A message to all within the ASCCA network of Seniors Computer Clubs …

This pandemic is forcing us to rethink many decisions we individually made just a week, or a fortnight, ago. It is all so difficult isn't it. Every club needs to do what is best for both members and their club. As always individual clubs need to arrange their program so that it meets the needs and interests of their members.

The question for you is are your trainers/mentors/tutors still quite happy to give face to face training and are there sufficient participating students to warrant keeping the clubroom open? Do you feel it is safe to keep the clubroom open, are you able to provide a safe as possible venue or has your thinking been altered as more facts come to light? It is vital that clubs work out ways to maintain connection with members and trainers whether in a clubroom or online. It will make all the difference for ongoing survival.

Studies have shown that keeping up contact online is a good substitute to face to face interaction. It gives a feeling of connectedness and is a good distraction in challenging times. Even if you plan to keep your club open, now might be the time for you to consider how you can help your members get the best out of their technology if they have to self-isolate because of individual health issues or an enforced closure of all community activities similar to seniors computer clubs.

Communication with trainer and students will be very important. Keep them as involved with your club to ensure that they are still interested when the threats have vanished and it is time to rebuild your club. The way you keep communicating with your members will probably differ from club to club. You already know the way your club likes to 'talk'!

As you would have heard on the news, COVID-19 poses the greatest risk of serious infection to elderly people, people with compromised immune systems, people with chronic medical conditions (like diabetes, heart disease or respiratory illnesses) and people living in group residential settings. Unfortunately that grouping includes most of us!
Social inclusion is an important part of club life. Many of our club members live alone and their lives are enriched by involvement with other club members so we must look for ways to continue to bring not only learning but enjoyment into the lives of all members while this virus unbalances our lives.

Because COVID-19 is a new disease, there is no existing immunity in the community. This means it could spread widely and quickly - to help reduce the spread and protect those who are most at risk, it is important that you takes steps to protect yourself and others.
To keep everyone safe, we are being asked to remember to practise good hygiene and physical distancing. For further details refer to the [NSW Health website](#) or call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on **1800 020 080** (or the National Relay Service on **1300 555 727**) for up to date advice about the present level of risk and recommended precautions.

This special Stop Press Newsletter contains some options for you to consider. These are serious times but we all need to add some fun and excitement to our immediate plans as we build for the future. Watch the ASCCA website and Facebook page because the ideas are going to continue to come—many of them from you, the network of seniors computer clubs.

Take care, stay safe, sincerely,

Nan Bosler, AM
President,
Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association

Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association

ASCCA

ASCCA NOTICE BOARD

Look ahead!	10 & 11 November	22nd Australian Technology Conference for Seniors	Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association ASCCA

Doing what is best for your Club and your members:

1. Your club has probably considered what action will be the best for your members and for your club.
2. If not, it is suggested you check with your landlord to find out if there are any plans to close the building in which you meet. Is there any rent/hire relief if you have to close. The answer may help you to make the decision.
3. If your decision is to cease training and meeting in your present clubroom the next thing to consider is how to keep the interest of your trainers and students—look for options!
4. ASCCA's Technical Officer, Mark Young has compiled a very useful one page "Proactive Cyber Security Checklist" for ASCCA's own business. Does your Club have a similar document"? Go to www.staysmartonline.gov.au to find the essentials and subscribe to alerts on new scams, with a Coronavirus focus.

Options to keep trainer and students involved with your club:

1. Online tutorials - trainers can introduce their students to a selected online learning site. If the club hasn't closed yet do this as a face to face lesson, if closed email and or phone them. Trainers to then act as a buddy, preferably during the time when they would normally be having their session in the clubroom with that student!

2. ASCCA will provide a Help Desk, two days a week -Tuesday and Thursdays - for trainers, tutors or mentors from ASCCA member clubs. Ring Jean on **9922 5408**, appropriate hours would be between 9.00am and 5.00pm.

3. If your club hasn't considered it previously, for whatever reason, maybe now is the time to look at the benefits of becoming a Network Partner of Be Connected and keep the lessons happening online for your members. For details of what's available, including grants, please email markyoung@ascca.org.au or jenniferwillcox@ascca.org.au

4. One on one training : this is an opportunity to explore online tutoring until the authorities declare this Coronavirus is no longer a pandemic and we are safe to meet in gatherings and have contact closer than a metre plus apart!

   * Using Zoom for video conferencing
   * And TeamViewer to mirror the student's device

   If this idea interests you further information can be provided.

5. Could this be the perfect time for your trainers to explore a new course, something different, and have to have it ready for when the club gets back to normal operating practise?

6. Your newsletter may already be on your website and now is the perfect opportunity to encourage our members to actually look at it. Send them all an email with a link to the newsletter. Or, you may decide to email the newsletter to each individual.

7. Myth busting around bandwidth or other issues that students may not have explored yet. With a lot of people working from home the internet may slow down at times. Show them how to do a speed test if it is running slow—https://www.speedtest.net/

Pages 2 and 3 provide just a few ideas to help you keep in touch with Club members in spite of the club being temporally closed. We are sure you can come up with many more, even better ideas and are just to start you thinking.

Devise a competition or two!

On one occasion you may hide a number of images on various pages of the website. In your newsletter highlight the search to find the greatest number of frogs (just an example) hidden in the website. To enter, email a given email address giving the number and the pages they are hiding on. Give a closing date and don't forget to ask them to add their name! Winner will be name Club Chief Frog-catcher and win a bock of chocolate.

I'm pretty sure petty cash will be able to pay for the chocolate.   Silly, yes. But fun.

Another competition may be write a story, no longer than 500 words, on a selected topic. Humorous entries welcomed. Closing date established. Have a couple of eager beavers decide on the most enjoyable and appealing entry. While that competition is running its course have an additional competition for the most appropriate certificate to be awarded to the winner. All clubs are invited to participate and entries submitted by 30 June 2020 will be judged and the best one included in a future ASCCA Newsletter. This is not a formal Creative W riting competition only for budding writers so encourage as many of your members as possible to participate. When submitting your clubs winning entry to ascca@ascca.org.au put the name of the writer and the club and an email address on a separate page.

Don't forget Social Media

1.   If you haven't already, post a couple of times a day to your club's Facebook group . Share daily tech tips and answer questions.

2.   Facetime is great for keeping in touch with family and friends. Sometimes you just want to see someone's face to know they are alright.

3.   Try using Facebook Messenger or Whats App for instant messaging. This is a great way to have ongoing chats with a group of people.

4.   Start organising regular and consistent posts about positive topics like the daily joke or riddle. To share the load you could arrange for different people to provide these posts on a daily basis. Maybe post a quandary online daily that members can rely on and to chat about.

5.   If members are worried about their internet data usage getting used up make sure they have their online account set up with their internet provider. When they log into it they will be able to see how much data they are progressively using.

More Ideas

1.   **What are your hobbies and interest areas?** Search for those Facebook groups. For example, if you like gardening the Gardening Australia group shares their gardening problems. Maybe you might be able to help solve some of them?

2.   **How an you support others in your local community?** Consider joining or setting up a group in your local area to offer to support your neighbours in a different way. It might be advice, offering to do some shopping for those who can't, or shouldn't, leave the house. Set up a regular time or day to check in with friends and family. Even a simple R U OK? Text can let people know you are thinking of them.

3.   **How to manage some things from home:** Coles and Woolworths have great online shopping. It is secure and at the moment can be delivered to your door. Maybe your Woolworths or Coles also stocks some stationary items. It is worth checking for instance if they stock ink cartridges suitable for your printer. Officeworks delivers very quickly to your door in a wide range of regions in Australia. Always check if there is a delivery charge.

Pass on this issue of the ASCCA newsletter by printing copies for distribution, or make a list of all your club members with email addresses and forward it to them.
It is of interest to each member of every club, not just Committee members.

The newsletter can also be read and/or downloaded from our website:- **www.ascca.org.au**
You are welcome to copy items from this newsletter but acknowledgment of **ASCCA** is required.

Membership of **ASCCA** is open to all Seniors Computer Clubs, Organisations with a membership including Seniors, and organisations that recognise the value of computer technology for Seniors.

ASCCA membership rates :
1 - 20 members - Nil
21 - 40 members - $118
41 - 100 members - $180
Over 100 members - $310
All prices quoted include GST
Corporate Membership also welcome

If your club fits one of these categories and are interested in joining **ASCCA** please go to our website www.ascca.org.au or email office@ascca.org.au to find out how to start a club; or read some of the advantages of joining **ASCCA** if you are an existing club. An Application Form is available on the website.

DISCLAIMER: This newsletter is provided "as is" without warranty of any kind. Each reader of the **ASCCA** newsletter assumes complete risk as to the accuracy and subsequent use of its contents.

Newsletter
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Contributions are welcome. Remember, this is **YOUR NEWSLETTER**.
Please take special note clubs outside Sydney and NSW.

Please forward contributions by email to the editor.

We recognise this is an extremely distressing and difficult time, and we know that the impact of COVID-19 is already affecting people experiencing vulnerability the hardest.

With this in mind, protecting the health and wellbeing of our clients, volunteers and staff is paramount, both to slow the spread of the virus and to allow us to maintain critical support to our partners.

The ASCCA Sydney office will be closed to the public as from Friday 20th March. All Staff and Volunteers will be working off-site from that date. ASCCA is dedicated to providing access to innovative solutions in these challenging times, and we are currently putting in place options that will allow us to maintain our high level of service delivery.

Responses to the COVID-19 pandemic are evolving day-by-day, and we will continue to monitor and adapt our services in response. We don't yet have all the solutions, but we will continue to serve you with tenacity, dedication and heart.

As the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Dr Michelle Bachelet stated last week, "COVID-19 is a test for our societies, and we are all learning and adapting as we respond to the virus. Human dignity and rights need to be front and centre in that effort, not an afterthought."

As always, reach out to us if you need support.

Shades of SWADE

ASCCA's SWADE WA, NT and NSW Be Connected projects will be managed remotely, pretty much as usual on the whole. Naturally, some aspects need to be modified and Project Officers Natika Hawes-Wright, Ursula Lyons and Mark Young are managing their individual areas. Existing Network Partners will already have their contact details.

Be Connected has advised that their staff too are working remotely from home, but their regular telephone numbers are still operational and emails are being answered. They are also putting in additional support measures including **grant extensions, special webinars** and new **resources.**

What better time to join your Club as a Be Connected Network Partner—for any queries please contact ASCCA's Mark Young markyoung@ascca.org.au

SWADE—*Seniors West Australian Digital Expansion project -
an ASCCA initiated concept.*

Be Connected
Australian Government
Every Australian online.