



SNIPPETS

March 2014 Edition 147

Seniors Enquiry Line
*Linking Seniors with
Community Information*

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Joke for the Month

If I had been around when Rubens was painting, I would have been revered as a fabulous model. Kate Moss? Well, she would have been the paintbrush.

~ Dawn French

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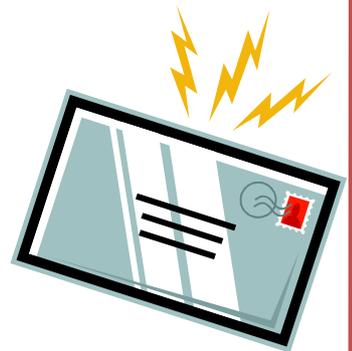
Seniors Enquiry Line is an information and referral service for Queensland seniors, proudly sponsored by the Queensland Government Department of Communities and operated by UnitingCare Community.

Postage Price Changes

Postal charges are likely to increase from 31st March, depending on government approval which is expected this month.

The cost of the basic postage rate will be 70 cents, up from 60 cents. There will also be increases to costs of other services such as domestic parcels, prepaid envelopes and mail redirection or mail hold.

Pensioners will still be able to get discounted mail redirection and mail hold (around half price). See your local post office for details.



Centrelink Increases - March 2014

Pensions: From 20th March, due to the consumer price index increase, there will be an increase in payments for pensioners who receive the Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment and Veterans' income support.

Single pensioners on full pensions will receive an extra \$15.70 per fortnight (to a total of \$842.80), while pensioner couples will receive an extra \$23.80 per fortnight for full pensions (to a total of \$635.30 for each member of the couple).

Allowances: Those people who receive a Newstart Allowance, Sickness Allowance, Widow Allowance or Partner Allowance may be able to keep more of the money that they earn because the income-free area will increase from \$62 to \$100 per fortnight.



The income-free area is the amount of income you can earn up to before your payment gets reduced. The new thresholds will be automatically applied to payments from 20 March 2014.

What's On

Seniors Health and Lifestyle Expo – Gold Coast

20th March 9.00am to 1.00pm

Free expo with advice, information and displays for seniors. Free eyesight and hearing checks.

Venue: Share N Care Centre, Tenth Ave, Palm Beach.

Web: www.goldcoastseniorshealthandlifestyleexpos.com

Phone: 07 5525 0512 or 0409 277 430

Retirement Villages – Cotton Tree

11th March 1:00pm – 3:30pm

A session on legal options for villages: forms of tenure, fees, distinctions between Retirement Villages and Manufactured Park Homes, etc. Cost: free.

Venue: Maroochydore Library, 44 Sixth Ave, Cotton Tree

Phone: 1300 542 727

Cyclones of North Qld - Townsville

1st March – 31st March 9:30am – 5.00pm

'Come Hell or High Water' is an exhibition about how cyclones have shaped the lives of North Queenslanders. Cost: \$15 adult, \$11 conc (cheaper for local residents).

Venue: Museum of Tropical Queensland,
70-102 Flinders St, Townsville

Phone: 07 4726 0604

Other events on Seniors Enquiry Line's 'Events'

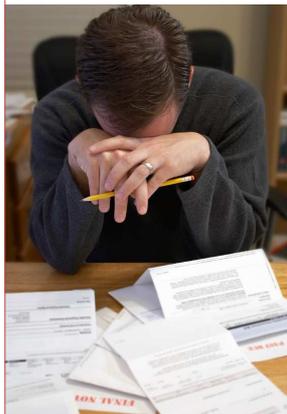
pages include: Learn to use an iPad – Beerwah, Tai Chi for Arthritis Classes – Maroochydore, Calendar Girls – Ayr, Opera in the Gardens – Mt Coot-tha, Celebration of Islamic Culture – Logan, Oakey Show.

Financial Problems?

Be very careful how you get help if you have financial problems. New companies have been set up to profit from the rising number of Australians in financial distress, according to Financial Counselling Australia.

If you are in financial distress, rather than paying a company to manage your debt, it is better to first call a free financial counsellor. Financial counsellors are non-judgmental, trained professionals who can provide information, support and advocacy to people in financial difficulty. Their services are free, independent & confidential.

Contact Financial Counselling Australia on 1800 007 007 to talk through your options.



Enduring Power of Attorney

You may not always be able to make decisions when you need to, due to illness, an accident, dementia etc. An enduring power of attorney is an important legal document which gives someone else the power to make personal or financial decisions on your behalf.

To make an enduring power of attorney (EPA) you must be an adult capable of making your own personal and financial decisions, and able to understand the nature and effect of an EPA.

Choose your attorney extremely carefully, as decisions they make will have the same legal force as if you had made them yourself. An attorney is personally accountable for their actions: if your attorney mismanages your affairs, whether deliberately or by negligence, they can be held liable for their actions. This can include court proceedings to recover money, and even criminal charges.

It is important to remember that an EPA is legally effective from the moment that you sign it, unless restricted by you e.g. you can specify that it becomes effective only when you lose capacity.

An EPA can be organised through the Public Trustee (cost is currently \$166.60) or a solicitor. It is possible to organise an EPA yourself, although you may wish to discuss it with a solicitor or the Public Trustee. Forms are available from larger newsagents or can be downloaded from www.justice.qld.gov.au (type 'enduring' in the top right search box, and follow the links). A long form is needed if you wish to have one attorney for financial decisions, and a different one for personal decisions; the short form is used where the attorney makes both financial & personal decisions.

For more information you can contact the Public Trustee on 1300 36 00 44 or go to www.pt.qld.gov.au Otherwise, staff at Seniors Enquiry Line can provide some further information: phone 1300 135 500.

Anxiety Online Resource

An online resource has been developed by the Jean Hailes Organisation to help women understand and manage anxiety and worries.

With 1 in 3 women in Australia experiencing an anxiety disorder in their lifetime, it is hoped that this new website will guide women through the stages of anxiety with easy to understand information, self-assessment and self-management tools, videos with experts and podcast stories from real women.

The resource is at <http://anxiety.jeanhailes.org.au>