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From the Editor

As the weather heats up, *Sydney Observer* will have you ready for summer.



This month, we feature the vibrant and lively Miguel Maestre, who shares stories about his love for food, while our Home and Garden section is filled with design tips and tricks that will help elevate your interiors. From how to create a productive and calm workspace to the season's latest trends, we have you covered.

The Fashion and Beauty pages will help your natural beauty shine with our boho beauty feature, and our Wellbeing section will leave you feeling relaxed and refreshed.

For all the mango lovers, our Food and Wine section has a guide on how to pick the perfect mango, with a delicious recipe that celebrates the iconic fruit.

So sit back, enjoy the sun and relax with our November issue.

Hannah



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SNIPPETS

Local Citizen of the Year Awards

Council is looking for quiet achievers who have contributed to Ku-ring-gai's community.

Each year on Australia Day, the council recognises the outstanding work of local residents and volunteers, with the NSW Local Citizen of the Year Awards.

The awards aim to recognise Ku-ring-gai residents who have demonstrated excellent citizenship and a contribution to the local or wider community.

There are five award categories, Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Senior Citizen of the Year, Environmental Citizen of the Year and Outstanding Service to the Ku-ring-gai community, which can be awarded to an individual or group. Nominations close on 15 November 2019.

For more information, email slacava@kmc.nsw.gov.au

BACH AKADEMIE AUSTRALIA PRESENTS COMFORT & JOY CANTATAS FOR CHRISTMAS

Friday 29th Nov 7.30pm
Christ Church St Laurence, George St, Sydney

Saturday 30th Nov, 7.30pm
St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta

Sunday 1st Dec 2.00pm
Parish of the Holy Name, Wahroonga

Featuring Part II of Bach's famous
Christmas Oratorio

Tickets: www.cantatasforchristmas.floktu.com
Box Office: 1300 785 377
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Road Safety Calendar

The 2020 Road Safety Calendar is now available! North Sydney Council has teamed up with five other Sydney councils to produce an eye-catching wall calendar featuring some fascinating - yet still deadly serious - 1950s-era road safety messages.

It's a case of the more things change, the more they stay the same, with these road safety messages that are still relevant for us today.

A poster showing a pedestrian absorbed in his morning newspaper stepping carelessly into the path of an oncoming car, is contrasted against him browsing his iPhone to suit today's audiences.

Other posters urge motorists to be alert for school children and to avoid hogging the right-hand lane.

The 2020 Road Safety Calendar is a collaboration of North Sydney, Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Northern Beaches and City of Ryde Councils.

Get a copy of the calendar and remind yourself on what you need to be doing to improve the safety for everyone on and near our local roads.

For a copy of the calendar visit customer service, Stanton Library and various community locations.

Twilight Golf Games

Cheap rates for twilight golf games are on offer at North Turramurra and Gordon, with a special deal for seniors at North Turramurra.

Now that daylight savings has commenced, both council-owned courses are offering cheap rates for twilight golf seven days a week.

From 2pm daily, golfers at the championship course at North Turramurra can take advantage of a cut-price offer of \$21 for 18 holes, and only \$20 to hire a cart to ensure all the holes can be played before sunset.

At the picturesque Gordon golf course, the twilight golf offer is even cheaper, with unlimited holes available after 2pm daily for only \$15.

Carts can also be hired for \$32 each at Gordon, and must be returned to the pro shop by 6:15pm sharp.

An introductory 6-week golf program for the over 55s is also starting on Monday 4 November at the North Turramurra course.

The program will introduce seniors to the game of golf in fun and relaxed lessons taught by experienced golf pros.

The 6-week course runs every Monday for one hour from 11am and costs just \$99, with all equipment provided.

Preparing for Bushfire Season

Ku-ring-gai Council is the first local government in Australia to use a 3D simulator showing people how bushfires could start and spread in their local area.

The American-made 'Simtable' was purchased by the council through an Increasing Resilience to Climate Change grant from LGNSW and the NSW Department of Environment, Energy and Science.

Ku-ring-gai is the first council in Australia to acquire a Simtable, which gives visually accurate 3D projections of how bushfires start and spread, calculated on wind speed, terrain and temperature among other factors.

The Simtable is being unveiled through a video and a series of community

information sessions hosted by council staff and the RFS, to coincide with the start of warmer weather and the official bushfire season.

The 'Get Ready Ku-ring-gai' campaign aims to educate people about how bushfires can start and spread.

Mayor Jennifer Anderson said with one of the largest areas of bushland interface in Sydney, the council was intensifying its public education efforts on the need to plan for bushfires in conjunction with other emergency authorities such as the RFS.

"The Simtable is another way of focusing people's attention. Bushfire readiness doesn't have to be complicated, we just need households to have a plan and communicate it with their loved ones."

Community Photography Competition

This competition aims to capture the essence of Ku-ring-gai through images of places and ideas about what gives the local area its character, asking people to showcase what they value most about the suburb they live, work or play in.

Up to five images in each category will be accepted until Friday 15 November, while the first prize is a \$200 gift voucher. Images should be submitted with a caption explaining its importance, and what makes it unique to Ku-ring-gai.

Categories are suburb based and include Gordon, Killara, Lindfield, Pymble, Roseville, St Ives, Turramurra and Wahroonga.

All photos submitted to the competition should have been taken in one of these suburbs during the last 12 months.



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Sail Away with James Craig

Tall Ship James Craig has roamed the oceans of the world during her 145-year existence. She braved the ultimate challenge for sailing ships of her era, the rounding of Cape Horn. James Craig made that passage 23 times.

Built in England in 1874 as Clan Macleod, the ship changed her name in 1905 when bought by New Zealand shipowner, J.J. Craig. She is named after his son, James Craig. After a second life in the Southern Hemisphere, the ship ended her working career as a coal hulk at a coal mine in remote Recherche Bay in southern Tasmania. The mine closed in the 1930s and it seemed it was also the closure of James Craig's life.

Abandoned and run ashore, the ship was rediscovered, salvaged and fully restored. Today, Sydney Heritage Fleet's James Craig offers a gentle reminder of the days of sail and is the only fully restored sailing ship from that era in the Southern Hemisphere.



James Craig in Recherche Bay during the fleet's first survey visit at Easter 1972.

James Craig is sailed by the experienced volunteer crews of Sydney Heritage Fleet, a community based, non-profit organisation dedicated to the preservation of Australia's maritime heritage. The crew operates a fleet of significant heritage

ships and boats; with five fully operational historical vessels more than 100-years old. Let us welcome you aboard James Craig. For sailing dates and bookings head to shf.org.au



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Movember for Men's Health

Isabella Ross

It is that time of year again – November, or better known as – Movember! The annual event predominantly involves men growing moustaches during this month, in order to raise awareness of men's health issues including prostate cancer and suicide. From humble beginnings in Australia, Movember has achieved a significant amount during its time. Resulting in approximately 6 million moustaches grown and 1,250 men's health programs funded internationally, Movember is at its peak. Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer amongst Aussie men, with one in six men diagnosed by the age of 85.

Women are also encouraged to get involved by committing to walking or running 60km over the month. As said by Movember spokesperson Samantha Mills, "you don't have to grow a mo to save a bro." 60km represents the 60 men we lose each hour around the globe due to suicide.



Jono Coleman is taking part this Movember.

Another pro note is that men need to start the month clean-shaven, so that everyone participating is on even footing. "It doesn't matter if your efforts are patchy, wispy, grey or bushy, just remember that

this Movember, whatever you grow will save a bro", says Ms Mills.

One of our beloved national television personalities and North Shore local, Jono Coleman, will also be taking part in Movember after being diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2017. "I attempted a mo last year, but because of my treatment, it turned out to be little more than a few whiskers. However, you don't have to grow to save a bro, so this year I have chosen a less hairy way – I will fundraise my colleague Joe Hildebrand and I will move instead – walking – walking 60 kilometres throughout the month to raise money for men's health," Jono said to *Sydney Observer*. So get involved and raise awareness this Movember for an incredibly important cause.



HAVE YOUR SAY Ku-ring-gai's Housing Future liveable for life

Ku-ring-gai Council is required by the NSW Government to undertake a Housing Strategy. This is to ensure we provide additional housing to meet the needs of Ku-ring-gai's current and future residents. The Housing Strategy will outline how we respond to growth and changing needs while protecting and enhancing the much-loved Ku-ring-gai character. We want your input to help shape our future housing.

Tell us about the type of housing you want and need over the next 20 years, and what you think the wider community will need.

Head to kmc.nsw.gov.au/housingstrategy to provide your thoughts. Complete a survey to help guide Council's Housing Strategy. The survey closes at 9am on Monday 11 November 2019.

Your feedback and information are important to us. It will help the Housing Strategy respond to the changing needs of our growing community and provide appropriate housing types at suitable locations.

Visit kmc.nsw.gov.au/housingstrategy, call (02) 9424 0000, or email kmc@kmc.nsw.gov.au



Ku-ring-gai Housing Strategy Consultations

Ku-ring-gai Council is calling for your advice! Community views and opinions are being sought after, in order to assist council in preparing a new housing strategy. The aim is to uncover housing needs for the local area's population, which is expected to rapidly grow over the next decade. Having an appropriate variety of housing types in Ku-ring-gai is also on the agenda.



To seek community advice, the council will be holding a range of surveys and online discussion forums over the next six months. The feedback will then help shape a draft housing strategy by early 2020.

The strategy will additionally outline where housing densities can be reasonably accommodated near public transport, the mix of housing types and how Ku-ring-gai's unique character can be protected.

Mayor Jennifer Anderson said all Sydney councils were being asked by

the state government to prepare housing strategies that plan for future population increases across the city.

"The next 20 years will see Ku-ring-gai's population increase to over 150,000 from its current 123,000. We want to put together a plan to help manage this growth, while at the same time

protecting the Ku-ring-gai that everyone loves. This is a shared challenge for the council and our community," Ms Anderson noted.

To find out more about the housing strategy and how you can give feedback, visit kmc.nsw.gov.au/housingstrategy

Music for the Soul



Bach Akademie Australia presents 'Comfort and Joy' – Cantatas for Christmas. As we get ready to celebrate the most joyful time of the year, the Bach Akademie Australia and its choir will present three concerts in late November/early December, featuring Part II of the famous Christmas Oratorio.

With its imagery of angels, shepherds, children, peace on earth and goodwill to man, the story of Christmas has inspired many great composers over the centuries but none more so than J.S. Bach.

Formerly of Lane Cove, Madeleine Easton, founder and Principal Violin of this sparkling new Australian Early Music Ensemble, has returned home after almost 20 years of forging a stellar career performing in Europe. She directed the Early Music Orchestra at the Royal Academy of Music in London, in a five-year project

performing the entire collection of Bach's Cantatas. Now a highly regarded specialist in Baroque music techniques, Madeleine has performed with and led prestigious ensembles including the Hanover Band, the English Baroque Soloists, The Kings Consort, the Gabrieli Consort, Florilegium and the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.

This first-class ensemble showcases the works of Johann Sebastian Bach – a repertoire of choral, instrumental, secular and sacred works from heartbreakingly beautiful solos to full orchestral forces with glorious oratorios, passions and the towering B minor Mass. The show is set to be a spectacular showcase of sounds.

Bookings: 1300 785 377 or cantatasforchristmas.floktu.com/

For more information head to bachakademieaustrali.com

Dates:
Friday November 29, 7.30pm
 Christ Church St Laurence, 812 George Street, Sydney
Saturday November 30, 7.30pm
 St Patrick's Cathedral, 1 Marist Place, Parramatta
Sunday December 1, 2.00pm
 Holy Name Church, 35 Billyard Avenue, Wahroonga

Privatisation of Buses Hits North Shore

Isabella Ross

To the frustration of the local community, the government has announced the privatisation of bus services in regions covering Sydney's lower North Shore, Northern Beaches, North-Western suburbs and Eastern suburbs. The decision has been seen as a betrayal to workers and the public. When looking at the success rate of bus services already privatised across Sydney, it is considerably grim in comparison to current state-run services. There has also been no guarantee from the government that current staff will have job security.

"We know privatisation doesn't work. Recent bus privatisation in the Inner-West has failed dismally. On-time running is down, routes have been cut, stops have closed, and workers' conditions have plummeted," Tram and Bus Division Secretary of the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) NSW, David Babineau said.

NSW Transport Minister, Andrew Constance, has assured the public that Sydney Trains is not set to be privatised. However, it is difficult to assess the statement's validity, as only the future will tell.



"Commuters deserve to know their current routes and services are going to be protected, and bus drivers deserve to know their wages and conditions are also going to be protected. The onus is now on the NSW Government to show how it is going to protect workers' conditions as well as the world-class public service the people of Sydney deserve if it insists on continuing down this unjustifiable route," urged Mr Babineau.



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On Life, Food and The Living Room



Hannah Prasad

Miguel Maestre's path has always been predetermined. Surrounded by food when growing up, Miguel's meals are a melting pot of rich heritage, love and passion. He has effortlessly taken to TV as a co-host on *The Living Room*, where his infectious personality transcends through the screen, bringing laughter, joy and knowledge to homes across Australia. *Sydney Observer* spoke to the star about life in Spain, cooking for his family and *The Living Room*.

Growing up with fresh produce and a family that fuelled love through food, Miguel has always found comfort in the kitchen. His childhood was filled with fresh produce and his fondest food memories centre around his family. From the fresh air of pristine seas, to fruit-filled farms, Miguel vibrantly shares how his childhood has helped shape his life as a chef.

"I'm not good at anything else really. When I was looking to channel all the energy I have, I think food and working in a kitchen was the only place I could release all that energy. I've never felt like I've belonged anywhere else than in the kitchen. When I was a young man, I tried a lot of different jobs, but I think cooking was the most real and truthful relationship."

"My mum and dad always cooked together at home. Cooking has always been a really positive

thing in our lives. I have really beautiful memories of cooking big paellas around the family, and I think that's where the love I have for food comes from. It was just apart of growing up."

"My heritage has a massive effect on my cooking. Spanish cuisine is one of the most internationally acclaimed, recognised and traditional cuisines in the world. This year, we have been voted the country in the world with the longest life span because of our amazing Mediterranean diet. It influences my Australian menu, there's a lot of theatre, a lot of colour and a lot of passion."

"I remember fishing when we were little, we would go and catch octopus. We would go with my uncle in his boat with our wetsuits. Then we would jump in the water and catch the delicious octopus."

"My grandfather would grow watermelons and we used to go to the watermelon fields, break the watermelons in half, then just eat the middle bit because it was the sweetest part. And he would get really angry at us."

"All the memories of food are amazing. One I always think about the most is when we lived in two houses. One was in the middle of the city and one was out of the city, closer to the country. My mum and dad would always cook together, that is something that has always stayed in my memory. The houses then weren't like the houses

"Cooking has always been a really positive thing in our lives."



now. I remember all of us sitting in the kitchen, and when mum was cooking, dad would be cleaning the calamari and mum would chuck it in the pan to cook a really nice paella. And that is a strong memory, when I think of food, I think of both of them."

Thriving off the feeling that comes when people enjoy his food, Miguel says he can almost taste the dishes in his head before creating them, while the feeling of anticipation and preparation is the ultimate reward. Pursuing his passion at a young age, Miguel jokingly says if he was not a chef he would be a sparky. With a family of his own, he loves cooking at home and creating meals for his wife and kids.

"I think it's a bit of a myth that chefs don't cook at home – that's rubbish. I cook so much delicious food in my house. I keep it really simple though. I make sure I invest in really good food for my family and I cook it properly. I don't cook really fancy stuff, I just cook the vegetables on the BBQ, they go with my salsa verde and fresh corn, broccoli, asparagus and these amazing lamb racks, and I salt them. I get the charcoal going with olive oil, salt and pepper, then I just let the flames do their job. When things are cooked properly they taste delicious. I think there are three important things on a plate, a good garnish, a good sauce and a good protein, boom, done."

The Living Room is a warm and welcoming show, where the friendship and interactions between the hosts make audiences feel like another member of the couch. Miguel is filled with gratitude and immense love and appreciation for Amanda, Barry and Chris. He looks up to Amanda as a mentor and shares cooking tips with her, while his most memorable moment on the show was when Barry got better.

"Barry was very sick and he wanted to share his journey with all of us, and the people that watch *The Living Room*. It was very powerful and scary, but it was very positive because the most amazing medicine is love and we all stand behind him. Just seeing Barry coming back to the sofa, that was very special."

To see more of Miguel, follow him @thecrazybull and catch him at the *Cake Bake & Sweets Show* from 8 – 10 November.

The Power of Learning

Russell Bailey, Headmaster, Redeemer Baptist School

As teachers and students have come back to school for the last term of 2019, the holidays may have given some good reasons to reflect on how great this world is.

Perhaps you have been camping in the wilderness, or ridden your first wave for the beach season – you might have even had the opportunity to watch whales migrating along the NSW coast. Our world is wonderful! The Bible's account of the beginning of creation has God looking at the world and saying, 'This is good, very good.'

Here is a good reason for us to learn to appreciate and understand as much as we can about the world that we live in, this world is good!

But the world is not perfect. During the holidays, 8 million people in Japan were



Eugene Kim (Year 6, Redeemer) receiving a Fred Hollows Humanity Award from Gabi Hollows at a ceremony last week at UTS. From right to left is Jonathan Cannon (Principal, Redeemer Baptist School), Eugene's grandfather, Gabi Hollows and Eugene's mother (Ji-Young).

evacuated from their homes because of Typhoon Hagibis. That's 1/3 the population of Australia, and in Queensland and NSW, fires took homes and lives.

Here is another reason to learn as much as we can at school, as knowledge, skills and

understanding will help us to respond proactively when nature threatens to become hostile.

But it's not just natural forces that wreak havoc. With reports of wars, riots and violence – these all remind us that there is evil at work in the world.

Here is a good reason to learn from history and religion at school. Today, as students look around the world, they could be fearful about extreme weather conditions, war or terrorism. When I was at school, we feared the spread of communism and nuclear war. Then, 30 years ago, on 9 November 1989, the physical wall that formed the iron curtain dividing the communist east from the free west was torn down. And we all breathed a sigh of relief.

In this good, imperfect world, we need to teach our students to dare to hope. Let's learn as much as we can at school!

Frog Conservation Awareness

Students on the North Shore are saving frogs from loss of habitat. An annual conservation project run by the Gibberagong Environmental Education Centre (EEC) and five local schools are helping the native animals as they benefit from this initiative.

Gibberagong EEC teacher, Brad Crossman, said the Powerful Project – named after the subject of the first campaign in 2013, the Powerful Owl – runs for all of Term 3 each year.

This year's results were presented at an expo at Turrumurra High School.

"Year 9 students from the high school mentored local Year 4 students in studying, protecting and raising awareness of a particular species," Mr Crossman said.

"This year we chose frogs because they are a local group of animals that are increasingly under threat from loss of habitat and changes to remaining habitat."



"If we can learn more about the frog and understand better the changes reducing its numbers, we're better able

to act to protect it and other fauna and flora in its habitat."

"The project naturally creates a lot of formal and personal bridges between the primary schools and the high school, supporting our transition programs."

Working together across schools, the students:

- Collected data for the Australian Museum using the FrogID app.
- Designed communications to educate their peers about protecting the species.
- Learnt how to create frog habitats.
- Took part in a nature photography workshop.
- Worked with the Frog and Tadpole Study Group.

Situated in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, Gibberagong EEC is one of 25 environmental and zoo education centres, inspiring students to experience and connect with nature.

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- > Winning Year 10 School & Teachers, UoW STEM Awards, 2018
- > STANSW Budding Young Scientist (K-2) Award, 2018
- > 1st & 2nd in Dorothea Mackellar Poetry Awards, 2019
- > Gold Award, NESA WriteOn, 2019
- > Gold, Silver & Bronze Medals in CIS athletics, 2019
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Pariselle Hughes (Year 12) with Principal Jonathan Cannon being awarded a 2019 John Lincoln Youth Community Service Award from the Governor of NSW

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Increase in Indigenous Students at University

Isabella Ross

The gap is gradually closing, as more Indigenous students are applying for university across the country. Out of the 330,608 students that applied for university this year, 83.6% received an offer, marking a momentous change in the educational opportunities for Indigenous youth. The great news comes as a result of continual improvements in accessibility of higher education for remote communities.

“Our government’s investment in supporting more Indigenous people into higher education, through programs like the Indigenous Student Success Program and the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program, is paying dividends,” said Minister for Education, Mr Dan Tehan. “Australia’s strong jobs market is also having an impact on university application rates, with the slight fall in applications reflecting more people joining the workforce.”

As part of the Federal Government’s ‘Close the Gap’ campaign, numerous targets for Indigenous education have



Macquarie University

Out of the 330,608 students that applied for university this year, 83.6% received an offer.

been achieved in recent years. It is also important to note the evolving services being offered to Indigenous students at varying universities across the Sydney basin. “Over the past 10 years, we have made inroads to better support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to attain a Year 12 qualification and enrol in higher education, with the greatest increases seen for young women,” noted a spokesperson from ‘Close the Gap.’

Funding for Schools

More annual funding will be delivered to schools, with \$1.25 billion going to more than 2000 public schools across the state next year. This \$60 million increase from 2019 will be funded by the NSW Liberals and Nationals Government, which is provided on top of a school’s base allocation, and can be used for more teachers, literacy and numeracy programs, and teacher training.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian stated, “We are unashamedly for lifting

standards in our schools and this additional funding is making a real difference in the outcomes of students at the local level.”

“Schools will consult with the local community to develop a plan for the funding to cater for the specific academic and wellbeing needs of their individual students.”

The Resource Allocation Model (RAM), which is a funding method, recognises the needs of schools

across NSW differ and takes into account the socio-economic profile of students, Aboriginal student numbers, disability and English language proficiency.

“We know that government has an obligation to current and future generations to fund access to a quality education for every child according to a transparent and consistent assessment of their educational needs. That is what the RAM is all about,” said Education Minister Sarah Mitchell.



Maths Set to Become Compulsory

In a bid to ensure students are ready for the workforce, maths is set to become compulsory as part of the revised NSW curriculum.

The NSW Government is working towards this change, for students from Kindergarten to Year 12, to ensure students have the numeracy skills required to succeed in today’s society.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian stated, “We promised to take the curriculum back to the basics and today we are taking the first steps to deliver on that commitment by prioritising maths.”

“My vision is for every child in NSW to have the necessary maths skills to succeed in life, whether that’s managing home budgets or preparing them for the jobs of the future in science, technology and engineering.”

It is crucial for students to be well equipped to thrive in a competitive and globalised workforce. Minister for Education, Sarah Mitchell stated, “Whether you are a carpenter or a software engineer, maths is a companion for life, we want to make sure that the new curriculum provides a level of maths concepts that will help every NSW student succeed in life after school.”

“Parents have a reasonable expectation that their children are mathematically literate when they finish school in Year 12.”

The NSW Government will begin consultation with education stakeholders over how maths can be incorporated into every single year of a child’s educational journey – from Kindergarten to the end of the HSC.



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The Joy of Community Gardening



Isabella Ross

Now is the time to engage with locals in your area and discover the wonders of sustainability and growing your own produce! The benefits of local community gardening initiatives are plentiful. Social connectivity, knowledge of food wastage and recycling, the promotion of healthy lifestyles and diet choices are just a few. Below is a selection of fantastic community gardens within the North Shore area and wider regions.



WEST PYMBLE COMMUNITY GARDEN

This garden is a favourite, as it has recently been revitalised. Always welcoming new volunteers to help nurture and build the green plot, this garden is nice and close for North Shore locals. The grant given by the Ku-ring-gai Council has transformed the space, with the garden holding a variety of raised beds filled with edible produce. One of their key agendas is to promote the conservation of energy and water through the maintenance of the garden, but also to locals within their own backyards.

TURRAMURRA LOOKOUT COMMUNITY GARDEN

Another beauty is the lovely community garden in Turramurra. Growing fresh, organic fruit and vegetables, volunteers at the garden enjoy meeting and conversing with like-minded people. Interaction and social connectivity is a major



aspect of all of our lives, so to have opportunities to do so within your local community is great. The community garden volunteers promote sustainable living to the wider area, while also hosting open days and seedling sales throughout the year.

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY GARDEN

Providing something a little different, Macquarie University gives locals the opportunity to purchase a plot within the university's community garden, so that you can start your own veggie or flower patch. This initiative is perfect for those who don't have enough space within their own backyard to grow something substantial. The community garden also encourages students to get involved and learn about organic growing practices.

Create a Calm and Productive Work Space

Hannah Prasad

As more people start to work from home, it is important to create a space that promotes productivity. So, if you are working from home in the New Year, or want to make the most of the last couple of months, try out these ideas to help kick your goals.



A SEPARATE SANCTUARY

Choosing a space that is separate from home will help draw the line between work and family time. It can be hard to switch off when working in the midst of family, so try setting up a space in the garage or spare room. If these options are not available, a local library

or co-working space can help ignite ideas and boost creativity.

COMFORT IS KEY

Create a space you want to work in. Whether you thrive off positive

affirmations, pops of colour or pictures, the choices are endless. Remember, a clutter-free environment is a clutter-free mind, so keep the space fresh and clean and you may even go into work extra early some days!

THE POWER OF NATURE

When cramped in an office, people often go on walks or take breaks to enjoy the sunshine. This sentiment should be no different when working from home. Take a walk around the block or sit outdoors while you have your break, as this will help recharge the mind. Adding plants will also bring a piece of the outdoors inside.

Bush Regeneration

This month, the Australian Plants Society North Shore group will be hosting guest speaker Robin Buchanan, who will be discussing the topic of restoring natural areas. An expert on how to manage natural landscapes, Robin has written two books on bush regeneration, 'Bush Regeneration: Recovering Australian Landscapes' and 'Restoring Natural Areas in Australia.' She has taught bush regeneration, conservation and land management at Ryde TAFE for over 20 years. In addition to her vast array of knowledge, she is a local resident and a passionate advocate for the local bushland.



The meeting will be held on Friday, November 8 in the Willow Park Community Hall, 25 Edgeworth David Avenue, Hornsby, at 7:45pm.

For more information about the organisation visit austplants.com.au/North-Shore or [facebook.com/APSNSG](https://www.facebook.com/APSNSG)



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Get Your Garden Summer Ready

Susan Potthurst

Spring is almost over, so by working in the garden whilst the temperature is still bearable, you can enjoy the fruits of your labour with family and friends over summer.

PREPPING THE SOIL

Gardening should be therapeutic, relaxing and rewarding, not overwhelming and disheartening, so pick an area that needs the most attention and complete it before moving on. Get the less attractive chores like weeding and enriching garden beds with composted cow manure out of the way first. Once you have improved the soil, you can get cracking on the serious business of rejuvenating existing plants and introducing new ones!

PLANT FOOD

Warm days mean rapid growth, so now is the time to feed every plant you have. Slow or controlled-release fertiliser granules are so easy to apply - simply sprinkle on the soil and water well, then apply a thick layer of sugar cane mulch on top and water again, remember to be mindful of the current water restrictions.

A BURST OF COLOUR

Add colour to your outdoor spaces by planting long-flowering perennials. For your sunniest areas choose Dipladenias, Geraniums and Lobularias, and in your morning sun/afternoon shade spots plant Hydrangeas, Begonias and Sunpatiens. Apply Thrive Flower+Fruit soluble fertiliser every 2 weeks for abundant blooms!

FRESH FOOD

Looking forward to those barbeques and lazy summer evenings? You will need food at your fingertips and there's nothing better than home-grown produce. Plant tomatoes now for crops that will keep on coming, and create a herb garden in a veggie patch or pots. Sweet basil is tomatoes' best buddy and makes scrumptious bruschetta. Just add some artisan bread like ciabatta or sourdough from your local bakery and you will have a tasty, fresh starter in moments!

Susan Potthurst is the proprietor of Elegant Outdoors at Turramurra. elegantoutdoors.com.au



RETIRE IN LUXURY

The newest in Seniors Living

Marston Living Beacon Hill is setting the new standard in luxury retirement living. Featuring the highest standard in fixtures and fittings, lavishly spacious units, breathtaking views of Dee Why Beach and a tranquil bush retreat, Marston Living Beacon Hill offers residents an opportunity to escape their worries to focus on their passions. At only 32 units Marston Living Beacon Hill presents a lucky few with an opportunity to join a highly exclusive and tight knit community of like minded individuals.

About seven minutes' drive from Warringah Mall, with local shops just a few hundred metres away.

The village will also operate a community bus. The facilities include a pool, gym and putting green, with a bowling green on the roof.

- Marston Resident Vivian Huang



Comfort, quality and peace of mind

With safety and medical back-up now crucial, the new residents McKechnies felt the support offered by Marston Living's contract with Safety Link, a 24-hour emergency alarm service, was "a major thing for us", she says. "My husband is a very big man, and if he falls to the ground there's no way that I can lift him. "Here, we have these lockets and if you push the button you get a response within a minute or two." That peace of mind underpins the couple's comfort in their new home.

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What's Trending in Interiors

Isabella Ross

When it comes to home design, there are countless trends, styles and themes on the market. To narrow it down for our readers, *Sydney Observer* got in contact with Press Loft to uncover the interior trends that are here to stay.

Cane and Rattan

"You may be forgiven for feeling we've stepped back into the 1970s, but rattan and cane are making an interior comeback," says Press Loft. This versatile material can be suited to a large range of design styles – country, coastal, bohemian and more – the options are endless! "They can be used to bring texture and elegance to a setting." There are also lots of ways to incorporate this trend in our homes, whether it is chairs, baskets, lampshades or side tables.

Country Farmhouse

A homely and inviting interior design theme, the quintessential country farmhouse does not equate to a dirty barn like some people think. Rather, it is understated elegance – exposed wood, authentic materials, metal

handles and cool-toned pastels like duck-egg green. Chandeliers are also a fantastic element to try, whether it is in the bedroom or above a dining table. Country chic is the way to go!

Tranquil Dawn

It is official – green is supreme! The Dulux colour of the year for 2020 is Tranquil Dawn, a cool-tinted shade of green. One of the best aspects of this colour palette is that it can be suited to any season. "A new decade heralds a new dawn and the hazy pale green tones of Tranquil Dawn are calming and comforting just when we need it most in our lives," says Marianne Shillingford, Creative Director at Dulux. Press Loft suggests pairing this trendy colour with neutral tones.

designboischaft GmbH



Garden Trading



FloraFurniture



The Future of Australian Design

Ashleigh Kok is a student at the Couture Arts Fashion Academy (CAFA), with an attention to detail, attitude, design and entrepreneurship skills that will help her succeed in the extremely competitive fashion environment. Ashleigh's interests lie in sustainable design, festival wear and vintage and recycled clothing. With an understanding of fashion-forward couture designs, she is also interested in a wide range of fashion that suits the lifestyle of young women in her chosen markets.

Ashleigh is taking on the issues that face fashion designers today, such as sustainability and recycling, and combining them with the durability and care of couture and high-end design and production techniques, to produce innovative and affordable fashion. She has also started her own made to measure

festival wear business that she runs from her Instagram account @dreamm.girl. *Sydney Observer* spoke to Ashleigh about the inspiration behind her career path.

What led you to study fashion?

A money drought while at high school. I had a festival coming up and no money for a cool new outfit. A friend who was studying sewing and textiles at school told me I could borrow her sewing machine whilst she was overseas. I made myself a little Lycra number and have been hooked ever since.

Where do you think fashion is going and who is your niche?

I have become more serious about fashion and the future as I have gotten older and become more world aware. I believe that the effect of unsustainable farming and manufacturing that features in the fashion industry will not be tolerated in the future. I would also like to see living wages and conditions improve in garment-producing countries such as Cambodia and Vietnam.

This can only increase the price of fashion items and I hope to curb the rise of cheap throw away fashion that is not made to last. I see my niche as using environmentally sustainable fabrics and sustainable manufacturing, while using closed-loop production to achieve this. I already use a mix of new and recycled material in my festival business.

What inspires you to design a garment?

Obviously, an event is important for festival wear. For my other design work, I enjoy looking back at fashion of the 1960s and 1970s for inspiration. Lately, I have been more influenced by the line, texture and proportion of garment details. The execution of detail like a pocket, a collar or sleeves and how the line, texture or colour can affect how the eye moves over the garment to enhance the wearers' figure preoccupies me now.

CAFA (Couture Arts Fashion Academy), teach sewing, pattern making and fashion design to all skill levels. For more information head to couturearts.com.au



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Summer Skincare – Boho Beauty

Hannah Prasad

Bohemian Skin creates natural beauty staples that are as beautiful for your skin as they are for your mind. Designed as pregnancy suitable products, but effective on all skin types, the brand prides itself on the use of Australian Certified Organic ingredients, ensuring the best for you, your skin and potential bubs.

Facial Mask

An invigorating yet subtle treatment, this mask is a mixture of kaolin clay, hemp seed oil and lactic acid. Drawing out any impurities and imperfections in the skin, the result is a smooth and lush base that will leave you glowing like the goddess you are.



Bright Eyes Cream

We often look past eye creams until the stressors of everyday life start showcasing their signs, but an eye cream can help prevent dark circles and puffiness, while hydrating this delicate area. A few of the ingredients in Bohemian Skin's Bright Eyes Cream include hyaluronic acid, olive leaf extract and Kakadu plum, which will nourish and brighten a part of the face that can get overlooked.

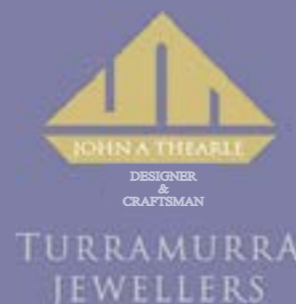
Moisturiser

A good moisturiser is important for problem-free skin, and Bohemian Skin's Facial Moisturiser is perfect for all skin types. With a gentle blend of hemp seed oil, witch hazel and lactic acid, these natural ingredients work together to promote clarity and hydration without leaving the skin feeling oily or shiny. For added impact, try out the Gel Cleanser and watch your natural beauty shine.



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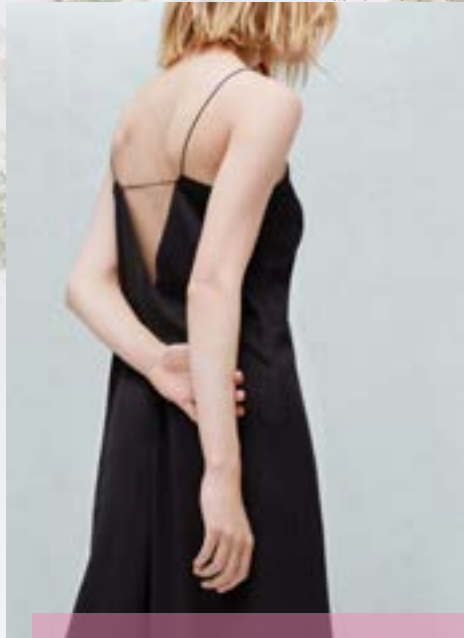


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Dress Chic this Formal Season

Isabella Ross

Fashion Trend Walk



Shimmer and Shine

Get ready to sparkle in photos, because this trend is hot on the market for formal season. A shimmery fabric, whether it is silver, gold or blush, is gratifying on all skin tones. There is a fine line however, as outright sequins do run the risk of appearing tacky. Accessorising with thought is the way to pull off this look – think a nude clutch, white corsage and blush heels – fabulous!



SilkFred

Backless Designs

Whether it is a criss cross or open style, backless dress designs are currently all-the-rage. When done tastefully, this cut of fabric can be incredibly flattering for many body types. Just make sure not to show too much skin, as it is a school formal! This style looks great with an up-do hairstyle, or low bun.

Funky Accessories

According to *Finder.com.au*, statement colour shoes are all the rage in formal wear. Nothing too outlandishly bold like neon, the pop of colour on the heel adds a bit of drama to the overall look, rather than subtracting from it. So for example, pair a silver dress with a soft pink heel or a black dress with a red heel. *WhoWhatWear.com.au* is seeing huge interest revenue in chunky gold hoops in the jewellery department – nothing too big or too small. In terms of brands, for higher-end products, Reliquia Jewellery is renowned for their quality materials and craftsmanship.



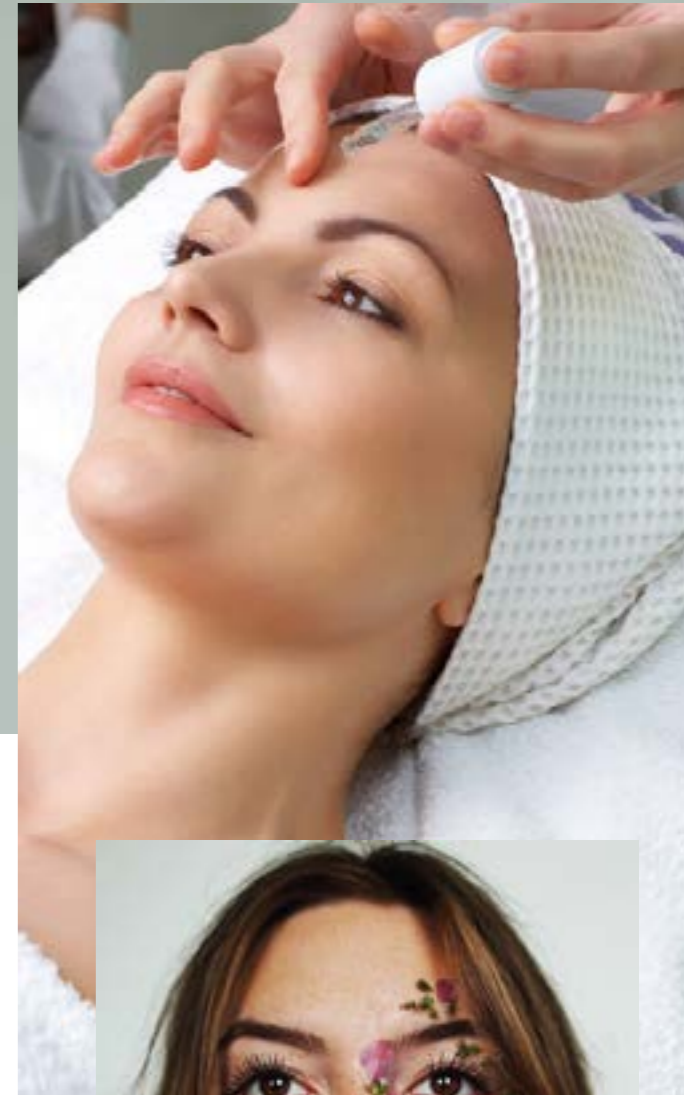
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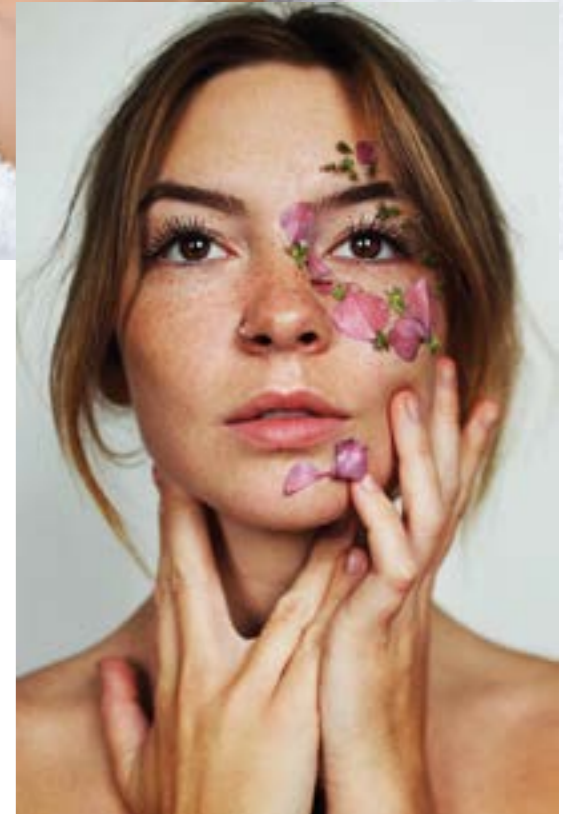
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Hope vs Optimism

Dr Sue Ferguson

It is important to have something to look forward to and work towards as we age. According to psychology research, hope involves not just a wish or belief that things will go well in the future (similar to optimism), but that you also have:

- Goals to hope for that are likely to be attainable.
- Thought through multiple different pathways and actions for achieving the goal.
- Self-belief and motivation to carry through the steps needed to achieve a positive outcome.

Research shows that hope is associated with increased happiness, and better overall mental and physical health in older adults. You can hope for big things or small everyday things.

TO BOOST HOPE THINK THROUGH AND WRITE DOWN

- **Goal** - One reasonable goal you hope to achieve in the future. For example, plan a dinner with friends for next week.

- **Plan & Action** - What small actions can you take that will start moving you closer towards this goal? Preferably actions you might actually enjoy! Invite friends, plan the menu, shop, etc.

- **Believe** - Write down 3 short sentences that will help remind you of your capabilities, for instance, 'I am capable and resourceful.'

COPING WITH SETBACKS

- List 3 alternative routes towards your goal. For example, cook the whole meal, or buy something pre-prepared (like a BBQ chicken) and just cook the roast vegies and add gravy.

- Have coping strategies ready if things don't go according to plan. For example, practice a relaxation exercise if you are stressed, or go out to dinner instead!

I have heard it said that we need three things to be happy, 'someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for.'



Dr Sue Ferguson is an Honorary Associate Lecturer in the Department of Psychology at Macquarie University.

Health Corner

Lewis Godwin



Nature

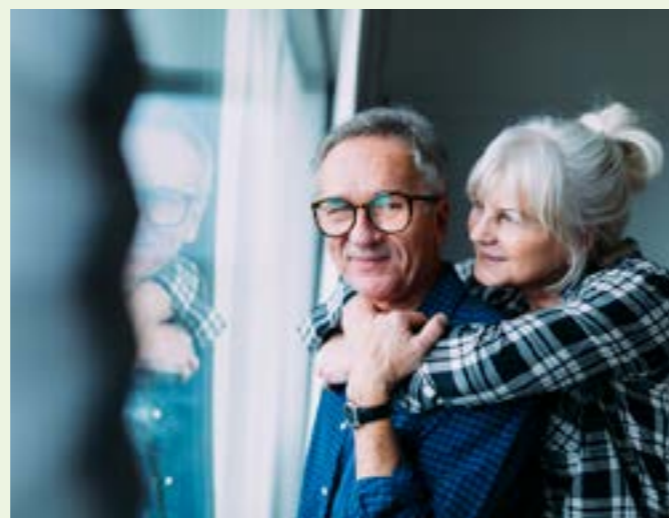
Experiencing nature can positively affect our wellbeing. Mather Lifeways Institute on Aging conducted research, finding that among seniors, active interaction with nature could improve psychological and social wellbeing, life satisfaction and quality of life.

The most effective interaction came in the form of gardening or horticulture therapy, activities that involve social interaction, knowledge development and the act of caring for nature.

Dating

Insurance Company Australian Seniors examined the shifting attitudes of seniors towards dating and relationships. While there aren't many seniors dating, research has suggested that more are open to the idea than in the past. Around 3 in 4 want to pursue a relationship, and nearly a quarter of seniors are encouraged by their children or grandchildren to do so.

Technology has had an impact on this trend, with almost 3 out of 5 seniors having used dating sites or apps, believing them to be for people of all ages.



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Seniors get a Bang for their Buck

Isabella Ross

With retirement comes less financial stability. When relying on superannuation, assets and pension, seniors are often on the lookout to save their money where plausible. In comes the Seniors Card – a special pass that offers great discounts and offers from thousands of participating businesses around the state. “The NSW Seniors Card program exists to help citizens live healthier, happier, more active and affordable lives and is a key priority under the NSW Ageing Strategy,” commented Gladys Berejiklian, Premier of NSW.

There are six key areas where seniors can save some cash – Holidays and Travel, Leisure and Lifestyle, Shopping, Household Needs, Automotive and Professional Services. To get our readers excited, we have collated a few of the discounts on offer within the North Shore in each of the categories.

Holiday and Travel – 10% off accommodation at Killara Inn Hotel and Conference Centre, Ascot Motor



Inn Wahroonga and Waldorf Hornsby Residential Apartments.

Leisure and Lifestyle – \$13 daily seniors tickets at Roseville Cinemas, 18 holes for \$21 Monday-Friday at Gordon Golf Club and 10% off lunch at Portico Restaurant at Greengate Hotel Killara.

Shopping – 10% off purchases at Flower Infusion Florist Wahroonga, 10% off full-priced shoes at Forbes Footwear Hornsby and 10% off purchases at Claphams Furniture and Antiques Lane Cove.

Household Needs – 10% off labour and materials at Rolec Electrical Willoughby, 10% off the total bill at

North Shore Home Improvements St Ives and 10% off all services at Donnelly Roof Repairs Hornsby.

Automotive – 10% off smash repairs and detailing at Colour Rite Smash Repairs Lane Cove, 10% off retail cost of tyres at Mister Tyres Hornsby and 10% off mechanical services at JAXQuickfit Tyres in Pymble and Artarmon.

Professional Services – 20% off taxation and legal services at Northern Suburbs Taxation Chatswood, 10% off all new dentures and repairs at Hornsby Denture Clinic and 10% off professional services fee at Hamilton Funerals Pymble.

Who is eligible for a Seniors Card?

- Must be 60 years of age or over.
- A permanent resident of NSW.
- Must work no more than 20 paid hours per week.

Connecting Seniors and Children

For seniors, isolation and loneliness can be overwhelming, so it is important to keep active in the community and sustain bonds with new friends.

A new program at the council-owned Thomas Carlyle Children’s Centre sees preschoolers doing exactly this, by making friends with residents from the Aveo Lindfield Gardens, aged care facility. The program is being introduced at the centre in the form of one-hour supervised visits to the facility, by preschoolers aged between 4 and 5 years.

According to staff at Thomas Carlyle Children’s Centre, the program reflects other successful initiatives that aim to reduce social isolation and loneliness

amongst aged care residents.

Seniors are not the only ones who benefit from this program, as children learn empathy for older people, how to develop social skills and an awareness of belonging to the wider community.

With the age gap between the visitors and residents around 80 years in most cases, care is being taken to ensure both groups don’t become overwhelmed by the experience. Most residents taking part in the program

are aged between 80 and 90, with the oldest aged 104 years.

So far the children and residents are enjoying shared experiences such as book reading, singing and gardening.

This initiative is an important step in bridging the generational gap, while bringing love and kindness to every member of the community.



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Rejimon Punchayil



John enjoyed the time he spent with his mates at the local club, while shopping at the local centre was his other passion. But John was deprived of his social life when his driving licence was taken away. John found walking a couple of hundred metres a great challenge. He disliked depending on others for his daily club and shopping centre visits. John was too determined to give up what was important in his life. He rediscovered his mobility, independence and social life with his newfound partner, Everest, his mobility scooter.

A mobility scooter means different things to different people. For some, like John, Everest is his primary mode of daily transport. For others, it is a portable convenience they carry in the boot of their car, to be used at shopping malls, flower shows, exhibitions or on holidays.

Therefore, for some, its weight and functionality are significant. As one of

what you expect from a mobility scooter and to discuss with your family, as well as health care professionals before you get one. Once you have decided, find one that meets your unique needs at your local mobility store.

It is not a great idea to put off the decision to get a mobility scooter after discontinuing regular driving, as this may impact your ability to drive a scooter confidently. A responsible mobility scooter provider will ensure the potential user is capable of operating and taking care of the scooter. John said while losing his driving licence was difficult to digest, he understood it was the best outcome. His decision to transition to a mobility scooter helped him realise that it was easier than driving a car, and it really did set him free.

our other clients Helen stated, it's her new pair of legs that guarantees her independence and offers her dignity. It is of paramount importance to think about

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Transformative Invisible Hearing Aids

Isabella Ross

According to the Hearing Care Industry Association, hearing loss is considerably common across our population. With approximately 3.6 million Aussies with hearing loss and difficulties, it is a condition that lots of seniors, in particular, are looking to manage. The statistics are even higher for older Australians, with 1 in 3 people aged between 65 – 74 struggling with hearing loss.

In comes the invisible hearing aid! Perfect for mild to moderately severe hearing loss, these hearing aids are customisable to the individual. Placed in the ear canal, these aids are completely out of sight in comparison to the older models which were bulky and quite a hassle. Even better, is

the convenience of these devices! It can become challenging for older citizens to remember to fit their device each morning, so it is great that this innovative model requires no batteries and no daily maintenance. It is also important for seniors to get their hearing aid from a trusted source, specifically a business which operates as part of the Hearing Care Industry Association

“HCIA members operate professional hearing health care clinics across Australia and are subject to substantial regulations relating to the devices they provide, the way in which they are prescribed, the health professionals they employ and the services they deliver. Australian consumer law is part of the industry’s regulatory framework to which all members must comply,” said HCIA Chairman, Mr Ashley Wilson.

So, if you struggle to hear conversations at the dinner table or catch yourself turning the television volume up a tad too loud, now is the time to get a hearing test and see if these discreet hearing aids are perfect for you.



HCIA member hearing clinics North Shore

- Bay Audio Chatswood Chase
- Neurosensory Wahroonga
- Bloom Hearing Specialists Gordon

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TURRAMURRA OPEN SOON

Myth or Truth?

3 Health Folklores Debunked

Isabella Ross

When it comes to health and wellbeing, it is hard to know what is trustworthy and what is just an urban myth. For centuries we have taken every little piece of information to heart instead of face value, leading to perpetual falsities.

2 A Flu Vaccine Shot Will Give You the Flu: MYTH

Another myth debunked! According to Harvard University's Health Department, the influenza shot is made from an inactivated virus that cannot transmit infection. So, patients who get sick after getting their flu shot cannot blame the illness on their vaccine. Rather, those who get ill were either infected with the flu prior to receiving the vaccine or have contracted another strain of the virus. In Australia, there were 1,255 deaths due to influenza alone in 2017, therefore emphasising the need for us all to get the jab for a great cause – our health!



1 Tanning Beds are Safer than Tanning out in the Sun: MYTH

A dangerous myth, tanning beds can also be incredibly harmful to the skin, just like spending considerable amounts of time in the outdoor sun without protection. Using tanning beds can also significantly increase a person's chance of developing melanoma, otherwise known as the deadliest skin cancer, and Australia's most commonly diagnosed cancer. Sadly, approximately 2 in 3 Aussies will be diagnosed with skin cancer by the time they reach 70, according to the Cancer Council Australia. So avoid the UV in both tanning beds and the outdoor sun, and opt for a self-tanner lotion instead – safer and still looks great!



3 The Five-Second Rule for Dropping Food: MYTH

We are all guilty of doing it. The five-second rule has become part of our nature. Many of us are known to pick up a piece of food if it has only touched the ground for less than five seconds, because we believe it will be 'ok' and not contaminated. However, this myth is unfortunately untrue. It turns out that bacteria can actually transfer incredibly quickly, especially if it's bacteria on the ground! The Business Insider recently revealed that scientists had debunked the myth, with one of the professors leading the study noting that 'bacteria can contaminate instantaneously.'



Relaxation Corner

Hannah Prasad

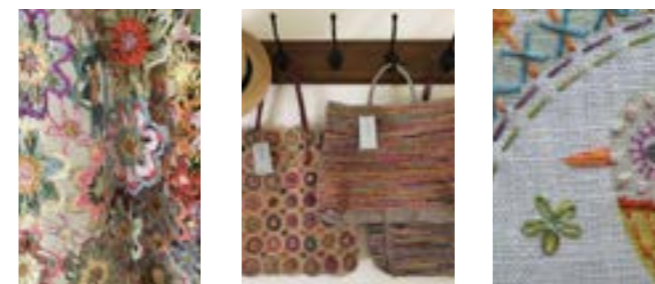
Book

Gratitude and gratefulness have the ability to change your life. Starting a gratitude journal will help you become thankful for each moment, and may even give you a different outlook on tough situations. Try writing down three things you are grateful for in the morning or before bed. Whether it is friends, the sunset or having a job, there is always something to be thankful for.



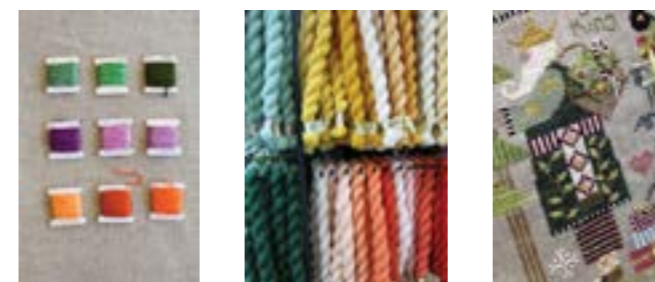
Sound

Whenever the weather starts to heat up and the sun shares its beauty, I always turn to Earth, Wind & Fire. *September* is definitely a favourite, with smooth vocals and funk that floods through the instruments, you can't help but dance and feel uplifted. Another classic, *Let's Groove*, has the same signature sound that evokes a feeling of bliss. Earth, Wind & Fire help me escape and I hope the next time you feel overwhelmed, they bring the same feeling of joy that sparks in me.



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Halloween – Beware of Dental Decay this Spooky Season



Dr Ian Sweeney is a dental surgeon at Northside Dental & Implant Centre, Turramurra.

The idea of giving out handfuls of lollies is enough to make any self-respecting dentist quiver. The reality is though, that the steadily increasing popularity of Halloween means that it is here to stay.

Everybody knows sweet food and drinks lead to dental decay. Bacteria in our mouths use sugar to produce acid, which will dissolve the enamel on teeth, making holes. The more sugar you have, the more holes you will get.

In the 1950s, dentists determined sticky and chewy sweets caused decay faster than a single sweet treat. This is because the total length of time that the teeth were bathed in acid was prolonged.

The time sugar is in your mouth is the key element in determining how many holes will form, or how quickly they will form. One quick sugar burst will have less of an effect than a prolonged supply. So, consuming a single sticky and chewy lolly is just as bad as having lots of small lollies. Remember, the easiest way to neutralise acid produced in the mouth is by drinking water.

Nobody wants to be the Halloween scrooge, so here are a few ideas to help balance your choice of Halloween treats while maintaining healthy values.

- Chocolate is always a favourite with kids. Remember, dark chocolate generally contains less sugar than milk chocolate.
- Try to avoid sticky lollies, as they are harder to remove from teeth and increase the risk of decay.

- Candy on sticks - The last thing we want is children running around with sticks in their mouths. You would be surprised at the damage they can cause if children fall.

A few possible alternatives to lollies on Halloween night can include:

- Bottled water
- Sugar-free treats
- Glow sticks
- Small inexpensive toys such as super balls, stickers or pencils

If your child is consuming sweets, try to time this with or just after a meal. The increased saliva production during a meal will help to cancel out the acids caused by bacteria in your mouth.

Help your child choose a few sweets and consider putting the rest away for another time or giving the remainder of the lolly stash away. Constant grazing of sweets throughout the day is not great for your child's dental health. You can also encourage lots of plain water consumption to help rinse the teeth. Try to stay away from sweetened drinks, juice, sports drinks or fizzy drinks. Finally, don't forget to brush and floss your child's teeth well before bed (and twice a day every day).

Remember, all things in moderation, and have a fun and safe night.

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a hoist on site. Our staff are highly trained and experienced in treating senior patients, patients with special needs and patients with complex medical conditions.

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White Wilderness Arctic

Lewis Godwin

When John Thearle from Turramurra Jewellers heard his friends were looking for someone to fill a space on a trip to Arctic, he knew it was a once in a lifetime opportunity he couldn't pass up. The remote beauty of Arctic is something that not many people are fortunate enough to experience, so we were delighted to speak to John about his journey.

The journey began with the group paddling 500kms up the coastline to a remote area away from the main town.

John fondly recalls, in particular, rows of glaciers and the myriad of wildlife, spotting whales, walrus and plenty of birds.

The group's clear view of the scenery is something he feels was afforded by travelling on a kayak, rather than a cruise ship, as it offered ample time to take everything in.

"You see everything as you go along," John says. "It's a bit like cycling compared to driving a car."

Unlike many other popular tourist spots, the continent appears pristine and untouched, something that can be attributed to the limitations placed on travellers. Those wishing to visit must first get a permit from the governor, and even then,

certain areas such as bird sanctuaries are closed off.

This, John agrees, is part of Arctic's appeal, and what makes it a unique travel destination worthy of anyone's bucket list.

"I'd go there just for the wildlife and the remoteness of it. I just like the fact that you hardly saw anybody."

I just like the fact that you hardly saw anybody."

John Thearle

While there is no shortage of breathtaking sights, one important factor John stresses, is that travellers should not underestimate how hard the trip can be.

"We were just really lucky," John explains. "We planned for about a week's worth of bad weather and we only really had two days of complete fog, and a couple of days where we didn't paddle because it was too windy."



"The statistic is that two out of three trips fail due to bad weather or bears. And two groups got evacuated while we there because of bears. Basically, bears invaded their campsite and trashed their tents and ate their food."

Suffice to say, this was not the kind of holiday that was spent relaxing.

Each morning, John's group would wake up at around seven, pack their boats and be out paddling on the water for most of the day, travelling as far as 36kms on some trips. John showed me the blisters he had formed on his hands from the cold they faced.

The group would seek out appropriate campsites each day, somewhere with water and space to land that was sheltered out of the wind. Supplies were an issue, particularly water, and John explained that while there was plenty of snowmelt, it was often green and contaminated by bird cliffs. Consequently, the group would usually stop by huts in the hopes of finding fuel there.

Once they began settling down for the night, the group would take turns on 'bear watch', rotating one hour on and five



hours off, to watch over the camp with 308 rifles and flares.

Though, the good fortune John's group did experience he feels can be attributed to adequate planning, something he stresses is crucial for getting the most out of your trip.

"Just do lots of planning, really," John advises. "I think everything went well because of the planning that we did. We did weapons practice before we left, and in hindsight, it was good to know the weapon and how to use it before you got there. Knowing now, I'd probably see if you could get a bit more information on huts and whether you can stay in them, and just sussing out campsites."



John's group was able to keep up with the weather by having someone shorthand text updates to them every day. He also suggests talking to the locals, as they can offer invaluable information.

Despite it being difficult at times, John still had an amazing trip, and it seems, would not pass up the opportunity to return someday.

"It was a good time. I'd go back, maybe in a different timescale, closer to the northern lights or something like that."

The Grandeur of Norway

Isabella Ross

Bergen is one of the major cities of Norway, known for its close access to the grand fjords, premium seafood and jaw-dropping mountains. One of the things that struck me the most about the Nordic city, is the appreciation of nature felt by the locals. I was fortunate to stay with close Norwegian friends in Bergen, getting amongst their culture, food, and secret insight. I cannot recommend this destination enough – yes it is considerably expensive, but the people and sights to see were nothing short of beautiful.

NORWEGIAN FJORDS

The number one activity I would recommend when visiting Bergen is booking a fjord cruise. I must warn they are sizeable in price, however, there are options to suit every budget. We chose to do the fjord cruise from Bergen to Mostraumen at 650NOK, equating to approximately 100AUD, which for a day trip in Scandinavia is reasonably cheap. The boat tour was breathtaking – flowing waterfalls, deep blue water, green meadows and snow-capped mountains towering above. We also did a tour by car along the path of the Hardangerfjord region, the fourth longest fjord in the world.

FRESH, SEASONAL FOOD

Lucky to stay with locals, we experienced some absolutely amazing food and produce. Ranging from fluffy crepes, to meatballs, fresh fish, skolebrods (custard buns) and more, the food did not disappoint. We also went to the popular seafood market in the heart of Bergen's city centre, enjoying a mouth-watering seafood paella. The fresh berries were divine as well, with Norwegian strawberries definitely being the cream of the crop.

Since we stayed with friends, we did not come into contact with the hefty price tags attached to a lot of the cuisine, as



often. The seafood paella serving for one was approximately 50AUD. On the odd occasion that we did eat out, for instance when visiting the neighbouring city Voss, a kebab cost a whopping 18AUD and a traditional Norwegian soft serve ice cream 10AUD. However, everything eaten was of exceptional quality and taste.

THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS OF BERGEN

Bergen is known for its iconic mountains. You do not need to be a hiker to enjoy the landscape, with cable car and funicular railway options for some of the mountains. However, I did truly appreciate the view from above. On the first day of our time in Norway, it was their summer solstice – the day with the longest period of daylight. So to mark the occasion, we swam in the ice-cold lake and hiked to the top of a local mountain at sunset. With the sunset at 12:30am, it was an extraordinary experience.

Mount Ulriken was another highlight, being the highest of the seven mountains. Taking a cable car to the top, we had dessert at the restaurant at the peak, looking down below to see we were higher than the cloud line. Lastly, we explored arguably the most well-known, Mt Fløyen, which can be accessed by tourists in the heart of the city. Like the other two, the panoramic view was fantastic, and we spent the day roaming the peak which included a souvenir store, restaurant, duck pond, walking trails and more.

Enjoy Majestic Mangoes

Isabella Ross

It is official – mango season has arrived! This mouth-watering tropical fruit is an Aussie icon in the summertime. Whether eaten on its own, or in a salad, with seafood or on a decadent pavlova, the mango is back and better than ever. *Sydney Observer* sat down with Petrena Welch from Australian Mangoes, to get three of our juicy questions answered.

HOW TO STORE A MANGO?

If your mango isn't ready yet, Ms Welch says to store it somewhere between 18 and 22 degrees Celsius. Never store mangoes in plastic bags, because they need air. Once you get the mango home, eat it within 24 hours, otherwise store it in the fridge as this will halt the ripening process.

HOW TO PICK THE PERFECT MANGO AT THE SHOP?

Contrary to popular belief, the pink blush and red colour that appears on some varieties is not an indicator of ripeness. Kensington Pride or Calypso will be slightly soft to the touch, and should have that potent mango scent, says Petrena.

HAS THE CURRENT DRY CLIMATE AFFECTED THIS SEASON'S CROP?

Ms Welch noted that as with any season, mango growers need to consider the weather conditions. Australian Mangoes Industry Development Officers provide services to growers to help with this decision, such as on farm quality testing, to ensure consumers receive a quality product.



BBQ Mango Cheeks with Lamb

Ingredients:

- 2 fresh Australian mangoes.
- 8 lamb cutlets.
- Vegetable oil.
- Salt & pepper for seasoning.

Dressing Ingredients:

- 1 long red chilli, finely sliced.
- 1 cup coriander leaves.
- Juice from 1 lime.
- Brown sugar.

Method:

1. Start by making a mango hedgehog but without turning the mango cheeks inside out.
2. Heat and lightly oil the BBQ hotplate, add the lamb (seasoned with salt and pepper) and mango cheeks, making sure the mango is flesh side down.
3. Cook lamb to your liking and the mango until it is caramelised.
4. For the dressing, combine chilli, coriander, lime juice and stir in sugar to taste.
5. Turn mango cheeks inside out and place on a large platter with cooked lamb, drizzle with dressing and serve.



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PLENTY OF PARKING

What's On



1 – 30 November

Glamping in the Garden 2019

Enjoy the great outdoors in style with glamping. At this pop-up glamping retreat, guests can expect luxurious, eco-friendly camping in a 160-acre garden outside of Sydney. So don't forget your marshmallows and enjoy the stunning stars.

simplepleasurescamping.co/events/mayfield-garden



2 – 30 November

Japan Supernatural

This exhibition celebrates Japan at the Art Gallery of NSW. Promising to be theatrical and multisensory, get lost in colour at this eye-catching event.

artgallery.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/supernatural/

3 November

Frenchs Forest Organic Food & Farmers Markets

Enjoy beautiful seasonal produce and other surprises at the Sunday markets. The perfect place to meet friends and share a meal, get in early, grab a coffee and stock up on beautiful produce for the week.

organicfoodmarkets.com.au

3 November

Lane Cove Food & Wine By the River

Tambourine Bay Park in Riverview hosts 20 popular regional wine and food stalls, serving up the best of the Orange region. Samples will be available by the glass or half glass, and a range of foodies will be on-site to offer the perfect accompaniment to your wine. The event is family-friendly and includes free face painting and a petting farm.

lanecove.nsw.gov.au



4 November

Connecting to Others

For seniors wanting to stay connected, Hornsby Library is hosting a free event teaching seniors how to make video calls using Skype, WhatsApp and FaceTime.

hornsby.nsw.gov.au/lifestyle/events/



6 November

Can You Spot a Scam?

Hornsby Library is offering a free event on what to do if you are scammed and where you can get help.

hornsby.nsw.gov.au/lifestyle/events/

8, 9 & 10 November

Cake, Bake & Sweets Show

The ultimate foodie experience, the Cake, Bake & Sweets Show features demonstrations by some of Australia's favourite celebrity chefs, baking bargains and snacks on the showroom floor. There will be competitions featuring beginners and professionals alike, on-hand workshops where visitors can take their creations home or savour them on the spot, and celebrity chef and cake artist book signings.

cakebakeandsweets.com/sydney/



10 November

Newtown Festival

This Inner West party celebrates Newtown with a full day of art, music and food. Supporting a great cause and raising funds for the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre, the festival helps people facing homelessness, living with mental illness or those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

newtownfestival.org

14 November

Common Garden Insects

Creepy crawlies have a bad reputation, but they are actually working hard to keep the environment healthy. Dr Lizzy Lowe, a postdoctoral researcher from Macquarie University, will discuss how to manage insects around the home, as well as showcasing the beneficial insects and spiders that live in Sydney.

northsydney.nsw.gov.au

11 November

Steps to a Plastic Free Home

Looking for practical tips on how to improve the sustainability of your home? This free demonstration at Thornleigh Community Centre will guide you on how to reduce the amount of plastic in your home, and how you can make simple swaps that help you live more with less.

hornsby.nsw.gov.au/lifestyle/events/sustainability/steps-to-a-plastic-free-home

15 November

Ladies Clothes Swap

Fast fashion is an industry that doesn't seem to be slowing down. So instead of buying a new item, why not attend this clothes swap and find something that will make the environment and you feel good.

northsydney.nsw.gov.au

16 November

The Jamaican Music and Food Festival

Get ready for a day of reggae, dancehall, dub and rocksteady, food stalls and merchandise at the Greenwood Hotel in North Sydney. This event promises to take you on a journey to the Caribbean, with sunshine, pulsating reggae beats and tantalising tastes.

jmff.com.au

17 November

Sustainable Fashion Workshop

Make the most of your clothes and extend their life at this workshop. Hosted by the passionate duo behind 'The Possibility Project,' they share their passion for changing the fashion industry and the way we purchase and wear our clothing. Don't forget to bring an item of clothing you would like to mend!

kmc.nsw.gov.au



17 November

The Best Gift Market

If you are looking for a unique and memorable Christmas gift, the Best Gift Market is the place for you. Bringing a host of sustainable and ethical items, from fashion and homewares to textiles and kids gifts, there is something for everyone!

randwick.nsw.gov.au/community/whats-on

23 & 24 November

Eryldene Christmas Fair 2019

Wander the exquisite historic gardens of Eryldene and browse through the unique Christmas gifts at each stall. Relax in the shade of the garden café and savour delicious homemade Christmas treats. There is a special offer for complimentary tea and coffee, and a Christmas treat for entry from 1pm on Sunday.

kmc.nsw.gov.au/Things_to_do/Events/activities/

24 November

Pet Festival

Doggy fashion parades, an international food market, a 101 Dalmatians jumping castle and pet workshops are open to you and your furry friends. Those without pets can enjoy a day getting to know a variety of animals.

emergefestival.com.au/events-2019/2019-events/pet-festival-2019/

24 November

Artisans Market

The November Artisan Markets will focus on making Christmas sustainable and easy. It is your one-stop shop for an ethical and relaxed festive season, demonstrating perfect gift buying, low-waste cooking and practical advice on how to reduce stress while cutting down on waste. This event will take place on The Platform at the Coal Loader in the evening. Enjoy a cold drink and beautiful sunset all while taking care of preparation for the holiday season.

northsydney.nsw.gov.au/Waste/Environment/The_Coal Loader/Coal Loader_Events/Artisans_Market

1 December

Beerfest

Explore rare brews, beer/food pairing, unique recipes at free masterclasses and tasting exclusive festival brews from around the country. Located at Centennial Parklands, there will be music, comedy and a line-up of over 300 unique, exotic and small-batch craft beers, ciders, cocktails and wines.

7 December

Rosé Bay – Wine and Food Festival

Experience the South of France on the glorious Sydney Harbour. This special event brings fine food, music and dozens of international and local rosé wines, as well as reds, whites and bubbles. Some of this season's finest wines will be available for testing and on order by the case. So grab a group of friends and get ready for the perfect day out.

eventbrite.com/e/rose-bay-wine-food-and-wine-festival-sydney-nsw-tickets-72343706975



Charismatic Billy Elliot Captivates

Isabella Ross

Sydney Observer was fortunate enough to be invited to the premiere of Billy Elliot the Musical. Needless to say, it did not disappoint! Featuring music by the iconic Elton John, Billy Elliot the Musical has been seen by over 12 million people worldwide. Last month I was lucky enough to be part of that 12 million quota at the Sydney Lyric Theatre at The Star Casino.

The musical's classic narrative follows eleven-year-old Billy's journey from the boxing ring to ballet classes. With a sharp tongue and raw talent, the star character Billy Elliot was performed by Jamie Rogers on the premiere night, who made his professional debut at the tender age of twelve. From Canberra, Rogers has been training and performing in ballet, tap and jazz since the age of seven, his experience and aptitude evident on the night.

Captivating the hearts of the entire theatre, Rogers played the role of Billy Elliot beautifully – bestowing charisma, the quintessential Northern England twang and stage presence. It



was quite funny to hear the musical's iconic use of profanity come from the mouth of such an innocent-looking red-headed boy. Yet that is what audiences love about the storyline – it is raw and honest to the nature of the UK's 1984 – 85 miner's strike. Recognition also needs to be addressed to the musical's costume designer, Nicky Gillibrand, who is a trained fashion textile and costume designer in theatre and opera.

So, for those who have not had the opportunity to see the captivating production, or avid fans who cannot wait to see it again, I would highly encourage Sydneysiders to sit back, relax, and enjoy the show!

The musical is currently playing at Sydney Lyric Theatre until December 15 2019. For tickets or more information visit: billyelliottthemusical.com.au/

What's On Kids

Lane Cove Bush Kids - River Life

When: 8 November
Where: Blackman Park
Prices: \$0 - \$6

Normanhurst West Family Fun Day 2019

When: 10 November
Where: Normanhurst West Public School
Prices: Free

The Wondrous Wizard of Oz presented by Lane Cove Theatre Company

When: 8 - 15 November
Where: The Performance Space at St Aidan's
Prices: \$20 - \$27

Bookworm Corner



'I Really Want a Puppy Mum!'

'I Really Want a Puppy Mum!' by Melita Lovett-Sisson is the story about a child whose greatest wish is to have a puppy of their own. This story is a fun tale about persistence and how a never-give-up attitude can help you achieve your dreams and get a new furry friend.

'The Return of Thelma the Unicorn'

Thelma the unicorn is back and ready for a new adventure. After leaving the spotlight because she did not like being famous, she is ready to get her sparkle back on. The sequel to 'Thelma the Unicorn' by Aaron Blabey, this new release is sure to be a winner with the kids.



'Kindness Grows'

'Kindness Grows' is a peek-through book by Britta Teckentrup, showcasing the power of kindness when angry words start to cause cracks. So let kindness bloom with this stunning book.



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The Power of Prayer

Kerrie Erwin

From an early age, I have always believed in a higher source, and this has helped me with the work I do as a professional energy worker and medium today. My gift was given to me from birth, and it is something I have learnt to live with and take responsibility for, by sitting with teachers for years in development circles.

These days, my teachers are my loving spirit team that are always with me. I have always been enchanted by magical powers, fairies, witches, wizards, spirits, light beings, nature spirits, angels and of course, superheroes. For example, Wonder Woman, Monkey Magic, Astro Boy, Superman, Invisible Man, Batman and the Green Lantern to name a few.

As a child, these realities were real and were a large part of my world. Not only did these stories and archetypes entertain us all for hours, but they always had the same theme, a fight against the dark and light forces. Unfortunately though, as we grew older, the reality was a far more brutal and harsh world than many of us could ever imagine, as we experienced disappointment, illness and realities worse than what we could ever predict.

On a positive note, one of the gifts we were allowed to keep from our magical world and connection was the gift of prayer, simple magic that connects us to the source of energy and love in our world. Just as we receive love from that energy, we can receive

guidance from that energy too. Prayer is a way to put out positive energy with hopeful, healing, loving thoughts. The Christ consciousness energy or what some may call the universe is the source of positive energy, the origin of love and all things hopeful and positive. It is God's loving energy that inspires us to return that love and share it with others less fortunate than ourselves.

Dark energy or negative thinking is soul-destroying and the source of fear, hate and all things negative. When you send negative energy out it comes back to you tenfold, so it is important to watch your thoughts. Prayer is our way to connect to God's positive energy and to feel part of something much bigger than ourselves.

You can use prayer for healing not only for yourself but also for others. Recently I was asked to help a young girl whose horse was about to be put down because of an illness. Lighting a candle I prayed and asked God for a miracle. Later I put the horse on social media and was overwhelmed by the positive response from all my friends. It was truly incredible and I could feel the beautiful energy of compassion and love as gentle waves of pure love and light emerged.

The gift of prayer is truly remarkable. If you are having problems in your life, light a candle and surrender all your fears to spirit. Don't be surprised if you receive a miracle.

Love and Blessings.

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