

January / February 2020

Gizmoe



Grant Sidaway, MNZM, 2020. For contribution to seniors and ICT education

As 2020 dawns, SeniorNet was delighted to see that its retiring Executive Officer Grant Sidaway was awarded a MNZM in the New Year Honours list for his services to seniors and ICT (Information and Communication Technology) education, a fitting recognition of his considerable contribution to the organisation. We offer Grant our sincere congratulations.



We must also acknowledge the efforts of those who prepared what turned out to be a compelling nomination, culminating successfully with Grant's award.

Grant, was rightly viewed as the face of SeniorNet, successfully led the organisation for 27 years and along the way, he built excellent relationships with many government and technology leaders. He also negotiated a number of significant partnerships and sponsorship agreements with major businesses and organisations.

Because of Grant's contribution, SeniorNet has achieved a high reputation for deliverability, for reliability and most important of all, the achievement of our mission to support and motivate senior people to enjoy and use technology in their everyday lives. I'm sure we all wish Grant the very best in his new endeavours.

AGM and National Symposium

Diarise 6-7 May for your trip to Dunedin. It's the AGM and annual symposium with a fascinating line up of speakers! I'm looking forward to meeting you all in person and learning more about your successes and challenges.

Things you might need to prepare –

- 1) Regional committee nominations if your representative has already served two years.
- 2) Any member motions you might want to put forward.
- 3) Who, from your learning centre is coming to the AGM and /or the symposium and who gets to vote.
- 4) Whether to apply for travel funding from your local gaming society or your local Chartered Club (if they have pokie machines).

More formal details to come shortly!



Introducing Your New Executive Officer

I'm pleased to introduce myself as the new Executive Officer from January. I'm very excited about meeting as many of you as possible in the early part of 2020. My background has been more about the governance side of the ICT community having been chair of Wellington ICT and on the committee of the Wellington 2020 Communications Trust for many years. Back in the 1990s I managed a project called NetDay, in which we recruited community volunteers to install Cat Five cabling into all primary schools in Wellington. That project created my enthusiasm for community ICT and I completed a Masters Degree in Communications as the web was becoming part of our lives (in the early 1990s). Looking back I still have some of my textbooks, and from time to time I might share some ICT history with you.



My paid career for the last 30 years has been in fundraising and I'm looking forward to sharing my knowledge to ensure the sustainability of the SeniorNet movement. I am very proud to have been bestowed with Fellowship of the Fundraising Institute of New Zealand and I'm a strong advocate for professional qualifications and adherence to the international codes of ethics and conduct for fundraising. I'd be happy to talk more about fundraising with any of our SeniorNet branches.

Leave No One Behind!

It's now less than two months until Kiwi Bank goes cheque-free from 28 February 2020. From this date, Kiwibank will no longer accept cheque deposits and will stop providing bank cheques. For many people, especially in provincial and rural communities, this will represent a huge hurdle in paying bills and administering daily money transactions. Other banks are likely to follow Kiwibank, and other government departments such as IRD are also going cheque free.



Fortunately, the SeniorNet Federation has signed another 12-month agreement with Westpac Bank which will help our Learning Centres team up with local Westpac branches to run internet banking workshops at our Learning Centres. I see this as a vital role we can all play in ensuring that no one from our communities are left behind and are not disadvantaged, We want to provide as much assistance as possible to help older people have the confidence to use internet banking and to give opportunity for them to be prepared for the day when cheques disappear from the landscape entirely.

Although I'm sure that most SeniorNet members are aware of internet banking but we shouldn't presume that other members of our communities are up with the play and we know for sure that there are still seniors who are not prepared for a cheque-less society. Bearing this in mind, I urge our Learning Centres to organise and host the Westpac/SeniorNet "Confidence with Internet Banking" workshops. You don't have to have an account at Westpac as the workshops are designed for people to learn how to use internet banking at all banks. We are grateful for the support of Westpac Bank to help us run these sessions in our Learning Centres. However, you could also take the workshops to Ryman Villages, to community meetings, even host them in your local Westpac Branch.

I see this as a vital role that SeniorNet can facilitate in our local communities. This is our contribution to ensure no one is left behind. In providing this service to our communities, I recommend collaborating with other senior organisations, your local library (especially if it runs an outreach service) and other relevant charities in your community.

Ryman Healthcare Opportunity

Last month Grant brought you news that Ryman Healthcare's three-year quest to build an app that eliminated paperwork and improved quality of life for residents has won a top international award. See Gizmo November/December 2019.

I'm pleased now to announce that Ryman Healthcare has come on board with SeniorNet once again as a major sponsor for 2020 – 2022. This significant agreement has some major benefits for Learning Centres.

Firstly, the agreement encourages Learning Centres to provide monthly learning sessions at Ryman Villages, which in turn are eligible for learning hours. And because of the financial support of the Ryman partnership the Federation is able to increase the rate for learning hours. Official information on this relationship, and the conditions, will come via your Regional co-ordinators.



Ten Topics for your Social Meetings

One of my philosophical thoughts is that if you're going to volunteer for something, then it has to be enjoyable, satisfying, gratifying and fun. Our volunteers have a choice, they can volunteer somewhere else. Like any charitable organisation our volunteers are our lifeblood. At SeniorNet we appear to be blessed to have so many volunteers, but we must make a conscious effort to ensure that our volunteers are having fun, feeling satisfied and that we motivate them to keep coming back week on week.

In attending SeniorNet in Upper Hutt, I discovered that the group keeps an active committee of about 8 volunteers who enjoy the social nature of their involvement. They are not there because they are technology experts, nor are they administration experts. Learning about technology, and the benefits it brings, is just one part of why they get together every week. Certainly, there is some administration involved, but this is not the main focus of their volunteering.

This got me thinking about the possible topics that might energise and enthuse your members, volunteers and new membership prospects (whether or not they are technology experts). You don't have to have technology expert speakers at every meeting, you could engage your own members with group discussion, panel sessions, quizzes, debates and demonstrations.

Send me your topics or ideas, heather@seniornet.co.nz, and I'll share them through Gizmo.

Here are the 10 topics you may wish to consider:

1. *Using technology for fun and enjoyment* (Invite people to share their online hobbies or best games).
2. *Technology and health* (new technology developments that are changing the way healthcare is delivered now and in the future).
3. *Life without cheques* (or life without any existing communication medium – life without the Post Office for example. Invite Westpac, as one of our sponsors, to participate in this one)
4. *What is 5G all about, what are the advantages or disadvantages?*
5. *How did we communicate before technology?* (Invite your members to share stories of life in days gone by).
6. *New Zealand in 2050* (What will your community look like? What technology changes will have come about for good and bad).
7. *Creating an online business* (find an entrepreneur or a business person to talk about their online e-commerce website).
8. *The future of.....* Ask local experts to talk about the future of their industry or sector, e.g. librarians, local government representatives, telecommunications providers, insurance, teachers, travel, recreation, the arts etc.
9. *Leave no one behind.* (This one is serious. How do we tackle the problem of social isolation? What can you and your members do for those who are isolated or housebound? Is there some way to use technology to communicate or reach out to people who can't come to your meetings? Can you collaborate with other community organisations, your local mobile library service, meals on wheels providers, the community development manager at your local council?).
10. *My favourite app.* (Ask members to share their favourite apps or most useful app or the biggest disappointment or to describe what they would like an app to do for them or to imagine what chore or tedious activity could be resolved with an app).

SeniorNet is grateful for the support we receive from our sponsors:

