



Inside this issue:

BUDGET & SENIORS	p. 1
EVENTS CALENDARS	p. 2
TECHNOLOGY HINTS	p. 2
SENIORS EVENTS	p. 2
CONTACT US	p. 3

May—July 2009 Electronic Newsletter

From the Editor:

Social issues—The aim of this newsletter is to provide seniors and seniors peak bodies with a brief overview of the most recent issues and perspectives raised and expressed on matters relevant to seniors.

Events—In addition, the newsletter flags important events that will be taking place and we will also report to you on some of those events.

Technology—The electronic form of the newsletter allows us to point you to online resources which are likely to inspire you or make your life easier. Enjoy.

Other news, tips and your views—We always welcome your comments. Please send them to newsletter@senioreventscalendar.com.au. We will publish most interesting posts.

The Budget

Kevin Rudd — (Ref. [Information Booklet](#))

- **Context** — Increasing longevity means that more people are receiving the Age Pension and for far longer periods than in the past.
- **Objective** — to simplify and boost the pension system. The Government will also change the pension income test eligibility rules to ensure the largest pension increases are targeted to those who need them most.
- **Pension rise** — From 20 September 2009, the maximum assistance for single pensioners will increase from around \$304.19 per week to \$336.68 per week and for pensioner couples from around \$497.36 per week to \$507.50 per week. The existing Goods and Services Tax Supplement, Pharmaceutical Allowance, Utilities Allowance, Telephone Allowance (at the higher internet rate), and increased assistance of \$2.49 per week for singles and \$10.14 per week for couples combined will be included in the new fortnightly Pension Supplement
- **Residential Aged Care**—Of the \$32.49 per week increase in the single base pension, \$22.40 per week will flow to the residential aged care provider and \$10.09 will flow to the pensioner. Those **self-funded retirees** in residential aged care on 19 September 2009 will have their existing fee levels protected until they leave. Those that enter aged care after this date will have any cost increase phased in over four years.
- **Concerns** — The Government is aware, it has taken a series of tough decisions to ensure the pension system remains sustainable in the long term, including: progressively increasing the Age Pension qualifying age to 67 years from 2017 and supporting ongoing workforce participation by age pensioners by introducing a Work Bonus which treats earned income more generously. The **Service Pension** qualifying age will remain at the current level of 60 for men. For women it is already progressively increasing to 60 by 1 January 2014. The Government has also decided to close the Pension Bonus Scheme to new entrants from 20 September 2009. [Click HERE for more on pension eligibility & more](#)

Comments on the Budget

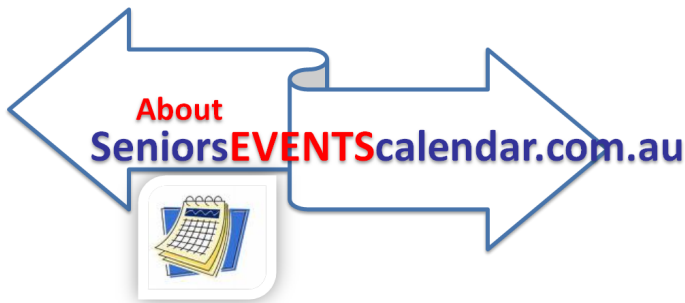
Minister for Ageing — “The 2009-10 Budget continues the Rudd Government’s support for aged and community care, focusing on supporting all older Australians, including those in rural and remote areas” (Ref. [The Hon. J. Elliot’s website](#)).

COTA Over 50s — “The government has delivered on the long standing calls by COTA and other seniors’ organisations for the single pension to be increased to two thirds the couple rate” (Ref. [Press release](#)).

National Seniors — “The government has delivered on its promise to provide help for pensioners struggling to meet increases in living costs” (Ref. [Press release](#)).

Independent Retirees — “It is apparent that the Government has listened to the voices of self-funded retirees to date, [...] while this sector continues to experience the negative effect of the global financial crisis [...]” (Ref. [Press release](#)).

Superannuants — “The Federal Government has failed to deliver its Commonwealth **Dental Health Program** announced in last year’s budget, and there’s no clear push to improve the dismal state of public dental services in this budget. Consequently, the status quo that sees people on very low incomes forced into the expensive private system or wait years for public treatment, remains”. “**Raising the age pension age** is unacceptable and will only increase poverty among people aged over 65 when it comes into effect”. (Ref. [Press release](#)).



- **What events can you find in the Calendar?**

The events may range from community conferences to local afternoon teas for seniors, to announcements of emergency meetings and so on.

- **What makes the Calendar unique and useful?**

The Calendar provides a central, universally-accessible, place which, ideally, would list all seniors events in Australia, thus obviating the drudgery of having to search through the many community websites which exist – and also to facilitate serendipitous discovery of community activities. The calendar is not intended to replace the current information channels, but is meant to enrich them.

[Finding Events—Click for a demonstration video](#)

See also <http://communityEVENTScalendar.com.au>



Our Technology Hints

If you need intellectual stimulation, entertain your grandchildren, or simply catch up on your favourite radio or TV programs, we invite you to explore

<http://broadbandforseniors.com.au> . Visit the site and keep clicking. Some practical advice:

- **Google TALK** — If you are tired of typing your emails and wish you could just TALK to your addressees, wait no more! Google created Google Talk and, once you have an account on Google, you can start sending voice emails.
- **What you need** — Provided your computer has a mike and it is turned on, sending emails was never easier. We have created a simple video taking you through the steps of creating your own Google account and, subsequently, downloading the Google Talk program on your computer and using it to TALK. The best thing is, your addressees don't have to have a Google account in order to receive your Google Talk messages.
- [Click HERE](#) for a link on creating a Google account.
- And [Click HERE](#) for a link on how to download and use Goggle TALK. Have fun.

- **Purpose of the Calendar**

The Seniors Events Calendar was constructed to inform and connect. It provides individuals and organisations with a simple way to reach out to the community and, as a consequence, enable people to have a quick and clear way of identifying relevant events in their neighbourhood or around Australia.

- **Benefits**

The calendar of events is self-managing. The owners of events enter the information themselves, determine the look of each entry and decide when an event is to be made public.

- The calendar gives individuals and organisations the capacity to insert for themselves events into a single national website. This, in turn, should increase the visibility of those events and therefore the visibility of local branches, organisations and associations which often lack the computer power or the IT Know-How to use the Internet. To assist this process, add a link to the Calendar on your own website.

Community Board Seniors Events in May and June

- **21-22 May** — ITAC 2009 - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN AGED CARE Sustaining Quality Through eCare
- **28th May**—COTA Over 50s' National Forum — *Social Inclusion by Design*.





Contact us

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- Contact us, if you need help with our calendars. Our Team is always ready to help.
- Also, refer to the Help Files created on the Calendar websites.
- If you would like to send a report about your events, we will be happy to publish it.

