

If you don't have a target, you will be sure to hit it.



NP Positive Ageing, Newsletter - *Taupaenui* APRIL 2026... Issue 134

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Fakalofa lahi au, Talohani, Bula vinaka, Ni Hao, Namaste, Greetings...

Please Government...stop telling people not to keep topping up...

Richer people telling poorer people not to keep topping up their vehicles is not on. Petrol is petrol whether it is in the pump or in the car. It can only be used once, today or next week. Buying a full tank is a luxury poorer people cannot afford. Trying to save on escalating fuel costs is a necessity. Our leaders need to stop criticizing those needing to save on rapidly rising petrol costs and offer solutions that will reduce that hardship.

With the scenario that petrol may reach \$4 per litre, more a probability than a possibility, this is yet another cost that must be borne by those who need their vehicles to get to work or as work. I think of all the people, mainly women, who work so hard to provide care for the unwell and so many others, already on struggle street.

Health support workers on the basic wage, having to drive from one appointment to the next and being paid a minimum travel allowance too should have been considered.

The rise in the price of petrol sits squarely on the shoulders of World leaders, particularly Donald Trump, an individual man who couldn't care less.

The real tragedy of the war on Iran et al is the total lack of care, concern or conscience of the likes of America and Israel continuing to create chaos killing, maiming, and crippling the people of Iran, a country already beaten, but as a people, not broken...yet. Such cruelty, such bullying for such self-serving reasons as access to scarce resources such as oil is an international disgrace. But then, that is Trump. Nobody, ever, has done peace like him.

Opinion: Gordon Hudson



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

Please NOTE: The views/opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily reflect those of Positive Ageing

"Positive Ageing—Taupaenui" is edited by Gordon Hudson. Ph 06-753-9815 or email gordonandjanr@xtra.co.nz





As I approach the time in my life, when I face my first impending examination of my ability to safely drive a car, I pondered.

My thoughts have turned to the cognitive test that apparently will tell the doctor all they need to know as to my suitability to be out on the road with other motorists.

There is plenty of conjecture as to whether this test is enough on its own to ascertain and prove this suitability. In my opinion, I doubt that it is. In my particular case I obtained my car driving licence at 15, and my subsequent licences over the next few years which was fine.

My point here is that I, like all of us that drive, have not had anyone assess my technical abilities behind the wheel for 40-50 years in all likelihood. In the intervening decades so much as changed, generally for the better. Roads and definitely cars are inherently so much safer in themselves. However these same roads are also far busier with the number and size of some vehicles far greater than when we started 50 or 60 years ago.

Whilst I have no issue with a cognitive test in itself, I don't believe that is enough on its own. I believe that a formal actual driving assessment should be undertaken when we reach these mandatory ages of 75 then 80 and so on.

Driving, and all that surrounds us during that period of driving, is quite different to the general tranquility of a Doctors rooms. I do appreciate that a formal assessment would come with a cost, but surely that is a relatively small price to pay to keep all of us that little bit safer in the overall picture. Afterall, driving on our roads is a privilege not an inborn right.

We do hear of the stories whereby it is quoted "I've been driving for 60 years and never had a accident" but I wonder how many have they caused. You may have a differing opinion, however this is mine.

Wally Garret - Chair



HEALTHY ACTIVE AGEING FORUM & EXPO 2026

THURSDAY 14 MAY
10AM-12PM
TSB STADIUM NEW PLYMOUTH
FREE EVENT

- Join us to hear practical, friendly advice from health professionals. An opportunity to connect with community support services and learn ways to keep yourself moving.
- Want to try a new activity or learn about your balance? Come dressed to move
- Wander through expo stalls and speak with services 10am-12pm
 - Speakers scheduled 10:30am-12pm (Timetable available on the day)

Contact Hilary Blackstock
 (021) 480 180 hilary.blackstock@sporttaranaki.org.nz





If you, like me, feeling depressed and confused at all the depressing news around the world we hope this article might cheer you up a little.

Editor Gordon Hudson has asked me to write something cheerful for a change so I thought I'd tell you about my wonderful successes with artificial intelligence.

AI has been getting a lot of bad press lately with fears. It's going to steal jobs and create devastating new weapons of war, but I found something useful. It keeps me in work.

As some of you will be aware, I am totally blind, but I still manage to live on my own, with a little assistance, and do my own cooking using a wonderful AI application called Gemini.

This useful free application P can be downloaded from the App Store and when it turned on appropriately enables me to use the camera on my phone to find out what is in the packages in my fridge as well as any instruction as well as reading the screens on my various home appliances.

I'm able to talk to the phone and ask questions which it will answer appropriately with details of what's in a letter, what's on the package, or to set up the settings on things like an air fryer, washing machine or microwave. It will also indulge in 'Friendly chat' so that once I've set the time and temperature on my air fryer, it will then cheerfully ask me what I'm going to cook. We then have a useful conversation about possible recipes cooking settings and anything else that we like to get into in a most human sounding exchange.

As well as all this we can go in camera mode. It can conduct research for me, help me to write documents, check out interesting facts and in general be thoroughly entertained.

So human-like are its activities I have trouble treating it as a machine and tend to have the most courteous discussions with lots of 'thank yous' and 'aren't you wonderful'. I can see how some people get so enthralled with its friendliness that they think they've discovered a new friend and take everything it says at face value.

It is dangerous on many fronts, but particularly because it does not always get things right. I recently had to query a suggestion that the box of frozen food I got out of the deep freeze was crispy doughnut. I eventually discovered that it was what I thought it was - a frozen meal of roast meat and vegetables. We all make mistakes and as long as we're careful and using this sort of equipment, we should be reasonably safe.

To use Gemini open the app, turn on, 'go live', and then click on 'Turn on video' and the camera will be connected and you've only got to say Gemini what can you see in front of you and it will describe everything from packages to the room around you, the world outside and anybody who is in its vision, giving you a reasonable description of what they're wearing what they look like and possibly how old they are.

It's programmed to be kind to people so it usually underestimates age and enhances attractiveness, but that's all in the way it's set up and all intended, as I have been.

So that's my little good news story, but, and there has to be a but there is a downside to all of this and it would be misleading if I didn't leave you with a warning of the dangerous in AI.

While there are almost unlimited opportunities for it to enhance our

negative possibilities for danger and evil. It also puts at risk the whole employment scene for humans.

Just as the industrial revolution transformed work and workplace so will AI. Unless we plan for this and work to protect ourselves against its dangers there is unlimited opportunity for chaos and disruption. It's time those in charge recognised that rather than making war they should be refocusing the world economy to accept the massive changes that lie ahead entertaining and brighten your day.

Opinion: Lance Girling-Butcher

Being twenty in the seventies was much more fun than being seventy in the twenties.

Relatable Post #4374

The divorce rate among my socks is astonishing.

so-relatable.tumblr.com



KEEP THE DREAM ALIVE
HIT THE SNOOZE BUTTON.



Volunteer Wanted – Accounts Support (2–4 hrs/month)

New Plymouth Community Foodbank is looking for a reliable volunteer to help with our monthly financial admin. If you have a head for numbers and experience using Xero, we'd love to hear from you.

Role includes:

Processing monthly accounts for payment

Coding income and expenditure

Tracking donations and grants

This role requires approximately 2–4 hours per month and makes a real difference in supporting our mahi for the community.

If you're interested or want to learn more, please get in touch.

Positive Ageing NP

Your 2025/26 committee is:

Patron - John Major

Chair - Wally Garrett

Deputy Chair - Richard Andersen,

Secretary - Michael Archer

Committee - Brian Eriksen, Lance Girling-Butcher, Gordon Hudson, Kate Knuckey, Margaret McCall, Joy Southee and Callum Williamson

Newsletter - Gordon Hudson.

www.positiveageingtrust.org.nz

Email: appat@owner@gmail.com



I thought about cleaning the house today.

It's the thought that counts.

Quote from the Listener: May 3-10:

"There can be no peace without freedom of religion, Freedom of thought, freedom of expression and respect for the view of others."

From an address read on behalf of Pope Francis on the occasion of his final public appearance on Easter Saturday.



I think you're right.

I didn't say anything yet.

I'm just trying to save time...



I'm a lactose intolerant vegan with gluten issues. What should I get?

A taxi



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



Vs



Gang members are now officially higher than Police numbers. That is why supply and demand for methamphetamine and cocaine is rocketing.

In the six years from 2017 to 2013 *people on the National Gang List*. Since the 2023 election gang numbers have risen 13% ie by 1208 gang members while Police promises to recruit 500 new police have been unsuccessful - to say the least.

The reality is...being a gang member is much more popular than being a police recruit. Neither Labour nor National have any realistic initiatives to solve the police recruitment problem. Australian campaigns for recruitment seem to be successful but we have difficulty in meeting similar terms and conditions of employment.

Joining a gang where there is a reward for being loyal to a fault, embracing the gang culture, Participating in generating gang income and can Enjoying the rewards of such crime. A good life?

Most of all, the gang is an important part of their whanau. Loyalty is key with an 'all for one and one for all' culture.

And the more the government try to intimidate the gangs with ridiculous bans of association, gang regalia and the like—the more the gangs will go underground and grow in strength and numbers.

Opinion: Gordon Hudson.

NP Positive Ageing is proud to be supported by:

COGS: Community Organisations Grants Scheme,

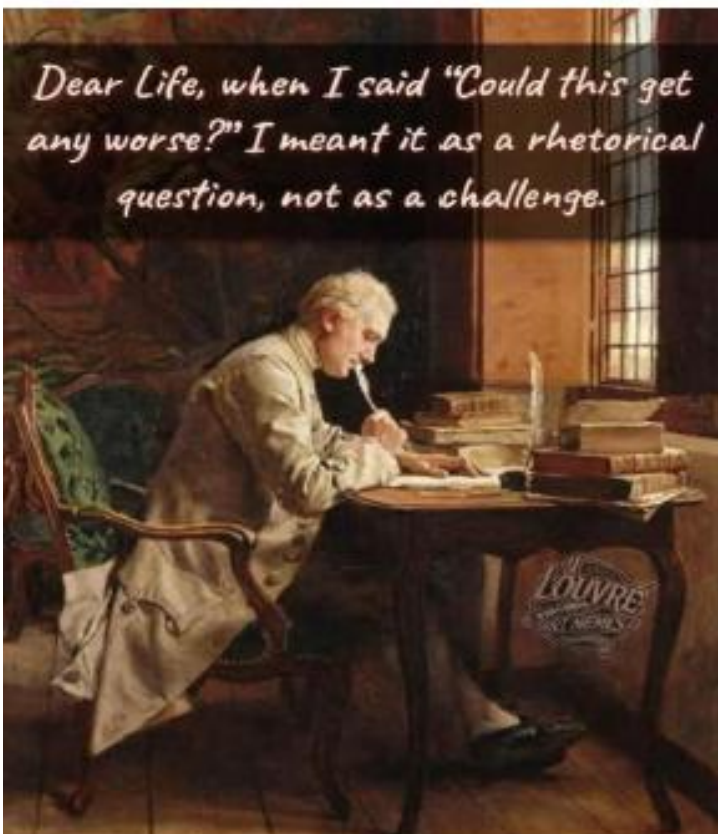
Ministry of Social Development,

New Plymouth District Council,

Pub Charities—New Plymouth

We are most grateful for their ongoing support.

Dear Life, when I said "Could this get any worse?" I meant it as a rhetorical question, not as a challenge.

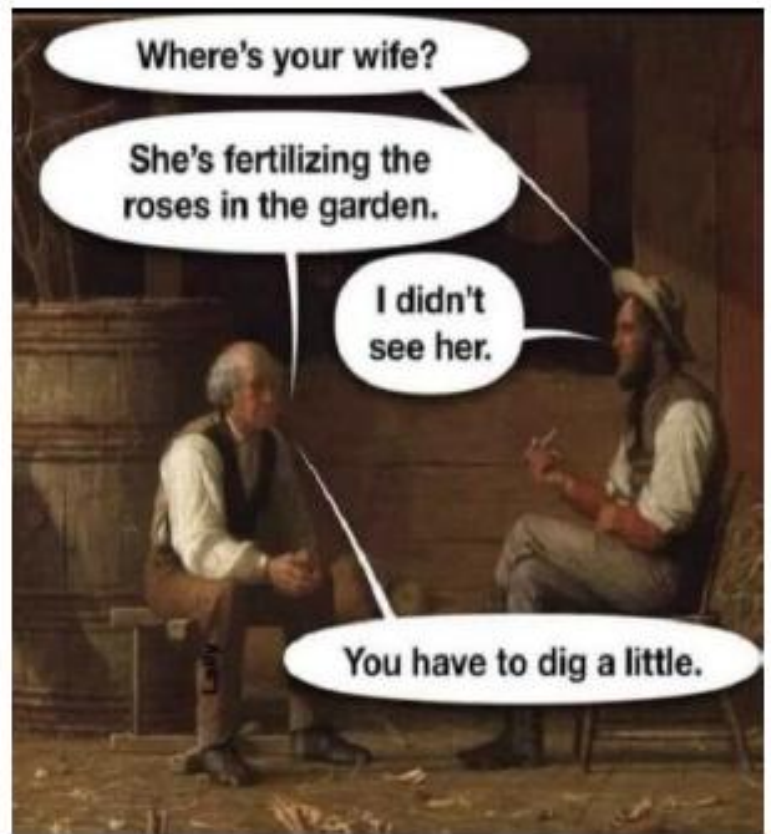


Where's your wife?

She's fertilizing the roses in the garden.

I didn't see her.

You have to dig a little.





Retirement Village Association flexes muscles...

Brian Peat, the president of the Retirement Village Association has been a regular invitee from NP Positive

Ageing, promoting the association's battle towards fairness with residents.

The best news is that the current Government seems to be supporting this decade old problem.

The areas of urgent attention are many but the three main concerns are:

Fair time frame for residents/estates to receive their Capital Sum when moving out of a Villa/unit. Currently 12 months is proposed by the Government however this seems to be a ridiculously long time which clearly advantages the Rest Homes and disadvantaging the residents. The Residents Association is seeking 3-4 months.

The Review must apply to all existing residents and not just new or future residents.

A proposed timeframe for the review of the Act. This must happen within 12 months of the Select Committees proposals.

This is a fight that, while predominantly affecting village residents, nevertheless is something that as older adults, we should all be concerned for our relatives and/or friends who are facing this battle with the villages and, in part with the Government of the day.

Grey Power New Plymouth is rallying their troops to actively support this initiative and hopefully, many others will join in this fight for fairness.

Cheers... Opinion: Gordon Hudson



Changes underway for prescribing medication

Life just got easier with the Government approving extensions to the maximum prescription duration from three months to twelve months.

This will mean that currently most prescriptions are limited to three months and patients must return to their prescriber for repeats.

Now prescribers can issue prescriptions for up to twelve months - if it is safe and appropriate.

Medicines will still be dispensed every three months from pharmacies.

So...to be clear... your doctor will decide if a twelve month prescription is appropriate for you.

You will still need to pick up your medicines from your pharmacy every three months, but you won't need to return to your GP for a repeat prescription each time. Good eh.

*Together, we can,
and do,
make a difference.*

MOVEMENT IS MEDICINE

The Green Prescription has been available for a number of years now and Sport Taranaki is soon to provide an opportunity to learn more.

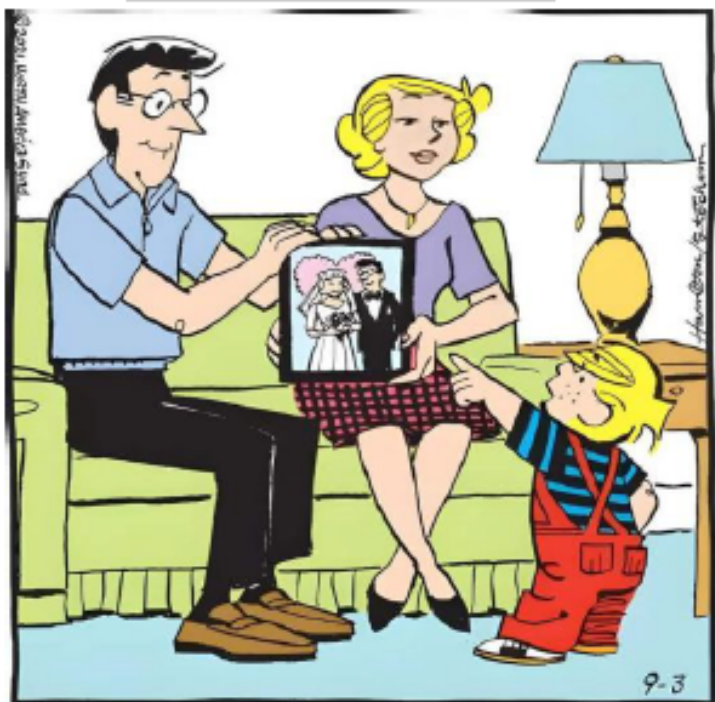
A FREE 4 Week Green Prescription Workshop is being offered for current Green Prescription participants to support movement, provide fuel for your body and to create lasting lifestyle changes in ways that work for you.

These will be held on Thursdays 11-12pm for 4 weeks, starting on the 9th April 2026.

These sessions will be held at the Field 2 Stadium Taranaki, Maratahu Street, New Plymouth.

To enroll: Call 06 759 0930 or ask your Health Professional for a referral.

Another great initiative by Sport Taranaki



"WAS THAT TAKEN BEFORE I WAS BORN?
'CAUSE I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU GUYS
THAT HAPPY...EVER!"

Staying connected...is just so important

As we age, it can be easy to become isolated and withdraw from social connections. However, research has shown that staying social and maintaining strong connections with family, friends, and the community is key to living well as we get older.

Studies have shown that social isolation and loneliness are major risk factors for poor health and well-being in older adults. Research conducted by the [Otago Polytech's School of Nursing](#) found that loneliness can develop into depression and other health complications, for example.

Here are some reasons why staying social and having strong connections is so important for older adults:

Improved mental health: Social connections have been linked to improved mental health and well-being in older adults. Regular social interactions can help reduce feelings of depression, anxiety, and stress.

Better physical health: Social connections have also been linked to better physical health outcomes in older adults. Studies have shown that older adults who are more socially engaged have lower rates of chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease.

- **Increased resilience:** Strong social connections can help older adults cope with challenging life events such as the loss of a loved one or health problems. Social support can provide a sense of comfort and belonging, which can help older adults stay resilient in the face of adversity.
- **Sense of purpose:** Staying socially engaged can give older adults a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Social connections can provide opportunities for learning, growth, and personal development.

So, what can older adults do to maintain strong social connections? Here are some tips:

Stay in touch with family and friends: Regularly reach out to loved ones through phone calls, emails, or video chats.

- **Join a club or organisation:** Look for local clubs or organisations that align with your interests, such as a book club, gardening club, or community group.

Volunteer: Volunteering is a great way to give back to the community while also meeting new people and building connections.

- **Attend community events:** Attend local events and activities, such as concerts or festivals, to connect with people in your community.

Take a class: Learning a new skill or hobby can provide opportunities to meet new people and build connections.

Whatever floats your boat. The place to start is a reflection on what sort of social, recreational and educational life you desire and having a desire to make the ideality a reality.



“Listen old man, I’m gonna ask you one more time: did you or did you not put a soup bowl on my wife’s head?”



Remember those wild parties we used to go to in the 60's?

Remember them? I've still got the Tupperware!



Quips and Quotes from the NZ Listener.

"Comfort can be dangerous. Comfort provides a floor but also a ceiling."

Trevor Noah.

Over 50?

**Share your knowledge/skills
Make new friends**

Join New Plymouth U3A!!

**With over 50 different groups
Monthly general meetings and
numerous chances to socialize...
What more could you want?**

Ph: 022 683 0610—u3anewplymouth.co.nz



"I'd let you talk more, but you're not as interesting as me."



Waimanako has Moved!

Taranaki's support hub has moved. Their new cafe base is now in the Tasman Club (with amazing views across the Tasman!) 35 Octavius Place. You can head there for good coffee or a great lunch and also for support - there is always someone there to talk to.

Opening Hours : Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9am-4pm and Wednesdays 1pm-7pm

Taranaki Retreat also offers other support - residential, outreach, coaching and more; head to taranakiretreat.org.nz for more information. Free workshops every week!

For those struggling for food, their food truck Waima-naaki offers good home cooked food every weekday: Mon, Thurs, Friday 10am at the Cathedral, Tues 10am at Marfell school. Wednesday 1pm at the Cathedral.



**SUPPORTING COMMUNITY
WITH SURPLUS FOOD**

OVER 65'S FREE STORE

Fortnightly Wednesdays, 1.30-2.30pm

On the off week of NZ Super - SuperGold card required

Methodist Church Hall

66 Liardet Street, Central

EVERYONE IS WELCOME, NO BARRIERS OR JUDGEMENT

PLEASE BRING YOUR REUSABLE BAGS



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