



**Grey Power New Zealand  
Federation Inc**

**December 2012**

**Bulletin**

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*The reports contained in this Bulletin are as presented at the December 2012 Board meeting or an abridged version by the individual named as author at foot of each article.*

*The only change made from the original submissions is change of type face to conform to the overall Bulletin format.*

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**Editors Note:**  
*I have corrected spelling or grammatical errors where noticed. I have deleted season's greetings from reports to save space.  
All contributors wish our membership well for the festive season and best wishes for the coming year.  
Reports are presented as written.  
Bob Thompson, Editor/Compiler of the Grey Power Bulletin*

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## Presidents Report

To follow up on my last report to the last Board meeting the Petition on the destroyed Retirement Villages in Christchurch was presented to the Parliament by Hon. Lianne Dalziel and has been referred to a select Committee which has so far not made any progress on the petition and does not appear to have any set date or time to report back the outcome to Parliament. This is very disappointing as the former residents concerns have not been considered as we had hoped.

I attended a Special General Meeting of the Nelson Association which elected a new President and Committee. I have since then received a letter by email raising some issues that are of concern to them.

Along with several other Board Members we attended a summit meeting hosted by Dr. Judy McGregor EEO, Office Human Rights Commission on her research book on Rest Home and Home Care titled "Caring Counts".

The outcome of the meeting is that a coalition group of interested groups is to be set up to try and have the report's recommendations implemented. It is important that there is a well trained work force employed in both the Home Care and Rest Home sectors.

With the new Standard for rest home care to be made mandatory is also going to cause some problems and I was invited to a brief discussion with the Ministry of Health. A paper is being prepared and we will be part of the discussion in the next few weeks.

The advocacy visit to Wellington went very well, and I complement Jan Pentecost for her efforts in arranging the meetings and preparing the briefing notes for those that we met and the Members taking part. It was a very busy week.

Ministry of Social Development are setting up a review of the of the Protection of Personal and Property Rights Act 1988 which was amended in 2007 to provide better protection for people setting up enduring powers of attorney and once in place protect the persons interests and wishes. The review will be looking to see if the changes made in 2007 are effective in providing better protection for people and look at whether more amendments are needed to provide better

protection for those making the Power of Attorney.

I attended the Zone 5 Meeting in Greymouth, although it was disappointing that two Associations did not attend many topics were covered.

## Going Digital Reference group.

I attended a meeting on 16 October and the meeting was briefed on the progress to date. At the end of September the Changeover to the Digital Signal for television was made on the West Coast of the South Island and Hawkes Bay. The Changeover created few problems in those areas. The rest of the South Island will be changed to a digital signal on 30 April 2013.

The targeted assistance package for those over age 75 was taken up by 86% (2339) in Hawkes Bay of those eligible while only 16.4% (410) took advantage of the package on the West Coast. The lower level of take up on the West Coast was probably due to the much higher conversion before the introduction of the package becoming available.

The package is now available for the rest of the South Island; In the North Island the package will become available six months prior to change over date.

## InterRai Governance Board.

The Interai programme is an assessment programme for those needing Home care and Rest Home Care. The rest homes will all be using the programme by the end of June 2014.

The Government has reduced the time by one year for the Rest Homes to have a Registered Nurse trained to do the work. It is to be hoped that the Government has made sufficient funding available for training in the shortened lead in time.

A lot of work needs to be done on bringing the administration under one organisation. At present there are both the Health Department and the DHB,s involved and it could become a function of the National Health Board to provide all funding.

I wish all Members well for the festive season and look forward to the coming year.

**Roy Reid President Grey Power NZ**

## Implementation Team

Since the last Board meeting Mrs S Feringa and Mr Bob Thompson expressed their interest in joining the team and have been co-opted. This brings the Membership to six people and no more will be added. If the team requires expertise in any given area then that will be sought from individuals without them being a member of the team.

One meeting has been held as well as two telephone meetings.

Work continues on the Responsibilities for the Chairs and Members of Standing Committees and NAG Committees as well as the production of manuals for Office holders.

A project plan is being developed as well as a risk Management plan, Quality Assurance plan and a responsibilities manual.

Work on the Constitution is also needed to allow the implementation of the Modernisation Plan adopted at the last AGM.

It is hoped that the work will be completed by 31 March 2013.

**R Reid - President**

## Zone One Report

Hello from Zone 1 in the tropical Far North where the fish never stop biting.

Since overcoming my eyesight problem of 12 plus months and can again see I have been able to get around the Associations once more.

Far North Assn. held a meeting recently which I attended and was pleased to see they had overcome the perennial problem of all Associations and that is of not getting volunteers to fill their committee.

As of other Associations they have got their local problems and because of their geographical situation in relation to the base hospital at Whangarei, transport and appointments are high on the agenda.

However I am working on these and am making progress. Mr Graham Dormer has been elected as new Chairman of Far North Association as Mr Gordon Bibb the previous Chairman had sold his farm and moved into a retirement home in Whangarei.

Far North recently held a morning tea in the local golf club and had distributed several fliers around locally with the result that they got a good turnout with several new

members. Well done Far North and keep up the good work.

A visit to Dargaville to attend a meeting of the Kaipara Association was next and they are also struggling with local problems such as the closing of the local courthouse. Also on SH 12 which runs north from SH 1 at Brynderwyn turnoff north up the west coast and is an integral part of the tourist route which circumnavigates Northland there are 2 one way wooden bridges very near the Matekohe Kauri Museum on which there has been several nasty accidents and a lot of promises from Transit on upgrading but physical action is absolutely non-existent. This association, has joined forces with local people who regularly traverse this road and bridges and bring the seriousness of the situation to notice.

These bridges were built around 1935 and 1938 and are now being used by 44 tonne logging trucks and trailers and Fontera milk tankers and trailers. I have been seeking information on what maintenance these bridges have had since they were built but I am afraid Transit staff are all Don Carter's and pass the buck along the line and as a result I get no information. At a public meeting called by locals which was attended by 75 persons a Transit speaker made the statement there had to be at least 3 fatalities on the bridges before any action will be undertaken. This person who made the statement is known and is probably regretting making such a statement. Also I believe the local MP Mr Mike Sabin is also taking a big interest in the matter and is strongly behind the efforts of the locals.

Kerikeri and Whangarei Assns are working well and are both holding Christmas luncheons in the near future.

At the last Zone meeting a consensus opinion from all Associations on the lack of information from the Modernisation committee to rank and file members was expressed in no uncertain terms which resulted in a resolution that the Zone Director write to the President expressing the Zone's concern and also pointing out that of the 7 Zones in our Federation only Zone 1 did not receive a personal visit from Mr Moffett. We will await a reply.

**Jack Kerr Zone One Director**

## Zone Two Report

It has been a busy time for Associations in Zone 2 with several submissions and the Zone making a submission to the Auckland Transport Draft Plan covering the structure of the Auckland City future transport system. Of particular concern was a policy statement that Auckland Transport had been asked by the NZ Transport Agency to review the Super Gold Card after 3.00pm concession offered by Auckland Council with the view of cancelling it as it "is unaffordable and not consistent with national policy."

This will be of major political significance and the formal hearings are anticipated to begin in December.

An issue in regard to possible overcharging in the Super Gold Card system has been raised with Auckland Transport following the query of a North Shore member.

Grey Power were prominent at a "morning tea" with the Mayor Len Brown in October to celebrate the International Year of the Older Person, the function arising out of the Mayoral meetings held with Len Brown by Grey Power and Age Concern.

Association activities are continuing as usual.

The rates rebate awareness scheme is being progressed by Howick/Pakuranga, and Counties/Manukau have been visiting retirement villages for GP promotion and to get signatures for the CIR.

Auckland have had several successful public meetings, and North Shore is hosting the Minister of Senior Citizens Jo Goodhew at their November meeting.

Our Zone meeting was held on Nov 15<sup>th</sup>, the Zone was very disappointed to learn that there has been little progress on the establishment of the new structure by the Modernisation Implementation Project group. Sandy Feringa of Howick/Pakuranga is now a member of the group.

Bill Rayner was re-appointed as Zone Director for 2013/14 and further consideration to Zone "officers" and operation was deferred until the new structure implementation requirements are clear.

**Bill Rayner Zone Director**

## Zone Three Report

Zone 3 had its last meeting for year on November 5<sup>th</sup> attended by fifty-two members

representing all but four of the Zone Three associations.

Among issues discussed was the Federation Data Base. It was moved by Hamilton seconded by Matamata that the Federation data base be more user friendly and it be fully interactive. The Board has agreed this is "to be done."

Discussion that Grey Power Federation election policy be formulated earlier was debated and agreed that election policies be available at the 2013 AGM.

A Rotorua's members complaint about the September Magazines page 20 article be looked at. The Boards answer was, this advertisement has slipped through the network and the printer was not aware that Grey Power policy was not to advertise the opposition's ware's and this article had been banned some years ago, our new printer will be advised.

The Kiwi Bank deposit scheme. Members would please consider using this scheme as you will get the same rate as other trading banks and in some case's you will get more and if you tell them to flag the account that you are a Grey Power member the Federation will also get a commission from you being identified as a Grey Power member. This will not affect your interest rate so you see if you should decide to put money on fixed deposit with this scheme its beneficial to both you and the Grey Power Federation

**Bruce Purchase Zone Director**

## Zone Four Report

For Zone 4 associations, the past few months have been dominated by continuing concerns over the process by which the suggested increase in capitation fees was pursued and the question of the legality of the postal ballot. It is unfortunate that the executive committee decided to continue with this despite having both a legal opinion that it was unconstitutional, since confirmed by the Federation's lawyers, and a viable alternative proposed to them that would have avoided this situation. Although this issue is unfortunate in itself, it is doubly so that it indicates the change in leadership style laid out in the document "This way forward", and accepted by the Board, has yet to be fully embraced in practice.

Although the failure to move forward as an organisation is now being addressed by

the implementation of the recommendations in the Moffat report, the long struggle to achieve this has left many associations and members frustrated with the pace of change, and dissatisfaction with the perceived performance of the Federation remains an open issue with many associations.

Several associations within the zone have undergone internal problems and assistance has been offered to them as appropriate. Assistance and mediation has also been offered to members who have had issues with either their association or the Federation. Problems at two associations remain outstanding. For one, mediation has been offered and accepted, however the other remains intransigent for the present. This period also saw the passing of John Cable, a life member of both Hutt City Associations and the Federation, and I represented the Board at his funeral.

All associations in the zone indicate successful engagement with local authorities, DHB's etc. Although successful engagement should not necessarily be construed as successful outcome in all cases, the degree to which Grey Power associations are accepted as the appropriate spokesman for older New Zealanders at this level is an achievement that we should make more of in our promotional material.

It has become apparent from conversations I have had that not all members appreciate the scope or reason for the structural changes that are proposed, the impact this will have on the conduct of the Board and the degree of accountability that it is intended that this will provide to member associations. Whilst this again demonstrates that communication remains an area where the Federation needs to pick up its game, it is also clear that association officers and committee members need to work harder to ensure their members are kept up to date.

**P. Matcham Director, Zone 4**

### Zone Five Report

No Report Received

### Zone Six Report

Most associations in Zone 6 still collecting outstanding subs, however there is

likely to be a number of unfinancial members in associations to be written off.

Associations now into Xmas afternoon tea/ parties for their members, I recently attended the Waimate Grey Power members Xmas meeting; it was pleasing to see a bigger attendance than when I attended a members meeting early in 2011. Members were keen to hear what the Federation is up to and was interested to hear about the recent advocacy trip to Wellington.

The Waimate president Mr Ken Brand has to stand down due to ill health. Ken took over Grey Power (Waimate) at a difficult time and has kept it running; we thank Ken for his efforts.

In August again I attended the Ashburton members meeting, again well attended and members were keen to hear the function of a Zone Director, and also the latest on the 'Keepourassets' petition.

The "Keepourassets" petition activity has been progressing well; our Timaru Association has done an outstanding job. As this report goes to press, they have gathered over 3000 signatures on their own. This has been done by sitting weekly in the main street of Timaru, to gather signatures. On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> of November, the President Denise Fitzgerald and her team visited the Geraldine fair and gathered over 300 signatures. (Well done, Denise)

Ashburton Grey Power shares their meeting room, at the Seniors centre with other groups in Ashburton, and recently contributed to a new screen for the meeting room.

Associations report good attendances at their members meeting, Guest speakers covering topics such as Elder Abuse, Digital TV, Preparing for Funerals, Power of Attorney, Recycling waste, AIL sponsorship, etc all topics important to our members.

### **Comments from the last Grey Power Zone 6, 3 Oct. 2012.**

**Discussion papers** distributed to associations without author verification or dating. Example "*Is local body rating system fair and equitable*" had no date or author. Yet we were supposed to read and discuss. Could future discussion papers be properly authorised and dated?

**Local body rates.** Discussion ensued on the submission made to the local body reform committee. General consensus was, the

submission is basically a poll tax, it contained some odd ideas and some poor ones. Grey Power should continue to lobby for the removal of GST on rates, and local bodies should stick to their core business.

**Miles R Jackson Zone Director**

## Zone Seven Report

Associations are growing slowly with new members and have been doing their best collecting signatures for the "Stop the Sale of Assets" - taking part in street marches, gala days and street signature points. There has been a good response in Zone 7.

At the Sept. zone meeting the following issues were discussed.

If superannuants are travelling overseas for a time longer than 29 days they need to contact WINZ to prevent their Super being stopped.

The Auckland city council are considering approving rates rebates to residents of retirement villages.

Board member Jo Millar spoke about high Doctors fees and also that peoples health is becoming available to view online, being run by a new Co.It is already being done by INTERAI so why do a repeat.

The issue of patients being sent home from hospital during the middle of the night was unacceptable.

The Kiwi Saver is of concern as it appears that different fees are being applied by Fund Managers and Govt. Taxation requirements. Kiwi Saver is based on buying units like on the sharemarket, therefore prices can fluctuate.

Zone 7 are considering centralising Zone meetings to Balclutha. This will save time and distance to travel - maximum 2 and a half hours instead of 4 and half.

**Les Glassey Zone 7 Director**

## Membership Report

Membership is continuing to decline overall, with a 10% drop across all associations between October 2011 and October 2012, financial members falling from 66,400 to 59,700.

Several associations had drop offs of over 25% which was a particular concern, whereas other major associations including North Shore, Otago, North2 Canterbury,

Whangarei, Matamata, Waitomo, and Hokitika held their own.

There must be something in the Coromandel water as Whangamata, Mercury Bay, Waihi, and Te Aroha all had increase, along with Wairoa, Wellington SE, and Buller.

Maintaining and increasing membership levels is an ongoing problem that needs to be constantly addressed. Our strength is in the numbers Grey Power represents.

**Bill Rayner - Chair Membership**

## Law and Order

On Tuesday 4th December the mid-day news was about the two young men that allegedly killed a radio announcer a whole year ago last December. Justice is taking to long to administer, despite this the Government is still wanting to close down more courts and saying that there are still to many Judges.

The question needs to be asked, "How long will it take to get perpetrators to court once this happens?"

Our President Roy Reid has made reference to mindless violence on several occasions.

Of increasing concern is the unprovoked violent attacks on our elderly. This must be stopped. The courts need to make an example of the people who are apprehended for the needless beatings of our elderly people. All for a couple of dollars for drugs. It is time for this Government to be held to account.

It is worth noting that Chester Borrows Nation Minister for Courts is willing to come and address you on the programmes the Government has in place for youth offenders

**Bruce Purchase - Law and Order and Licensing Portfolio Chair**

## Communications and Technology

Since our last board meeting in an effort to keep in touch with the wider membership we sought members e-mail addresses through the Grey Power magazine, some associations were apprehensive about this, expressing concern about a privacy issue.

On our recent advocacy visit to Wellington, we visited the Privacy Commissioner and briefed him on our activities, and he had no issue with it. We advised him it was only being used to

communicate information to our members; under no circumstances were these being given to a third party. We are pleased to report that many members have advised our office of their e-mail address to date. A number of associations already have their members e-mail addresses.

Several areas of Grey Power activities have been identified as needing attention, the main one being the Grey Power web-site. It is hoped over the next year, this will be addressed.

As this is a new Standing (Portfolio) Committee, a number of areas and responsibilities are still under discussion and review, and as the 'Implementation Committee' is rolling out its programme, this portfolio has to be mindful that it could be duplicating responsibilities and functions.

**M R Jackson Chair. Communication & Technology Standing Committee**

### Finance Committee Report

This report is brief due to further restructuring at board level.

The finance committee is tight on budget, watching carefully where the year will end financially.

It would appear that an increase in Federation dues will be required.

Some associations are still not paying the Federation Capitation Fee when they receive membership money. It is DUE by 20 days after - please read the constitution clause 7.1 a and b. and make sure your Association secretary is aware of this.

**Les Glassey Finance committee member**

### 50+ Sub-Committee Report

The major issue which still occupies the 50+ sub-committee is ageism in the workforce and its accompanying problem; older people who are made redundant and who are reliant on the unemployment benefit to survive.

**Background:** Over the last two years numerous approaches have been made to Grey Power members, through the Bulletin, for information to enable the 50+ committee to take a well evidenced case to the Minister of Social Development requesting consistent and

fair management of older unemployed workers by Work & Income.

There is much formal evidence of unfair, subjective treatment but we have very few personal stories to tell. Personal and written approaches to the Minister have been made but to little avail although she did say that sanctions would not be applied to older people 60-65 years on sickness or invalids benefits but those on unemployment benefits would face the same punitive work test obligations and sanctions as every-one else even though their chances of finding suitable employment are almost nil.

**Aims:** To request politicians and other decision makers to:

- Rescind the 2007 changes to the Social Security Act (before 2007 persons 60-65yrs old were required to look for work but were not subject to work test and sanctions);
- Grant people in this group a special benefit discrete from the unemployment benefit which would be administered similarly to the separate superannuation centres at Work & Income, would include a realistic abatement rate, would provide appropriate employment training and opportunities for older people who have usually had a life time of work experience and would not include the punitive work test obligations and sanctions. This system would involve administrators with training which recognises that this age group are extremely vulnerable because ageism often means they cannot find suitable employment no matter how hard they try and also recognises that many older redundant workers are suffering from extreme anxiety and loss of self-respect etc. following the loss of, in many cases, life-time employment. Many of these people have also paid taxes for many years and should not be punished when they are in need of societies' help often for the first time in their lives.

#### **Proposed Action:**

- To provide a real life case study for the next Grey Power Quarterly Magazine, along with a request for others to provide details of any similar cases;
- To take yet again a well- documented and evidenced case to the Minister of Social Development



- To take the case to opposition spokespeople and other relevant decision-makers
- To find evidence of discrimination of older workers and if possible take specific cases to the Human Rights Commission.

**Jan Pentecost** [jan.pentecost@gmail.com](mailto:jan.pentecost@gmail.com)

**Shirley Gilmer** [dsgilmer@xtra.co.nz](mailto:dsgilmer@xtra.co.nz)

### Advocacy Committee

The Advocacy team visited Wellington from October 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> 2012:

#### Summary:

- The objectives of the meetings were to lobby and to access information on behalf of Grey Power members and others regarding appropriate issues which have been received by the Federation Board since the last advocacy trip or which are on-going and to request politicians and others to follow up on promised action from the previous advocacy visit.
- The core team consisted of five Grey Power Federation Board members- two other Board members and the off-board chair of the superannuation and taxation standing committee attended selected meetings.
- Lobby visits were organised utilising the updated format as set out in the draft document 'The way forward,' – the main features = all timetabling arrangements were accurate and the advocacy team and those who were visited adhered to them, all issues on the agenda were notified to the advocacy team and those visited before the meetings, and in the main were covered during meetings and many of those visited said they appreciated prior notice of the issues. Therefore I believe the arrangements worked effectively.
- Meeting appointments were made with twenty -four Ministers, Opposition spokespeople, Government Departments and others.
- The main issues covered were health, law and order, local government, the environment, senior social services/superannuation/retirement income, transport, privacy issues and issues faced by deaf people.
- Several issues were resolved, some were to be actioned in some way and a number were

unable to be solved and will therefore be on-going.

I am taking this opportunity to provide a précis of the successes, possibilities and setbacks as a result of the advocacy visit:

1. **Successes** – defined as positive action/information by politicians and others visited by the Grey Power advocacy team
  - New meters for diabetic patients -Pharmac will provide information re the changes-advertisements to be placed in newspapers, road shows and Internet based training programmes for nurses and pharmacists (the latter are being paid to educate people on meter use). Pharmac also provided an article for the Grey Power quarterly magazine re diabetes meter information road-shows.
  - Rest home subsidies - Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Development (Senior Services), Minister of Senior Citizens, Minister of Social Development and Opposition Spokespeople will look at the problem where the Ministry of Health have refused to provide a carry- over loan for rest home payments while property is sold and that there is no appeal for this process.
  - Elderly suicide - Opposition Health Spokesperson will ask questions in the House re the priority of this issue based on information from the Suicide Prevention Information NZ August 2010 newsletter that the suicide rate for people in their 80s is high compared to the general population- the overall suicide rate for the population is 11 per 100,000 people; for 15-19 yr olds the rate is 13.1 and for 80-84 yr olds it is 15.8 (Ministry of Health).
  - National dental health strategy – the Opposition Associate Health spokesperson provided the Grey Power Health standing committee with the strategy as written by Jim Anderton- Grey Power to continue to follow this up.
  - 'Caring Counts' = the results of Dr Judy McGregor's (the Equal Opportunities Commissioner) investigation into the employment conditions for workers in the aged care sector - she believes that in many instances, the worker's conditions breach the human rights legislation and has made corrective recommendations to the Government. Labour informed that the recommendations and any issue they consider is missing from the 'Caring

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- Counts' report will probably appear in their next election policy.
- ACC = destruction of many files in the 1990's therefore old hearing loss records cannot be compared with current hearing loss results - the Opposition ACC Spokesperson to write a letter re this and copy Grey Power in
  - ACC investment in the new private prison detrimental said Greens and Labour
  - Details of a seminar re 'Reforming ACC' will be provided to Grey Power by the Greens senior citizen spokespeople.
  - Ministry of Health (Older Persons' Team) - Grey Power delegation provided with information and documents re the revised Home & Community Support Sector Standard NZS 8158:2012, the MOH team will look at producing a plain English explanation of the standard, the auditing requirements document, strengthening quality assurance in home and community support services and the eligibility requirements for residential care loans. Discussion was also held on the 'Long Term Residential Care' booklet and the large number of copies sent to Grey Power Associations- MOH to look at this - the placement of dementia care units above the ground floor - MOH to look at this next year- 'Smarter Home Services' which provides information to G.Ps and DHBs on best practice components integrated in care pathways.
- The MOH team asked that the Grey Power delegation remain over their allotted appointment time to continue discussions on the above.
- Ministry of Social Development (MSD) - the Grey Power team were informed that:
    - changes are imminent to provide hassle free disability allowance application -- they want Grey Power feedback on the new system - the allowance is based on current costs but the previous year's costs are required so the MSD can get an idea of what current costs may be;
    - businesses as part of the SuperGold card discount system continue to increase-3,800 business now taking part.
      - the health & well-being campaign for older people is aiming to get new business partners
        - they are considering how the PowerSwitch programme can be communicated to their clients
        - they will write a paper re the EPOA for the November issue of the Grey Power Quarterly Magazine
        - 2003 was the last time baselines were reviewed for superannuation
  - Senior Citizen Minister as a top ranking minister = Grey Power policy-the Opposition Senior Citizen spokesperson agrees that this should occur
  - Access to rest homes- sometimes this is controlled by the rest home manager-the Opposition Senior Citizen Spokesperson to put in a written question to the Minister of Health and take this up with Martin Taylor CEO of the NZ Aged Care Association
  - Fair travel for aged care workers -the Opposition Senior Citizen Spokesperson provided the information that in some instances Work & Income, when assessing income, for abatement purposes, include travel allowance as income
  - Nation-wide wills data base: Grey Power have lobbied on this and it is now Labour policy
  - Enduring Power of Attorney (EPOA)- Grey Power raised the question of elder abuse in this situation-Minister of Senior Citizens will address this when the EPOA legislation is reviewed next year- she will seek Grey Power's assistance re this when appropriate. Opposition Senior Citizen Spokesperson requested examples of elder abuse.
- The Green's Spokespeople for Senior Citizens recommended that Grey Power ask the law society for their opinion-to be followed up
- Written driver license renewals = problem with this as a computer-based system-many Grey Power members do not use computers - Associate Minister of Transport is firm that all systems in place must permit access for those unable to use computers.
  - New road user charges = the new requirement for drivers of heavier camper vans to up-grade their licences- the Associate Minister of Transport said there are exemptions - Grey Power to follow this up.
  - The Orewa toll screen = Member request= the inability of older people to read the screen at the toll gate especially when the sun is shining on it- Associate Minister of Transport reported that he had already had a

new anti-glare screen installed as a result of Grey Power's request.

- Minister of Social Development informed that the government will provide more money to help grandparents raising grandchildren and that the baseline for superannuation will be reviewed- both of these have been on-going Grey Power requests.

**2. Possibilities** –defined as the possibility of some action by politicians and others:

- Petrol tax- Grey Power has asked all political parties to consider collecting ACC levies at the petrol/diesel pumps - Labour to consider this.
- Funding of Local Body Rates - some Grey Power Associations are requesting that local authority rates be sourced through a small rise in income tax as a fairer system.
- Opposition Local Government Spokesperson believes this would lead to a loss of local democracy- could look at other means to fund local authorities – will meet with a Grey Power delegation re this
- United Future will keep a watching brief of this with interest- asked would this system have a surcharge for the likes of the Christchurch earthquake?
- Minister of Local Government commented that the Government would not want to remove local decision-making- they set guidelines – but he listened to the proposal, did not appear to dismiss it out of hand.
- Removal of GST on Rates (Grey Power policy) The Greens = E Sage will look at how much revenue would be lost if GST removed
- Rates Rebate Take-up – Grey Power concerned that many older people are unaware of their eligibility for this rebate. - The Greens = Eugenie Sage would look at administering this rebate through Inland Revenue
- Opposition Local Government spokesperson believes Government should provide more information re this
- Minister of Local Bodies explained that people were increasingly applying for the rebate and approximately 70% were superannuitants- he will look at the question

of trust properties receiving or not the rebate and get back to us.

- ACC Funding
  - the Labour ACC spokesperson prefers a pay as you go system-it could reduce the costs 20%-30% - he is writing a paper re this and will inform Grey Power if it is successful - Labour policy = fully funded ACC system
- Fair travel allowances for home carers- Minister of Senior Citizens response= the DHB's are not paying enough but this is being investigated- Grey Power response = could this money be ring-fenced- answer = government do not want to tell DHB's what to do-one size does not fit all- she suggested Grey Power lobby individual DHB's and copy her in
- Superannuation:
  - United Future will be producing a paper for the Retirement Commissioner on their flexible superannuation scheme – means that people can choose when to retire from 60 yrs onwards with an increasing superannuation payment the longer people remain in the workforce.
    - NZ First believe that if their bill re the changes to the payment of superannuation to those who have
      - paid most of their tax as overseas workers etc on a pro rata basis gets into the ballot and became
        - legislation there would be no need to change the receipt age for superannuation.

**3. Setbacks** defined as not much hope presently of action by politicians and others

- Funding Local Body Rates from income tax - Greens would be against this = Eugenie Sage
- GST on Rates -- Minister of Local Government favours retaining GST on rates because the system then remains pure
- Compulsory Third Party Insurance – the Associate Minister of Transport pointed out that evidence discloses only 6% of drivers would be affected; therefore would not make any difference
- Aged Care - Caring Counts- pay parity between carers employed by the DHB's and those in the private sector- those in the former category receive higher rates- Minister of Senior Citizens response = not enough money to pay for this-she will provide us with pay parity charts which

disclose that only 1% of total geriatric beds are not part of the DHB system.

#### 4. Miscellaneous

- Agenda 21 – several Grey Power Associations have requested that the Federation investigate the implications of Agenda 21 = a United Nations global environmental policy which they believe is a 'global conspiracy that aims to end private property rights world-wide.
- Opposition Local Government Spokesperson was unaware of this document; as was the Minister of Local Government
- NZ First distrust the treaty because it makes national sovereignty secondary
- United Future supports this but all international treaties of which New Zealand is a part must support our right to sovereignty and they need to protect our interests
- Green's = Eugenie Sage responded that it is not a global conspiracy but an effort to get a global consensus – any Treaty the government signs should be ratified by parliament
- Opposition Leader D. Shearer met briefly with the Grey Power team and requested that we make an appointment with him on every advocacy visit
- Greens and Labour informed that if Grey Power wants to influence their policies for the next election then they need to start work now.
- Visit to Privacy Commissioner = confirmation that the Grey Power constitution complies with the Privacy Act- the basic premise is that if Grey Power members were likely to be /surprised about what the Federation Board did with their information then it is likely the Board was contravening the Act. As long as the members have been informed of what their information is to be used for there is no problem.

#### **Jan Pentecost Chair Advocacy Standing Committee**

#### **Health Committee**

We are slowly making progress in a few of our ongoing issues in the Health system.

I have had a meeting to show me how the Interai system is operating and although the person advised that this was primarily for Rest Homes, it is obvious that the core questions are very relevant to the Home Care provisions.

The President and I are met with the National Director of Health on 11 December and I have been given contact numbers to follow up on some of our outstanding queries. It was interesting to find the National Health Board members are following up on a concern I had tabled at their board meeting in October with regard to their plan for the Health of Older People and keeping them in their homes longer. The plan originally had no provision for the social interactivity for these people and this is now being addressed.

At the meeting with Dr Moody we were given assurances that anyone who had been taken off Warfarin and preferred to be back on it can have it prescribed without any extra charge.

Two issues which have recently arisen are the charges by St John to transport people to appointments. Board members who live in Auckland will no doubt have seen the article in the New Zealand Herald on 22 November in which a pensioner was charged \$145 by St John to go to a dentist's appointment. I have been advised that if you pay a \$50 annual fee to St John then any transporting they do for you is free.

The other was an article which appeared in the Otago Daily Times in which a Professor at Otago University reported the results of a research they had done on people not receiving free prescriptions after they had used more than 20 prescriptions. I am following this up with the Professor in the New Year,

#### **Jo Millar Chair Health Committee**

#### **Energy Report**

The main issue is of course the sale of assets and the effect that this could have on the cost of electricity once these SOE's are partially sold, the work on the Citizens Initiated Referendum (CIR) in regard to asset sales is being handled by Miles Jackson, so apart from supporting his efforts there is little that the Energy Portfolio can do in this regard. Although I am aware that Molly has been personally active in providing material in support of the CIR campaign.

Another issue that the Energy Portfolio is trying to progress action from the Electricity Authority in regards to transparency in electricity billing. Every electricity bill should clearly identify the separate components that make it up so that consumers know exactly where each dollar is supposed to go. Each Power Bill is made up of three basic components, transmission charges, distribution charges and the retail price of electricity. With the full knowledge of how their bill is made up consumers can then do a more accurate comparison between retailers when they can separate out what their Lines Company is charging and any other costs.

Transmission charges are those imposed by Transpower to get the electricity from the point of generation to your Lines Company's point of supply. At present these costs are hidden in your electricity retailer's charges and could be have inflated, who knows? Your local Distribution Company's charges may also be hidden within your electricity retailer's charges.

**Allen Davies Chair Energy Portfolio**

## Administration Report

**AIL special benefit** –Associations have been furnished with the AIL yellow cards to handout to new members. This eliminates the need for AIL insert one in every magazine issue as some of our more senior members think that they have to return the card each time. Associations should be aware that it is not essential that members return the cards to AIL as all financial members on the Grey Power central database are entitled to this benefit throughout the term of the membership, but members should consider putting the card with their personal papers in case of any unfortunate event that requires someone to know about this entitlement in order to make a claim.

**Kiwibank** – Association committees are reminded to encourage their members to enquire with Kiwibank about the special investment rates for Grey Power members joining through our affiliation.

**August mail** – The mailout at the end of August included a Free full Printout of each Assn's membership, Handbook for Assns [including Guide for Membership Records & Database Instructions, sample forms, and various instructions] and the new Directory.

**Aims, Policies and Objectives** – we were unable to include the Aims, Policies and Objectives booklet as the information for the remaining portfolios has not been forthcoming. Could all chairs please check the information on the website regarding your portfolio and confirm if you are happy with the current summaries so that we can produce and print new booklets and can update the current information on the website.

**Member cards – Cards/labels** – Associations have been asked to request cards (if needed) for 2013 and they should order their labels (blue for 2014 expiry) as soon as they require them. Associations should be made aware that a label is generated separately for both parties under one number (ie Mr and Mrs) and therefore it is important that they have the initials of the 2<sup>nd</sup> party registered on the database. Many Associations only give initials of Mr.

**Purging of unfinancial and deleted members' details** will take place at the end of the financial year – as you are all aware, only financial members receive Magazines after the June issue.

**Christmas closing for Federation office** – 21<sup>st</sup> December to 21<sup>st</sup> January. I will attend the office during this period to check mail and do banking that may come in.

**Violet McCowatt – Chair Administration**

## Social Services

**Telecom mobile phone with large buttons:** For the past few years I have pushed the concept of a phone that is suitable for elder persons to use, with large easily visible keys and with a built in emergency button on the back. Telecom have now such a phone: in the case of trouble pressing the button on the back phones one (and txts up to 3 other) pre-programmed emergency numbers and also raises a localised alarm. This gives some security to elders, especially people with medical problems as medical alarms only work in the vicinity of the home – not on the street. I have been invited to attend the launch and I will send all details to Associations by email. Further, I continue campaigning the MSD to look to fund these phones for people with medical problems (for more information regarding this and other issues please refer to the lobbying report). These phones will be

available for sale at \$129-00 (SIM sold separately).

**SuperGold Card:** I have also spoken to the MSD about expanding the SuperGold Card discounts to include the likes of Countdown which they assure me they will endeavour to do. Hopefully, more news in this regard is to follow.

## **Violet McCowatt Chair Social Services**

### **Privacy Commission**

On a recent visit to the Privacy Commission in Wellington, we were shown a number of pamphlets that associations may be interested in. If you would like to obtain these, please contact the:

Office of the Privacy Commissioner,  
P O Box 10094 Wellington. Or  
[www.privacy.org.nz](http://www.privacy.org.nz)

#### **The Pamphlets were as follows:**

- Your health information / Know your Privacy Rights.
- Good Privacy is good Business /Know your Privacy Rights and obligations
- Keeping your Financial Information Safe,
- Keeping your information Safe On Line,
- Protecting Yourself Against Scams
- Your Personal Information Is Valuable,
- You Control Your Health Information,
- The perils of a medieval Twitterer

## **Miles Jackson**

### **Communication & Technology Chair.**

### **Retirement Villages Report**

**Christchurch Red Zone:-** As nothing has been heard regarding any progress on the petition to the House of Representatives, the Clerk of the Finance & Expenditure Select Committee was recently again contacted. He has informed that the petition has been “tabled and released.” It is however, effectively still with the Select Committee and they will consider it “in due course”? We will continue to follow up on this.

**RVA Conference:-** As a result of my presentation to the Retirement Villages Association, a number of the issues raised have been replied to by the RVA CEO John Collins, some not fully to the satisfaction of residents. Discussions with the RVA will be on-going.

### **Village Gone into Liquidation:-**

The situation is that whilst a Retirement Village can only be on-sold as a Village unless ALL of the residents agree, in this particular case, out of the “planned” over 100 units to be built only 9 were. Some of the residents initially wished to remain. However, no offers to purchase as a Village were forthcoming and the only offer to buy was from a company that wanted it for residential housing. Eventually all residents agreed that they were prepared to leave the Village on the basis that they would receive back the total capital amount each resident had initially paid for their Occupation Right Agreement (ORA).

As the residents had not been in residence for too long, they were all satisfied and able to purchase an ORA in another Village. Whilst I do not wish to witness any Village going into liquidation, it was eventually accepted that the settlement was the most favourable for the residents.

**Portfolio Work:-** There is still an increasing number of enquiries from members considering going into an RV during the past three months. Considering that each enquiry can take from 30 to 60 minutes to answer, this has also occupied some time for the portfolio.

**Appeal:-** An appeal made in the Grey Power Magazine September issue 8 for interested persons who were residents in a retirement village and were knowledgeable or keen enough to learn, to come forward and assist the portfolio was very successful. Subject to approval of the Board, those persons would be considered to be Off-Board member of the Retirement Villages Portfolio. Such a proposal was put to the Board at the recent Board Meeting, and more information was requested.

### **Bill Atkinson**

### **Chair Retirement Villages Portfolio Committee**

### **Research Committee Report**

The period since the last Board meeting has largely been concerned with establishing operational protocols and procedures. These included cover sheets and work sheets to ensure all work is documented and traceable.

Initial contacts have been made with Age Concern NZ with a view to sharing

information and cooperation on future projects. Further contacts will be pursued through the umbrella of Victoria University, and with other agencies specialising in our area of interest. Several members of the Victoria University Institute of policy studies have been approached informally and it is hoped that they will also be prepared to offer assistance pro bono.

The initial task for the committee commissioned by the Board, was to investigate and report on UN Agenda 21 and associated allegations that this document was a conspiracy to, inter alia impose a world government. Research of academic papers and mass media reports indicated that the allegations made were groundless and emanated from extreme right wing groups in the US. The report was tabled at the December Board meeting and was accepted, together with a recommendation that no further action be taken.

The primary procedural task for the next period will be the completion of a draft budget for the forthcoming financial year for incorporation into the Federation draft budget.

**P. Matcham Chair, Research Standing Committee**

### Remits and Regulations

Recently a memo was sent to all Associations Presidents containing the closing dates for remits for the 2013 AGM. Associations can get copies from their Presidents and they are to be read in conjunction with schedule 6 in the by-laws.

As was successfully voted on at 2012 AGM all remits are to be forwarded to Administration Officer at Papakura Office clearly endorsed 'Remit for 2013 AGM' in bottom left hand corner of the envelope. This is save postage and time as when received by Admin Officer she will immediately email copies to the Federation Secretary and myself for action.

I will also be raising a discussion at the December Board meeting on the alteration to submitted remits as when I was handed this portfolio I was told that in no way could anything in a submitted remit be altered.

Despite a lot of time spent searching on this matter I cannot find any regulation that has been introduced whereby the Remit and

Regulation Committee cannot alter spelling mistakes. Even the Incorporate Societies do not have any ruling on this and their statement was "as long as the intent of the remit is not altered at all then alterations such as spelling mistakes and grammar could be altered." Following the discussion on this at the Board Meeting in December there will be a further clause added to number 6 in the by-laws detailing this.

**Jack Kerr Chairman Remit & Regulation Portfolio.**

