



U3A Northern Illawarra Inc A Bridge to Learning



Newsletter No. 72

Editor: Ainslie Lamb

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear U3A members

It seems from news releases that there is to be a lockdown for at least another 90 days, that will take us to the end of June. On that basis, the Committee has concluded that U3A will not be able to resume activities at the TCC or other venues in Term 2.

But U3A is not “cancelled”! Several groups have continued to “meet” online, and they are encouraged to continue to do so, even during the “school holiday” period. The Classics book club is experimenting with Zoom. Other book groups, Current Affairs, Brain Games, Reading Aloud, Australian Studies and Italian Conversation are keeping things going via email exchanges. The Sandpipers walking group are continuing to socialise via emails about their personal walks, even from one member who is in a moon boot at the moment, and another member about his walk in the UK. You are a resourceful lot! If anyone else would like to join these groups over the isolation period, contact their group leaders (details on back page).

Online meetings are not feasible for other groups such as the choir, and the art groups, but you are encouraged to keep singing and painting, so you are ready to resume these group activities, hopefully in Term 3. Maybe you are also learning to play an instrument. We can turn the results of these activities into music and art events when U3A resumes at the Thirroul Community Centre.

A very special ‘Thank you’ to those wonderful people who have been phoning our living alone, isolated members. We fear some members might have fallen through the cracks, mainly those who registered in the last weeks of operation, those who paid on line and didn't send a form or whose details on the form were hard to read. If you would like a call from a U3A Member or would like to be a caller, please let Margaret - 0411526899 or Pam - 42 686981 know.

We have a *U3A Northern Illawarra Facebook* site. Members might like to send photos of things they are getting up to during the break to Joan (jonicat7@gmail.com) who will post them on our FB page.

And if Balance'n'Bones people would to follow the exercises at home, contact me (ainslie2518@gmail.com) if you would like to purchase a copy of the DVD (\$25 inclusive of postage).

For now, have a quiet but safe Easter. Stay well, keep exercising both body and brain, and stay connected with U3A.

Ainslie



10 of the world's best virtual museum and art gallery tours

By Antonia Wilson, *Guardian*, Tue 24 Mar 2020

The originals are out of reach for now, but you can still see world-class art – without the queues or ticket prices – with an online tour of these famous museums

Art lovers can view thousands of paintings, sculptures, installations and new work online – many in minute detail – as well as explore the museums themselves. There are various platforms: from interactive, 360-degree videos and full “walk-around” tours with voiceover descriptions to slideshows with zoomable photos of the world’s greatest artworks. And many allow viewers to get closer to the art than they could do in real life.

J Paul Getty Museum Los Angeles - www.getty.edu

Guggenheim, Bilbao - www.guggenheim-bilbao.eus

Natural History Museum, London www.nhm.ac.uk

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam - www.rijksmuseum.nl

National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, South Korea - www.mmca.go.kr

Musée d'Orsay, Paris www.m.musee-orsay.fr

British Museum www.britishmuseum.org

MASP, São Paulo, Brazil www.masp.org.br

National Gallery, London www.nationalgallery.org.uk

See also National Gallery of Victoria - <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/virtual-tours/>

PROPOSAL FOR A SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP RELATING TO MUSIC

Music is the only sensual pleasure without vice – Samuel Johnson, British lexicographer

If you accept this statement by Dr Johnson and it appeals to you, then please sign up to join a group of similar minded musicians who just enjoy getting together and making music.

If you play, or have ever played, any musical instrument, including the voice, or merely like good music, then you are welcome. Suggestions and ideas for making these sessions recreational and entertaining will be well received.

People who make music together cannot be enemies, at least not while the music lasts - Paul Hindemith, German composer.

Contact Jan Brown (northhillta248ax@internode.on.net or 4268 2017

This could be a very enterprising and entertaining U3A activity – contact Jan so he can start to build the group, in readiness for resumption of U3A activities – Ed.

Make some music. No instrument handy? Make a kazoo out of a toilet paper roll.

1. Poke a hole 2 inches (5.1 cm) from the end of a toilet paper roll. Mark 2 inches (5.1 cm) from the end of the tube with a pen or pencil. Now, place the pen or pencil vertically over the mark and press down until it pokes through the paper roll.
2. Cut a square of wax paper 1 to 2 inches (2.5 to 5.1 cm) wider than the tube's diameter. Wrap the wax paper over the end of the tube with a rubber band. Keep the paper centered so that it wraps over the tube evenly. Cut off the excess paper below the rubber band with a pair of scissors.
3. Press the open end lightly against your mouth and blow. As you blow, making singing or humming sounds, such as "duh" and "doo." Place your finger lightly over the hole on top of the kazoo as you blow into it. Press down to decrease airflow and release to increase airflow—this will change the sound of the notes the kazoo makes! Make sure your lips are dry to get the best quality sounds

I went to get tested for coronavirus. The doctor told me I was all clear, just a touch of Tom Jones flu .I've never heard of it, I said. Oh, he said, it's not unusual.

Life Explained (in case you hadn't figured it out already) (Thanks Wolfgang)

One day, God created the dog and said: "Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of twenty years." The dog said: "That's a long time to be barking. How about only ten years and I'll give you back the other ten?" So God agreed.

On the second day, God created the monkey and said: "Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh. For this, I'll give you a twenty-year life span." The monkey said: "Monkey tricks for twenty years? That's a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back ten like the dog did?" And God agreed.

On the third day, God created the cow and said: "You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves and give milk to support the farmer's family. For this, I will give you a life span of sixty years." The cow said: "That's kind of a tough life you want me to live for sixty years. How about twenty years and I'll give back the other forty?" And God agreed again.

On the fourth day, God created man and said: "Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this, I'll give you twenty years." But man said: "Only twenty years? Could you possibly give me my twenty, the forty the cow gave back, the ten the monkey gave back, and the ten the dog gave back; that makes eighty, okay?" "Okay," said God, "You asked for it."

So that is why for our first twenty years we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves. For the next forty years we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next ten years we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren. And for the last ten years we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone. Life has now been explained to you...

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it too.

Old Granny Adams left half her money to her granddaughter, and half of that amount to her grandson. She left a sixth to her brother, and the remaining \$1000 to the Dogs Home. How much did she leave altogether? *Answer on back page.*

This game helps scientists design COVID drugs. They want you to play

By Liam Mannix *Your Life Choices*, March 31, 2020

If you like solving puzzles, scientists want your help to start designing potential drugs to combat the coronavirus using a game you can play on your computer. The citizen-science project, known as Foldit, hopes to start turning designs into actual drugs within a month.

Asking untrained people to design drugs sounds like pie in the sky. But the science behind the project is very real, independent researchers told *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*. "The lab behind it, led by Professor David Baker, is possibly the best equipped in the world to design a protein," says Associate Professor Ashley Buckle, a protein engineer based at Monash University. "The approach has been shown to work. Not always. But there is a good chance it will."

Foldit is among the world's most-successful citizen-science projects. It challenges users to solve 3D puzzles by finding ways to fit complex shapes together, or build their own new shapes – a cross between 3D Tetris and Minecraft. Those shapes are proteins, the building blocks of the human body.

The program, originally co-ordinated by Professor Baker's Institute for Protein Design at the University of Washington, has been running for more than 10 years and has a string of successes behind it – such as building a protein 20 times more efficient than one designed by scientists, or cracking the shape of another protein important to AIDS drugs. Scientists had been trying to do it for a decade but Foldit players did it in days.

How does solving puzzles bring us closer to a COVID-19 cure?

Our cells are covered in "cellular receptors" – think of them as little antennas that listen for signals from the body. SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, has a long spike that is perfectly shaped to stick on to one particular receptor, like a key sliding into a lock. But if you could make a drug that sticks onto that spike, in effect gumming it up, you could stop the virus infecting people.

Foldit presents players with a 3D model of SARS-CoV-2's spike. The goal: build a protein that will stick onto it. It's much harder than it sounds. Your drug needs to bend around and stick to the extremely complex structure of the spike. Natural selection has finely honed the spike so it sticks perfectly onto our cells – so your drug needs to stick even more perfectly to the spike. The problem is often left to supercomputers, which can use raw computing power to quickly try millions of different shapes. But they have their limits. Humans can learn from their failures and have something supercomputers don't: creativity. That's what gives Foldit its real power.

So far, they've had a few thousand people submit solutions for the COVID puzzle using different shapes. But every extra person helps, says Dr Koepnick. The team will select the best protein shapes soon and begin building them in the lab within the next few weeks. Then they will be tested against SARS-CoV-2 in a lab – and if they find one that works, the drug will go on to other scientists for further testing and possible clinical trials.

To have a go yourself, go to <https://fold.it/>

An Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman walk into a bar Oh, wait... that's 3 people

COVID-19 (coronavirus) scams

Unfortunately, scammers are taking advantage of the spread of coronavirus to exploit and play on the fears of consumers across Australia. Scammers are doing things such as falsely selling coronavirus-related products online, and using fake emails or text messages to try and obtain personal data.

Other scams include phishing emails and phone calls impersonating the World Health Organisation, government authorities, and legitimate businesses – including travel agents and telecommunications companies.

If you think you have been scammed, you can make a report on the Scamwatch website, and find more information about where to get help.

<https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/news/covid-19-coronavirus-scams>

Common types of coronavirus scams

- phishing emails and phone calls impersonating entities. These include the World Health Organisation, government authorities, people confirmed to have the coronavirus, and legitimate businesses such as travel agents and telecommunications companies
- people receiving misinformation about the coronavirus, being sent by text, social media and email
- online shopping scams pretending to be legitimate online sellers, either with a fake website or a fake ad on a genuine retailer site.
- investment scams claiming coronavirus has created opportunities.

Protect yourself

- Be aware of fraudulent emails claiming to be from experts saying that they have information about the virus. For the most up-to-date information about the coronavirus, visit the [Department of Health](#) and the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO).
- The best way to detect a fake trader or social media online shopping scam is to search for reviews before purchasing. No vaccine or cure presently exists for the coronavirus.
- Don't click on links from sources you don't know. They could download viruses onto your computer or device.
- Don't open attachments or click on links in emails, text messages or social media messages you've received from strangers — just press delete.
- Never respond to unsolicited messages and calls that ask for personal or financial details — just press delete or hang up.
- Always keep your computer security up to date with anti-virus and anti-spyware software, and a good firewall. Only buy computer and anti-virus software from a reputable source.

Stay up to date with latest consumer advice relating to COVID-19 (coronavirus) on the ACCC website at: www.accc.gov.au/covid-19

U3A CONTACTS

Management Committee 2020 -

President - Ainslie Lamb Ph: 4283 7818 (ainslie2518@gmail.com)

Vice-President – Operations - Judy Bull - Ph 4267 2417

Vice-President – Development – Sue Rejske Ph: 4285 9002

Treasurer – Judy Ireland – Ph: 0403 618 882

Secretary – and Web administrator – Peter Gibbs Ph 4284 4705

Address correspondence to:

The Secretary, U3A Northern Illawarra, PO Box 849 Thirroul NSW 2515

Publicity Officer: Joan Fleming Ph 0468 964 048

Committee members

Judy Gibbs	Ph 4284 4705
Tricia Kullik	Ph 0405 768 642
Patrick Heaven	Ph: 0448 061 951
Jill Merrin	Ph: 0422 655 711
Margaret Stratton	Ph 0411 526 899

Welfare Officer and Safety Officer : Margaret Stratton Ph: 0411 526 899

Newsletter Editor - Ainslie Lamb Tel: 4283 7818 Proofreader – Ron Browne

Public Officer : Peter Gibbs, 141/201 Pioneer Road, Fairy Meadow NSW 2519

Website: www.northernillawarra.u3anet.org.au

Special Interest Group Convenors

Australian Studies - Toni Conley - toniconley@me.com

Brain Games - Ainslie Lamb - ainslie2518@gmail.com

Book groups - Bronwen Cole - gcol2612@bigpond.net.au

Current Affairs - Wolfgang Kullik - wolfandtricia@gmail.com

Italian Conversation - Freda Turner – freda.turner45@icloud.com

Reading Aloud – Ainslie Lamb - ainslie2518@gmail.com

Answer to puzzle on p. 3 - \$12,000