

## President's Report

Well what a month March turned out to be.

As you know, our classes were cancelled due to co-vid 19. And looks like it might extend longer than we originally thought. You will be advised about term two as the time gets closer.

I hope you are all doing your best to keep your class active at home. It's a bit hard for aqua, but some exercises can be simplified, like arm curl, steps, marching on the spot.

My sincere condolences go out to our tutor, Lindy Bell, who lost her husband Vic last week. Lindy, you and your family are in our thoughts and prayers. Vale Vic, R.I.P.

Please keep listening to news about the virus. We all have to take care at this time, re social distancing, hygiene, etc., but if we are all aware and do the right thing, this will hopefully be nipped in the bud sooner rather than later.

Enjoy your break and sdo look forward to seeing all of you soon.

Evie

## Class News

Many thanks to all our Tutors and members for their understanding of our decision to close classes early. Given the rapid changes in Government decisions, we made the right choice.

We will advise members regarding Term 2 classes on Wednesday the 15th.

It is hoped we can keep Tutors in touch with their classes. To that end, we are asking Tutors to submit activities we can publish in the newsletter. You can tailor activities to your specific classes, or for all members receiving the newsletter.

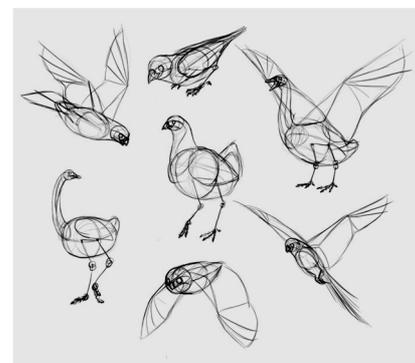
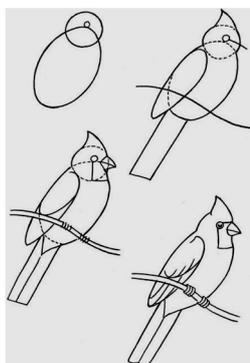
We realise not ever member receives the newsletter, but that is at least a start.

In the meantime, stay safe, stay well and stay inside.

## Draw a Picture of a Bird Day

Pencil, pen, felt tip or chalk, Draw a Picture of a Bird Day - 8th April - is great fun for everyone. It's very straightforward: simply draw a picture of a bird in tribute to our feathered friends.

When you are done, share your drawing on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/U3A-Gympie-Inc](http://www.facebook.com/U3A-Gympie-Inc)



### Happy Birthday!

Dianne O'Connor  
Wendy Edmiston  
Karen Emmerson  
Jeffrey Leggat  
Marilyn Kelsey  
Nickole Lowe

We hope everyone celebrating a birthday this month has a joyous day.

### Editor Needed

Do you enjoy reading this newsletter?  
We are looking for a new Editor to compile and publish the monthly newsletter. Full training available and plenty of overlap with the current editor, before you take sole responsibility.  
Expressions of interest to [news@u3agympie.com](mailto:news@u3agympie.com)

### Dates to Remember

15th April

Advice regarding term 2 arrangements

Bendigo Bank  
BSB: 633 000  
Account: U3A Gympie Inc  
Number 156 399 636

# In Times of Adversity

**Susan Goggan, President Southlakes U3A, NSW, writes:**

**We are fortunate to have a retired couple who lived through the African Ebola pandemic and they have graciously agreed to share their story and learning from this experience with all U3A members.**

The Western African Ebola virus epidemic (2013–2016) was the most widespread outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in history. Worldwide, 28,646 people were infected and 11,323 died.

In 2011, Eileen and I were transferred from northern Alberta, Canada to Lagos, Nigeria where I took up the posting of Audit Division Manager for my employer's African operations. Life was very different in a city with over 20 million people, most facing hardships that were unimaginable (e.g. no running water, sanitation or proper drainage) and foreign to us. We lived in a gated compound with armed security, together with over 40 other expatriate families, in what was deemed as the safest part of town. To get from the airport to our compound (~25Km) we travelled in an armed convoy (led and chase configuration) with the trip taking from 1.5 hours to sometimes more than 3 hours, no toilets breaks allowed. Daily we would average around 10 power outages of varying lengths and internet was very intermittent.

Each family had a company vehicle and an experienced driver (by the way, our driver who lived a fair way away only had power for about 2 hours daily, generally from midnight to 2 or 3 am). Daniel was a beautiful big man, a definite advantage in our new environment, he was our rock. While living just under a kilometre from my office, I had to be driven along the potholed dirt road (wasn't allowed to walk) that could take up to an hour depending on the time of day. I'm thinking you are now getting the picture, life was not always a bowl of roses.

On 20th July 2014, a Liberian man with Ebola virus arrived by plane to Lagos. He died 5 days later. His arrival set off a chain that infected 19 people of whom 7 died. Given the difficult environment, everyone (including us) was very frightened. Here we had a crisis in a place where nothing, except crime, really worked effectively from the Government down. However, amazingly this fear seemed to pull everyone together.

The Government, working in close liaison with the big companies, mine included, quickly introduced very strict measures, controls and curfews. The people fell into line and I believe a huge disaster was averted. Ebola has an incubation period of up to 21 days. Nigeria would be declared Ebola free if there were no new cases identified for a period of 42 days. This occurred on 20th October 2014, we left on 14th September 2014 for my next posting based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Life in Lagos was a roller coaster, lot of highs and lot of lows, but most of the locals we encountered were beautiful, kind people. How blessed we were to have had this experience. One of the greatest gifts from this is that we can now better appreciate many things we previously took for granted. Given our adventures, the following pointers may assist you as we face our current challenge or rather opportunity.

- **Fear is natural but don't panic.** It increases stress and clouds rational thinking. Accept this, think of a silver lining and move forward.
- **Heed the advice of Regulatory Authorities.** They know better than us (although some soothsayers out there may argue this point) and they will be the ones with the best grasp of the bigger picture. They will coordinate and implement the necessary policy, steps, assistance and restrictions to get us through.
- **The crisis will pass.** No one knows how long it will take and forecasts of up to 6 months are stressful and frightening. Break up your time by segmenting it into manageable lengths, this may vary from person to person, but as a suggestion 2 weeks may be a good choice as this aligns with the current self-isolation guideline.
- **Plan your time.** Think of pleasant and enjoyable activities or distractions and use these as a reward for the doing those tasks you deem as boring. You have plenty of time so don't squeeze too much in daily, give yourself enough time, there is always tomorrow.
- **Communication is paramount.** As physical movement may become increasingly restricted, make use of the phone and internet. Keep close contact with family, friends and even some of your U3A members. Conversation with others can work wonders as sometimes our mind can play silly little tricks on us and we just need to be reminded we are all in the same boat and together we can conquer anything.
- **Choose your News Media exposure wisely.** Try and avoid too much focus on items dwelling on sensationalism and emotional commentary, it is quite often only relevant to a very small microcosm and more aimed at boosting viewer ratings rather than disseminating a balanced assessment.
- **An Opportunity to better appreciate life.** We live in a wonderful world and can take a lot of things for granted. Use this period to reflect on how going forward we may become a little more tolerant and appreciative of what we have.
- **Don't forget to Exercise.** Outside if possible, even if is only walking around the perimeter of your home or sitting in your favour chair and moving your legs and arms. It's both physically and mentally rewarding. If you can enjoy our beautiful environment will working out, then even better.
- **Don't place all your eggs (options) in the "electronic" basket.** "Spread your risk and have diversity in your option portfolio (metaphorically speaking)". If the internet slows or goes down for a time have some non-electronic options to pursue





## U3A NETWORK QUEENSLAND INC. I

incorporation No: 1A37380 ABN: 13517501874

Web: [www.u3aqlld.org.au](http://www.u3aqlld.org.au)

PO Box 1271, Stafford Qld 4053

*"Connecting Seniors to Lifelong Learning"*

Dear President and Management Committee Members

It is with great regret that we announce that the 2020 U3A Network State Conference has been cancelled

The decision to cancel was difficult to make, especially given that the conference was scheduled for the month of June which is still more than 2 months away. However, it is believed that the cancellation of the conference is not only consistent with advice being released by health authorities but also serves the best interests of our members.

The hosts of the 2020 conference, U3A Redlands, worked extremely hard to formulate a program that was informative, educational and enjoyable. We are extremely sorry that their efforts over many months have come to nought.

Representatives of the Conference Committee will contact individuals who had registered for the conference to advise the cancellation of registration and refund of conference fees.

You would be aware that the U3A Network Annual General Meeting is normally held on the first day of the conference. The principal business of the AGM is to receive the report of the President, the financial statements and the Auditor's report as well as the conduct of the election of office bearers. The AGM this year will need to be conducted in vastly different circumstances. Due to the current closure of many of our U3As permission has been granted by the Office of Fair Trading to defer the AGM. If circumstances permit, the AGM will be held on 26 August 2020. We hope that by then all U3As will be in a position to participate.

It is proposed that papers, such as the notice of meeting, nomination forms, minutes, etc will be circulated in mid-June and candidate profiles, President's Report, the audited Financial Statements, ballot papers and the name of the Returning Officer for the election, in mid-July.

The Management Committee of the Network will keep in touch so that you are abreast of developments as they unfold.

Yours Sincerely

Gail Bonser, President

## Your Life Choices

(<https://www.yourlifechoices.com.au/>)

This free website is great for providing seniors information on health, wealth, travel and work issues. I read all about pension increases and one-off payments from this site well before the government gets around to telling me.

## Money Matters

Tutors are unpaid volunteers, but you are not expected to suffer financially as a result of your Tutoring. You may ask class members to contribute to the reasonable cost of teaching aids, or you may be able to claim these from U3A Gympie Inc. You should discuss likely costs with the class coordinator and/or the Treasurer before committing yourself to spending money.