



## SAARP SOCIAL SERVICES - PINELANDS

(Reg No 2006/003084/08)

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Monthly Meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at Pinelands Bowling Club  
St Stephen's Rd. Doors closed due to Covid-19.

### NEWSLETTER : NOVEMBER 2020

#### Hello again

And so the lockdown continues – 219 days as I write. Trying as it is, though, we are fortunate that we have not so far succumbed to a second wave of the pandemic, as is happening abroad, particularly in Europe. In this connection I thought the following image which Ray Hattingh sent through - very interesting as it comes from a BBC programme, I don't believe that it is fake news:



It's notable that Neanderthal genes are widely distributed throughout Asia and Europe, yet very limited in Africa; which makes one wonder if that has something to do with the fact that Africa has managed to control the spread of the virus far more efficiently than Europe, for instance, despite chronic poverty, lack of water, hygiene, medical and social problems.

Another thing I found interesting recently was an item in The Argus about an international study which has shown that individuals with blood group O have a lower risk of contracting Covid-19 compared to other blood groups (O was the original blood group, and we know the human species originated in Africa). The American Society of Hematology shows that blood group O not only has a lower infection risk but also a lower risk of severe outcomes after contracting the virus & subsequent complications to organs. The data is based on a control group of over 2.2 million people from the general populace who had tests done. The American

results were compared to data the Danish health registry produced based on 473 000 individuals tested for Covid-19, which showed that fewer people with blood type O tested positive and more people with A, B and AB types confirmed with the virus. Although the studies show that some link exists between Covid-19 vulnerability and blood groups, research continues to find out why this should be the case.

On a personal note, I am O negative and my antecedents were Scots and Austrian, but I was born in South Africa – which doesn't tie in with the Neanderthal graphic - strange.

## **HALLOWEEN**

The history of Halloween dates back thousands of years to the Celtic celebration of Samhain (pronounced 'sow-win'), a festival that marked the end of the harvest and the start of a new year. The day was also said to be a time when the veil between the living and the dead was the thinnest, when humans could communicate with those beyond the grave. They'd build bonfires in honour of the dead, and crops & animals as sacrifices to the Celtic gods. Villagers would attend the bonfire wearing costumes of animal heads and skins. The bonfires would attract bugs which then attracted bats; eventually folklore emerged citing bats as harbingers of death or doom.

Several Christian popes attempted to replace "pagan" holidays like Samhain with events of their own design. By 1000 AD, All Souls' Day on 2 November served as a time for the living to pray for the souls of the dead. All Saints' Day, assigned to 1 November, obviously honoured saints but it was also called All Hallows. That made 31 October All Hallows Eve, and later Halloween.

In the 1700s & 1800s, women used to perform rituals in the hope of finding a husband. They would throw apple peels over their shoulders, hoping to see their future husband's initials, and competitively bob for apples at parties because the winner would be the first to marry. The weirdest belief was that by standing in a dark room with a candle in front of a mirror, they would make their future husband's face appear!

Mid-19th century, a wave of Irish immigrants escaping from the potato famine arrived in America and popularized the celebration of Halloween with their new superstitions and customs, like pumpkin jack-o'-lanterns (they used to be carved out of turnips, potatoes, and beets as well).

Trick-or-treating skyrocketed in popularity by the 1950s, when Halloween became a true national event. In this pandemic year, however, the practice has been banned in many states and European countries.

## **BLUE MOON – Saturday 21 October**

Normally there's only one full moon a month. When a second full moon occurs in the same month it is termed a 'Blue Moon' – something that doesn't happen often. This year the 1<sup>st</sup> full moon occurred on the night of 1-2 October; this year's Blue Moon was on 31 October – Halloween night. The last time the two events coincided was in 2001, and it will not happen again for another 19 years.

The extra special thing about this Blue Moon is that it was visible across all world time zones – something that hasn't happened since 1944, and won't occur again until 2039. As the moon is further from the Earth at the moment it is smaller than usual, making it a micro moon; in comparison, a super moon is about 14% larger and 30% brighter.

**LEMONS** are a nutritious fruit packed with vitamin C and antioxidants. Consuming lemon water has ample benefits, including kicking the digestive system into action, fighting off infections, and boosting the immune system.

**1. Aids in Digestion:** Drink a cup of lemon water on an empty stomach in the morning to ease bloating, gas & constipation. Lemon contains minerals that promote healthy digestion, alleviate heartburn & stimulate healthy bowel function.

**2. Promotes Weight Loss:** Evidence suggests lemon water may help shed those stubborn pounds. The tart citrus flavour makes lemon water more refreshing & easier to drink than plain water, and this helps us to drink more fluids. It also curbs appetite & helps prevent binges on sugary sweets.

**3. Encourages Liver Detox:** Lemons help remove toxins that accumulate in the blood over time & may cause a wide range of health issues. Symptoms of toxin overload include constipation, diarrhea, indigestion, nausea, aches and pains, and even memory loss. Lemon water assists the liver in cleansing the body of these damaging invaders.

**4. Boosts Immune Function:** The abundance of vitamin C in lemon provides a powerful immune boost & increases electrolytes to help support the immune system when the body is fighting off infection or illness. Lemons also contain bioflavonoids, which fight free radicals that can cause inflammation & blood vessel damage. Add lemon juice, honey, and ginger root to a cup of hot water for a potent immune-enhancing drink.

**5. Freshens Breath:** Bacteria or lingering food particles can cause bad breath. Lemon water helps alleviate many causes of bad breath by neutralizing the odour from foods like onion and garlic. It also stimulates saliva production, which helps flush the mouth of food and bacteria. Dry mouth can also cause bad breath, so staying hydrated with lemon water can prevent this issue.

**6. Nourishes the Skin:** Lemon contains nutrients that nourish & revitalize the skin. Vitamin C protects against free radical damage & improves hydration, reducing the appearance of wrinkles & keeping skin supple. Lemon water helps flush toxins that can speed aging and damage the skin. It also supports hydration, which helps keep the skin healthy.

**7. Reduces Inflammation:** Chronic inflammation is the root of many modern diseases. Again, lemon water can help fend off free radicals and inflammatory markers in the blood. Uric acid in the joints also leads to inflammation, and lemon water can prevent this buildup as well, easing joint pain and stiffness.

**8. Provides an Energy Boost:** Lemon has an energizing, revitalizing & refresh-ing scent. It awakens the senses and stimulates physiological functions. Lemon water offers energizing effects without the crash that often comes with caffeine.

Furthermore, drinking water of any kind provides hydration that keeps the mind alert throughout the day, fending off afternoon fatigue.

**9. Helps Fight Infection:** Lemon juice has antibacterial & antiviral components that help fight off infections. This, combined with the immunity boost, keeps the body

primed to fight off infections as soon as they develop. Lemon also soothes sore throats caused by viral infection, relaxes the lungs & thins mucus.

**10. Lowers blood pressure:** Lemon is an excellent source of potassium, a mineral that regulates blood pressure & maintains heart health, factors that reduce the risk of stroke, heart attack, anxiety & depression. Potassium deficiency can cause abnormal heartbeat, palpitations, anaemia & headaches. Eating plenty of fruits & vegetables is the best way to get enough potassium, but lemon water increases the quantity of this mineral without extra calories.

**AGEING** (I may have used this several years ago – if so, my apologies!)

**As I get older I realize:**

I talk to myself because sometimes I need expert advice

Sometimes I roll my eyes out loud

1. I don't need anger management – I need people to stop annoying me
2. My people skills are just fine – it's my tolerance of idiots that needs work
3. The biggest lie I tell myself is: 'I don't need to write that down – I'll remember it'
4. When I was a child I thought nap time was punishment; now it's like a mini-vacation
5. The day the world runs out of wine is just too terrible to think about
6. Even duct tape can't fix stupid but it can muffle the sound
7. Wouldn't it be great if we could put ourselves in the tumble dryer for ten minutes and come out wrinkle-free and three sizes smaller
8. "Getting lucky" means walking into a room & remembering why I'm there

**It doesn't look as though we're going to be able to have another meeting or a Christmas lunch this year – so sad; however, I'm not sending Christmas wishes at this stage as I'm sure there'll be some news to pass on to you before the end of the year. Meanwhile, keep safe and look after yourselves with masks, sanitiser and social distancing.**

**Cheers for now**

**Ruth**

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