

SeniorNet Kapiti Inc

2020-2021 Annual Report

Our membership at the end of the Financial Year (31 March 2021) was 361 including 10 Honorary Members. Our membership has grown by 28 over the past year despite 68 people deciding not to renew in October. Our recruitment efforts continue to bring in new members and this has been aided in the past year by the AMI offer of free membership for its customers who decided to join us. Financially, we have made a small loss for 2020-21 driven mainly by a lack of classes during COVID-19 Lockdowns. In a year of such turmoil, this is a satisfactory result.

As I reflect on my two years as ChairPerson, there is no doubt in my mind that we are a successful SeniorNet Learning Centre – an outsider recently described us as “vibrant” and I wouldn’t disagree! Our continued success is a result of a combination of regular and active recruitment efforts, a good mix of courses and workshops coupled with excellent premises and great tutors. A warm welcome and a friendly environment on all our classes means we have a solid reputation in our local community. Thank you to everyone who has contributed in the past to building that reputation and to those currently running the organisation for keeping us up to date with our members needs. We need to keep relevant in an ever-changing technical world and I believe we are doing that rather well.

Courses and Workshops

In the past (2020-21) year we have run 107 courses and workshops helping 421 students build their technical confidence and learn new things about their devices and how to use them effectively. We undertook 1,360hrs of teaching during the year and received more than \$3,000 in reimbursement from The SeniorNet Federation. We continue to see a slow decline in interest in our multi-day courses although our Managing the Data on Your PC course remains as popular as ever. It is also pleasing to see the introduction of a new course called “What can I do on my device” which is a cross-platform look at all the things members can use their devices for.

The use of more targeted advertising to our members has proven successful in filling many courses and workshops which, just 10 days out from their start date, looked empty.

Our courses and regular workshops focussing on portable devices continue to be strongly supported. With the widespread implementation of fibre in Kapiti we are also seeing a steady reduction of people with traditional home phones. This leads to an increase in the use of mobile phones and their apps with a consequent increase in people seeking our services. Building our members’ confidence in using these devices has become a key focus of what we do.

I want to express my sincere thanks to all our Tutors who give freely of their time to assist our members. Without you, SeniorNet couldn’t function and we are very lucky to have such a knowledgeable and reliable team as our disposal.

Facilities

In Kapiti we are very lucky to have access to this building and we are grateful to our landlord, the Kapiti Coast District Council, for its ongoing support and maintenance of the building. We have replaced our aging air conditioning unit this past year as well as upgrading the main room lighting with lower energy (and brighter) LED units. We also installed a bike rack around the back for those members who choose to cycle to our Learning Centre. Special thanks to Barry Bailey for his tireless efforts liaising with the council and keeping the premises in tip top condition.

Committee

I am pleased to advise that everyone on the current Committee has agreed to stand again for the coming year. Each member of the Committee contributes in different ways but as a whole they are a cohesive unit and effective at making decisions for the good of SeniorNet Kapiti and its members. I have enjoyed working with everyone on the team and I thank you for your support. I know you will continue to support Sue Connor as she takes over the leadership reins.

COVID-19

The past year, and indeed a large portion of my term as Chairperson, has been dominated by COVID-19. SeniorNet Kapiti has weathered the COVID storm well and in a number of ways, has also helped other SeniorNets throughout the country to cope with its effects. Our swift adoption of online learning (aka Zoom) was an example to other Learning Centres of what was possible and a number of our tutors were involved in online coaching of tutors in other locations. We adapted our existing workshops to the online format and offered our members something to do during the long days of Lockdown. My thanks to everyone involved.

Coming out of Lockdown wasn't without its own challenges as we needed to quickly develop procedures which allowed us to restart without endangering the health of tutors or students. Our focus was on giving people a choice on whether to return to face to face classes or remain online for a little longer. Our Level 2 COVID Guidelines are now well developed and can still be found on our website "just in case". When the second Level 2 restrictions were put in place earlier in 2021, we simply dusted the procedures off and went about our business safely and confidently.

Also emerging out of the Lockdowns was the Federation's SeniorHangouts and it's pleasing that one of our tutors (Teresa Urutia) is one of the more popular Buddies on that platform. Her sessions are always well attended and people who have participated are very complimentary about the way she runs her classes.

Again, my special thanks to all our Tutors who proved so adaptable during this difficult period. Your loyalty and commitment are recognised and greatly appreciated.

Peter Bunkall - ChairPerson