



adding life to your years



The fast track to a life well lived is feeling grateful.

David DeSteno



HEALTH

DIET COOLDRINKS - Potential side effects

Free of calories, carbs, and sugar, diet soda may seem like a healthy and refreshing alternative to sugary soft drinks but **drinking too much** diet soda may be linked to several side effects and affect both long- and short-term health. Here are 8 possible side effects of diet soda, plus some easy ways to reduce your intake.

1. Could disrupt gut health

Some small studies in humans and animals suggest that artificial sweeteners could negatively affect gut health, but more research is needed.

2. Erodes tooth enamel

Acidic drinks, including regular and diet soda, may damage and erode tooth enamel.

3. May cause headaches

Consuming high amounts of aspartame and caffeine could cause headaches for some people.

4. Could decrease bone density

Some studies show that drinking diet soda could be associated with decreased bone density and an increased risk of fractures, possibly due to its phosphoric acid and caffeine content.

5. May affect heart health

Some studies have linked diet soda intake to a higher risk of heart disease, stroke, and metabolic syndrome. However, more research is needed.

6. Might be associated with sugar cravings

Drinking diet soda might be related to sugar cravings. However, studies on the effects of diet soda and artificial sweeteners on body weight have found mixed results, so more research is needed.

7. Might be related to weight gain

One study in 749 older adults found that those who consumed diet soda regularly tended to have greater increases in belly fat over a 9-year period, compared with people who didn't regularly consume diet soda (32Trusted Source). Much more research is needed to explore how drinking diet soda might be related to body weight.

8. May be linked to type 2 diabetes

Although research is inconsistent and more research is needed, some studies show that consuming diet soda and artificial sweeteners may be associated with a higher risk of type 2 diabetes and insulin resistance.

[8 Potential Side Effects of Consuming Too Much Diet Soda \(healthline.com\)](https://www.healthline.com/health/diet-soda-side-effects)

ANTIBIOTICS CONFUSION

There is a crucial need to educate older people about the use of antibiotics, according to a recent paper that found that a sizable minority misuse the medications.

The information comes from a survey of more than 2,200 adults ages 50 to 80 that was part of the University of Michigan's National Poll on Healthy Aging, sponsored by AARP. Researchers found:

- ▶ Nearly 13 percent of those with antibiotic prescriptions stopped taking the drug before finishing the course.
- ▶ 34 percent wrongly believe antibiotics can be used to treat a cold or the flu.
- ▶ More than half of those who reported having "leftover" antibiotics used to treat an earlier ailment, took the old drugs to treat a subsequent ailment.
- ▶ About 1 in 5 have used antibiotics without consulting a doctor or pharmacist.

AARP Bulletin May 2021

POST COVID VISITS

I thought these would be useful, Ray.

NEW RULES

Set ground rules ahead of time so there can be no misunderstanding.

- Do we hug? Wear masks? Go to restaurants? Invite others over?
- Bring our own towels? Drive to places together?
- Don't spark debates or arguments. Make your time together personal and fun; make laughter the goal. It's not your job to convince anyone to embrace your point of view.

- Let there be spaces in your togetherness. Plan time on your own. Take a walk, read a book, take a nap, shop for the dinner groceries.
- Above all, keep it short. For now, a two-night visit should be your maximum, even with a cherished, long-time friend.
- Common sense: Bring a gift, help with meals, clean up after yourself, and write a thank-you note.

AARP, Christine Fellingham

LITERATURE

The modern generation does not understand the genius of Shakespeare and company and their effect on the written word.

STORYTELLING

Sometime around the year 1600, the art of storytelling changed forever. Nobody knows how he came upon the idea, but William Shakespeare began experimenting with breaking the rules of how the dramatic question had previously been handled. The Professor of humanities Stephen Greenblatt writes that his true leap into genius took place when he made the ‘crucial breakthrough’ of removing one particular class of character information.

In most instances, the source material on which playwrights such as Shakespeare based their work clearly explained the causes of their character’s behaviour. But when he was working on Hamlet, Shakespeare decided to try artfully excising such neat and reassuring explanations. In previous versions of the play, Hamlet’s ‘madness’ had been tactical and fake, a ruse to buy time and foster the appearance of harmlessness. But in Shakespeare’s version, his suicidal madness is actually real and, writes Greenblatt, ‘nothing to do with the ghost’ that informed him of his father’s murder.

Shakespeare continued his experiment with ‘radical excision’ of such character information in the thrilling sequence of plays written between 1603 and 1606, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth. Why did Othello’s Iago so desperately want to kill his general? Shakespeare obscured and hinted at Iago’s motivations, which were clearly spelled out in his source, a short story by Giambattista Giraldi. Why did King Lear decide to perform his ridiculous love test? The source play, The True Chronicle History of King Leir, provided an explanation: Cordelia wanted to marry for love while her father, the King, wanted her marriage to further his dynasty. The love test was a trick. Cordelia was expected to claim she loved her father more than her sisters, to which the King would respond, ‘So prove it. Marry who I tell you.’ In Shakespeare’s version, the cause of Lear’s dysfunctional decision is removed. This

experimentation in denying neat explanations, writes Greenblatt, resulted in plays that were ‘immeasurably deeper’ than what had gone before.

It’s often said the genius of Shakespeare lies in his psychological truth. Recent advances in the sciences of the mind show the extraordinary degree to which this is correct. Shakespeare had always been sceptical of ‘accounts, whether psychological or theological, of why people behave the way they do’. In his scepticism he’s been proven entirely correct. **As we’ve learned, none of us know why we do what we do – not King Lear, not Iago, not me and not you.**

The Science of Storytelling: Why Stories Make Us Human and How to Tell Them Better (Storr, Will)

SHORT STORIES

SAARP WEBSITE

There are over 100 short stories on the SAARP Website as well as three anthologies:

- Poetry: The value of learning it by heart
- Expressions 2002
- Expressions 2006

The last two are also in ePub and Kindle format.

- **Expressions 2002** ([click to read](#)) ([click to download](#))
[click to download ePub](#) | [click to download Kindle](#)
- **Expressions 2006** ([click to read](#)) ([click to download](#))
[click to download ePub](#) | [click to download Kindle](#)

Go to www.saarp.net and click on Short Stories.



RIP SAA

THE FLYING SPRINGOK

. . . on May 1, 2020, Pravin Gordhan, the South African Minister of Public Enterprises, officially announced the termination of SAA in its present form and the prospective birth of an entirely new yet very much downsized version of its former self. The plan was summarized in the following statement:
Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. The challenges facing South African Airways has required the Leadership of all the stakeholders to rise above the crisis created by both the weaknesses within SAA and COVID 19, and to agree on a long-term vision and strategy to mitigate the impact on employees, tourism, the aviation industry and to become a catalyst for economic development and job creation. This requires an absolute focus on becoming internationally competitive for safety, quality, and cost. It will not be the old SAA but the beginning of a new journey to a new restructured airline, which will be a proud flagship for South Africa.

And thus it was that, after 86 years—91 if you include the five year existence of its predecessor, Union Airways—SAA came to the end of its incarnation as one of the world’s great carriers and the flagship airline of the African skies.

Regrettable though these developments unquestionably were, there was much for SAA to be proud of. **For 23 consecutive years, it was voted Africa’s leading airline by the UK-based World Travel Awards organization. Often operating against enormous odds its achievements and accomplishments had been many. Its efficiency was often the envy of many much larger carriers around the globe.** Behind it lay the abiding legacy of that ubiquitous Flying Springbok, the logo that represented the carrier during its most turbulent, controversial yet successful heydays.

No matter what new form the airline may take in years to come, or whether it ceases operations entirely and recedes into the annals of aviation history as so many other great airlines before it, long may the Flying Springbok be remembered.

Friedberg, Lionel. *The Flying Springbok* (pp. 511-512). John Hunt Publishing. Kindle Edition.

BOOKS

NON-FICTION

In June, in reply to a request, I revealed some of my non-fiction books over the past while. Well, here are those I have read since then:

1. *Remember: The Science of Memory and the Art of Forgetting* by Lisa Genova
2. *Bad Days in History: A Gleefully Grim Chronicle of Misfortune, Mayhem, and Misery for Every Day of the Year* by Michael Farquhar

3. *The Flying Springbok: A History of South African Airways Since Its Inception to the Post-Apartheid Era* by Lionel Friedberg
4. *Just the Arguments: 100 of the Most Important Arguments in Western Philosophy* by Michael Bruce, Michael Bruce, Steven Barbone
5. *Humorists: From Hogarth to Noel Coward* by Paul Johnson
6. *The Myths We Live By* by Mary Midgley
7. *The Anglo-Saxons: A History of the Beginnings of England* by Marc Morris
8. *Philip: The Final Portrait* by Gyles Brandreth
9. *Being You - A New Science of Consciousness* by Anil Seth
10. *Seven and a Half Lessons About the Brain* by Lisa Feldman Barrett

Ray

MEDICAL

The Importance of Checklists Saving Lives in the Hospital

Doctors and especially surgeons must also deal with intricate and challenging situations. In his book *The Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right*, Atul Gawande explains: In surgery the way we handle this is we say, “You need eight, nine, ten years of training, you get experience under your belt, and then you go with the instinct and expertise that you’ve developed over time. You go with your knowledge.”

But surgeons are human. We miss stuff. We are inconsistent and unreliable because of the complexity of care.

Looking for better ways to do things, Gawande took the chance to visit Boeing to see how they handled dangerously complex situations

Over and over again I found that they fall back on the basic checklist. The pilot’s checklist is a critical component not just for how you handle takeoff and landing in normal circumstances, but even how you handle a crisis emergency when you only have a couple of minutes to make a critical decision.

Gawande and a team of researchers then applied this basic idea to the field of surgery. They wanted to see how much better surgeons might perform if the complexity of surgery were to be made more explicit and put into a “top-of-mind” perspective. They put together “a bedside aide” to help navigate complex procedures.

The operational team brought a two-minute checklist into the operating rooms of eight hospitals to see what, if any, progress could be made. They worked with the people at Boeing to show them how it was done in the air.

One important component was not just the checklist but also making sure that the items called for on the checklist were close at hand. A cart was brought into the operating rooms that contained many of the critical items that might

be needed: additional blood, additional antibiotics and other items just in case. If the various items were not available at a critical moment, the opportunity to resolve a crisis might be lost.

Did it work? “We got better results,” Gawande said. “Massively better results . . . We caught basic mistakes and some of that stupid stuff,” Gawande reports. But the study returned some surprising results: “We also found that good teamwork required certain things that we missed very frequently.”

Surprisingly, it was found that if everyone in the operating room knew everyone else’s name, the operation tended to be more successful. With a personal relationship developed among the team members in the operating room, the average number of complications and deaths dropped by 35 percent. People were more likely to speak up when things went wrong and to give suggestions to their team members.

Knott, Jared. *Tiny Blunders/Big Disasters: Thirty-Nine Tiny Mistakes That Changed the World Forever (Revised Edition)* (pp. 436-438). Jefferson Central Publishing. Kindle Edition.

BOOK EXTRACT

IMAGINATION

I was in feminine company the other day when the talk turned on war economies, with the inevitable allusion to the substitution of margarine for butter. I found it was generally agreed that the substitution had been a success. "Well," said one, "I bought some butter the other day--the sort we used to use--and put it on the table with the margarine which we have learned to eat. My husband took some, thinking it was margarine, made a wry face, and said, 'It won't do. This margarine economy is beyond me. We must return to butter, even if we lose the war.' I explained to him that he was eating butter - real butter - and he said, 'Well, I'm hanged!' Now, what do you think of that?" I said I thought it showed that taste was a matter of habit, and that imagination played a larger part in our make-up than we supposed.

Pebbles on the Shore by Alpha of the Plough 1917

CHEATING – UNIVERSAL IN ALL COMPETITIONS?

BRIDGE

“Bridge has so many moving parts that cheating can be both easy to do and hard to detect,” David Owen writes, in a report today on this past summer’s “Great Bridge Boycott.” He recounts the events leading up to the European Bridge League’s qualifying tournament for the 2021 World National Team

Championships, where all thirty teams that were scheduled to compete against the Italian team forfeited in protest. The implied reason? The inclusion on the Italian team of Fulvio Fantoni, a notorious player who was accused of cheating several years ago. (Fantoni, and his regular partner, Claudio Nunes, have denied all allegations of cheating, and have declined to comment.)

A mention of bridge can conjure easy stereotypes, of “little old ladies” and folding card tables—in contrast to the game’s cousin, poker, with its suspenseful battles and associations with “Casino Royale.” But the stakes, and the subterfuge, are serious in bridge, where a long-standing history of cheating through the use of secret signals and subtle gestures has dethroned many a champion. Scandals like these, and the most recent one involving Fantoni, have made the game seem more interesting to some people who’ve never played it.

Jessie Li, newsletter editor. The New Yorker

Athletes’ Justification of Cheating in Sport: Relationship with Moral Disengagement in Sport and Personal Factors

Download the PDF:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283085695_Athletes'_Justification_of_Cheating_in_Sport_Relationship_with_Moral_Disengagement_in_Sport_and_Personal_Factors

TECHNOLOGY

FAKE NEWS

*"Senses such as vision and hearing might be separated at their sources, but our mind combines these inputs to create a model – a working illusion – to explain what’s going on. As a consequence, **our perception readily adapts the present to what we expect of it.** Camouflage deceives the gazelle, who expects to see long grass and so overlooks the lioness. It isn’t until something reaches a certain bar of sensory improbability – long grass shouldn’t smell like a lion, it shouldn’t move against the wind – that the integrity of the illusion is challenged and revised."*

The trouble with the illusions created by and from the internet is that the smell of the lion is missing . . .

BAD LANGUAGE DAY

DECEMBER 3, 1992

No LOL Matter

On December 3, 1992, Neil Papworth sent the world’s first text message, making it a very bad day for the English language indeed. Since that day,

teenagers have stopped actually speaking to one another, proper spelling has become obsolete, and driving while **texting has now far surpassed driving while drinking as the most lethal activity on the road.** 4COL.*

Bad Days in History by Michael Farquhar

* 4COL means "For Crying Out Loud"

SAARP SERVICES

SHORT TERM INSURANCE

Please contact us if you experience any problems with an insurance claim or are faced with unreasonable annual increases. We are a registered broker and deal with three different insurance companies to ensure that our members receive the best deal possible.

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SAARP NEWS

MEMBER FEED BACK (Verbatim)

- I just want to say thank you so much for your monthly newsletter, it is informative, and very helpful with your medical info etc. Keep up the good work.
- I am writing to comment on an article published in the last newsletter under Book Extracts. The book Pebbles on the Shore was mentioned , written by Alfred George Gardiner (Alpha of the Plough) and it was very interesting to me as he was my great grandfather's brother! My grandfather came here during the Anglo Boer war (ie it was his uncle who wrote the book). My Mother who is turning 105 in 2 week's time had the book as her English setwork book at Cape Town High, not knowing then that she would one day be married to my father who was the great nephew of the author. Thought this might be of interest to you.
- Yesterday I received an SMS advising me that my claim had been approved and that the claim amount would be paid into my bank account within the next 2 to 3 days. May I thank you for the exceptional service displayed by your company, yourself and your associates. Kindly 'pass on' my thanks to them.
- Thanks Ray, very informative newsletter and loaded with very useful information all round.

- Always enjoy the Newsletters
- Just a little message of compliment! You kindly booked us into the accommodation at Club Mykonos during flower season and we had a great time. They were renovating the pool right outside our flat but we weren't there so no inconvenience! We were at the centre of the flowers and enjoyed beautiful displays in and around Langebaan, Cape Columbine at its absolute best and of course West Coast National Park. We used the backroads via Darling so saw beautiful fields of Canola and Arum Lilies. So the timing was absolutely spot on and we had a great time. Thank you for your role in making this possible!
- Thank you so much Renske for all your efforts on my behalf.
- For yet another helpful email. Such service is, of course, not expected in modern-day practice and very seldom provided. Your kind attention to personal service is much and sincerely appreciated. So the insurers are improving the odds in their 9 month wait clause. The advanced age of applicants in this case increases the likelihood of passing on before the end of the waiting period. QED. I will follow your advice and go the 'cash is king' route. On that score, a suggestion to you: If one believes that more and more seniors are rejecting the concept of expensive coffins and elaborate funerals, then a case could be made for SAARP providing regularly updated details in this regard e.g. cost comparisons between basic and fancy farewells. 'Twould be useful, yes? Nice chatting to you, as always,

SHORT STORIES FEEDBACK (Verbatim)

- I much appreciated the short story, Mrs Ketley. It read less like a classic short story with a twist in the tale but was nevertheless able to draw me in and invoke a real sense of what life was like at that time. It did so without pretention. The author wrote with empathy and humility which was engaging.
- I enjoyed one of the stories on Saarp. Cut Price.
- Great story. Thank you. I am glad we did not miss it after all. The Great Garden Gnome Heist

Go to www.saarp.net . . . to read them.

SAARP HOLIDAY CLUB

The following are examples of discounted off-peak holidays, which our Holiday Club has on offer for you and your families. *To book phone Renske on 021 592 1279 or email her at renskes@saarp.net*

RESORT	AREA	DATE	UNIT	PRICE
BOOKINGS FOR 2022				
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	7-11 March	1 bedroom	R2587.50
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	30/5 – 3/6	1 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	30/5 – 3/6	2 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	6-10 June	1 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	6-10 June	2 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	25-29 July	2 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	1-5 Aug	2 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	15-19 Aug	1 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	29/8 – 2/9	2 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	5-9 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Port Owen Marina	Velddrif	11-15 April	1 bedroom	R3450
Port Owen Marina	Velddrif	25-29 July	1 bedroom	R1293.75
Port Owen Marina	Velddrif	15-19 Aug	1 bedroom	R1293.75
Strand Pavillion	Strand	31/1 – 4/2	Studio	R3018.75
Strand Pavillion	Strand	7-11 Feb	Studio	R3018.75
Strand Pavillion	Strand	11-15 April	Studio	R2587.50
Strand Pavillion	Strand	19-23 Sep	2 bedroom	R2587.50
The Peninsula	Sea Point	21-24 Jan	Studio	R4743.75
The Peninsula	Sea Point	25-29 April	Studio	R4312.50
Eden on the Bay	Blouberg	16-20 May	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Tableview Cabanas	Blouberg	14-18 Feb	Studio	R2156.25
Tableview Cabanas	Blouberg	7-11 March	1 bedroom	R3450
Tableview Cabanas	Blouberg	16-20 May	1 bedroom	R1293.75
Formosa Bay	Plettenberg Bay	21-25 Feb	1 bedroom	R2587.50
Brookes Hill	Port Elizabeth	25-29 July	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Brookes Hill	Port Elizabeth	22-26 Aug	1 bedroom	R2156.25
Cayley Lodge	Drakensberg	7-11 Feb	1 bedroom	R3450
Cayley Lodge	Drakensberg	14-18 Feb	1 bedroom	R3450

Drakensberg Sun	Drakensberg	30/5 – 3/6	1 bedroom	R2156.25
Drakensberg Sun	Drakensberg	25-29 July	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Dolphin View	Umdloti	14-18 Feb	1 bedroom	R3018.75
Dolphin View	Umdloti	16-20 May	Studio	R1293.75
Umhlanga Cabanas	Umhlanga	23-27 May	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Umhlanga Cabanas	Umhlanga	15-19 Aug	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Umhlanga Cabanas	Umhlanga	12-16 Sep	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Umhlanga Sands	Umhlanga	6-11 June	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Umhlanga Sands	Umhlanga	15-20 Aug	1 bedroom	R2156.25
Umhlanga Sands	Umhlanga	22-27 Aug	1 bedroom	R2156.25
Umhlanga Sands	Umhlanga	5-10 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Sandpiper Dunes	Namibia	14-18March	2 bedroom	R3018.75
Mabalingwe	Bela Bela	29/8 – 2/9	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Bakgatla	Pilanesberg	24-28 Jan	1 bedroom	R2587.50
Manyane	Pilanesberg	21-25 Feb	1 bedroom	R3018.75
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	14-18March	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	23-27 May	2 bedroom	R1725
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	30/5 – 3/6	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	30/5 – 3/6	3 bedroom	R2587.50
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	6-10 June	2 bedroom	R2587.50
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	25-29 July	2 bedroom	R1725
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	1-5 Aug	3 bedroom	R2587.50
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	22-26 Aug	2 bedroom	R1725

NOTE 1: The above prices include 15% VAT.

NOTE 2: The price is for the entire period.

NOTE 3: All cancellations must be made 7 weeks before check-in date.

NOTE 4: These are Holiday Club Regulations, to which all members MUST adhere.

Note: 5: In making a booking, you agree that these regulations apply to you.

PAYMENT: Once Renske has CONFIRMED your booking, she will submit an invoice containing SAARP's bank details. Once you have deposited the required amount in SAARP's bank account, please provide proof of payment using one of the following:

Fax : 021 592 1284

E-mail: info@saarp.net

In addition, remember to quote your ID Number and name.

DO NOT PAY ANYTHING UNTIL YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE CONFIRMATION OF THE BOOKING AND THE INVOICE

Contact us at SAARP Tel: 021 592 1279

Fax: 021 592 1284

Call us and we'll call you back to save your phone bill

e-mail: info@saarp.net

Or see it all at www.saarp.net

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TRIVIA

SNIPPETS

- 'The divided and acrimonious world that is being created by net zero policies will permit China to further enhance its global economic presence and influence while the developed, democratic world becomes economically, politically, and militarily weaker.' **The Spectator**
- In six years Sajid Javid has had six cabinet jobs. He has been culture secretary, business secretary, communities secretary, home secretary and chancellor — and, just over 100 days ago, he was made Secretary of State for Health. **The Spectator**

POINTS TO PONDER

... AND WE THINK WE ARE ADVANCED

- Depending on the trap style and season, the stewards of the traps could target either herring or salmon, and manage how many salmon went on to spawn in the local creek systems. **By doing this they were able to ensure they only took enough fish to meet community and trade needs. If a fish run looked weak, they could opt not to fish it at all.**

Fish traps - Between 1300 and 100 years old - of the K'ómoks People, on the east side of Vancouver Island on the edge of the Salish Sea.

Read the article:

<https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20211013-an-underwater-mystery-on-canadas-coast>

- “We still have so much to learn— we’re like babes in the wood when it comes to really understanding nature. **We haven’t even begun to learn about the myriad of forms of life in the soil beneath us.**” Jane Goodall, the world's foremost expert on chimpanzees.
- **Within one linear centimetre of your lower colon there lives and works more bacteria (about 100 billion) than all humans who have ever been born.** Yet many people continue to assert that it is we who are in charge of the world. **Neil deGrasse Tyson, astrophysicist and author**

LANGUAGE

Many people, people who make posters for leading publishers, write captions for the BBC, compose letters and advertisements for important institutions, seem to think that capitalization and marks of punctuation are condiments that you sprinkle through any collection of words as if from a saltshaker.

The Road to Little Dribbling by Bill Bryson

SMILE

- Borrow money from pessimists, they don't expect to get it back
- Half the people you know are below average
- How do you tell when you're out of invisible ink?
- Hard work pays off in the future; but laziness pays off now
- If at first you don't succeed, destroy all the evidence that you tried
- Experience is something you don't get until just after you needed it
- The problem with the genepool is that there is no lifeguard
- Everyone has a photographic memory; some just don't have the film
- If your car could travel at the speed of light would your headlights still work?
- So what's the speed of dark?

SAARP YEAR-END CLOSING

We will close at 12h00 on Wednesday the 15th December, 2021 and be back in the office on the 11th January 2022.

This is the last newsletter for this year.

While we are closed, please remember to check the SAARP website www.saarp.net for information on a variety of subjects.

The next newsletter will be number 178 and will be distributed at 09h00 on Monday 31st January 2022.

THE SOCIAL CLUB YEAR

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS 2021

It seems just yesterday that I was starting this final note of the year for Christmas 2020 and here we are - Christmas 2021.

Throughout the year, it appears that the regulations governing social distancing have been playing the on-again, off-again game, leaving some of us unsure as to what the current “right way” of doing things is. One thing never changes though: wear a mask in all public places and sanitise your hands. It is also imperative to keep your masks hygienically clean, and germ free.

Added to this has been the huge controversy raging over to vaccinate or not to vaccinate. Many feel that compulsory vaccination requirements are a violation of their personal rights, and a move towards a more controlling political system. However, doctors, hospitals and nursing staff continue with the heavy workload of those succumbing to Covid-19.

Full marks to our Social Clubs. Many of them have steadfastly continued to remain in contact with their members, arranging on line meetings and activities as well as being very creative in terms of physical meetings in open outdoor places. Some have even had speakers, and done mountain walks et cetera. We salute your efforts in these trying times.

Social Clubs play a very important role in the lives of many people, and in some cases, are their lifelines to sanity, particularly under these isolating circumstances.

We have lost a number of members who have passed on, and through resignations linked to a reluctance to be involved in community meetings. But, we have gained a few new members, which is heartening. We have had enquiries from two different areas in terms of starting up new Social Clubs, which is also encouraging. We have kept in touch all our clubs in terms of regular information sent to chairpersons on changing conditions, and requirements.

We believe that a positive attitude, a willingness to help others in need, or those less fortunate than ourselves, and an acceptance of who and where we are in terms of this pandemic, all go a long way to easing the difficult situations many of us find ourselves in.

Over this Christmas-New Year period may you all have blessings in abundance, the wisdom to recognise them, and the patience to put them into practice. Enjoy being with your families, friends and loved ones. Be sensible and take care at all times, and above all may the joyous blessings of this time of year fill your coming year with love, gratitude, and an awareness of the needs of others. We at SAARP wish you all the most peaceful Festive Season.

Julie Hattingh

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Dear Members

As we near the end of the year and look back on the year we can do so with thanks that in our membership of around 100000 members we had so few who succumbed to the Corona virus.

With our free Wills benefit, I have only seen a few cases of estates which we had to finalize due to the virus, or advices being received of membership cancellations due to deaths caused by the virus.

Our members are very dear to our hearts and we do not like to lose any for any reason. I thank members for looking after themselves during these trying times.

Our holiday club section has been inundated with holiday requests a clear indication that after the lockdown period members now want to get away and have a change of scenery. The lists of low cost holidays available in the newsletter each month are what the members look forward to.

Sadly, during the year we lost one of our staff members, Lorraine, due to an incurable disease and we have now replaced her with Mandy so we are back to full strength and ready to serve our members.

As a service organization for people over 50, our prime aim is to do whatever we can to assist our members, particularly financially, in their daily lives. It is pleasing to us to see how much members use the benefits that their free membership provides. We urge members to encourage friends to join and also be able to use these benefits and save money wherever they can. They should simply go to our website www.saarp.net to join.

As we near the Christmas holidays and look forward a break with friends and families I thank you for being part of our family and the numerous letters and visits to the office that we received over the year.

We will close from the 16th December until early January and I wish you all a very blessed and happy Christmas; may it be filled with love and happiness.

The happy faces of our grandchildren at this time of the year make up for all the troubles we have experienced.
Hopefully we can all look forward to a happier, healthy and prosperous 2022.
Best wishes
JOHN BENWELL



FROM ALL OF US HERE AT SAARP

**WE WISH YOU AND YOURS A REALLY HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND A HEALTHY, REWARDING AND SAFE 2022
FILLED WITH WONDER**

DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE – THE LIFE YOU SAVE MAY BE YOUR OWN

Ray Hattingh

PS "Study is the bane of childhood, the oil of youth, the indulgence of adulthood, and a restorative in old age."

Walter Savage Landor

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adding life to your years