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Committee Contacts
Our Sponsors

Editor contact

rotorua@seniornet.nz

Website

www.rotoruasenior.net

Hello, members,

Our Chairman, Keith, is recuperating after a health incident, so I am attempting to fill his literary boots with this month's contribution.

Bert talks about the new Senior Hangouts in his article, so I would like to add my thoughts on the possibilities this will present our members. Because our membership is aging (gracefully) and becoming less mobile, and we don't have our own premises, video assistance via Zoom etc. will become the major way we can provide tuition to our members.

In other areas of the country, SeniorNet branches have closed through lack of replacement tutors and new members. We would like to avoid this situation if possible.

Senior Hangouts will allow members to join virtual classes on topics that interest them. Getting in at the start of the programme gives members the chance to shape it to their needs.

If the times of Virtual lessons don't suit you, a video copy will be available in the online Library. If you can't find a session specific to your needs, you can request one. You will be able to form your own interest group(s) and meet a whole new batch of people who share your interest and quest for knowledge. You will be able to participate in an Online Forum where you can ask questions and offer suggestions.

Many of you probably already use Facetime, Zoom, Skype etc to talk to family members. We will be looking at ways to help the rest of you become familiar with video communication, including perhaps some practice sessions at Parksyde, or even at the Library. I hope you will at least sign up for Senior Hangouts, even if you think you may not use it much.

Cheers

Gene

Rotorua SeniorNet is just one of 75 local groups in the New Zealand Federation. If you would like to know more about what goes on elsewhere, OR what discounts or services are available to members, go to the Federation website.

www.seniornet.nz

Next members' forum

Monday 12 June 2023

Our monthly members' forums are at Parksyde Centre, Tarewa Place, on the second Monday of each month at 2 pm, with interesting talks followed by afternoon tea. Visitors are welcome.

From Bert, Activities Co-ordinator

A word or two about Senior Hangouts

Some of our newer members may not be aware of the Hangouts web site which was developed during the Covid Pandemic. Its arrival coincided with the massive expansion of the Zoom program which enabled many people to keep in touch during the periods of lockdown which were imposed at this time.

Hangouts enabled SeniorNet to remain a functioning organisation during the pandemic and members were able to log in to the Zoom website and see short presentations on computer related subjects from SeniorNet tutors from all over New Zealand.

In the aftermath of Covid, SeniorNet has had to make some large changes in its organisation which are still taking place. We are operating in a completely different environment which requires new strategies to meet the changed circumstances post Covid.

One of the early decisions made was to continue the use of Hangouts but in a new format which will be used by SeniorNet financial members only. A great deal of work has been done by some of our SeniorNet volunteers. The new Hangouts version for use by our financial members only was launched at the recent Symposium in Wellington. Hangouts will be at no extra cost to our members and will be part of the membership package. This will be an additional benefit to members alongside our sponsors' discounts etc.

Starting up a new entity such as Hangouts is a complex business and things need to be done in a certain order. The people who will be operating it will need a certain amount of training and familiarisation. While this is taking place our members will be encouraged to register their interest. It is vital that as many people as possible of our membership register for this service. Strong support from our membership is essential as with many other enterprises there is a break-even point, or in scientific terms, a critical mass that must be achieved to make the whole thing viable.

In the weeks to come more detailed information will be made available. This will be in the form of Online notifications and in Zoom lessons over the next 6-8 weeks. I am sure that we will all benefit from the use of Hangouts in the future and I hope that everyone will support this new endeavour.

Information on how to register will be sent to you shortly.

Bert

FYI/FYE (For Your Information/From Your Editor)

The Dark Side of Technology

As a teacher, I spent nearly 30 years observing secondary school students, from the time of manual typewriters and a phone in each teaching block, to five years ago, with laptops and cellphones everywhere. When I read Matt Heath's article in the NZ Herald on 22 May this year, it resonated. His article dealt with the current issue of boredom and its relationship to all-pervasive technology.

The evidence quoted comes from research by an American psychologist, who relates current levels of ennui, illness and pain with people's brains becoming overloaded with pleasure from modern life and devices. While this is probably validated research, I can't help wondering how much of this is also attributable to the content that people are accessing.

Talk to any teenager and they probably know all about celebrity lifestyles, consumer goods and trends and the latest fashion/behavioural trends. This tends to set up the expectation of a lifestyle akin to the Kardashians as being the norm, as I saw in classrooms, where young people think that the modern, celebrity lifestyle is how everyone (except themselves) actually lives!

Just a few days ago, I was talking to a primary school teacher and commented that, from my observations as a former secondary teacher and skating coach, it seems that a lot of young people are simply not developing in the way we would expect, either mentally or physically. She agreed, and told me that the primary school she teaches at has had to employ, not just a physed teacher, but also a developmental specialist – for just that reason! Their students are spending so much time in front of screens (TV, phone and computer) that they are starting school already years behind where they should be. Some, I'm told, have even arrived at school in nappies! Add to this the time they spend in car seats (when did you last see a family group waiting at a bus stop or walking to the shops?) and some of our young people are in a bad way.

Projecting these thoughts a little further, I'm thinking about the connection between (among?) this developmental delay (both physical and mental), poor school performance and the current craze for ram raids, car theft and general hell-raising among our young teenage population. It's probably old-fashioned, and definitely not PC, but I personally think a little bit of 'applied parenting' is needed – and not just to the kids!

Ngaire

What 9 letter English word has only 1 vowel and 8 consonants?

What 10 letter English word has one only of each of the vowels, in alphabetical order?

What 15 letter English word has one only of each of the vowels, in reverse alphabetical order?

Answers in next newsletter

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



Committee and Tutor Contact Details

Chair/Webmaster	Keith Garratt	07 357 2020
Vice Chairman/Treasurer	John Somerville	021 181 5193
Secretary	Peter McKellar	07 347 1154 or 027 2216275
Committee member	Rob Grant	07 345 4222
Committee members/tutors:	Ngaire Tucker	0272907347
	Gene Rigney	027 5724363
	Bert Harris	343 7232
	Eric Cameron	027 4410567
	Alan Scicluna	0273893505
	Felix Hohener	021 737694
	Alan Armstrong	07 349 6344/021 171 0946