

July 2022

# Gizmoe



A newsletter for members of SeniorNet

---

## Introducing our new Chair



Following our recent online AGM Peter Campbell, regional rep for Otago Southland, was elected incoming Chairperson of the SeniorNet Federation.

Peter is a member of Dunedin SeniorNet Learning Centre and has been active through the Saturday morning technical group.

He joins the Federation Committee at an exciting time as we recover from the COVID lockdowns.

"First, I would like to introduce myself, Peter Campbell, as your newly elected Chair of the Management Committee of the Federation. I am a member and Secretary of the SeniorNet Dunedin Learning Centre, where I also tutor a couple of times a week.

Dunedin born and bred, my background is 25 years in Telecom NZ in a wide range of roles, including: NZPO Linesman, Telecom Sales Rep, Manager New Product Development, Customer Project Manager and Billing Programme Manager. After leaving Telecom, I spent the past 20 years as a Senior IT/Business Consultant in Wellington, managing large IT and change projects for a range of clients. After five years managing the replacement of The University of Otago's student management system, my wife (Diana) and I decided to move back to Dunedin permanently and retire. "

## From Heather's Desk



Will we ever get back to normal, I wonder? No, not the old normal but instead I would like to think of a butterfly about to emerge from its chrysalis. Having just thought we were out of our cocoon, we now discover that another wave of infection is coming and that we still need to be very cautious.

Our May AGM has been and gone, and I'm hoping it will signal the last time our membership has to meet online. We are not yet sure where our next AGM will be held but we are anticipating that it

will be face to face.

We farewelled our 2021 Chairperson, Marilyn Goodwin from Warkworth, and welcomed Peter Campbell from South of the South.

An online AGM does have its benefits. While we miss the face to face sharing, more people can participate in the AGM itself, especially for those who come from further afield. This year we had over 100 people attending, many more than would have attended a face to face. But we missed the interactive symposium where we could meet and greet our sponsors.

Kind regards Heather Newell, Executive Officer, SeniorNet Federation  
ACE Aotearoa Tangata Tiriti, Educator of the Year.

## SeniorNet in Print

Thanks to Terry Dowdeswell from Wanganui SeniorNet, we featured in a national newsletter sent out to all members of the Digital Equity Coalition Aotearoa. This national group includes representatives from all organisations, including ourselves, involved in digital inclusion. Thanks to Terry for the promotions.



Steve\*, recently retired, was born, raised and worked his entire life in a provincial town in the North Island of New Zealand. He left school, found work locally and enjoyed a relatively quiet life, living with his mother who took care of household business, and with no digital technology engagement whatsoever. His mates tried to get him interested in a smartphone and internet connection, but the reply was, "No, not likely mate!"

Recently, Steve's mother passed away. He then had to deal not only with his mother's death, but also take over the financial management of the household.

First things first. Power. He called the power company, only to find that he'd have to open a new account, in his own name. And to open an account he needed an email address.

Up to this point, Steve\* had shunned the Internet and digital devices. He didn't see the need. He had newspapers, friends, TV, phone. But now, reluctantly, he called SeniorNet for help. He only wanted an email address, nothing more. Except of course he would need a smartphone, or other device, and a connection. Oh dear.

Appropriate device and internet connection sorted, Steve\* enrolled in an introductory smartphone course. Then another. And another. He was on a roll!

"What's this app?"

"What happens if I do this?"

"I'm not doing online banking!"

And then:

"I need to pay an account online"

"Can I use my data for movies?"

"Can I stream to my TV?"

"I'm not going on Facebook."

"Hey, look at all this stuff on Facebook!"

"I can use maps. Find sports info! Look at this photo!"

Access to digital technology has not just helped Steve. It has not just changed his life. It has given him a whole new life, and boy, is he excited about that!

Steve's story is by no means an isolated case. Our senior citizens now have a huge range of digital tools to make their lives healthier, easier, happier, and longer. But they need both access and skills to conduct their necessary, daily business in this world. We have an obligation as a community and a country, to provide it.

\*Steve is a pseudonym

Story shared with us by Terry Dowdeswell, Chair of SeniorNet Wanganui

## **ACE engagement**

Many of you will recognise the name of ACE – Adult and Community Education. ACE represents the interests of all adult learning organisations and receives funding from government to promote adult learning. We joined the group recently and added our 52 Learning Centres to their network. We are thrilled to announce that we have received funding from ACE to pilot a set of Quality Assurance Guidelines for SeniorNet and we are inviting 12 Learning Centres to participate. The aim is to create our own fit for purpose Quality Assurance Guidelines and ultimately implement the guidelines throughout our Learning Centres. Some funding will be provided to participating Learning Centres.

ACE has also provided us with a promotional video and an article in their autumn publication.

## **Stop Press**

At the ACE National Conference in June, Heather Newell, our Executive Officer, was named Tangata Tiriti Educator of the Year and SeniorHangouts was named Programme of the Year.



*Dr Vinay Karanam with the award for SeniorHangouts ACE Aotearoa, Programme of the Year*

## Learning Centre news

Are Chrome Books the way of the future?



Late last year we brought you news about Chromebooks being piloted in Manawatū. Now Bream Bay have been experimenting and Nancy Edge recently reported that it was possible to convert an old lap top into a Chrome Book.

### HAVE YOU CONSIDERED A CHROMEBOOK?

AUTHOR: NANCY EDGE, SENIORNET BREAM BAY INC.

The marketing of Chromebooks by schools and retailers has created the notion that they are a “student’s laptop” leading to the common misconception that they have limited functionality compared to a PC or MacBook.

While, to some degree, that is true, my research has led to the conclusion that the key differences are -

A Chromebook cannot run applications that require a Windows or Apple based operating system to work – e.g. software such as Adobe Photoshop and resident Accounting software.

Large hard drives are not required because data is automatically stored in the Cloud.



The good news is that Chromebooks can access online based software applications such as Office 365, Accounting, photo editing applications, etc., so they are not as limiting as we might imagine. And, best of all, they are less expensive.

All that you need to sign into a Chromebook is a Google account to access your stuff (data files). With that account you gain access to use all the **free Google applications** that they provide such as -

- Gmail (email)
- Google Docs (word processor)
- Google Sheets (spreadsheet)
- Google Slides (for making slideshows)
- Google Drive - (cloud storage for your photos and files)
- Google Calendar – (a digital calendar that connects to your phone or tablet)
- Contacts – (an address book of family, friends and business you interact with).

The Google Operating System (OS) in a Chromebook is lightweight and designed to operate online. If you already use the **Chrome browser** on your computer, you will discover that using a Chromebook is a similar experience.

### **They are the ideal laptop for seniors!**



They are less complicated to use, easier to learn, simpler to set up, and perform most, if not all of the tasks the average older person could want. You can communicate by email, phone or video, write letters, print documents, operate bank accounts, watch

YouTube videos, store photos and documents, buy and sell items, access online services such as Office 365, Xero or MYOB, interact with Government departments and stream TV.

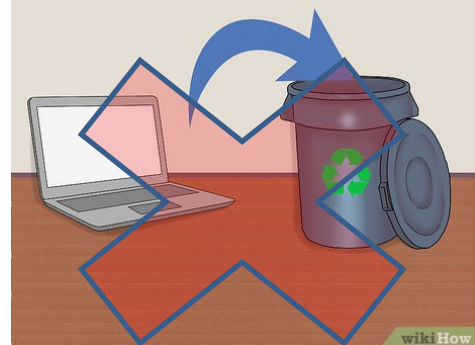
### **How much time do you spend using a browser compared to the time you spend using offline applications on your computer?**

Chromebooks range in price from \$400 for a basic model to about \$1,500 for a faster model with larger hard drive. Compare that to laptops ranging in price from about \$500 to \$6000 (according to PB Tech "Home & Study" listing.)

***BUT THERE IS MORE!***

### **Older laptops can be brought back to a useful life by converting them into Chromebooks!**

In many cases, an **older 64 bit laptop**, with hardware that is unable to be upgraded, can be converted into a Chromebook. An operating system, based on the Google Chromium OS code-base, called CloudReady has been developed by Neverware for this purpose.



**How many older laptops are lurking about in family cupboards around the country that could be successfully re-purposed as Chromebooks to live another day for years to come?**

### **Learning centres can convert laptops to Chromebooks.**

At Bream Bay Learning Centre, we have four 6year old slow HP laptops running W10. Dumping them did not appeal, so instead, we have converted them into Chromebooks. They now boot up faster and load websites at an acceptable speed.

Our objective is to promote Chromebooks as –

1. an affordable alternative to PCs or MacBooks, both to our SeniorNet members and to the community at large, or
2. transforming a redundant PC or MacBook into a useable Chromebook.

## In Conclusion:

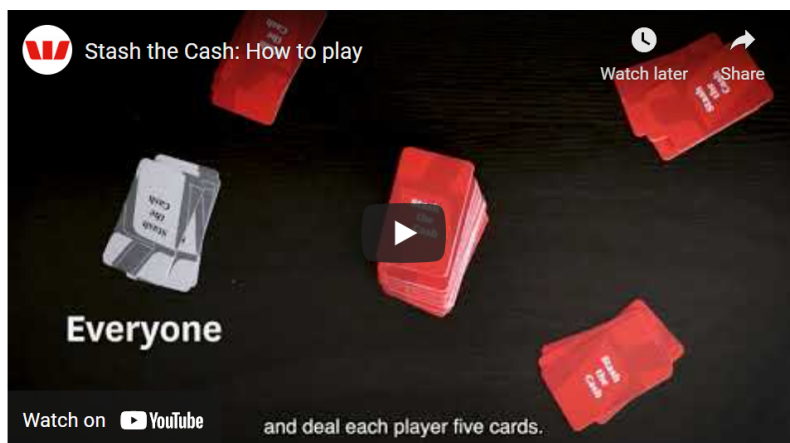
If you or someone you know has an older redundant laptop lurking around in the back of a dark cupboard, consider saving it from the landfill by converting it to a perfectly useable Chromebook.

---

## Westpac Banking - Stash the Cash

### Watch Stash the Cash (Ages 10+)

During a game of Stash the Cash, you play a scammer who is out to scam all the other players. Everyone else in the game is a scammer too and it is a battle royale to see who finishes with the most money. The scams in the game are based on real scams that people do or have been tricked by. We recommend this game as suitable for children over 10, and adults too.



In some cases presenting information about scams is likely to reduce confidence in the technology, rather than improving trust and confidence. Westpac's Stash the Cash game is designed to make awareness of scams fun, adding a lighthearted touch to a very serious topic.

Copies of the game are available from the Federation Office.

---

## Suzuki



Thanks to a hybrid electric car provided courtesy of Suzuki, our EO Heather Newell is not nearly as impacted by the petrol price rises as others. The SeniorNet Suzuki has recently been seen in Hawkes Bay, Kapiti, Waikato, Wairarapa and frequently in Wellington. Don't forget the Suzuki sponsorship which allows SeniorNet members to have free onroad costs.

## Noel Leeming

Need a new electrical appliance? Noel Leeming have just updated our discount cards to clarify that we are entitled to a discount. When you present your new card to the Noel Leeming staff, please emphasise that you prefer to specify SeniorNet for your discount.

Although the discount rate is similar to that of the Gold Card, SeniorNet earns a commission for all sales made on the card.

## **TechWeek**

Thanks to the support of Office for Seniors - SeniorNet, the 2020 Communications Trust, Age Concern Auckland and the Digital Inclusion Alliance Aotearoa, we were able to participate in Tech Week, in May. The “sponsorship” allowed us to feature in a panel session which highlighted our collaborations to ensure digital inclusion for older people. Thanks to our existing relationship with Google, we were able to secure Ross Young, Google’s government relations manager, to participate in the panel.

## **SeniorHangouts**

If you haven’t experienced SeniorHangouts you are in for a treat. It’s an online meeting place every weekday morning at 10 am for those who want to get together and talk about tech. Our own participants, with some occasional special guests, present sessions on their hobbies, interests and favourite apps. It’s half an hour of presentation and then 20 minutes of social time to ask questions and share your own experiences. Have a question or a comment – our forum section allows anyone to ask questions and share answers.

Wherever you are and who ever you are, you can register for free. Just sign up once and give it a go at [www.seniorhangouts.nz](http://www.seniorhangouts.nz).

The new website includes a forum, a calendar, access to recorded sessions, a one button click to attend the sessions and everything you might need to keep up to date and socialise with other like-minded people. And there are two very helpful features – an accessibility button which allows you to enlarge, change fonts, change colours, and lots of other useful accessibility features and a chat bot in case you need to submit a quick question.

Recent topics of interest include weather maps, the evolution of glass (think Chorus, think fibre).

## **We Go Global**

Our service is international. Our SeniorHangouts Master of Ceremonies – Dr Vinay Karanam, has provided a Hindi speaking version of SeniorHangouts to a group of Hindi speaking seniors from an Auckland based organisation called Shanti Niwas. Some of the participants have returned to India and even though there is a difficult time difference they have continued to sign in on a regular basis. Some other participants have shared the link overseas and now we are truly on the world stage. Congratulations to Vinay.

Our work with Google has recently been recognised in the partnership category of the Fundraising Institute of New Zealand annual awards. We were in a shortlist of three organisations.

### **Chorus – watch out for a visit to your town!**

Watch out for an invitation in your letterbox from Chorus inviting you to attend a roadshow explaining what fibre means for your home. Chorus are supporters of SeniorNet and have invited us to participate in their roadshows to talk about our services to older people. The roadshow events are a great way of finding interested people and for talking about the membership of SeniorNet.

### **Introducing Otila Osborne**

BCom (Hons), MBA (Victoria) and Otago University Ph.D. School of Marketing candidate  
If you've been participating in SeniorHangouts you may have met Otila Osborne who is helping us with an evaluation of SeniorHangouts. Over late January Otila interviewed a number of our buddies to ask about their motivations and experiences of learning online.



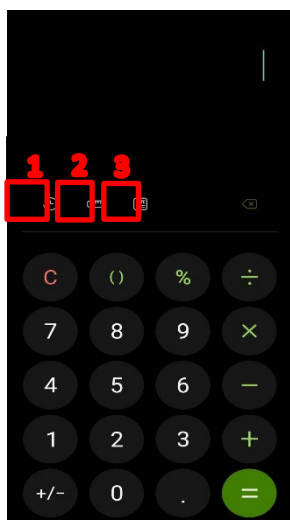
Otila is an Otago University Marketing PhD Scholarship recipient, passionately committed to improving societal wellbeing. She has been working in the NGO sector for the past 10 years and has supported a range of charities with their fundraising and marketing initiatives.

Otila's PhD involves researching 'the effects of commercial and social marketing on the risk perception of older female internet gamblers.'

Qualifications: BCom (Hons) 2020, MBA (Victoria) 2017 - 2019 and PhD Scholarship Candidature (Otago) 2021. Research interests: communications and social media marketing strategy, aging populations, technology, and international business. Concerned about the well-being of aging populations, Otila also has interests in technology, genealogy, classical music, travel and gardening. Her strengths and experience in marketing communications, strategy and academic writing will be utilised to produce the SeniorHangouts evaluation and provide us with online communications support. Otila recently moved to Otago and has joined our Dunedin SeniorNet.



## Smartphone Calculator



Earlier this year, I purchased a new smartphone to replace my aging and unreliable 2017 Sony phone. The Sony had a calculator like all cell phones but it did not have features which I used regularly. On the upgrade phone, the original calculator was reinstalled and I continued using it until one day, I had a close look at the calculator on my new Samsung.

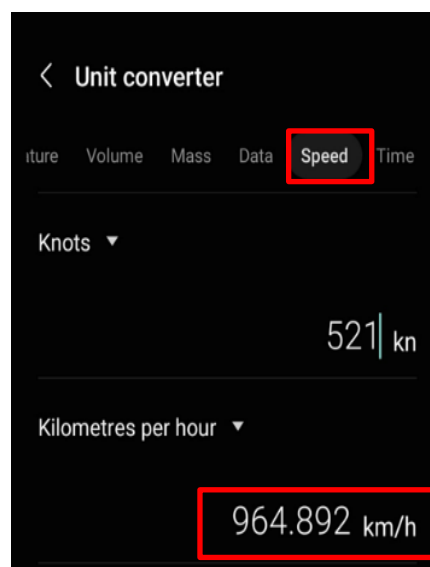
The new phone's calculator had all the features and more than the previous calculator app. This prompted me to ask you, "Have you had a close look at your calculator app?" While this item mainly refers to the Samsung phones, all other makes will have similar options.

Opening the app, shows three small icons as shown above under the numbers 1, 2, and 3.

**Icon 1:** The icon highlighted as "1" shows any previous calculations you have made.

**Icon 2:** By pressing the middle icon, number 2 in the picture above, you display the **unit converter**. Shown in the red box (at right) are some other the converters you can use: **Area, Length, Temperature, Volume, Mass, Data, Speed** and **Time**.

Where can I use these, you may ask? For example, you have a new recipe that is all metric and your scales are in pounds and ounces. You select Mass and from the drop box at left of the screen scroll down to Grams. In the box below select Ounces. Enter your metric figure, say 175 grams and the display will show 6.17 ounces. In the example above, the Converter "Speed" is being used to convert 521 knots with the answer as 964.892km/hour.



**Icon 3:** The icon below the number "3" will display a scientific calculator where you can square a number, find a square root, plus trigonometry functions etc.

Thanks to John Burn, Chair, SeniorNet Ashburton