharon Maedke](#) 740-283-3636

April 27-29, 2007 -- Corpus Christi, Texas
Contact: [Desda](#) 361 949 1251
Contact: [Fr. Tom Goodwin](#) 361 882 7912

April 27-29, 2007 -- Washington/ DC Metro Area - Maryland
Note: Bilingual Spanish and English
Contact: [Eugenia Hadley](#) 301 237 6177

April 27-29, 2007 -- Richardton, North Dakota
Contact: [Carol Kling](#) 605 374 5639

May 4-6, 2007 - Missoula, Montana
Contact: Word of Hope [Susan Sweatman](#) 406 549 6565
Note: Interdenominational

May 4-6, 2007 - Paterson/Morris County, New Jersey
Contact: [Marie Ryan](#) 973 777 8818 ext 264

May 4-6, 2007 -- Springfield, Massachusetts
Contact: [Mary Petisce](#) or [Claire Lapointe](#) 413 452 0661

May 4-6, 2007 -- Rapid City, South Dakota
Local host: Family Life Ministries, Diocese of Rapid City
Contact: [Carol Kling](#) 605 374 5639

May 18-20, 2007 -- Baltimore, Maryland
Contact: [Denise Douglas](#) 410 354 6900

Contact: Deacon Frank Zeiler 800-286-4224

May 18-20, 2007 -- Cherry Hill, New Jersey
Contact: [Stephanie Claudy](#) 866 4 RACHEL

May 18-20, 2007 -- Philadelphia Area, Pennsylvania
Contact: [Priscilla](#) 215-906-6337
Contact: [Geri Simboli](#) 610 399 0890

May 18-20, 2007 -- Launceston, Tasmania, Australia
Contact: [Anne Sherston](#) 03 62298739

May 18-20, 2007 -- Stanwood, Washington
Contact: [Valerie Jacobs](#) 800 822 HOPE

May 18-20, 2007 -- Houston, Texas
Contact: [Traci](#) 713 379 3844
Contact: Cindy 281 286 7729

May 18-20, 2007 -- Melbourne, Australia
Note: Interdenominational
Contact: [Anne Neville](#) 61 3 9870 7044

May 18-20, 2007 -- Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Contact: [Julie Kohler](#) 403 218 5506
Contact: Kathy Smith 1-877 597-3223

May 18-20, 2007 -- Los Angeles, California
Note: Spanish Retreat
Contact: Marcela Figueroa de Alcala 877-2-Raquel
Claretian Renewal Center

May 25-27, 2007 - Sydney, Australia
Contact: [Julie Kelly](#) 02 9440 7980

May 25-27, 2007 -- Cedar Falls, Iowa
Contact: [Maria Shores](#) 319 530 2597 (mobile)

May 25-27, 2007 -- Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
Note: Interdenominational
Local Host: Post Abortion Community Services, Office of Life & Family
Contact: [Doreen Yung](#) 604 525 0999
Contact: Angie Cote 604 525 0999
Contact: Michele 604 443 3256

May 25-27, 2007 -- Taipei, Taiwan
Contact: [Georgie Hsieh](#) 886-933-42-6608

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