

NEWSLETTER

Hutt City

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A Secret Date with Nigella

It was 7 am at Wellington railway station on a grey day. It was supposed to be a secret – in Wellington Station?? Come on! The worst kept secret was that Nigella was to be there. But we actors were there as well. The secrecy extended to the earlier charade of tasting and talking about cheese during the auditions, but we'd seen the news and knew Nigella was in town, so 2 + 2 made 4 as usual. The green room was a marquee outside on the lawn and the food was superb, the other extras interesting and all excited and lots of fun. It was the photo shoot for a TV commercial for Whittakers' new creamy milk chocolate. The whole thing was unscripted; they presented a situation and you had to come up with something. The idea was that Nigella "invited" the chosen ones (us) into a white polystyrene structure to taste the chocolate. You then had to come up with some "magic". We hadn't really bought into the Nigella

phenomenon and with all the contemporary UK publicity, didn't know what to expect. But all that changed. Nigella was so professional and warm. There were 30 or so of us to try the chocolate in turn and she was just as lively and switched on with the 30th as for the 1st. A hugely enjoyable day's filming. In the end they used the clip of Barry talking about the chocolate "mmm, problem is you don't want to stop eating it", Nigella, "I don't see that as a problem" while my wife looked on beaming. The only downside was that our cameras were banned so all the commuters got the shots – we didn't. And no, we haven't got a lifetime supply of Whittakers as a result, just a few dollars and no, we didn't get Nigella's phone number.

Turns out she wasn't one of those celebrities that jet in jet out, not knowing where she was, but rather took a keen interest in how things "work" here in Wellington, the wonderful fresh food available, and of course the people. We're now fans.

Barry Mawer

New Members

Up to 07/08/24

It's been a while since the last newsletter so rather than list all the new members individually I will just say "welcome" to you all and it's nice to have you along.



New Art in the Centre by Trudi Bruhlmann



Trudi says: I thought the SeniorNet rooms needed cheering up - and what would be more appropriate than an electronic wall-hanging?

Artists sometimes convert everyday objects into musical instruments. I went the opposite way by incorporating instruments of noise production into a silent wall-hanging.

Most of the weft is obsolete cables and colourful plugs with lots of silenced cassette tapes - peace and quiet, and a little bit of wool for warmth.

(Ed: I wonder how many of these cables you can identify? No prize but would love to dredge our collective memories.)

Introducing your 2024 Committee



Chris Jared

Fun fact

'An active musical child in brass band, pipe band and choir'

- Deputy Chairman
- Looks after our technology at the centre magnificently
- Technology Interests
 - Windows PC
 - Android phone and tablet
 - Electronics, Databases, programming
- Tutor for most things Microsoft

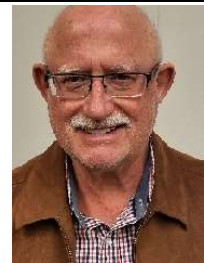


Trudi Bruhlman

Fun fact

'Knows and remembers more about trees than computers'

- Committee member
- Is our non-technical user wanting to learn more tech but keeping us techies grounded.
- Has offered to keep our biscuit tins filled!
- Not a tech tutor, but ...knitting and helping others to cope with hearing loss.



Phillip O'Brien

Fun fact

'Has never been a pantomime dame'

- Treasurer
- New member liaison
- Technology Interests
 - Ordinary non-techie personal use
 - How tech can help small organisations
- Not a tutor; Treasurer keeps him quite busy enough.



Loraine Shorter

Fun fact

'21 yr old UK Tax Collector. A bit daunting but fun dealing with quirky & amusing debtors'

- Committee member
- Technology Interests
 - iPad & iPhone
 - Limited Facebook
 - Apps that are entertaining or time saving, enable research or communication



Geoff Bartlett

Fun fact

'Was a Trumper then the hills got steeper. Then a Mountain Biker and the Mountains got steeper. Then got a

Campervan and the price of petrol got steeper. So now takes the bus.'

- Committee member (formerly Joint Chair and Treasurer)
- Technology Interests
 - Windows PC
 - Android Smart Phones
 - iPad
 - What's App and any other useful Apps.
 - Messenger
 - Facebook Market Place selling
- Tutor For
 - Trade Me



Barry Mawer

Fun fact

'Has been a Pantomime Dame in more shows than he cares to remember'

- Committee member
- Facebook admin
- Technology Interests
 - Windows PC
 - iPhone and iPad
 - Android phone and tablet
 - Apps that save time
- Tutor for
 - Travel Technology
 - Facebook
 - ManageMyHealth
 - Online banking
 - Online Security
 - Online Shopping

AI (Artificial Intelligence – NOT artificial insemination!)

This is a follow-up to the talk given at the AGM. ChatGPT is the most well-known of the latest AI tools.

Exploring ChatGPT: A Handy Helper for Seniors

As technology continues to evolve, new tools are emerging to make our lives easier and more enjoyable. One such tool is ChatGPT, an intelligent virtual assistant designed to help with a wide range of tasks. If you're wondering how ChatGPT can be useful for you, read on! Here's a simple guide to what ChatGPT is and how it can be beneficial for seniors.

What is ChatGPT?

ChatGPT is a conversational computer program developed by OpenAI. It can understand and generate human-like text, making it a useful companion for various activities. Think of it as a friendly and knowledgeable helper that you can chat with through your computer, tablet, or smartphone.

How Can ChatGPT Help You?

- 1. Answering Questions:** Have a question about a historical event, a recipe, or a health tip? ChatGPT can provide clear and accurate information on a wide range of topics.
- 2. Entertainment:** Feeling bored? ChatGPT can share jokes, interesting facts, or even engage you in a fun conversation. It's like having a chatty friend available at any time.
- 3. Learning New Skills:** Whether you want to learn a new hobby, get tips on gardening, or understand how to use a new gadget, ChatGPT can guide you through the process step-by-step.
- 4. Reminders and Organization:** Need a reminder to take your medication or remember a family member's birthday? ChatGPT can help you set reminders and keep track of important dates.
- 5. Companionship:** Sometimes, all you need is someone to talk to. ChatGPT is always available for a friendly chat, making it a great companion for those times when you feel a bit lonely.
- 6. Planning and Recommendations:** Planning a trip or looking for a new restaurant to try? ChatGPT can help you find recommendations and even assist in creating itineraries.

What Can You Get Out of Using ChatGPT?

- **Convenience:** With ChatGPT, you have a personal assistant at your fingertips. It's available 24/7, ready to help whenever you need it.
- **Engagement:** ChatGPT can keep your mind active and engaged with interesting conversations and new information.
- **Independence:** By providing assistance with everyday tasks, ChatGPT can help you maintain your independence.
- **Connection:** It can also help you stay connected with the world, offering news updates, weather forecasts, and more.

How to Get Started

Getting started with ChatGPT is easy. You can access it through various platforms, including websites and mobile apps. If you're not sure how to begin, ask a family member or friend to help set it up for you. Once you're set up, simply type in your question or message and start the conversation!

In conclusion, ChatGPT is a versatile and user-friendly tool that can enhance your daily life in many ways. Whether you're looking for information, entertainment, or a little companionship, ChatGPT is here to help. Give it a try and discover all the ways it can assist you!

Ed: the above article was wholly written by ChatGPT in response to me asking

"Write an article for a newsletter to non-technical seniors on what they might use ChatGPT for and what they would get out of it"

Ed: do you have any jokes about seniors trying to use ChatGPT

ChatGPT

Sure, here are a few light-hearted jokes about seniors trying to use ChatGPT:

1. The Password Problem

- Senior: "ChatGPT, I can't remember my password!"
- ChatGPT: "No worries, what was your password hint?"
- Senior: "It was 'The name of my first pet.'"
- ChatGPT: "Great! What was your first pet's name?"
- Senior: "That's the problem... I can't remember!"

2. Tech Support

- Senior: "ChatGPT, can you help me? My computer says 'Press any key to continue.'"
- ChatGPT: "Sure, just press any key on your keyboard."
- Senior: "But where's the 'Any' key?"

3. Voice Commands

- Senior: "ChatGPT, my kids told me I can talk to you. How do I start?"
- ChatGPT: "Just say 'Hello, ChatGPT!' and ask your question."
- Senior: Yelling "HELLO, CHATGPT! CAN YOU HEAR ME?"
- ChatGPT: "No need to shout, I hear you perfectly fine!"

4. Autocorrect Adventures

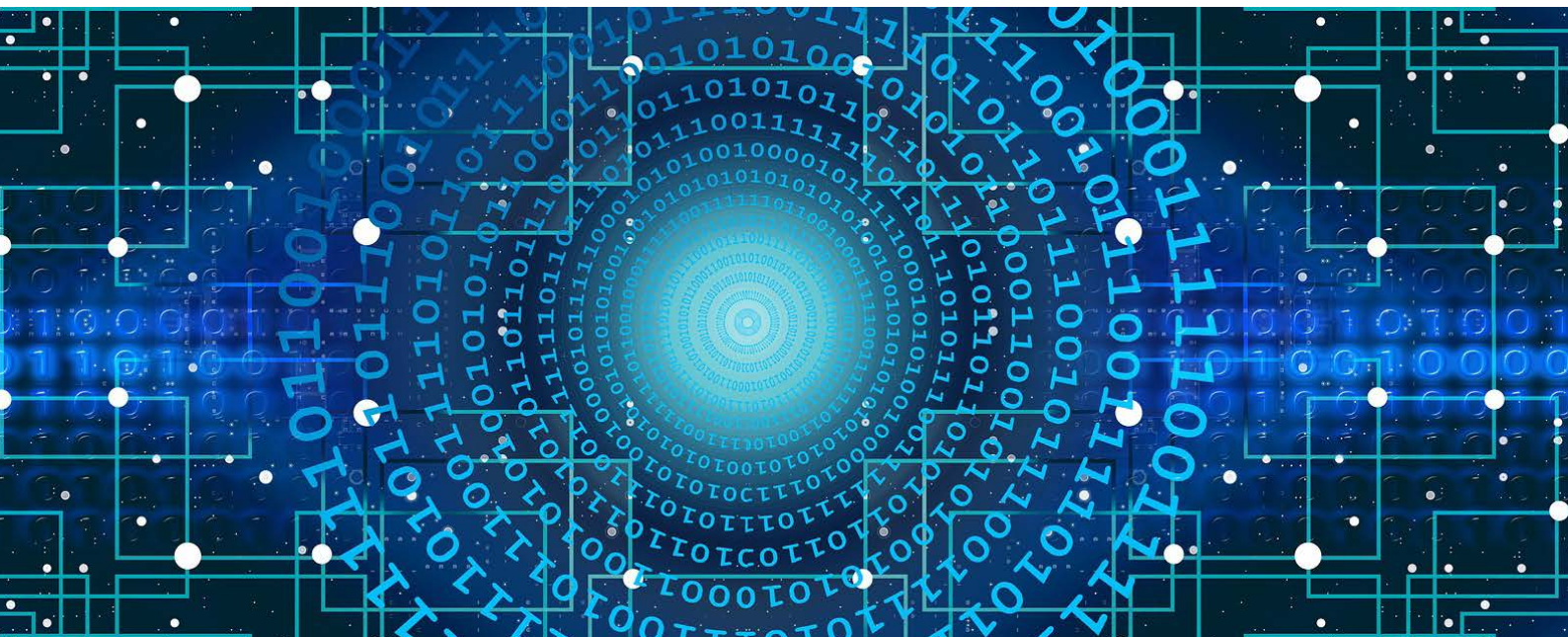
- Senior: "ChatGPT, why does my phone keep changing what I type?"
- ChatGPT: "That's autocorrect trying to guess what you meant."
- Senior: "Well, it needs to stop guessing and start minding its own business!"

These jokes playfully highlight the humorous moments that can occur when seniors interact with new technology, like ChatGPT. Remember, it's all in good fun!

Ed: I wonder if there would enough interest in running a workshop helping members to get started in using this latest tool?

Email: yorkybarry@gmail.com

Barry Mawer





Spark Now Charging for Xtra Email.

A reminder that Spark bills from 16th May will include an additional charge of \$5.95 a month for Xtra email for those using Spark Services (broadband, etc) or \$9.95 a month for others not using any other services. So, us Xtra users have decisions to make.

Assuming we still want an e-mail service, there are basically 2 options for dealing with this.

1. Pay up – this will happen by default if we do nothing – everything stays as before.
2. Keep using the Spark services but get another free e-mail from either Gmail, Outlook or some other service and terminate Xtra once the new email is set up to your liking.

If you want to migrate to a new email service, it's a bit messy but quite straightforward with lots of help articles on the Spark website and SeniorNet tutors can help you do it.

The question for you to ask yourself is:

1. Do you still want access to your old emails when you stop Xtra, and for how long?
 - a. If you don't, then all you probably need to do is export your address book from Xtra into a new email account before closing Xtra, tell all those you still want to communicate with of the new address (don't forget services such as banking, insurance, clubs, shopping web sites etc) and just use Gmail, say, from then onwards.
 - b. If you do, then you still need to export your Xtra address book and then you will either need to download all of the old emails onto your PC or laptop only (archive) or use Gmail, say, to get all of your old Xtra messages into Gmail (for PC, Laptop or Mobile).

Either way, if you don't feel confident in making the change yourself then SeniorNet tutors can help you on 1 on 1 sessions (\$15 for 2 hours).

The other thing to be aware of when stopping using Xtra is that over the years you may have created accounts for services that have a "forgotten password" recovery mechanism that involves sending an email containing a re-activation code to your Xtra email account. If, at some future time, you need to use this forgotten password facility, you may find the service is sending the email to your now defunct Xtra account and you could be potentially locked out of your service. So, you'd need to update all these services with your new email address.

Barry Mawer

Notices:

1. It was decided at the AGM that the subscription rate for 24/25 would remain unchanged at \$25 for a single membership and \$40 for two people living at the same address.
2. At the 1st committee meeting it was decided that because of the current low interest in many of the courses and workshops we offer, we would look at possibly different ways of increasing the appeal and attendance as well as what courses the members would be interested in. The aim being to introduce any changes in September.



Passwords

The guys in US government who deal with the cyber bad guys have restressed the importance of good passwords in 2024. They produce voluminous recommendations. However I'm reproducing here a simple version from Ed Bott of ZNET, [7 password rules to live by in 2024, according to security experts](#) | ZDNET

1. Make sure all your passwords are strong enough

What makes a password strong?

- It's long enough -- at least 12 characters, and ideally more.
- It's random, with a mix of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers, and symbols that are not found in a dictionary and don't include any part of your name or the name of the service they unlock.
- It's not easy to guess.

Of all those factors, experts agree that length is the most important. In fact, the experts at NIST say that recent analyses of breached password databases show that having a longer password is far more important than trying to make it complex.

Passphrases made up of three or more unrelated words separated by symbols and numbers can be effective as well.

2. Use a password manager

The average person has dozens of passwords. An extremely online person might have hundreds of credentials. No human can memorize even a handful of long, random, unique passwords. This is why you need a [password manager](#), which offloads the work of creating unique, impossible-to-guess passwords and saves them in a secure, encrypted enclave.

Technically, a pen-and-paper notebook can do part of that job, albeit with a lot more friction (**Ed: and disaster when you lose the notebook**). A software-based password manager, however, does so much more: it instantly creates truly random passwords, saves your credentials in an encrypted database, and syncs everything across multiple devices.

The most important layer of protection, though, is one that isn't immediately obvious. Your password manager knows which domain (or domains) are associated with a saved set of credentials and won't enter a password on a domain that isn't authorized. So if a skilled attacker crafts an email that fools you into thinking it's from your bank or broker, and you click a link that goes to a fake domain, the password manager will refuse to enter your credentials.

That's a powerful anti-phishing tool.

3. Never reuse a password

It's a natural human instinct to have a favourite set of credentials (username and password) that you reuse on multiple sites. Yes, that makes things easier to remember, but it also ensures that a data breach at one site will

give attackers access to that set of credentials, which they will in turn try on other sites that weren't affected by the breach.

A good password manager should flag reused passwords and offer to create strong, unique replacements.

Please note: Simply tacking an exclamation point or a number on the end of your old password doesn't qualify as creating a new password. Neither does creating a new variation of one of your commonly used passwords.

(Ed: I confess I find this difficult but prefer to re-use some passwords for web sites I don't care about – e.g. shopping websites that don't have my credit card details saved.)

4. Avoid password hints

The whole idea of a password hint is that it's made up of some word or name or date that is meaningful to you. By definition, that kind of password is easy to guess, and adding a password hint makes the job even easier for someone who wants to break into your accounts.

The best password hint is four words: "Check your password manager."

5. Change default passwords

One of the most insidious ways for attackers to break into a home or business network is to go through a device on that network, using vulnerabilities in its management interface. That could be your Wi-Fi router, for example, with its default password that's often just *password*. IP-based cameras and doorbells you install as part of a home security system are also possible entry points.

If you have any of those devices on your network, replace those default passwords with more robust credentials.

6. Use multi-factor authentication whenever possible

No matter how strong you make your passwords and how carefully you try to protect them from being compromised, stuff happens. (That isn't exactly how the expression goes, but it's close enough.)

The most effective protection, by far, is to ensure that no one can sign in to your accounts on a new device unless they can provide a second form of identification, ideally using an authenticator app on a device you own. (Codes sent to your phone using SMS are an acceptable option but are at greater risk of being taken over by a determined attacker.)

You don't have to [2-factor-authorisation](#) all the things, but you should insist on a second factor for high-value accounts such as email, banks, and brokers.

7. Don't change your passwords unless you have to

Experts agree that changing passwords regularly isn't necessary, and that organizations requiring users to change their password for no reason are actually making their networks less secure.

Why? Because people who are forced to change passwords regularly are likely to choose a weak, easy-to-guess password. If you've done a solid job of choosing a strong and unique password, there's no need to change it under normal circumstances.

So, when should you change your password?

Obviously, you should replace a password if it's unacceptably weak or if it's a duplicate of one you use elsewhere. You should also change any password at the first hint that it's been compromised as part of a data breach. "

Note that SeniorNet does have a Security workshop that covers these and other "keep yourself safe online" tips. Watch out for the August schedule.

Learn Something New Today

Phone 04 560 3160 or email huttcity@seniornet.nz
to enquire about your next class now!!!



Smartphones



Email



WhatsApp

SeniorNet Hutt City Info:

Subscriptions

People have been asking about renewing their subscriptions - your current membership subscription ends on March 31st unless you joined after November 1st, in which case it stays current till the following year. Accounts and reminders are sent in due course.

Has your email address changed?

To ensure you get your emails from SeniorNet Hutt City, please make sure we have your correct email address. Send an email from anywhere to this address:

huttcity@seniornet.nz .

Use the same address if you are going away and want to be temporarily removed from the mailing list.

Don't forget to email again to tell us to resume on your return. Your records will be updated

Receiving newsletters

Weekly emails and the quarterly newsletter are only sent to email

addresses. If you have not been receiving regular email from SeniorNet or have changed your email address recently, please advise us of your correct email address. You can send an email from anywhere to:

huttcity@seniornet.nz

Enrolling on a course

Read the Student Schedules carefully and contact the tutor whose name and phone number will be included in this. In SeniorNet Hutt City the secretary is the usual person to send out the emails to the entire membership of about 260 but she is not the person who will be running the course so it is best to phone the tutor direct and then you are also able to hear of any special requirements or can ask any relevant questions.

Disclaimer

Members voluntarily give help and advice to other members on matters relating to computers,

associated equipment and software. This help or advice is taken at the recipients' risk and imposes no responsibility or liability of any kind either on those providing such help or advice or on SeniorNet Hutt City Inc. This includes all information provided in whatever fashion including emails, newsletters or programs provided. All SeniorNet Hutt City produced Courses are copyright to it, not to the individual authors, or to the copyright holder as noted.

Personal items, including Laptops, Digital Cameras, Cell Phones, Flash Drives and the like are brought to the Centre at your own risk. SeniorNet Hutt City and any of its members cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage.

We would urge all members contemplating removing items such as Laptops from their home to carefully check their Insurance Policy or with their Insurance Company to ensure the item is fully covered.

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Hutt City

Sponsors

