



Positive Ageing — Taupaenui

Issue 8 — SEPTEMBER — 2014

STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION ... & THE ELDERLY...

This issue contains a compelling article by John Cunningham about combatting loneliness within the elderly sector. Recent research indicates that loneliness is as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Heaven help the lonely smokers.

So much of loneliness among the elderly can be attributed to the way too many people view older people—too often stigmatising them as too old to be bothered with, a burden to families, and heaven forbid—the State.

Stigmatisation of older people is created by bias, prejudice, stereotyping, guilt, ignorance and arrogance.



Stigma enables people to devalue the contribution elderly have made to society, and to exclude them from inclusion in decision making and participation in their families and communities.

It impacts on the ability of older people to access resources and opportunities in their communities.

It can lead to low self-esteem, isolation and a sense of hopelessness.

It deters the public and politicians from adequately resourcing health and social services for the elderly.

Sadly, it can deprive people of their dignity and their participation in their communities of interest.

Stigma demonstrates a lack of understanding, compassion and information of the ageing process and the people it affects.

When people have to face the challenge of being avoided, deprived of employment, housing, close relationships, much needed health services, and participating in their communities, the impacts can be devastating.

Stigma can lead people to feel flawed, ostracised, unneeded and unwanted.

It can, at its worst, lead those who need help the most towards social isolation, depression and suicide.

Opinion Gordon Hudson.

Chairman's message...

This month I thought it a good idea to give you an overview of what the New Plymouth Positive Aging Trust does or has done within our community.



Chairman Jeff Blyde

Addressing the issues:

The Positive Ageing Trust:

- Has formed close working relationships with both the New Plymouth District Council and the Taranaki District Health Board.
- Holds reference group meetings monthly with the NPDC and Bi-monthly with the TDHB.
- Facilitates a wide range of public forums - at least four every year
- Has negotiated FREE parking with the use of the Gold Card up to 11am within New Plymouth city centre and surrounding suburbs.
- Has made submissions to the NPDC on all issues that affect older people.
- Has developed a 'falls prevention' partnership with ACC and is an active partner in the District Health Board's Health of Older People.

Promoting the demographic shift based on the latest statistics:

In 2011, the first of the baby-boom generation turned 65 years old, signalling an increase in our ageing population.

We positively promote the need for the NPDC to present an Older Person Strategy to accommodate this demographic shift. Many other Councils around New Zealand have introduced these strategies.

Understand the issues:

Positive Ageing in consultation with key agencies, identifies emerging topics and trends that change how organisations need to respond in the Positive Ageing sector.

Strength together:

Positive Ageing makes a concerted effort to have clear delegated representation with key groups, social services and government.

It remains flexible in its approach in bringing or co-opting people with relevant skills to respond to emerging tasks.

Continued on page 3.

A Newsletter for those interested in improving the quality of life for older persons in Taranaki.





Supported by the TSB Community Trust

WHAT'S ON NGĀ KAUPAPA O TE WĀ

Issue 83—Compiled BY people on limited incomes FOR people on limited incomes...
Please place on a notice board somewhere where people on limited incomes will notice it...

SEPTEMBER—2014

6th Sep—23rd Nov—Another World: Portraits From Ohura Exhibition —Main Exhibition Gallery, Puke Ariki. This is the result of 30 visits to Ohura over a year by photographer Tony Carter. **FREE**

6th Sep—23rd Nov—Precious Cargo—Main Exhibition Gallery, Puke Ariki. Tim Wigmore has taken the traditional Maori waka huia (treasure boxes and reworked it in new ways to look at the connection between vessels and the objects they contain. To be experienced visually but also through touch, smell and sound. **FREE**

Mon 1— Lecture 'NZ's Renewable Geothermal Resources' - NPGH—7:30pm. Dr Chris Bromley of GNS Science Wairakei presents his Hochstetter Lecture. **GOLD COIN**

Sat Justice Of The Peace Service Desk
Level 1, Puke Ariki Library—10am—12:30. If you need to have your signature witnessed, make a declaration or have originals or copies certified, a Justice of the Peace will be available to help you out, every Tuesday and Saturday. **FREE**

Te Kupenga Stone Sculpture Open Day—78 Centennial Drive. Watch stone carving in progress and meet the artists. **FREE**

Thu 4 Mental Health Matters - Access Radio 104.4FM—9:30-10am. Gordon Hudson—with Jill Baker—topic—'Understanding Dementia' **FREE**

Fri 5 Govett-Brewster Seniors@Puke Ariki—Daily News Café, Puke Ariki Library - 10-11:30am. Bookings are essential: 759 6060. **FREE**

Fri 5 Hui-a-Toi-Knitting and crochet—Level 1 Puke Ariki Library—10am—12pm. Get crafty with like-minded people and learn new skills! Come along and learn to knit or crochet or bring along your current project. **FREE**

Sat 6 Precious Cargo Artist Demonstration and Discussion—10am—5pm (demo) 2—3pm (discussion) Join artist and furniture designer Tim

Sat 13 Singing Workshop for Women—St Andrews Church Hall, Liardet Street—10am—4pm. If you love to sing come along for a day of fun with the Taranaki Harmony Chorus. Learn the art of four-part unaccompanied singing, American Barbershop style. No previous singing or musical experience required—all abilities welcome. Cost and obligation free with lunch provided. Register your interest with Denise: 06 755 0452 or go to the website:

<http://taranakiharmony.co.nz> **FREE**

Let's get our heads around Dementia...

Free Public Presentation

Thursday, 18th September—1.30 - 3.30pm

Learn more, understand more and appreciate more about dementia—from an expert.

Ruth Thomas, Coordinator, Midland Regional Dementia Behavioural Support and Advisory Service

'The Lightening Quick Tour of Dementia and Dementia Care'

and

"Communicating with someone with Dementia"

Where: St Mary's Peace Memorial Hall—44 Vivian St—NP

When: Thursday, 18th September—1.30 -3.30pm

Coffee/Tea and biscuits available—at no charge.

Sponsored by:

Positive Ageing—New Plymouth and Stratford
Alzheimers Taranaki

Like Minds Taranaki

BUPA Care Services—Taranaki

NP District Council

Proudly supporting Dementia Awareness Month

"What's On" is emailed to almost 300 organisations in Taranaki and sent on to 100s more via their email networks and displayed on many notice boards etc. It has become quite wide-reaching and could be worthwhile for you to consider using it to promote your educational and/or recreation activity.



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'

Chair's message continued from page 1.

The right message:

Positive Ageing clearly defines its messages tailored to different audiences.

Organisational development:

Positive Ageing ensures that it is relevant and effective to make a positive difference for ageing in this community.

Monthly speakers:

Positive Ageing holds monthly meetings where relevant speakers are organised each month to educate and inform those who attend.

Quarterly presented forums:

Technology, changes in home insurance, banking scams - to name a few recently presented subjects.

"Positive Aging working for you in our community"

jeff.blyde@healthcarenz.co.nz or phone 06 75 98046

Together—we can make a difference!

Jeff Blyde, Chair, Positive Ageing



Recognition Awards

1st October 2014...

To mark *International Day of the Older Person...*

Positive Ageing New Plymouth is hosting an evening to celebrate up to 20 older people in New Plymouth who have been recognised as great role models within their organisation and further afield.

All nominees have been nominated by their organisations as people that others recognise and are inspired by.

It is a great opportunity to celebrate ageing positively and publicly acknowledging outstanding contributions of so many people. A big THANK YOU for all those organisations that have made nominations.

The Awards will be presented at the NPDC Chamber on Wednesday 1st October, with a 7.00pm start and a 9.00pm finish.

There is no charge for this night of acknowledgement and celebration.

Hoping to see you there.

Coming Events—September 2014: Alzheimers Awareness Month

Wed: 10th: Positive Ageing Trust meeting
Mon: 15th: PA Trust—General meeting 9am
Thur: 18th: Let's get our heads around Dementia Public Info Forum 1.30-3.30pm
VENUE: - St Mary's Peace memorial Hall —NP
Sat: 20th: Election Day

**Wed: October 1st: 7 - 900pm—NPDC Chamber
Recognition Awards for Older Persons NPDC**

Obituary—Barry Watt...

Barry was a stalwart of our community, a key person, operating below the horizon, but always active in a wide range of societies providing the cohesion that creates a vibrant, healthy community.

Some of the many organisations he has been active in include Grey Power (both as a committee member and past president), Positive Ageing Trust (with particular input into health matters), Hospice Taranaki (he and his wife were instrumental in setting up the Hospice Shop and he was a regular volunteer) and Community Patrols. He was also a member of the Masonic Lodge.

Barry was a positive and pleasant person with a great sense of humour—a genuine nice bloke. He will be sorely missed.

Farewell my old friend.

Keith Allum.

Power Company Telemarketers abusing Elderly

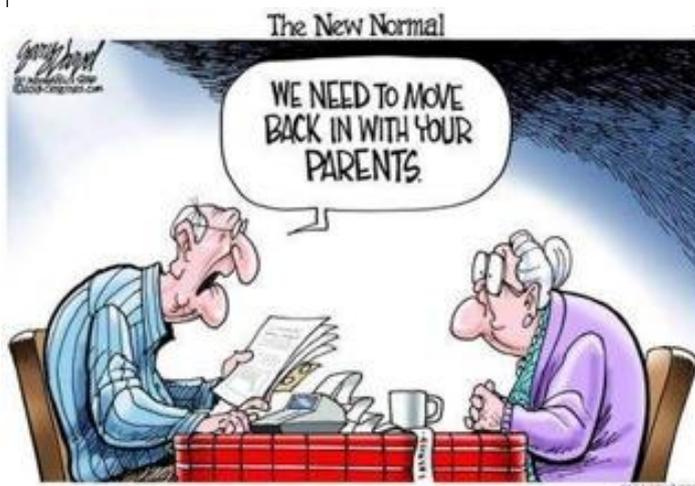
Taranaki Daily News...

"An 84-year-old pensioner living alone has been hit with big bills after being targeted by a series of telemarketers and persuaded to swap power companies. She has been upset to find that in one case, she attracted an extra \$100 on her bill and in another was required by Genesis to pay a \$150 penalty for breaking her contract.

Her family has called for power companies to stop targeting vulnerable customers and for checks and balances to be put in place.

Age Concern Chief Executive Robyn Scott, suggests a good way to deal with telemarketers was to ask them to put their offers in writing and post them.

Sounds like very sound advice.



**I know what I want—when I want it!
Apart from that I am quite easy to please.**

The silent scourge of the Elderly...

Loneliness, as Gordon has pointed out in his editorial has huge negative side effects, and it's a growing scourge among the elderly as the nation ages and individuals are left, often—all alone.

What is happening nationally to give assistance?

I don't see it considered in great depth in what I research.

"In New Zealand today it is estimated 50,000 older to elderly people are severely and chronically lonely."

This is about 8% of the population of people aged 65 and over, based on Census figures and some New Zealand research from 2012.

So –what's the answer? What can be done? One gets the feeling not a lot. One can only feel true heartfelt sympathy for people in this situation.

There are some positive programmes throughout New Zealand, but not enough to deal with the problem effectively.

Age Concern has the 'Accredited Visiting Service' in 23 centres, and the Total Mobility Service and Meals on Wheels really do help, but give only brief social interaction. I'm sure there are other helpers like the Selwyn Foundation, which operates in the upper North Island and Christchurch through its 39 centres. It's difficult to find out what else may exist.

Where does it all go from here?

The answer to this lies within each community in a concentrated manner to help collectively.

This leads me to the far reaching Napier initiative, "Napier Connects," a programme developed together by community groups, local organizations including Napier City Council, Age Concern, YMCA and Government Departments working together. What a mighty scheme!

The whole plan is to involve more elderly people in community life.

The initial idea was started by the Minister of Senior Citizens, Jo Goodhew, who challenged the community to come up with its own way of reducing social isolation amongst older people. Age Concern Napier found that "social isolation through lack of community connection is the most serious issue facing the elderly." This scheme is working.

So what could be done here in Taranaki? Is there a willingness to improve the lot of our elderly?

Perhaps Positive Ageing could start by talking about social isolation! An excellent topic for a seminar or workshop. We have the community groups, we have the infrastructure but do we have the will?

It's up to us really.

*John Cunningham- Positive Ageing Ambassador
for the Office For Senior Citizens.*

REFERENCES:

Age Concern "Loneliness the Issue"
Insite New Zealand – "Loneliness , the last Problem"
Rise Magazine –"Tackling Loneliness"-for Napier Article
Age U. K. Oxfordshire. "Loneliness- The State We're In."
"www.ageuk.org.uk/brandpartnerglobal/oxfordshirevpp/documents/lone..."

Big increase in suicide among the elderly...

Not the nicest topic of conversation—but—people aged 80 and over have the highest rate of suicide in New Zealand—a rather alarming statistic.

Alarming it may be—but sadly, this is becoming a trend.

The latest release of suicide statistics by the Chief Coroner are concerning to say the least for they do not take into consideration the number of people who opt to end their lives by refusing food and medication. Their inevitable deaths may not be recorded as suicide—yet—is their another category for self-inflicted deaths?

We seem to accept that a high rate of suicide in the elderly is inevitable because they are expected to die anyway. This is unacceptable.

There is no room for complacency about this trend.

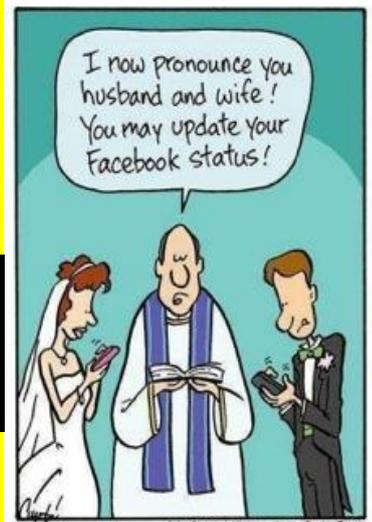
10th September 2014

International Suicide Prevention Day

Connect with family/whanau



What you do can make all the difference



"Positive Ageing—Taupaenui" is edited by Gordon Hudson. Your news and views are eagerly sought.

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October 2014 issue will be distributed in late September. Contributions by Friday, 19th September please.