



## National Seniors Australia Corinda Branch

### August 2019 Newsletter



National Seniors Australia provides information regarding topics of interest to seniors and a collective voice to insure matters concerning seniors are heard. Corinda Branch provides a local face to this National Organisation to enable information to be disseminated and Seniors to join together to socialise and meet friends and to have a bit of fun.

#### Meetings

- Branch Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month February to December.
- We meet at The Croll Memorial Precinct, Sherwood/Indooroopilly RSL Sub-Branch, 2 Clewley St, Corinda. (opposite the Services Club)
- Registration at 9.30am for 10.00am start.
- Meeting fee of \$3.00 includes morning tea

#### July Branch Meeting – Guest Presenter

**Speaker: Brian Robinson from Qld Fauna Consultancy.**

Queensland Fauna Consultancy is a specialist fauna management company providing comprehensive fauna spotter catcher and ecological interpretive services to Queensland. We had the pleasure of listening to a very interesting talk by Brian who spoke on the snakes of South East Queensland. Brian had the meeting enthralled by his extensive knowledge of these creatures and the facts he was able to provide. He began with the fact that there are 109 different species of snakes. These snakes are divided into sub groups:

**Colubrids** are a group of solid-toothed and rear-fanged snakes that lack a sophisticated venom-delivery system. Only ten species occur in Australia (all of which are found in Queensland) but this is the world's most diverse and widespread snake family. This group include the Green Tree Snake.

**Pythons** are non-venomous, with backward curving solid-teeth. Pythons kill by coiling around their prey and squeezing until suffocation occurs—a technique known as constriction. Most common seen here are the Carpet and Spotted Pythons.

**Elapids** or fixed front fanged, venomous land snakes. A number of venomous snakes are found in and around Brisbane, including the coastal taipan, tiger snake, death adder, rough-scaled snake and eastern brown snake. Of these snakes only the eastern brown snake is regularly found in Brisbane's suburbs.

The **keelback or freshwater snake** is non venomous, found in and around creeks, rivers and marshlands and feeds largely on frogs (including cane toads).

**Blind snakes** are small, smooth, worm-like burrowers with glossy, close fitting scales and bluntly rounded tails, ending in a short spur. They feed on termites and the eggs, larvae and pupae of ants.

Brian also spoke on the **Legless Lizards** as they are sometimes mistaken for snakes These are non-venomous burrowers that live in moist, dark areas. They feed on insects and small reptiles, and are usually found in or near compost bins and vegetable gardens or under leaf litter.

#### Free Off-Peak Travel for Seniors

Seniors will get free trips on Brisbane buses, City Cats and ferries — if they are happy to travel outside rush hour.



The free travel will apply from October 1 on Brisbane buses, City Cats and ferries between 8.30am and 3.30pm, and 6pm to 6am, Monday to Friday. Buses will be free for seniors on weekends.

The initiative will also apply to the Brisbane Metro bi-articulated buses when services begin in 2023.

Brisbane lord mayor Adrian Schrinner said free off-peak travel for seniors would make better use of available capacity and create more opportunities for older residents to travel the city and connect with family and friends.

"It's also about giving something back to the generations who have worked hard and contributed so much to help build our city and our community," he said.

**My local cinema got robbed  
of \$1000 yesterday.  
The thieves stole two jumbo  
popcorns, two large Cokes  
and a packet of Skittles.**

## **THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF LAUGHTER**

They say that laughter is "the best medicine," and as it turns out, there is some scientific truth to this assertion. Humour-associated laughter has numerous health benefits, so here are 11 reasons you should laugh it up.

### **1. LAUGHTER IS A SIGN OF GOOD WILL TOWARD OTHERS.**

Laughter may be unique to humans. According to a 2010 study in *BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, laughter and smiling are generally intended as a message of good will. "Because some forms of smiling are voluntary and easily faked, laughter, which requires a more synergetic contraction of the wider musculature, is believed to have evolved in humans to express a secure, safe message to others."

### **2. LAUGHTER MAY REDUCE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE.**

High blood pressure (hypertension) is one of the most dangerous side effects of stress, as well as a huge risk factor for heart disease and stroke. There are more than a few studies that show a reduction of blood pressure after laughter, such as a 2017 study in the *Journal of Dental and Medical Research*, where 40 patients undergoing haemodialysis listened to CDs of comic shows for 16 30-minute sessions over eight weeks, and saw a decrease in blood pressure.

### **3. THIS HAD LED TO A TREATMENT KNOWN AS LAUGHTER YOGA.**

The success of laughter studies on blood pressure and other ills has led to a unique kind of treatment known as "laughter yoga."

Dr. Madan Kataria, founder of the Laughter Yoga School, told Medscape, "You don't need any jokes, any humour, or any comedy. You don't even need to be happy. What we do is laugh in a group and initiate laughter as a form of bodily exercise, but when we have eye contact with others, this laughter becomes real and contagious."

As a result, laughter yoga has gone on to be used as an intervention for a variety of health issues, ranging from stress to dementia.

### **4. LAUGHTER CAN REDUCE ANXIETY AND OTHER NEGATIVE EMOTIONS.**

Laughter therapy has also been shown to improve anxiety in patients with Parkinson's disease, reduce anxiety and depression in nursing students, and improve optimism, self-esteem, and depression in menopausal women.

Author Bernard Saper suggests that the ability to maintain a sense of humour and the ability to laugh can act as positive coping mechanisms to help a person get through difficult times.

### **5. LAUGHTER IS AN IMMUNE BOOSTER.**

At the beginning of cold and flu season, it may be a good idea to practice some laughter therapy, as several studies have shown the immune boosting power of a chuckle.

### **6. LAUGHTER MAY ACT AS A NATURAL ANTI-DEPRESSANT.**

While nobody would recommend laughter in lieu of other treatment for depression, it has shown promise at ameliorating depressed moods. A 2015 study in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary*

*Medicine* found that three 60-minute laughter therapy sessions improved the depression and negative mood states of cancer patients.

### **7. YOU BREATHE BETTER AFTER LAUGHING.**

It turns out that a good bout of deep belly laughter can lead to increased heart rate, respiratory rate, and oxygen consumption, which are similar to what happens during exercise. While a 2009 study in the *International Journal of Humour Research* found that these changes only last as long as the laughter itself, if you can laugh like that for 30 minutes to an hour, maybe you can skip the gym.

### **8. LAUGHTER IS GOOD FOR YOUR CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM.**

Your lungs aren't the only organ that benefits from a great guffaw. A 2009 study in *Medical Hypotheses* found powerful benefits to the heart and cardiovascular system.

The American Heart Association recommends laughter for a healthy heart, adding that research has shown laughter promotes reduced artery inflammation and increased production of HDL, or "good" cholesterol.

### **9. LAUGHTER CALMS STRESS HORMONES.**

Humour, and by extension, laughter, stimulates multiple physiological systems that decrease levels of stress hormones, such as cortisol and epinephrine, and increase the activation of the dopamine-dispensing reward system of the brain, according to researchers of a 2017 study in *Advances in Physiology Education*. A 2003 study in *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* found that viewing a funny film decreased a wide variety of stress hormones.

### **10. SOCIAL LAUGHTER CAN RELIEVE PAIN.**

Laughter might be as good as some analgesics for pain, something early physicians seemed to understand. In the 14th century, French surgeon Henri de Mondeville used humour to distract patients from the pain of surgery and to help them during recovery. More modern research has found that participants who watched comedy videos needed less pain medication than those who watched control videos. In a 2011 study published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, over the course of six experiments using extreme cold as a pain-tolerance measure, researchers found that social laughter—laughter done in groups in a social context—elevates pain thresholds. The authors suggest, "These results can best be explained by the action of endorphins released by laughter."

### **11. LAUGHING BURNS CALORIES.**

As if all of these benefits aren't a good enough reason to giggle every day, a 2014 study in the *International Journal of Obesity* found that laughter can burn calories. Researchers broke a group of 45 participants into two groups, half of whom watched film clips intended to evoke laughter for approximately 10 minutes, and half who watched film clips unlikely to stimulate laughter. Both groups were attached to a "calorimeter" that measured energy expenditure and heart rate. They determined that those who laughed during their viewing burned up to 10 calories in 10 minutes, as compared to those who did not laugh and did not burn any calories.

### Financial ferrets eyeing off your nest egg

A recent series of jail sentences for fraudsters who have fleeced retirees of their savings is a timely reminder of the steps you should take to protect your nest egg.

#### Scamwatch

The Federal Government's Scamwatch website has useful tips on how to avoid being fleeced.

The site lists four categories of scams targeting your investments such as:

- **Cold callers** pretending to be brokers or advisers offering low risk products which yield high returns on investments
- **Hot tips** where scammers will persuade their victims to buy into shares that they say are about to sky rocket in value
- **Seminars** promoted by so-called experts who use motivational speeches to scam those who attend into buying risky and overpriced products such as investment property, without allowing for independent advice
- **Superannuation** where the scammer poses as a financial adviser, offering people early access to their super fund. The site says they .... *"may ask you to agree to a story to ensure the early release of your money, and then, acting as your financial adviser, they will deceive your superannuation company into paying out your super benefits directly to them."*

It says you should NEVER give your details to cold callers and emailers, and you should always be suspicious of products offering "low risk with high returns."

**WIFE:** "There is trouble with the car. It has water in the carburetor."  
**HUSBAND:** "Water in the carburetor? That's ridiculous"  
**WIFE:** "I tell you the car has water in the carburetor."  
**HUSBAND:** "You don't even know what a carburetor is. Where's the car?"  
**WIFE:** "In our pool"

### **What's On In Our Area**

#### **24 August 2019 Graceville State School Fete**

– a great day out for young and old finishing with fireworks at 7.00pm

New ... For Senior Travel



### Painful truths:

#### Is chronic pain crippling you and your wallet?

One in three Australians aged over 65 lives with chronic pain and up to 80 per cent of aged care residents. It is often under-treated or poorly managed. As the population gets older, the need to prevent and manage pain becomes more urgent, both for personal wellbeing and to stem lost productivity and health costs.

For those who experience it, chronic pain can be debilitating and have an adverse effect on work, sleep, and relationships.

Individuals with chronic pain may also experience depression, sleep disturbance and fatigue.

#### **Tips for managing pain**

Before you head to the medicine cabinet, consider this: medication like aspirin and ibuprofen can cause stomach ulcers, water retention and increased blood pressure.

Your genetics might also play a role in limiting the effectiveness of medicines.

"Codeine does not work for 10 per cent of people because of their DNA," says CEO of Ward Medication Management, Fiona Rhody-Nicoll.

"A DNA test can determine if the painkillers you are taking are being activated by your liver and inform you which painkillers are best for you."

Other tips to improve pain management include:

- Daily stretching, walking and staying active
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Focusing your attention on something other than the pain, like listening to music
- Reviewing your medication regularly with a qualified health professional, such as a clinical pharmacist. This may be done through a [Home Medicines Review](#) or program such as [Ward MM Thrive](#).

Through our partnership with Ward Medication Management, National Seniors Australia members are eligible for a 6% saving on their [Ward MM Thrive](#) 12 month subscription service at a reduced cost.

### **Day Trips**

**Herman's Tours and Travel**, Corinda have a great selection of day trips if you are looking for an interesting outing.

- Saturday 31 August – Mooroochy Wetland and McMartin's Strawberry Farm – Bli Bli
- Saturday 14 September – Laidley Spring Festival
- Sunday 29 September – Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers
- Wednesday 16 October – Practically Perfect, the music of Julie Andrews

**For details and prices Phone 3379 6255**  
**Brochure available at the meeting.**

## News from COTA

**Council on the Ageing (COTA) Queensland** is a statewide not for profit organisation advancing the rights, interests and futures of people as we age.

Seniors Week, 17-25 August 2019

### 100: a celebration of QLD's oldest residents / The Centenarian Portrait Project by Teenagers

The Centenarian Portrait Project by Teenagers is an uplifting initiative matching 100 teenage artists with 100 of Queensland's oldest residents.

From storytelling, reminiscing, joy and laughter, comes unique portraits, a gift and friendships to treasure between the generations.

You are invited to meet Queensland's centenarians and discover how each artist captures a moment of a 100 year life.

The exhibition will run 17 August – 1 September, 11 am – 5 pm daily at the Seven Hills Hub 28  
*Tallowood Street, Seven Hills. (Off Clearview Tce)*  
Brisbane, 4170. Cost - Free

### **Are you being charged extra fees to receive paper bills via post?**

Avoid these extra fees for posted bills by opting to receive bills electronically, or some companies will waive paper bill fees if you are:

- a senior
- getting income support
- registered for a concession
- on a hardship program
- without internet access.

Find out more about paper billing fees and if you are eligible for an exemption

at [consumerlaw.gov.au/paperbilling](http://consumerlaw.gov.au/paperbilling)

Little boy tells his nursery teacher he found a dead cat.

"How did you know it was dead?" asks the teacher.

"Because I pissed in its ear & it didn't move" says the boy.

"You did what!?" shrieks the teacher.

"You know" explains the boy, "I leant over & went Pssst & it didn't move!"

### Branch Calendar June 2019 to February 2020

Tuesday 13 August	Annual General Meeting – Election of Committee, followed by a light Lunch.
Tuesday 10 September	Presenter - Dementia Australia
Tuesday 8 October	Financial Advice Matters - Managing your money in retirement.
Tuesday 12 November	Oxley Nursery – Choosing and caring for your potted plants.
Tuesday 10 December	Christmas Party
Tuesday 11 February 2020	First Meeting for 2020.

(While the program is correct at time of printing changes may occur due to unforeseen circumstances)

#### Elected Branch Committee

##### July 2018- August 2019

President: Norma Spinetti

Vice President: Val Spinetti

Secretary: Bronwyn Quinn

Treasurer: Heather Hallam

Publicity Officer: Lorna Norris

##### Committee Members

Margaret Maynard

Fay Heers

Rita Hibbard

Wendy Ostrofski

Ruby McFarlane

#### Branch Contacts:

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