

## **A BEDTIME STORY: BARBARA CALDICOTT**

I was reading a goodnight story to my grandchildren, 'A', 'B' and 'C' one evening when 'A' wished to read his own choice of book. It was about sex education, suitable for an eight-year-old that had been handed out at school.

After a few minutes his head popped up saying 'is this true Grammy? That the man puts his thingy into the woman?'

I cannot tell a lie, so with a deep breath and trying to sound normal I said 'yes...that's right'.

'B' and 'C' also tuned in now deeply interested. 'OH, yuuuuck', they said in unison. 'What about Mummy and Daddy?' 'Yes'...'ohh yuuuuck', again.

'And what about you and Pa?' 'Yes'. Eyes opened even wider, disbelievingly.

'And Uncle Graham and Auntie Sally?' 'Yes'.

Trying to steer the conversation away from personalities, I explained, 'all animals make babies this way, and remember, humans are animals too, we are animals'.

I recited the entire animal kingdom, horses, cows, sheep, dogs, cats, tigers, lions, monkeys etc. and all birds, fish. Insects and so on. 'It is a normal way to get babies, but you have to be grown up and married', I warned with a grave voice as their little eyes and mouths goggled.

Fortunately, young 'C' fell asleep, but the conversation continued. The main discussion points about 'thingies' kept them alert for the next hour.

Time for lights out, big hugs and kisses and they settled.

Breathing a great sigh and thinking I handled it fairly well, I found my way to the kitchen to pour a glass of wine when 'B' padded out to ask me, 'Grammy, how do the cows do it?'

'Well...the bull gets on top of the cow, then they start ...'

'HMPHH', she exclaimed, 'if I was the cow I would be on the top'!!!