

August 2017



Gizmoe

This is the fifth edition of *Gizmoe* in 2017.

Gizmoe will also be posted on www.seniornet.co.nz from 18th August 2017.

I try to produce six editions of *Gizmoe* each year, however this year it's likely there will be eight! It seems a lot is happening and rather than accumulate items for a normal bi-monthly (every two months) edition I figured on in this instance, more is better than less.

Few of us will need reminding that a general election is just around the corner. One of my fondest memories of my Father relate to election nights – Armed with a HB pencil and a copy of the Evening Post, sprawled over the kitchen table, listening intently for results coming to him via the trusty “Pacemaker” valve radio he would copy the results and tabulate his predictions. Not a Political Scientist in sight or a wiggly line graph to follow – old school technology at play! That said, what a fabulous website: <http://www.elections.org.nz/> covering everything anyone needs to know about elections in our country. Take a look, and encourage younger members of your family to do the same.

As mentioned in the July *Gizmoe*, I wrote to all the major political parties seeking comment on digital literacy and a pledge to fund SeniorNet. Four out of the nine parties responded – see the article in this edition. Perhaps even approach your local candidates for their comment?

Also in the July edition was an article about a fabulous, kiwi designed, App called Kin2Kin. Many SeniorNet members have joined Kin2Kin giving them a purpose-built way of communicating with family and in particular connecting grandparents with grandchildren. So perhaps if you find Facebook a bit overpowering but want to bond more closely with the grandkids, on their “wavelength”, give Kin2Kin a go and support a New Zealand initiative!

Remember, learn something new every day!

Grant Sidaway Executive Officer.



Political Response to Digital Literacy and SeniorNet

With the general election, just a few weeks away and to give opportunity for each major political party to provide their position on digital literacy for older people and the lack of funding for SeniorNet, the letter below, was sent by email and post.



The letter

19th June 2017

Your commitment to help fund SeniorNet – the Digital Literacy Training Network for

Older New Zealanders.

Dear.....,

Digital literacy is a key factor in the growth of New Zealand, both from a financial and social well-being aspect.

Numerous studies have identified older New Zealanders are at risk of not gaining digital skills and confidence to effectively participate in the digital society.

Our organisation, SeniorNet (the community training network that supports and motivates people aged 50+ to enjoy and use technology in their everyday lives) has been successfully operating in New Zealand for 25 years. We are a charity. All our teachers are volunteers and about the same age as their students. With 74 Learning Centres and approximately 15,500 people attending sessions on an ongoing basis we do our best to fill an otherwise huge gap in teaching digital literacy to older New Zealanders.

For nine years, up until the end of 2015, SeniorNet received some assistance by way of funding through the Adult Community Education (ACE) sector of the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). Through a change in “priorities”, by the TEC (presumably initiated by the Government) SeniorNet was denied ongoing funding with emphasis being placed on disadvantaged adults under 25, Maori and Pacific – deliberately excluding older people.

We have worked hard to find alternative ways to fund SeniorNet and thus keep the cost for individuals to attend sessions to a minimum, however, without funding assistance from government we are faced with putting up fees to keep our facilities open. This in the knowledge that many older people will not be able to afford to come to our Centres and learn the necessary digital skills.

We maintain that any government has a responsibility to ensure all people in society have fair and equal opportunity to participate in the digital age. SeniorNet has a proven record of providing older people with the skills and confidence to do just that. After visiting senior representatives from virtually every government department two aspects emerged:

- *They support SeniorNet and recognise the value of the work we do*
- *There are no direct funding channels to support the work we do.*

The conclusion we have drawn is SeniorNet fulfils many of the positive aging and digital literacy strategies the government has set in place but “don’t ask us for financial help!”

To be fair, SeniorNet has received an annual grant from the National Lottery Grants Board. But due to provisioning limitations this represents a very small portion of the \$1.5M (approximately) annual operating cost. We also have some help from commercial supporters (Vodafone, Noel Leeming and Westpac), though these are more marketing related than sponsorships and thus require cost to manage the relationship.

There is no need to establish other facilities for seniors to learn digital skills – that would represent unnecessary duplication. SeniorNet has a proven track record over 25 years, it is fit for purpose and because it is run by volunteers it is low cost. But to stay focused on delivery we need government(s) to recognise the important role we fulfil and help fund the work we do.

Our strong belief is funding of SeniorNet should be an investment partnership:

- *One third funded by people attending, showing commitment on their behalf to learn*
- *One third funded by like-minded commercial organisations, as it’s in their best interest to have motivated seniors to purchase and use digital products and services*
- *One third funded by Government, to ensure older people are not left behind and have equal access to learn basic digital literacy skills*

If your party is elected and given you agree digital literacy for older people is essential and that the SeniorNet organisation has a proven record to deliver fit for purpose training;

What pledge can you make to help fund SeniorNet through government channels?

I am asking for a response from all major political parties. Our members felt marginalised when TEC funding priorities ruled out future funding and then further exasperated in learning our work is valued by government” but don’t expect any help”.

I am sure your response will assist our members understanding your commitment to help fund SeniorNet in New Zealand.

I look forward to hearing back from you before 31 July 2017.

Kind regards,

Grant Sidaway

Executive Officer

Just four parties responded:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| • ACT New Zealand | No response |
| • Conservative Party of New Zealand | No response |
| • Māori Party | No Response |
| • New Zealand First | Click to read response |
| • New Zealand Labour Party | Click to read response |
| • The Greens | Click to read response |
| • The New Zealand National Party | No Response |
| • The Opportunities Party | No response |
| • United Future New Zealand | Click to read response |

It was encouraging to see that SeniorNet gets specific mention in both the New Zealand First and the New Zealand Labour Party manifestos. Perhaps, not so encouraging the lack of response from the five other parties, in particular the New Zealand National party!

Whist our decisions on where to place our vote – or indeed if we choose to vote – is guided by many factors the response to our letter may form part of your decision(s) come election day!

Cyber Security – CERT NZ

The New Zealand Government announced an investment of \$22.2 million to set up a new national Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) as part of Budget 2016. CERT NZ was established in May this year. In establishing a CERT, New Zealand joins an international network of CERTs. This improves our access to information on potential or real-time cyber-attacks, and helps us play our part in the global effort to improve cyber security.



- CERT NZ is part of a global effort to improve cyber security.
- CERT NZ receives information from local and international sources as a trusted government body.
- CERT NZ securely gather information on cyber threats and incidents in New Zealand through their online reporting tool.
- CERT NZ raise awareness of cyber security impacts and best practice.
- CERT NZ collates a profile of the threat landscape in New Zealand and report on this to help all New Zealanders.

“How to report a cyber threat” – the brochure

Brochures explaining CERT NZ will be sent to all Learning Centres in September, be sure to pick one up when you are next in your Learning Centre.

- The purpose of this brochure is to explain who CERT NZ is and help navigate people to CERT NZ if they think they may have been compromised by a cyber threat or attack.
- Even if people aren't sure if they've been compromised, CERT NZ will help to diagnose the issue for free and get them to the right place for help.

visit www.cert.govt.nz to learn more about cyber security and how to help keep yourself safe and secure online.

Keeping Your Children Safe Online: A Guide for New Zealand Parents

By John Parsons New Zealand's leading authority on cyber safety for children.

To view the trailer for the book, please visit: <http://www.pottonandburton.co.nz/store/keeping-your-children-safe-online>

Our children are being raised in a society that is radically different to that of just 20 years ago, as the internet has taken a central place in our lives and with the virtually universal adoption of smart phones and computers by young people. This revolutionary and enormously disruptive technology has created a completely new set of challenges for parents, ones that are entirely different to those of a generation ago.

Keeping Your Children Safe Online addresses these challenges head-on.

The author, John Parsons, works all over New Zealand with kids and their parents, and works as a consultant with the police, teachers and the health sector. He has developed a toolbox of practical, realistic and effective strategies that enable children and their parents to deal with the challenges of digital technology, such as establishing boundaries for acceptable use, preventing online sexual predation, cyber bullying and cybercrime. These strategies do not depend on technological know-how rather, they simply require you to have a clear set of family values, and then to enable your child to broadcast these into the online world.

- A hugely significant and ultimately empowering book
- Essential reading for parents, ***grandparents***, child carers.

Special Offer to Senior Net Members

10% discount and free delivery in New Zealand

Recommended Retail Price \$34.99 - Members' Special Price \$31.49



To obtain this discount order online at Potton & Burton <http://www.pottonandburton.co.nz/>

Use the discount code SenNet at the shopping cart. **Offer expires 31st October 2017.**

Ticket Giveaway

Chamber Music New Zealand presents **Beethoven: The Piano & Violin Sonatas**

Beethoven's ten Sonatas for Violin and Piano are one of the most important bodies of work written for these instruments. For the first time in its history, Chamber Music New Zealand is presenting the entire sonata cycle back-to-back. Take a journey through Beethoven's sublime music and hear how his style developed during this short but transformative period in his life.



New Zealand's pre-eminent pianist Michael Houston will be joined by dazzling violinist Bella Hristova to perform the "Spring", the "Kreutzer" and 8 more masterpieces, in what will be a landmark musical event of 2017.

I have two double passes to give away for this tour.

Both winners will receive two tickets in best reserve for a concert of their choice in: Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Nelson or Auckland.

For tour dates please visit: www.chambermusic.co.nz/michael&bella

To go in the draw simply email grant@presenter.co.nz stating your name and why you would like to go to the concert!

Winners will be notified on Thursday 24th August and asked to choose which concert they would like to attend.

Terms + Conditions

- Winners will be provided with 2 tickets for a concert of their choice from the listed tour dates on the CMNZ website, except for Hawkes Bay and New Plymouth. In cities with multiple concerts for the tour, one concert must be chosen.
- Tickets cannot be exchanged for cash
- This competition is only valid for the Michael Houston and Bella Hristova tour
- Winners will be notified on Thursday 24 August, and must claim their prize within 24 hours. After that time, a new winner will be chosen.

How fast are we – not as fast as we could be!

A recently published new ranking of world broadband speeds places New Zealand in 30th position.

The worldwide rankings, compiled by the broadband comparison service Cable.co.uk, place the UK one place below us, the United States at 21st and our Aussie cousins, at 55th position with 7.7Mbs.

New Zealand's mean download speed was 16.6Mbs. In practical terms means you can download a 7.5GB movie in just over 60 minutes. This compares to 18 minutes for Singapore, the top ranked country which got 55Mbs.

But hey that's a lot better than Yemen, where download speeds of 0.34Mbps means it would take two days to download a movie. Oh gosh I remember those days!!!

Most countries in the top 30 were from Europe and Asia.



New Zealand's download speeds should be improving as more people sign up for ultra-fast broadband (fibre). Fibre has a capability of 100Mbps!

The latest test involved more than 63 million speed tests carried out across the world in the 12 months up to May 2017.

Want to check you speed?

Download the Ookla Speed test app for your smartphone.

Or go to our partners site Vodafone <https://www.vodafone.co.nz/broadband/speedtest/>

To find out the fastest potential speed at your home go to www.broadbandmap.nz

Let's face it

Have you ever wanted a slightly different face?

In the age of the selfie, there's no shortage of apps that can make you better looking, turn you into a dog, or even swap your face onto someone else's.

Now, there's an app that can alter your gender entirely, age you, or add a smile to your face.

Called FaceApp, it can take a selfie or a photo saved to your camera and alter it using *neural-network technology*. FaceApp is capable of adding two different kinds of smiles to your photo, ageing you or making you look younger, or swapping your gender. There's also a filter called "Flash," which seems to lighten and smooth skin.



The app isn't perfect by any stretch of the imagination. It often adds strange colours to people's skin when making them look younger, and changing a woman's face into a man's often gives some weird results. I've given it a shot – pressed the "old" filter to see what I would look like when older and it delivered the same image as I had taken on myself (could it be I can't get any older!)

Anyway, it's a bit of fun and something to share with the kids and grandkids when they visit.

Download the App from either the Apple App store or Google Play store

Mobile Phone Batteries about to be sorted?

Researchers in the United States have revealed a prototype of a battery-free mobile phone, using technology they think will ultimately be combined into mass-market products.

The phone works by collecting minute amounts of power from radio signals, known as radio frequency or 'RF' waves.

"Ambient RF waves are all around us so, as an example, your FM station broadcasts radio waves, your AM stations do that, your TV stations, your cellphone towers. They all are transmitting RF waves," team member Vamsi Talla said.



The phone is a first prototype and its operation is basic, so there is some distance to travel before we see them on the shelves of Vodafone stores. - the caller must wear headphones and press a button to switch between talking and listening.

There are plans to develop further prototypes, featuring a low-power screen for texting and even a basic camera. They also plan a version of the battery-free phone that uses a tiny solar cell to provide power.

"In the future, every smartphone will come with a battery-free mode where you can at least make a voice call when your battery's dead."

In addition, researchers at the Universities of Bristol and Surrey in the UK, are developing supercapacitors, which they believe will eventually allow devices to charge in a matter of a few minutes.

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