

## ***Minister's Christmas message***

With the summer holiday season fast approaching it is useful to step back and take stock of the past year.

The most rewarding experiences for me since I was appointed Minister for Seniors have been the opportunities to meet and spend time with so many of our SuperSeniors.

It has been enlightening to hear what you do and learn more about the inspiring and rewarding lives you have led and continue to lead.

I am developing Community Connects, a programme which encourages communities to implement age-friendly policies which would help older people. Napier, New Plymouth, Hamilton, Kapiti and Palmerston North, among others, are already developing plans.

There is also a drive to reduce social isolation by developing a checklist for identifying if somebody you know is at risk. A brochure includes information on how people can stay socially connected, and it can be found on the SuperSeniors website - [superseniors.msd.govt.nz](http://superseniors.msd.govt.nz)

This year, I commissioned a report on elder abuse which shows incidents are often hidden and those who experience it are frequently afraid to acknowledge it occurs. The findings will enable measures to be taken to address the problem. Again, you can read more on the SuperSeniors website.

Seniors are such an important group to this country - both socially and economically. Your voice is trusted, respected and listened to. And smart businesses are increasingly recognising your economic clout.

It is privilege to speak on your behalf, share your stories with others and develop policies and actions that will allow seniors to lead the most meaningful lives possible.

That is why the launch of the SuperSeniors website and this newsletter in September are particular highlights in my year.

When the Prime Minister and I officially launched the site we had a strong vision of providing a one-stop shop for internet-savvy seniors where you not only can get updates on entitlements and benefits from using the SuperGold Card great deals but also to learn more about what other older New Zealanders are doing.

I look forward to meeting more of you and sharing your stories in 2016.

My very best wishes to you and your families. I hope you have a safe, happy and peaceful festive season and a wonderful new year.



Honourable Maggie Barry ONZM  
Minister for Seniors



## ***Christmas budgeting tips***

Diane Maxwell, Retirement Commissioner

Christmas can be the best of times and the worst of times. Sometimes family is around us, we have time to take stock after a busy year, the sun is shining, and the food is great. But it can also be bittersweet. With family overseas. Or missing loved ones we have lost.

Whatever Christmas has in store for you, be assured that lots of people will be waking up to a host of different situations; alone, together, healthy or with uncertainty.

For some it can be a time of financial pressure as we shop frantically to buy presents for children, grandchildren and the other people in our lives. I find the worst present purchases are made just days out from Christmas when shopping fever has set in and our rational brain has left us. Grandchildren can be a tough crowd when it comes to presents and the prospect of disappointed faces on Christmas morning can be enough to make us throw caution to the wind and spend much more than we intended.

Many families have their own traditions that help take the pressure off. If you don't, and you're just starting out with grandchildren, it might be worth introducing traditions early to set the pace. Maybe a \$5-\$10 dollar limit on presents? Then the fun is more about finding an interesting or funny gift than an expensive one.

And there is not always a correlation between spend and excitement. My mum bought our son a cutlery set when he was two which was not only his favourite present of all time, but also the cheapest. He also spent a week climbing in and out of two cardboard boxes that the grocery shopping came in. They were a house, then a car, then a boat – crocodiles swam past, there were pirate ships on the horizon – until it became a train and then the whole family had to sit on the floor in a line and show their tickets before the driver set off for distant lands. We put our phones and iPads away, and laughed and played.

So at the end of it all, if you have family or friends around the Christmas table, and can share a meal and hear each other's stories, then your presence is the most important thing. As we seem to get busier and busier family time is something very special and you can point out that the presents are secondary.

For more on this story go to the superseniors website.



### ***Money-saving ideas***

- Introduce secret Santa for the adults and allocate a maximum amount to be spent. Draw out names so you know who you are buying for and every adult gives and receives one present.
- Keep an eye on supermarket specials and stock up before Christmas.
- Get the grandchildren to make tree decorations, crepe paper chains and Christmas cards.
- Have a go at hand-made gifts: Christmas cookies, truffles, jams, a painting or a calendar featuring family photos.
- Make a recipe book featuring the tried and tested favourites you're willing to share.
- Layer a glass jar with all the ingredients to make a batch of gingerbread, tie the recipe around the lid with a festive ribbon.
- Give vouchers for babysitting or gardening.
- Redeem points on your reward cards for vouchers or gifts.
- Take the grandchildren for a picnic at the beach or the park.
- Go on nature walks and give the children a list of items to collect.
- Encourage them to build an obstacle course in the backyard or set up the sprinkler.
- Head for the library and stock up on Christmas books if the weather turns wet.
- Bring out the playing cards and teach everyone your favourite games: rummy; 500.

## ***Protecting your property***

The NZ Police say a few simple steps can make a big difference to keeping your property safe over the holidays.

Always lock up. Burglars often enter through unlocked doors and windows or they take advantage of weak locks.

Lock the door, even if you're in the back garden, having a rest or doing something that needs a lot of concentration, such as reading, sewing or on the computer. It may be difficult to hear people when you're concentrating.

Tools and ladders could be used by burglars to break in, so locking garden sheds and your garage can reduce the chances of a burglary.

Inspector Paula Holt, the NZ Police's Manager Community Services, says one of the best things you can do to make your home safer is to know your neighbours.

"Exchange contact details, discuss your crime and safety concerns and decide what you would do in an emergency. Let neighbours know when you're going to be away. Swap holiday addresses and phone numbers. Let each other know if visitors or tradespeople will be in your house while you're away."

Sensor lights are an excellent security device because they light up automatically if somebody moves nearby. They also provide light for you if you return home late at night. Keep trees and shrubs trimmed so they don't provide hiding places for burglars.

Guard your keys. Don't have personal details on your keys (such as your name, phone number or address). Don't leave house keys with your car keys when your car is being serviced. Don't invite burglars in – never leave notes on a door stating that you're out. When you go away, make sure your home looks 'lived in'.

For more tips on keeping yourself and your property safe visit the SuperSeniors website.

### Helpful hints

Before you go away:

- tell your neighbour when and where you're going and give them a contact number
- cancel mail, paper etc
- put a lamp on a timer
- curtains open, blinds up
- turn telephone ringer sound down
- lock all doors, close all windows.

## Health is a Precious thing



Precious McKenzie has been an advocate for healthy living all his life and at 79, he's still active and fit.

The former South African weightlifter fell in love with New Zealand when he was here in 1974 for the Commonwealth Games, representing England and moved here in 1975. Since then Precious has represented New Zealand in the Commonwealth and Olympic Games and Masters World powerlifting competitions. He won his fourth Commonwealth gold at the age of 42.

For the last six years, Precious has been the honorary ambassador at Settlers Albany – a retirement village in Auckland. When he moved there, he offered to run aerobics classes for the residents – all voluntarily – and the classes are still going. They run for half an hour, two mornings a week and are very popular with people aged from 65 to 90.

Precious has a long connection to aerobics – he was one of the first to put aerobic exercises to music, first in South Africa and later for the YMCA in New Zealand.

For people who haven't done regular exercise, Precious encourages them to start slowly and build up. "Don't try and keep up with someone else, just take it at your pace to start with."

He says it's never too late to start and it's important for older people to stay active. "When people don't exercise they get very frail, especially as they get older. I believe if people keep themselves fit, they'll live longer, they'll feel better and they'll enjoy life."

"My philosophy is as long as you can move, do something – actions are louder than words. Your health is very important – money can't buy that, so to keep healthy is to exercise."

Precious says the heart is a muscle and needs to be exercised to stay healthy and keep working efficiently, day in and day out.

### Precious' top tips:

- walking is a great exercise to get you started – start slowly and build up – you'll be amazed at how quickly your fitness will improve
- if you choose to start walking, aim to complete the walk a little bit quicker each time which will exercise your heart and increase the fitness "...a little bit at a time"
- it's never too late to start – whether it's joining a walking group, doing exercise classes or lifting weights – start small and give it a go.

## Changes to off-peak transport

From next July there will be some changes to the SuperGold Card public transport scheme.

Funding changes preserve cardholders' entitlement to free off-peak public transport. Some regional councils may be adopting regional smartcards, so some SuperGold cardholders will need to buy them to access free off-peak travel.

In Auckland, SuperGold cardholders who want to use free public transport from 1 July 2016 – including cardholders visiting the region – will need to have an AT HOP card with a SuperGold Card concession loaded on it.

Right now you can buy an AT HOP Card for \$5. But from 17 December the cost will increase to \$10. In addition to the purchase cost a minimum of \$5 must be loaded onto the card when it is bought, which can then be used to pay for peak time travel.

AT HOP cards can be bought online and from retailers - visit the Auckland Transport website (<https://at.govt.nz/bus-train-ferry/at-hop-card/buy-at-hop-card/>) for details. The SuperGold Card concession can be loaded on the card at an Auckland Transport customer service centre.

It will take some time for these systems to be rolled out across the country, so Aucklanders travelling to other regions will need to present their SuperGold Card as they do currently (or the other region's smartcard, as these become available).

Other changes to the SuperGold Card public transport scheme include a shift in how councils receive funding for SuperGold Card travel, and an end to the moratorium that has prevented new services from entering the scheme since 2010.

To find out more about the changes here <http://www.transport.govt.nz/land/supergoldcardtransportfunding/>

## Senior lifesavers still making waves

Photo: Jamie Troughton, D'Scribe Media



Kent Jarman (r) on patrol with Hamish Rieger.

Kent Jarman has been a surf lifesaver since he was 16, and now at the age of 65, the patrol captain at Mount Maunganui has no intention of giving it away.

The builder, who competes at the Masters and Nationals, will be at the beach again this summer.

"It's a way of life, there's a lot of surf lifesavers in it for life, some of us never leave. You're surrounded by young people and that keeps you young and keeps you active. As you get older, there is a bit of respect but they don't cut you a lot of slack."

Former professional boxer Denny Enright, 66, is a surf lifesaver at the Omanu Beach club.

There are 1,041 lifesavers who are 50 plus and, of those, 340 are over the age of 65, says Surf Lifesaving New Zealand.

Denny first got into surf lifesaving when he shifted to the Bay of Plenty.

"It was a sport I could involve the whole family in, meaning I wasn't going home feeling selfish about my own time, doing my own thing. I could involve the whole family and feel really happy about my time at the beach so it was great."

His role is to coach the juniors, the Academy squad.

"I like helping the Academy kids who are just learning about the surf, learning how to ride a board, learning confidence in the water, learning that the sea is a living thing.

"We teach the kids those sorts of skills and base their training on enjoyment because if young people are enjoying their training, they're learning, their mind is open. But, if they've got a closed mind and put pressure on them, they learn very little."



Denny Enright (r) in the surf with fellow lifesaver Sid Salek.

Photo: Jamie Troughton, D'Scribe Media



## Trampers take a walk on the wild side



Jon Dumble takes to the high road.

Jon Dumble has been tramping since the 1960s and now at 78, he still regularly heads out on one of New Zealand's great walks, the Routeburn track, as well as the hills and mountains on his doorstep near Queenstown.

Jon is a member of the Wakatipu Tramping Club, along with several other over-70s, and until recently was a walking guide for NZ Nature Walks.

He's also a skier at nearby Coronet Peak and still runs his farm in the Wakatipu Basin, finding the physical work and tramping complement each other.

The Wakatipu Tramping Club grades tramps into easy, medium and fit and Jon doesn't always go for the easy ones.

Carrying a pack is no problem for this extraordinarily determined man. He enjoys the challenge tramps offer, such as crossing streams, wading through mud or using a tree as a handhold as he negotiates a steep bank.

Jon says tramping is a great way to make new friends and catch up regularly with mates.

"I love the remoteness, the views and there's no one else around. There's always something different to see and an adventure to experience."

If you've never tramped before and would like to try it, join a tramping club. They offer bushcraft courses and useful tips on equipment, food, safety and the most suitable routes. Travel costs are shared so kept as low as possible.

Jon's love of tramping goes hand in hand with the DoC's Healthy Nature, Healthy People programme.

For more on this story go to the SuperSeniors website.

### ***Jon's top tips:***

- check the weather before you leave
- only pack essentials – don't make your pack any heavier than it needs to be
- good walking shoes or boots and a waterproof/windproof jacket are essential
- wear thin layers of clothes so you can take something off if you get too warm.

## WOMAD competition winners

Thanks to everyone who entered our competition to win a ticket to WOMAD 2016.

It was great to read the many reasons people have for celebrating getting older.

Congratulations to Sarndra Raybould of Waipukurau and Jeanette Short of Taupo, whose entries were selected by Seniors Minister Maggie Barry as our winners.

Sarndra and Jeanette will each receive one three-day ticket to next year's WOMAD.

Their respective winning entries were:

"The best thing about getting older, pure contentment in feeling and knowing you are your own Boss, you can take control of decisions about your future health and well-being, and feel good about it. You begin to see this part of your life as the part to be lived to the fullest, making the best of the time you may have left. You realise the importance of family and leaving the best memories of you, to cherish in the future. You wake up every day with your partner, if you have one, and make the most of it. You do not waste time on people who do not like you, you are far too busy loving the people who love you."



"The best thing about getting older is:

- Not sweating the small stuff.
- Understanding happiness happens when appreciating the things you have, not fretting about things you don't.
- Having a heart full of a lifetime of love for my whanau.
- Realising learning never stops, I can achieve anything I want without the fear of failure stopping me.
- Dressing in a way that makes me feel fabulous not in a way I think people expect me to.
- Hearing my children saying "What are you up to now?", knowing that not a day goes by that I'm not living life to its fullest."

## ***When bigger is better***

We've had feedback from a few of our readers that they have trouble reading the content of our newsletters as the text is too small. In this edition, we've made the text a bit bigger, but the biggest difference comes from the device that you view the newsletter on and how it is set up.

There are a number of ways you can change the settings to make it easier to see the content on your screen.

Here are a few easy solutions to try:

- Try holding down the Ctrl key and roll the scroll wheel on your mouse forward or back to instantly make everything appear larger or smaller.
- On touch-screen devices like smart phones and tablets, you can use two-fingers to pinch together or spread your fingers apart to zoom in or out.

To find out how the changes work for your device, try searching in your favourite search engine (for example Google) for the following:

- make the text larger on your computer
- make the text larger in your browser
- make the text larger in applications.

There are a lot of detailed guides and videos that will help you, depending on what device, browser or operating system you're using.

### ***New Zealand Carers' Strategy Action Plan 2014 to 2018: Survey evaluating our progress***

The lead agencies of the NZ Carers' Strategy and the NZ Carers Alliance would like your feedback on the progress we are making towards the five objectives laid out in the New Zealand Carers' Strategy Action Plan 2014 to 2018 and the difference it is making for whānau, aiga, and family carers.

Anyone who is a carer, related to a carer, or has an interest in carers' needs is welcome to take part in this survey. It should only take around 15 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you will have an opportunity to go into a draw to win one of two \$50 supermarket gift vouchers.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CSAP2015>

## ***Find out more***

For more on the stories in this issue and other useful information and updates developed especially for seniors, go to [www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz](http://www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz)

You can also LIKE our Facebook page for daily updates on seniors' news, events and issues

## SuperGold Card Special Offers

Check out the latest special offers for our super seniors through the SuperSeniors website.

**Disclaimer:** The SuperGold Card programme enables independent businesses to offer discounts and benefits to older New Zealanders. The Ministry of Social Development is not associated with any seller and does not guarantee any representation made by a seller and any future dispute will need to be taken up with the seller not the Ministry of Social Development. Offers range in size and nature and cardholders should always check to see if a better offer is available locally.



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