

## Chairman's Report –Seniornet Wellington 2021

Welcome to the 29<sup>th</sup> AGM of SeniorNet Wellington.

Well, this will be my last report as your Chairman as I pass on the mantle of the Chair to my successor Pam Fletcher. When I agreed to take on the Chairman's position it was supposed to be only for 2 terms, but somehow it lasted for 5 terms.

I would like to take this opportunity to say **Thank you** to all the members of the Executive, Office staff and Volunteers that have helped me in the successful running and operation of our Organisation.

Without you – the Tutors, Office staff, the members of the Executive – Seniornet Wellington would not be able to function, so again a big **Thank you!**

### Highlights of the 2020 year to April 2021

#### Covid-19 Pandemic

Well I don't know if I should call this a "Highlight" but when the WHO declared that Covid-19 is now a Pandemic it certainly caused a lot of change in how we did things, not only at SeniorNet, but to everyone in the world.

On 25 March 2020 our Prime Minister put NZ into a Level 4 lock down for 4 week period minimum. For us at SeniorNet, it forced us to shut down completely, cancelling all activities at Anvil House, cancelling the scheduled AGM at the Boatshed, and I had to quickly get up to speed with Zoom.

After some trial runs with the Executive members to sort out of any tech issues that our members had, and a successful March Executive meeting, on the 15 April SeniorNet Wellington had it's very 1<sup>st</sup> AGM using the Zoom video technology.

This technology is now very much a SeniorNet Federation tool as I discuss later in this report

#### Pro Rata subscription system

Another 1<sup>st</sup> for us was the implementation of the Pro rata subscription system for **new** members joining SeniorNet Wellington. Traditionally, we hold 4 Visitors' Day per year, Feb, June, Sept and Nov. where we inform visitors what we offer them if they join as a member of SeniorNet, and that the subscription is \$25.00 per year. However, George Barna our Database administrator, thought that it was not fair that a new member joining in September or November was charge \$25.00, and within less than 4 months they were issued with another subscription order of \$25.00. The Executive agreed, so our Pro rata subscription for **new** members was devised and implemented from the 2020 financial year on. The screenshot below shows what is now on our new membership application form and the amount a new member would pay depending on their joining date.

<b>Membership subscription is \$25 a full year, reducing depending on your joining date:</b>		
January, February, March \$25,	April, May, June \$20,	July, August, September \$15,
October, November \$10,	December \$25 for 13 months.	
<b>Note: If you join before 21 September 2021 and are an AMI insurance customer, AMI will pay your subscription for the current year.</b>		

I believe that we are the only SeniorNet who operates such a subscription system and that our subscription of \$25.00 is the cheapest – most other SeniorNets charge \$30.00.

## **Joining the Federation of SeniorNets**

After 28 years of being a SeniorNet and the last 14 years being apart from the Federation, I formally accepted, with the approval of Executive committee, an invitation from the Heather Newell, the new CEO of the Federation, to become a member of the Federation.

So, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2021, another 1<sup>st</sup> for us was on that date we were welcomed and became a member of the Federation of SeniorNets.

The benefits we get more than outweighs the cost of not being a member.

As most will be aware, since TEC stopped funding SeniorNets and community Colleges Adult type education courses, we have been operating in deficit financial mode, but thanks to the judicial investment of funds over the years by our previous Executive Committees, we have accumulated funds to operate in deficit mode for a while yet.

A major benefit of being a member of the Federation is that they will pay us \$2.50 per student hour for any activity we run that has a learning aspect to it. For example, every month we run 6 free SIG's (iOS SIG, COG, DigiCam, Mac OS, Android and Q&A), so if we get 10 members to each of these free session, then we could claim  $60 \times 2 = 120$  hours (our session are 2 hr each),  $120 \times \$2.5 = \$300.00$  each month!! Which we previously ran these for FREE!! and is still free for you to attend, except now I can claim \$5.00 from the Federation for your attendance!

So, members, help us by coming along to these "Free" activities (and our paid activities) and help us reduce our operating deficit so we can operate longer.

Another bonus for us, at least until the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021, is that AMI Insurance will pay the year's subscription for all Members who holds an AMI policy. To date we have processed 35 members in this category. Some of these members have already paid their subscription and have informed us to treat their AMI payment as a donation rather than have their subscription refunded. To those members I say **"Thank you very much"**

## **Google's Offer and SeniorNet Virtual Classroom**

During this period, through Michael Munro's contact, Google offered us a substantial amount of money if we could develop a strategy that would benefit Seniors in using digital technology.

We realised that since we were only a local SeniorNet we could not in good conscience take this offer as we could not reach Seniors on a National level so suggested Google approach the Federation, which Google did.

The result of this, is the development of a virtual SeniorNet Classroom called "Senior Hangouts" using the Zoom video technology.

This development, funded by Google, is being done by a Dr Vinay Karanam Senior Principal Scientist & Director General at Earth and Energy Innovation LLC. and is now at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of its development.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of the development is an app that will operate on mobile devices and will automatically connect the user to the virtual SeniorNet Classroom. The App is intended to be officially launched at the National AGM of the Federation in May.

These virtual classroom sessions are limited to 30 minute duration and they are currently running Monday to Fridays starting at 10am each day. Any member from the Federation SeniorNet can enrol (join) this virtual SeniorNet Classroom. I became number 221 to join.

This virtual SeniorNet Classroom is the Federation of SeniorNets solution to the Pandemic, plus a solution to provide access to Seniors where there are no SeniorNet such as the Westcoast of NZ.

Each video session is recorded and saved to a Google Drive storage, so if you miss a session you can access that saved recording and view the session when you have time to do so. I've missed two sessions that I wanted to take part in, but by accessing the saved recording I still got to see what the session was about and learnt from it. The only thing I missed out on was being able to ask questions at the end of the presentation. Still able to hear and see what the other members ask though and the reply to the question.

At the Wellington Regional meeting of SeniorNets recently I discovered that a major problem with most SeniorNets was the lack of volunteer Tutors and the ability attract more.

The use of this virtual Classroom may be a way to help solve this for some SeniorNets and the Federation is prepared to pay the Presenters SeniorNet the student learner hours for all members registered for the session.

So those were the highlights of my 2020 year to April 2021.

Allan Chee  
Chairman