



# ***Grey Power***

**CHRISTCHURCH ASSOCIATION INC**

**Phone (03) 383 6589**

**PO Box 15051,  
Aranui, Christchurch 8643**

**AUTUMN ISSUE 2026**

## GREYPOWER CHRISTCHURCH

PO Box 15051, Aranui, Christchurch 8643



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**Please Note:** All Committee members are volunteers. If you wish to contact them and the answer machine comes on please leave a message. We will endeavour to contact you asap.

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## Our Owl is our symbol

The wise old owl sat on the oak  
The more he listened the less he spoke  
The less he spoke the more he heard  
Who of us is like this wise old bird



Grey Power loves our owl it is our official symbol and is used in all correspondence.

## Presidents Word



Happy New Year to you all, hope you had a good Christmas.

There are lots of changes coming to hopefully give you the best service we can. At our Socials there will be a quick chat with members regarding information on what Greypower are doing for the members.

We did a Greypower chat at a Church Group and a lady had some concerns about her Husband's Advance Care Plan which was not taken into account, when in hospital. It was forwarded to The Greypower Federation. A couple of months later they had a meeting with the Health Minister where this issue was raised. Should anyone have a similar problem with health, it can be emailed to me and forwarded to the Federation, they requested issues to be sent to them.

Nice to have summer occasionally, although I moan when it is 32, a moaning mini.

Hope to see you at our Socials and if you wish to hear a particular speaker please advise and we will endeavor to accommodate.

Enjoy the summer, the next issue will be in three months time, early May.

*Ann Ferrari* | President

If you have any thing you would like to put in the magazine maybe a joke or a recipe or something that concerns you please get hold of Ann on 027 482 1706 or email: joeannferrari@gmail.com

Other peoples opinions do help us so feel free to contact us *Thanks*

If You require help around your home eg house work lawn mowing your first point of call is your Doctor to get the necessary forms signed. Grey Power Christchurch do not have a data base for people to do any of these jobs



# Membership Renewal 2026-2027

## Membership expires 31 March 2026

Before paying for your 2026-27 membership, please check the expiry date on your membership card. If it is:

- 31 March 2026, then you can renew your membership for 2027.
- 31 March 2027 or later you do not need to renew your membership

## What if my membership expired earlier than 2026, or I can't find my card so can't check?

You can send an email to the email listed below. If you don't have email then you can call Catharine on the number listed below.

## How much is the 2026-27 Subscription?

Single membership is \$25, Dual membership is \$35

Note: A portion of your subscription is passed to the Federation to maintain your membership with the Federation.

## How can I pay my subscription?

You can make payment in cash at a membership meeting or via internet banking (or direct credit or phone banking) to:

- Account Name: GREYPOWER CHRISTCHURCH SUPERANNUITANTS ASSOCIATION
- Account Number: 030854 0652512 00

Please put your membership number (if you know it) in the reference field.

## Contact details

We are working to update our contact details where possible. If we are missing contact details when you renew, we will try to let you know and ask that you provide updated details.

## Any queries or updates regarding your membership?

Send an Email (preferred) to the address below, or call Catharine on the number below.

[greypowerchmembership@gmail.com](mailto:greypowerchmembership@gmail.com)

Catharine Elliott  
03 339 6322

## TRAVEL OUTINGS

### Bus Trips 2025

Well! where do I start, taking on the organising of the bus trips since Tui retired was no easy task, she was such an amazing host and organiser.

I did a lot of searching on google and asking around to find places to go of interest and restaurants for meals. I hope that those of you that joined me on the 2025 trips enjoyed yourselves. This year I had to find another bus company as Clarkes had changed ownership and did not get back to me. After looking into another couple of companies I decided to go with Pacific Tourways.

**Our April Trip** took us to Hamner for a lovely meal at the Village Inn followed by free time to have a look around the Village.



**Our May Trip** took us on a trip to Kaiapoi Club for Lunch via state highway 73 to Sheffield then by the inland route to West Eyreton Road to the Kaiapoi Club. After our enjoyable meal we then went to Amberley via Rangiora and the inland route and back down state highway home.

**Our June Trip** took us to The Ashburton Fire Museum at Tinwald where they had arranged for us to look around not only the Fire Museum but most of The Plains Vintage Railway & Historical Museum, from there we went to Hotel Ashburton for Lunch.



**Our July Trip** saw us travelling to Geraldine via the Inland road to the Crown Heritage Hotel for Lunch. After Lunch we went to the Geraldine Vintage Car & Machinery Club Museum. We traveled back via State Highway 1.



**Our August Trip** saw us travel through Sumner to Lyttleton on to Teddington thru Gebbies Pass to Motukarara, Tai Tapu, Prebbleton, to Yaldhurst to as always a Lunch at Hoofbeats. After lunch we went to the Air Force Museum at Wigram.



**Our September Trip** was close to home as we went to Mona Vale to wonder through the amazing grounds then out to Kaiapoi to Pineacres for Lunch.

**Our October Trip** saw us travelling to Glenlothian Farm at West Melton where we saw many heritage breeds of animals which was very enjoyable. We then headed to Summerset at Avonhead where we had a delightful time at the Divine Café.



**Our November Trip** was an enchanting trip to listen to the amazing musical students from Chrisnallwood School from there we went to Hoofbeats for our Christmas Lunch which was as always enjoyable plus a quick visit from Santa.



Cheers *Julie*

## What happens when we don't trust anything?

Sad to say, but those fun videos of porch pirates getting covered in paint and such -- all fake.

Some staged. But mostly fake. Same thing with most dramatic disaster clips. Nearly every one is fake. Forget the heartwarming wild animal clips. Animals don't really ask people for help. The happy exception is with seals, who actually do jump onto boats to escape killer whales. But, polar bear cubs do not. They have different habitats entirely.

Welcome to the Artificial Intelligence (AI) world. Don't believe what you see or hear because anything that any person can dream up can be made into a video in minutes with AI.

Ironically, if you suspect a video is AI generated, you can always ask AI, which doesn't mind telling on itself. Still, our reality is fragmenting.

In early era of radio and television, people of all ages gathered to watch or listen to big events. Big sports events, or a big television premiere -- these were things that everyone watched, young and old. They were the talk of the water cooler the

next day; The top subject at school for kids.

Today, we all watch different things. Kids have their noses stuck in their TikTok videos. Grandma is watching Facebook reels. What we see there we should not necessarily believe.

A host of studies by researchgate.net and others, suggest that a constant stream of fake videos promote widespread cynicism ("nothing is real") and low trust in all media. That can lead to a polarized, low-trust society.

Imagine what happens when juries don't trust actual, visual evidence of a crime. Or, what if a criminal argues that a real video of his criminal act is fake? Will people who are used to seeing everything as fake reject the real evidence as fake?

Yet, there is a potential for good news. People might well demand credible, verified sources of information. That could give traditional journalism a boost. Unfortunately traditional journalism has a job ahead of them. In 2025 Gallup's September 2025 poll showed that public trust of traditional journalism was at a 50-year low of 28 percent.

# the good companion

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# Ministerial Roadshow

## Living well in later life: a presentation by the Minister for Seniors

The Minister for Seniors will visit Christchurch to talk about the Government's long-term plan for supporting people to live well as they age.

Hosted by Grey Power Christchurch, the Minister will outline the Better Later Life Action Plan, including work underway to strengthen aged care and support people to remain independent for as long as possible.

The discussion will include local perspectives, reflecting on ageing well in Christchurch and the role communities play in supporting older people.

After the presentation, there will be conversation and refreshments. Local organisations will be invited to share information about services that support wellbeing and independent living.

### Event details

**Date: Tuesday 15 April**

**Time: 1.30pm**

**Host: Grey Power Christchurch  
St Martins Church,  
50 Lincoln Road, Christchurch**

**Members of the public are welcome. *RSVP not required.***

### *Speaker Bio*

#### **Hon Casey Costello, Minister for Seniors**

Hon Casey Costello is the Minister for Seniors and leads the delivery of the Better Later Life Strategy and Action Plan.

She brings a strong background in public service, having served 14 years with New Zealand Police and later becoming the first woman elected Vice-President of the Police Association. She has also held leadership roles in the private sector.

Minister Costello is focused on supporting people to live well as they age, and ensuring older New Zealanders are valued and respected. As Associate Health Minister, she is responsible for aged care and the Aged Care Ministerial Advisory Group, which is currently looking at the changes needed to build a sustainable care system that is easier for people to access and navigate.

### HAVING TROUBLE FALLING ASLEEP?

After reading the findings of a sleep expert, I decided to test this out.



You know that feeling of nodding off in the evening, can't keep your eyes open to watch the last bit of the program on tellie! It's been a long day, and you are quite tired, so you bustle round to get ready for bed. You climb in, lie down and turn off the light. Bliss – all snuggled down and comfy and relaxed but no! The feeling of being sleepy has disappeared and instead the mind is alert and full of the day's events, what will happen tomorrow and a myriad of other things. But don't worry there is a solution

The expert's advice is to pick a letter from the alphabet and think of all the words that start with that letter. It can be anything – a noun or a verb, a place or a feeling. The theory is that there is no emotional or personal attachment to a bunch of random words – bit like reading a dictionary or the phone book. This is only a method to help you fall asleep not stay asleep but if you wake in the night then this exercise ensures you fall asleep again more quickly. Just pick another letter each time.

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### GEN LESS

Since EECA (the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority) launched Gen Less, thousands of New Zealanders have joined us in taking simple, smart actions to save energy, money, and emissions. From today, we're bringing that same energy and inspiration together in one place at: **eeeca.govt.nz**

We know our community loves practical, energy related tips for households, businesses and on the road. We have been working hard to make sure our refreshed site runs smoothly and make it even easier for New Zealanders to find trusted advice, tools, and stories of Kiwi energy leadership.

We value the community that we have built through Gen Less, and we're looking forward to bringing you fresh advice, tools and insights for Kiwi households through our **Everyday Energy News**.

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## BLIND PEOPLE WERE ABLE TO READ AGAIN

*This week's good news roundup*



*'Revolutionary' implant enables blind people to see*

In a medical breakthrough that sounds like the stuff of science fiction, blind people have been able to read again thanks to a revolutionary eye implant.

The microchip was inserted under the retinas of 38 blind people as part of a landmark global study, the results of which were published this week. All those taking part had untreatable age-related macular degeneration, which is the leading cause of blindness for over-50s and affects some five million people worldwide. For 84% of participants, the device enabled them to see again.

"I was an avid bookworm, and I wanted that back," said Sheila Irvine (main image), who took part in the multi-country trial at London's Moorfields Eye Hospital. "It was dead exciting when I began seeing a letter. It's not simple, learning to read again, but the more hours I put in, the more I pick up. It's made a big difference. Reading takes you into another world, I'm definitely more optimistic now."

Designed by US-based Science Corporation, the chip is paired with a set of video recording glasses, which transmit live footage to a pocket computer that converts the footage into an electronic signal. This signal is then beamed to the chip, which sends it through the retinal and optical nerve cells and into the brain, where it is interpreted as vision.

"In the history of artificial vision, this represents a new era," said Mahi Muqit, senior vitreoretinal consultant at Moorfields. "[It has] has never been done before."

Ref: Positive News

## DON'T WASTE YOUR MONEY ON EXTENDED WARRANTIES

By Kate Harvey – Consumer NZ

**About seven out of 10 shoppers are still being offered an extended warranty at Apple Stores, Harvey Norman and Noel Leeming.**

While extended warranties promise to pay for repairs for a specified period after the manufacturer's warranty has expired, you're likely paying hundreds of dollars for protection you already have under consumer law.

Harvey Norman, Noel Leeming and Apple Stores – were the most likely to offer an extended warranty and only 2 to 3% of shoppers at the three big retailers were told by store staff what protection they already have under consumer law. Extended warranties may also be marketed as product care or damage protection plans.

### You're already covered

Under the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA), manufacturers and retailers are obliged to guarantee the products they sell are of an acceptable quality and fit for their purpose. Most appliances, certainly the big-ticket ones, can be expected to perform well for many years, not just the period covered by the manufacturer's warranty.

This means that if your product develops a fault when it's still reasonably new, you can have it repaired or, if that isn't possible, replaced – even if the manufacturer's warranty has expired.

If the fault is substantial, you can choose between a refund, repair or replacement.

Therefore, there's no value in having an extended warranty if the only thing it gives you is cover beyond the period of the manufacturer's warranty.

The extended warranty may cover accidental damage, but so does your home and contents policy – for example, your contents insurance should cover damage to computers and electronic appliances from power surges.

An extended warranty is worth considering if it goes beyond the protections provided by the CGA. An example would be if a warranty guarantees replacement with a new item if something goes wrong, rather than having to wait for repairs.

When selling you an extended warranty, the retailer should tell you the extra rights it gives you on top of the CGA.

## How special is your birthday, really?

Your birthday, your special day. But how special is it?

According to Reader's Digest, about 20.8 million people worldwide share the same day of their birthday, if not the precise day and year.

But that's actually an estimate. Seems no one has actually done the research.

However, we do know what are the 10 most common birthdays in the U.S. and all but one are in September, the most common birthday month.

The first top five are all in September. They are, in order starting with the number one most common birthday: 9, 19, 12, 17, and 19.

The sixth most common birthday is July 7.

The seventh through 10th most common birthdays are all in September: 20, 25, 16, and 18.



## Sweaters from seaweed?



A new effort to find a planet-friendly clothing material took a deep dive into fibers and landed on kelp.

Yes, that's seaweed and it has some things going for it. It's abundant. It grows back easily. It doesn't contain pesticides or fertilizers, and isn't infected by microplastics. Plus, when kelp is turned into fiber, it helps create a flame-resistant, biodegradable, non-toxic material.

The developer, Keel Labs, calls the kelp fiber kelsun and it has already partnered with Stella McCartney and Outerknown to release the clothes made of the fiber.

## Pets bonds: what's changed for renters

Good news for pet lovers who rent: new tenancy rules will give renters more certainty and confidence when thinking about bringing a pet into their home. In the new rules implemented on 1 December, landlords can still require written consent for a pet, but they can only decline a request for specific reasons based on practical factors – such as whether the home is suitable for the animal, or if local bylaws don't allow certain pets – rather than personal preference. Landlords will be able to request a pet bond of up to two weeks' rent, and may set reasonable conditions such as carpet cleaning at the end of the tenancy. This helps give landlords confidence while giving tenants more opportunity to enjoy the companionship of a pet.

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## SENIOR LIVING ALTERNATIVES

Once upon a time, the aim of almost every adult New Zealander was to own their own home on the traditional 'quarter acre section' and to remain in it as they aged. But those times have changed. Now, many retirees are exploring new concepts of home ownership, while others are choosing to be renters or to explore alternative models of housing.

If you're currently living in your family home, and are considering future proofing it, or if you're looking for a different living option, congratulations for being a realist. Many seniors make the mistake of assuming their current, unmodified home, will be adequate for them as they age, and if and when it no longer is, they will either make the modifications or move at the time.

But these options aren't necessarily realistic. Moving home isn't for the faint hearted, and it can be especially difficult for seniors who have half a lifetime of accumulated possessions to deal with, and less energy to do so. Modifications to a home take time, but these changes are often required immediately, and during a health crisis when you may not be well enough to project-manage them. As for moving to an aged residential care (ARC) facility, you may be waiting a long time for the opportunity. Statistics NZ tell us, in 2023, only 5% of seniors in the 65-84 age bracket were in ARC. While this may sound like good news, bear in mind many more seniors may wish to choose this option if it was available. However, spaces in ARC are limited, and the criteria for accessing a place can be stringent.

Fortunately, New Zealand has a number of home ownership options for seniors to consider. They include the more traditional concepts of modifying

a present home, down-sizing to a smaller property or buying into a retirement village situation. Even within the home 'ownership' category of living solutions, there are a significant number of alternatives. They include co-housing (where people own their own homes on communal land, and share a range of facilities), and unit title ownership (where you own a home on a site including other properties and legally manage the properties and grounds in tandem with other owners). Some seniors are choosing to move a tiny home onto a property they own or co-own with adult children, while others are living in a self-contained unit in a house which they jointly own with family.

Still, other homeowners own relocatable dwellings such as mobile-homes or caravans (which may or may not remain stationary). Home ownership aside, more seniors than ever are choosing to rent in retirement, a trend which is growing. In fact, a recent estimate by The Retirement Commission suggests "more than 600,000 New Zealanders aged 65 and over may be renting in the private rental sector by 2048, a 100% increase on 2022 levels." The private rental market is only one rental option, seniors are also renting from community providers such as councils, Kāinga Ora, and Māori based initiatives. Others are contributing to a family home where they live in an intergenerational setting, and some are 'flattening' with other seniors in a shared rental.

Housing options for seniors have never been more varied, but one thing is certain: there has never been a better time for considering your future home, than now!

Ref: *Grownups*

## BAN ON PLASTIC WET WIPES announced for England

England is to phase out the sale of wet wipes containing plastic, after the government signed legislation on Tuesday to tackle the stubborn and costly source of pollution. Plastic wet wipes have become a familiar blight. A recent beach survey showed an average of 20 wet wipes littering every 100 metres of beach across the UK. "This ban will put an end to plastic wet wipes which choke our sewers, litter our beaches and poison wildlife," said environment secretary Emma Reynolds. [Most wet wipes consist of viscose and polyester or polypropylene.]

Retailers have until spring 2027 to comply – a timeline campaigners said is too generous. What do French people use instead of baby wipes? French moms don't use baby wipes to change a diaper. They use a lotion made of all natural ingredients (primarily olive oil and lime water) that is applied on a cotton pad or a washcloth. This lotion is unique because it does not need to be rinsed off.

Ref: Positive News



# White Sparrow HOMES

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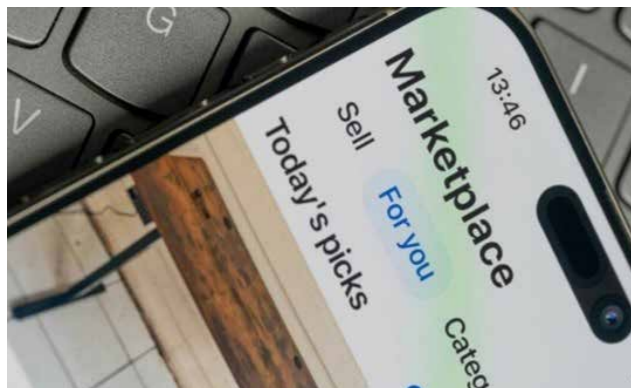
Christchurch is our home. We live here. We build here. We hire locally and work with tradespeople who take pride in their craft. For us, this isn't just a business. It's a way to improve our city, one home, one seller, one buyer at a time. Because every home has a story, and some just need the right people to help them fly again.



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## HOW TO STAY SAFE USING ONLINE MARKETPLACES

By Ruairi O'Shea | Investigative Writer – Consumer NZ



Trade Me and Facebook Marketplace are good, but these marketplaces are risky. Scams are common and your bank won't reimburse you if you're the victim of a scam that starts via an online marketplace.

Sellers often report thefts of items they've listed for sale and for both buyers and sellers, the information you provide to strangers increases your vulnerability to identity theft so it's not just money you could lose.

If an online marketplace provides a form of buyer protection, it's important to use it. Trade Me offers buyer protection on purchases made using its payment service, Ping, and those made using Afterpay. If your item doesn't turn up, isn't as described, or is damaged, you should be reimbursed.

Sellers on Trade Me can choose which payment methods they'll accept. That means sellers can refuse to take payments made through methods that offer buyer protection. Proceed carefully when transacting with a seller who places this restriction. And avoid sellers who only accept bank transfers – because if your item doesn't arrive, neither Trade Me nor your bank will reimburse you.

### Use PayPal when shopping on Facebook Marketplace

Facebook Marketplace offers forms of payment protection in other markets, but not in New Zealand. If you're making a purchase on Facebook Marketplace, using PayPal to make a payment can add a layer of protection. It's buyer protection policy covers you if you received a different item to the one you purchased, a counterfeit product, or

an item that has a defect that is not immediately obvious. The policy does not cover goods that you collect in person or arrange to be collected on your behalf and does not cover payments made using PayPal's "friends and family" functionality.

If you're looking to use PayPal's buyer protection, it's important to identify it as a "payment for goods and services". This will mean the seller will have to pay a fee – which they might want to pass onto you – but it means the payment will be protected.

PayPal's buyer protection has a lengthy list of terms, conditions, and exclusions and we recommend reading these fully before using the service.

Always scrutinise a user's profile for signs of a scam.

### On Trade Me you should:

- check the seller's feedback – if they have a low number of transactions, or all their feedback looks suspiciously similar, treat them with caution
- research the seller – search the seller's username and location to see if they link to an authentic digital footprint. Finding details about a seller, like where they work or have their headquarters, or whether they've featured in a local news story or event, can help give you peace of mind about their identity.

### On Facebook, be cautious if a profile:

- was created recently
- appears to be based overseas
- is locked or lacks personal information.

And as with Trade Me, look for more information about the user online to confirm you're dealing with a genuine person or business and **treat your information like your money. Be careful and think before you buy or sell.**

We'd recommend using PayPal's goods and services feature if you're using Facebook Marketplace like this. However, if a seller doesn't have PayPal and doesn't want to use it, your only option will be to pay by bank transfer without seeing the product in person.

**Don't risk big money on sight-unseen deals** so only go ahead if it's money you can accept losing, because you won't be reimbursed if something goes wrong. The advice is to not spend more than \$50 in this way.

To start with, take extra care with double-checking the seller's identity. If you have any suspicions, don't go through with the purchase.

# Supporting our seniors

## Your Christchurch Labour team



**Duncan Webb**

03 366 5519

MP for Christchurch Central

[f/DuncanWebbLabour](#)



**Megan Woods**

03 338 6347

MP for Wigram

[f/MeganWoodsWigram](#)



**Reuben Davidson**

03 382 0288

MP for Christchurch East

[f/ReubenDavidsonLabour](#)



**Tracey McLellan**

03 376 4512

List MP based in Banks Peninsula

[f/TraceyMcLellanLabour](#)



# Post Office Closures Undermine Access for Seniors

## Grey Power Sounds the Alarm



As NZ Post moves forward with plans to close more than 140 post office counters across the country, Grey Power is raising serious concerns about the impact on older New Zealanders — particularly those in rural and small-town communities.

In their public statements, NZ Post has claimed that, following the closures, the furthest distance any customer will need to travel to access postal services will be approximately 4 kilometres. However, Grey Power says that in practice, this is not always the case — and the reality is far more difficult for seniors living with limited transport options.

Grey Power National President Gayle Chambers voiced concern not only over the growing inconvenience but over the deeper implications of this nationwide downsizing:

“NZ Post quoted in their justification for closing yet another 140 post outlets that there would be an outlet, at the furthest away from the closure a 4 km distance. However, while being interviewed by Radio New Zealand a dairy owner in Paekākāriki who had their postal agency closed relayed that the next available outlet was Paraparaumu which is approximately 9 km’s by road. I predict that there will be no postal service in 10–15 years and this is just a start to the long line of closures that will continue.”

At the same time, banks are quietly reducing staffing levels and face-to-face services in rural branches — with many closing altogether or converting to “digital-only” services. Seniors, who often rely on

in-person support for financial transactions, are increasingly finding themselves disconnected, disadvantaged, and disempowered by decisions made without adequate community consultation.

Grey Power believes these closures are not just a matter of inconvenience — they pose a serious threat to seniors’ access to essential services, financial independence, and social inclusion.

The organisation urges NZ Post, banks, and central government to pause further cuts, reassess the true impact on communities, and develop a fairer, more inclusive plan for service delivery that respects the needs of older New Zealanders.

## NZ Post to shut 22 stores in city

NZ Post is closing 22 service counters in convenience stores, pharmacies and libraries across the city.

In Christchurch, the affected stores include:

Elmwood	Papanui
Greers Rd	Redwood
North Avon	Burwood Hospital
Forte in the central city	Dallington
Redcliffs	Wainoni
Aranui	Linwood
Woolston	Hillmorton
Hoon Hay	Opawa
Prebbleton	Hei Hei
Ilam	Templeton

and outlets at Christchurch Airport and Christchurch Hospital.

Outside the city, services will also be removed from NZ Post stores in:

Burnham, Ashburton’s Allenton Creek Road and Hampstead, Timaru’s Marchwiell and Washdyke as well as Pegasus and Woodend.

The closures follow an update to NZ Post’s deed of understanding with the government, resetting minimum post shop requirements for the first time since the 1980s.

NZ Post General Manager Consumer Sarah Sandoval said a review showed increased demand for parcel services. “A lot has changed since the 1980s, when our minimum store requirements were last set”.

Shingles: Potential protection with less side effects

## No jab? At risk of shingles? Shingles jab for 70 or older.

If you're 70 or older and haven't had a shingles or chickenpox vaccine, you may be able to join a clinical trial testing an investigational vaccine that may offer better protection with fewer side effects. Every eligible participant gets a vaccine and participation is free.

### Why take part?

- Help researchers develop better vaccine options to protect older adults
- Receive study-related medical care at no cost
- It costs nothing to take part; participants get reimbursed for time and travel (up to \$2850 NZD less tax)

This study is approved by Medsafe and HDEC.

Call 0800 73 73 27 ext 1 or Scan QR code



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Harvesting your homegrown vegetables and fruit, is one of life's pleasures. At this time of the year there will be plenty of choice, with both vegetables and fruits having ripened. Whilst enjoying this you need to think ahead to what cool season vegetables you will plant.

Broccoli, Bok choy, Cabbage, Spinach, Silverbeet and Lettuces are good choices along with seed sowing carrots, spring onions and radishes that will do well in the cooler weather. By planting one or two punnets at a time, you should get a continuous winter and spring feed. Brassicas are heavy feeders so put in compost and well-rotted animal manure. Water and mulch to keep the soil evenly moist.

As we head into the cooler months your vegetable garden has less plantings and a green manure crop could be a good option to replenish the soil and help keep the weeds down.

You can grow a green manure crop on any empty ground. Some crops have a turnaround from seed sowing to "dig into the soil" for as little as four to six weeks. It is important not to let your cover crop set to seed or it will become a weed in your garden.

When the plants are dug back into the soil they rot down and gradually releases the nutrients. Types of green manure crops are lupins, mustard, broad beans and buckwheat.

Herbs are a wonderful addition to your garden, varieties that do well in late summer are Coriander, Fennel, Parsley, Oregano, and Thyme.

**Spring flowering bulbs** are a popular topic for our gardening customers as we plant out gorgeous colourful varieties and beautifully scented flowering bulb now so we can enjoy them come, spring. You do not need a lot of room, a few bulbs in a pot can make a patio area more vibrant.

**Anemones, Ranunculus and Freesias.** These bulbs can all be planted either into pots or in garden beds. Plant Anemone corms with their points down Ranunculus with their claws down.

**Hyacinths,** we have single and double hyacinths. These can be planted in pots, glass jars and in garden beds.

**Freesias** always offer that amazing scent of Spring. They make a wonderful cut flower on single blooms that sit high on 40cm stems Easy to grow they thrive in sunny well drained positions.

**Tulips** give us a wonderful display in rich colour. These tulips flower brilliantly on approx. 40-50 cm stems making a great cut flower. They are easy to grow in a sunny well-drained position. Plant the bulbs in well-prepared soil, 6-8 cm deep and 10-15cm apart, ideally in bold clumps.

Always when planting add bulb food to give you stronger, healthier spring delights. Portstone also stocks Daffodils, Bluebells and Gladioli nanus. You can always contact us to see what we have in current stock.

Keep checking for insects on your **indoor plants.** Make sure plants have sufficient water and most plants love a mist of water to help humidify them. You could take all your plants outside on a rainy day and let the rain wash down the leaves giving them a drink at the same time. The plants will love that but do not leave them outside in the sun as they will burn very easily. Leave them in a shady spot to drain before bringing back inside. This is a good opportunity to spray for pest and feed as well.

New **Bone China cups** have arrived; these are very popular as the cups are good to drink from. They make lovely gifts. There are the favourite patterns back in stock, plus some new designs.

Remember our great offer at Portstone Garden Centre is 10% discount for Gold Card Holders on certain products. Please present your card at the beginning of the sale. We look forward to seeing you at Portstone soon.

## Cockroach to the rescue

If you've ever wondered what possible use cockroaches are, a German startup has the answer: Tiny spies.



SWARM Biotactics is seriously fitting Madagascar hissing cockroaches with a tiny backpack, according to CBS News.

The little critters, a creepy two to three inches long, can fit just about anywhere and with their tiny backpacks they could carry with them a camera, microphone or even radar. Of course, cockroaches tend to skitter where they want so the SWARM neuroscientists attach electrodes to the insect's antennae to nudge it in the right direction. That would be one cockroach -- or a swarm.

The scientists say reassuringly that there is no pain nor harm to the roaches.

They believe the roaches could easily be used in search and rescue operations, though there is no word as to whether people would want to be rescued by a Madagascar hissing cockroach.

## SHOP BY NUMBERS

To keep your supermarket bill as low as possible always check the "per gram, kilo, litre or each" which is in tiny writing on the price tags. It is the law now that these details are shown.

Just because one brand of a product is on sale does not always mean it is the cheapest. Just take the time to read the information on the tag. Most household items, such as cleaning products, have 'per litre or gram' and it often makes for very interesting reading.

### For example:

Cakes of soap – Protex \$2/100g  
Palmolive \$1.44/100g  
Dove \$2.20/100g

Eggs range from .86c each to \$1.13 each

Ice cream 2L tubs - 0.28c/100ml  
0.32/100ml  
0.40c/100ml

Fruit – Bananas - .91c each  
Mandarins \$1.16ea  
Avo \$1.89ea  
Kiwifruit \$2.25ea

Punnets – Blueberries \$5.50 but \$44/1kg  
Grapes \$9.90 but \$19.80/1kg  
Cherries \$7.50 but \$18.75/1kg  
Strawberries \$3.60 but 14.40/1kg

It can be an eye opener as to the real cost of things and can help keep the cost at the checkout down a bit.



Portstone Garden Centre, 465 Ferry Road (under the gum tree)  
389 4352 | [www.portstone.co.nz](http://www.portstone.co.nz)

## Protect your family assets

Trusts are a great option for protecting family assets, but they can be complicated and risky if set up incorrectly or managed improperly.

If you'd like some practical and independent advice, please get in touch. [www.tp.co.nz](http://www.tp.co.nz)



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# Christchurch City Mission

Te Whare Mīhana Ki Ōtautahi  
by Ewan Sargent

We can be so proud of ourselves in the way the city and region lifted its support to struggling families through our work over Christmas. It was an amazing response to need and a beautiful thing to see.

Quite understandably it feels like the job is done and it's time to relax and enjoy summer. And of course we wish a wonderful summer for everyone. But just as life has a way of carrying on, so does stress and debt.

Sadly it's in the post-Christmas and early New Year period when those problems can play out again in a major way.

It's something a lot of people probably don't realise – that once the big push to help at Christmas has passed the hardship in our community remains. The family with empty cupboards in December who needed our help with a Christmas food parcel and presents for the kids, is still in trouble in January and February.

After their Christmas food parcel has gone they are

immediately back to facing the choice of paying bills or buying food. But now all the kids are at home and they are hungry.

And often the trouble will be even deeper if the family went further into debt to keep up appearances when getting through Christmas.

We are a 365 day a year 24/7 operation for some of our services at the City Mission and open all days except public holidays for most of the other services and that's because we know the need never stops. It's why we know January and February can be so difficult even when the summer sun is shining.

One group of people whose problems actively get worse in the New Year are those who are battling addiction to either alcohol and/or drugs. Christmas with all its partying, drinking and stress can be so overwhelming to them and the temptation so difficult to avoid that they park the battle and come back to it in the New Year with remorse and new resolutions. That's why our addiction counsellors see a spike in demand early in the year and know it will be coming.

Recently we have been acknowledging the difficulties for people in the period after the big Christmas effort and a number of our supporters have been happy to target their donations to get behind the work needed in the New Year. We are so thankful for that.

**People and families facing hardship don't get a summer break and we will always be where we are needed.**



[www.citymission.org.nz](http://www.citymission.org.nz) | [www.facebook.com/ChristchurchCityMission](https://www.facebook.com/ChristchurchCityMission)

## CHEESY VEGETABLE RAMEKINS

Somewhere between an individual soufflé and a quiche, these are a delicious way to jazz up leftover cooked vegetables.

**Serves 1 - Preparation Time 25 Minutes**

### Ingredients

- Eggs, beaten – allow one per ramekin
- Breadcrumbs – allow ½ slice of bread per ramekin
- Grated cheese (any kind) – allow 1 tbsp per ramekin
- Left-over cooked vegetables, finely chopped – allow 1 tablespoon per ramekin (see note)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Herbs (optional) – allow a pinch of dried herbs per ramekin or about a teaspoon of very finely chopped fresh herbs

### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Using a food processor, whizz the bread into crumbs. Add the cooked vegetables and whizz again – it should take only a second or so to shred the vegetables finely – you're not aiming to make a paste.
3. Transfer the mixture to a bowl, season, and stir in the eggs and cheese, and fresh or dried herbs if you're using any.
4. Grease the ramekins very thoroughly. Fill the ramekins with the mixture, allowing about half a centimetre at the top for them to rise.
5. Place them on a baking tray (they're less likely to tip over this way, and the tray will also catch any spillage) and bake for 15-20 minutes until risen and golden.



## Lemon and vanilla cheesecake



Healthy Food Guide makeover to produce a lower calorie and lower saturated fat version.

**Serves: 8 Time to make: 1 hr 15 mins**

### Ingredients

- 250g (1 tub) ricotta
- 400g (2 tubs) quarg
- ½ cup castor sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- zest and juice of lemon (or less to taste)
- 2 eggs
- 150g low-fat biscuits, crushed into crumbs (we used Vitalife digestives)
- 50g reduced-fat spread, melted
- 300g berries, frozen or fresh
- 2 tablespoons sugar

### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 150°C. Combine the biscuit crumbs and butter in a bowl and mix together. Press the mixture into the bottom of your pan and set aside.
2. Mix the ricotta, quarg, eggs, sugar and vanilla in a large bowl with a hand-held kitchen mixer. When well mixed, add the lemon zest and juice. Pour the mixture into your tin and place in the oven. Cook for 30-40 minutes for a large cheesecake, or 20-25 minutes for small. Turn the oven off and leave the cheesecake in the oven until completely cold (this stops the top cracking).
3. To make the topping, put the berries in a bowl and sprinkle the sugar over the top. Set aside for 30 minutes or so. The juice should run out of the berries as the sugar dissolves. Take half the berries and push through a sieve to make a smooth sauce. Or, if you're okay with seeds, just blend for a minute or so.
4. To assemble, pile the whole berries on top of the cheesecake and spoon the sauce over the top.

*Quarg is a fresh soft cheese related to yoghurt, cream cheese and cottage cheese, with the consistency of a spreadable paste. It has less butterfat than cream cheese but more than yoghurt and cottage cheese, so it's useful in desserts in the place of cream cheese.*

# JOINT PAIN OR OSTEOARTHRITIS? WHY EXERCISE SHOULD BE YOUR FIRST LINE OF TREATMENT

Author Clodagh Toomey Physiotherapist and Associate Professor, School of Allied Health, University of Limerick- Analysis of 31,276 patients with hip and knee osteoarthritis.

Stiff knees, aching hips and the slow grind of chronic joint pain are often accepted as an unavoidable part of getting older. But while osteoarthritis is the world's most common joint disease, experts say the way we treat and prevent it is badly out of step with the evidence.

The best medicine isn't found in a pill bottle or an operating theatre – it's movement. Yet across countries and health systems, too few patients are being guided toward the one therapy proven to protect their joints and ease their pain: exercise.

Exercise is one of the most effective treatments for chronic, disabling joint conditions such as osteoarthritis. Yet very few patients actually receive it.

Research across health systems in Ireland, the UK, Norway and the United States shows the same pattern: fewer than half of people with osteoarthritis are referred to exercise or physiotherapy by their primary care provider. More than 60% are given treatments that guidelines do not recommend, and around 40% are sent to a surgeon before non-surgical options have even been tried.

To understand why those figures are so troubling, it helps to understand what exercise does for joints. Osteoarthritis is by far the most common form of arthritis, already affecting more than 595 million people worldwide.

According to a global study in The Lancet, that number could approach one billion by 2050. Longer life expectancy, increasingly sedentary lifestyles and rising numbers of overweight or obese people are driving the trend.

Yet people who exercise regularly are physically and biologically protecting themselves from developing the disease and from suffering its worst effects.

The cartilage that covers the ends of our bones is a tough, protective layer with no blood supply of its own. It relies on movement.



Like a sponge, cartilage is compressed when we walk or load a joint, squeezing fluid out and then drawing fresh nutrients back in. Each step allows nutrients and natural lubricants to circulate and maintain joint health.

That is why the old idea of osteoarthritis as simple “wear and tear” is misleading. Joints are not car tyres that inevitably grind down.

Osteoarthritis is better understood as a long process of wear and repair in which regular movement and exercise are critical to healing and to the health of the entire joint.

## A disease of the whole joint

We now know osteoarthritis is a whole-joint disease. It affects the joint fluid, the underlying bone, the ligaments, the surrounding muscles and even the nerves that support movement.

Therapeutic exercise targets all these elements. Muscle weakness, for instance, is one of the earliest signs of osteoarthritis and can be improved

with resistance training. There is strong evidence that muscle weakness increases the risk of both developing the disease and seeing it progress.

Nerve and muscle control can also be trained through neuromuscular exercise programmes such as GLA:D® (Good Life with osteoArthritis: Denmark) for hip and knee osteoarthritis. Usually delivered in supervised group sessions by physiotherapists, these programmes focus on movement quality, balance and strength to improve joint stability and rebuild confidence.

Significant improvements in pain, joint function and quality of life have been recorded for up to 12 months after completing the programme.

Exercise is good medicine for the whole body: it has documented benefits across more than 26 chronic diseases. In osteoarthritis, it helps not only by strengthening cartilage and muscle but also by tackling the inflammation, metabolic changes and hormonal shifts that drive the disease.

Obesity is a major risk factor for osteoarthritis, and not merely because of the extra mechanical load on joints. High levels of inflammatory molecules in the blood and in joint tissues can degrade cartilage and accelerate disease.

For osteoarthritis, regular activity can counter this at a molecular level, lowering inflammatory markers, limiting cell damage and even altering gene expression.

### Exercise first, surgery later

Currently there are no drugs that modify the course of osteoarthritis. Joint replacement surgery can be life-changing for some people, but it is major surgery and does not succeed for everyone.

Exercise should be tried first and continued throughout every stage of the disease. It carries far fewer side effects and brings many additional health benefits.

Osteoarthritis is not simply a matter of “worn out” joints. It is shaped by muscle strength, inflammation, metabolism and lifestyle.

Regular, targeted exercise addresses many of these factors at once – helping to protect cartilage, strengthen the whole joint and improve overall health. Before considering surgery, movement itself remains one of the most powerful treatments we have.

Ref: The Conversation – Oct 2025

## WHAT CAN I DO IF MY GP (Doctor) WON'T RENEW MY LICENCE?

Some members have asked that if their GP gives them a mandatory cognitive test which they fail, and refuses to give them a medical certificate, can they appeal?

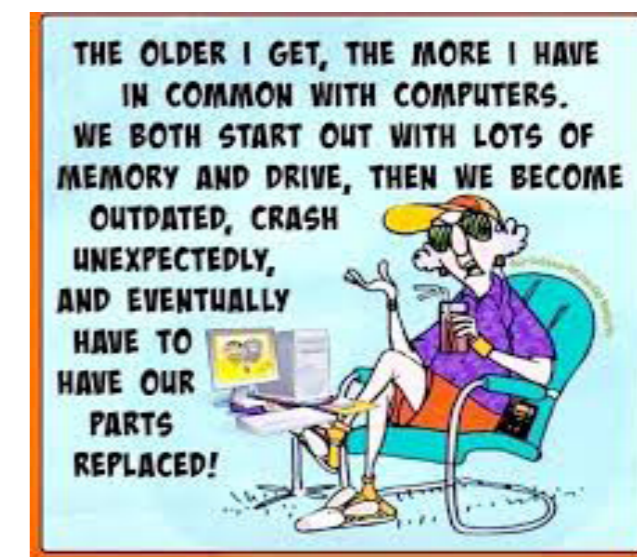
After consulting with NZTA, the short answer is that the legislation does not provide an appeal to NZTA. However, just like with any medical opinion, a driver who is not issued a medical certificate for licence renewal is able to advise their GP that they will seek another medical opinion. Should the driver be issued a Medical Certificate by the second GP, they can take it to a Driver Licensing Agent (e.g. AA, VVTNZ) and there will be a referral to the NZTA Driver Safety (Medical) Team prior to a final decision being made.

An alternative approach for someone failed with the cognitive test is to request if they can resit the test at a later date, or if they could be referred for an On Road Safety Test which is free of charge for those aged 75 or over. An alternative is a referral to an Occupational Therapist, but the cost is likely to be between \$800 and \$1500.

Since some of these processes take time, we encourage our members to start preparing for their licence renewal well in advance of their qualifying birthday – NZTA are reminding licence holders that the rules allow licence renewal up to 6 months prior to your birthday.

*David Marshall*

National Vice-President Grey Power NZ Fed Inc



# ABOUT GREY POWER

For those of you who are not Grey Power members, you may wonder how we started and what our purpose is. SO:

Way back in 1986 people retired at 60 and the government were urging people to put away extra savings for their retirement – which a lot did. Suddenly the government announced that there would be a tax on those savings when they retired. I remember because it adversely affected my parents. There was an enormous outcry with the overall feeling of unfairness and of being duped. In Auckland, huge numbers of those affected took to the streets in protest, meetings were called and ministers taken to task.

Needless to say, because of the relentless pressure by a group called The Auckland Superannuants Association, the surcharge/tax was repealed. Out of that fight for justice an organisation called Grey Power [GP] was formed. The success of that group made other people around New Zealand feel that there ought to be similar groups and ever since then, 70+ Grey Power Associations have kept a watching brief on laws and policies that may be detrimental to older citizens, and to protect the National Superannuation.

Over the last 39 years there have been many gains when GP has singly or with other organisations, established better policies and conditions for retirees and also those nearing that age. An array of health issues and benefits have been achieved

such as free prescriptions, free vaccinations for shingles, influenza, extended the age for free screening, reduced doctors' fees and more.

A major milestone was working together with Winston Peters to establish a fully funded Super Gold Card. We keep lobbying to make sure the funding for this continues and it has become the most widely used discount card for seniors. Issues that we are working on and putting in submissions – driver licence test for 75+, age care provisions, review of the Retirement Village Act '03, the Therapeutics Bill and many others. We advocate on the cost of living so those who are reliant on National Super are able to live their later lives with dignity. Also to increase the accommodation supplement, increase the cash asset allowance and reduce the tax to zero on the first \$10k.

When you join Grey Power, you join a body of some 45,000 people who want fairness, well-being and dignity for all of us as we age. GP is now made up of 70+ autonomous associations throughout NZ run entirely by volunteers and they are all overseen by a Federation body with a Board of volunteers who are tasked with travelling to Parliament to meet with ministers and other influential people or groups. Part of your membership fee goes directly to the Federation to help pay for travel and other expenses.

**Our purpose is to make the wider community aware of the value of older people and their importance in society as a whole, to educate and inform organisations, institutions, other bodies and the public of the needs of the older person and their ability to contribute to the community, and to cooperate with any other organisation carrying out charitable work similar to that of Grey Power.**

*Courtesy of Manawatu Assn*

**THE DEPARTING AGED CARE COMMISSIONER** says the government does not have a proper plan for the health of our ageing population despite data showing that in three years, there will be 1 million people aged 65 years or older living in New Zealand. Carolyn Cooper finished her job at the end of August 2025 - three and a half years into a five year term, in which she has been outspoken about the need for better aged care beds for older people, particularly in rural and provincial New Zealand. She's also drawn attention to the workforce shortages in aged care, long wait times for older people seeing GPs and a lack of home and community support services.

[Grey Power is eagerly awaiting to hear who her replacement will be as the board has worked closely with the Commissioner in the past.]



## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Our advertisers support helps to enable the continuation of our newsletter. Please support them where you can and let them know where you found them.

*Many thanks*

If you have any thing you would like to put in the magazine maybe a joke or a recipe or something that concerns you please get hold of Maureen on 942 8816 or email: nanachooksboyz@gmail.com

Other peoples opinions do help us so feel free to contact us *Thanks*



## Social Afternoons Superannuitants' and Friends

Meetings will be held at St Martins Church Hall, 50 Lincoln Road. Start Time: 1.00pm

**18th February:** Resonate Health | Aroha

**18th March:** Pip, Customer Service Officer  
Inland Revenue | Allan Barron

**15th April:** Minister for Seniors | Afternoon Tea

If for any reason there are any changes please message Ann 027 482 1706 (text only please) or email joannferrari@gmail.com

*Hope to see you all there*

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

Name:..... Membership Number:.....

Address: .....

Post Code: ..... Phone Number: .....

Email:.....

**I/We enclose my/our subscription for the year 1/4/2026 to 31/3/2027**

Single (\$25)  Double (\$35)  Renewal  New  Donation

**Payable by Cash to Grey Power Christchurch**

**or pay by Internet Banking  to Westpac A/C 03-0854-0652512-00**

**Account name: Greypower Christchurch Superannuitants Association**

Please use **Name** and **Membership Number** or **post completed Membership Form to the**

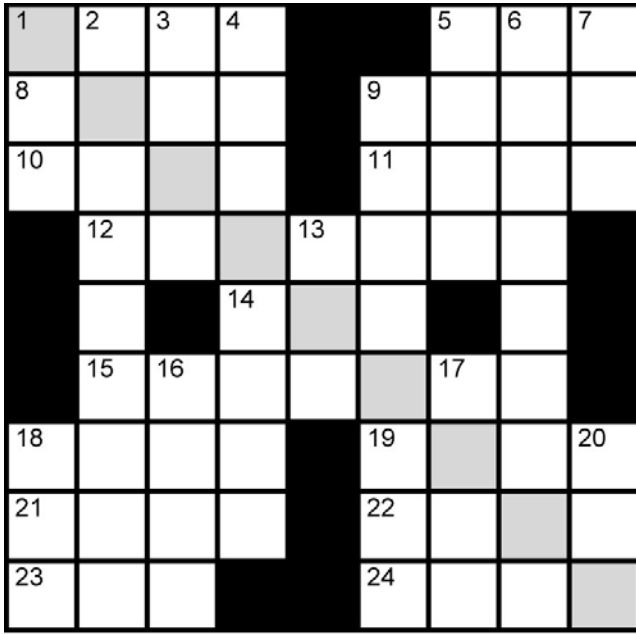
**Membership Secretary**

I agree the information provided herewith may be used by Grey Power Federation and/or their commercial agreement partners. Yes  No

**Signature:** .....

**Send subscription to: Membership Secretary, PO Box 15051, Aranui, Christchurch 8643**

# Quick Pic

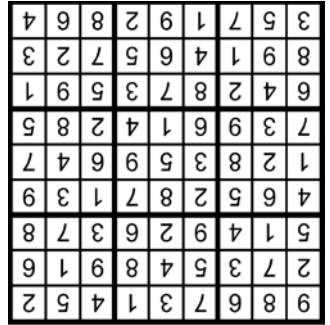
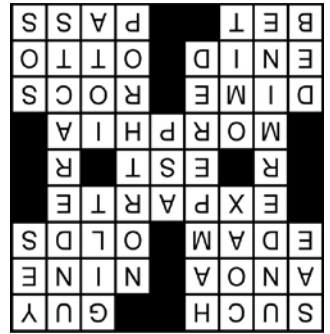


- Across**
- 1. Similar
  - 5. Chap
  - 8. Celebes ox
  - 9. Opening time, maybe
  - 10. \_\_\_ cheese
  - 11. Cutlass, e.g.
  - 12. From one side only
  - 14. "C' \_\_\_ la vie!"
  - 15. Narcotic

- 18. Kind of store
- 19. Enormous birds of myth
- 21. "Idylls of the King" character
- 22. "Beetle Bailey" dog
- 23. "Wanna \_\_\_?"
- 24. Hail Mary, e.g.

**Down**

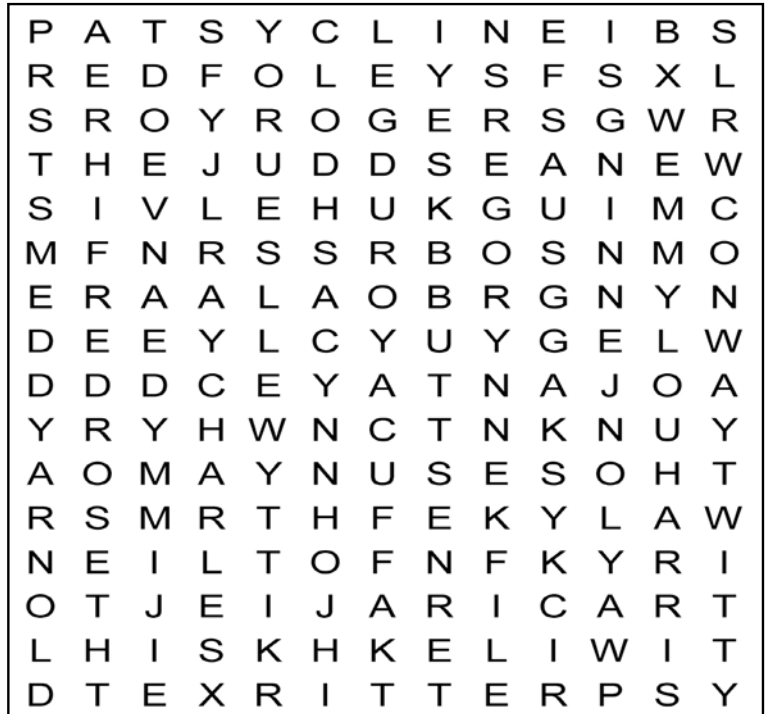
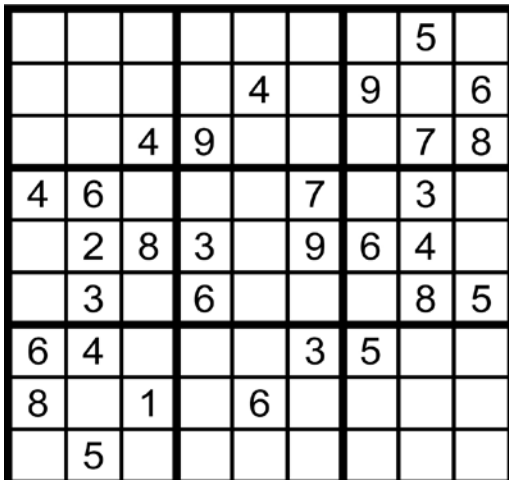
- 1. Ed.'s request
- 2. Sabotage
- 3. Cajole
- 4. Impeded
- 5. Gold-plated
- 6. Restrained stage performances
- 7. "Absolutely!"
- 9. A chemistry Nobel: 1946
- 13. Death on the Nile cause, perhaps
- 16. Leave out
- 17. Bit
- 18. Center of a ball?
- 20. "Help!"



*The crossword headline is a clue to the answer in the shaded diagonal*

- CONWAY TWITTY
- EDDY ARNOLD
- ELVIS
- EMMYLOU HARRIS
- ERNEST TUBB
- FRED ROSE
- HANK SNOW
- JIMMY DEAN
- JOHNNY CASH
- KENNY ROGERS
- KITTY WELLS
- PATSY CLINE
- RAY CHARLES
- RED FOLEY
- RICKY SKAGGS
- ROY ACUFF
- ROY CLARK
- ROY ROGERS
- TEX RITTER
- THE JUDDS
- WAYLON JENNINGS

## SUDOKU



*How to solve sudoku puzzles:* No math is required to solve a sudoku. You only need logic and patience. Simply make sure that each 3x3 square region has only one instance of the numbers 1-9. Similarly, each number can only appear once in a column or row in the larger grid. The difficulty on this puzzle is easy.

## Country Singers