

One For All



the elul project

From the moment COVID hit and I realized the seriousness of it and its implications for society around me, my thoughts were for others.

Personal safety has naturally been a consideration at all times, but because I am in the fortunate situation of having everything I need and living in Perth, I feel an obligation to do what I can to make life easier for others in tangible ways.

My magnum opus was a return to Bridge teaching – I wrote and emailed lessons in Bridge to members of my club, which were much appreciated. Somehow I think I might have been my best student, because I often took my own advice when playing online!

It has been astounding to see the ingenious ways people have found to bring joy, distraction and company to others. A violinist or an operatic duo perform on their balcony to an audience of neighbours. A symphony orchestra plays Ravel's Bolero on Zoom. Friends begin sending messages - inspirational, diverting, amusing or of great beauty through social media, and we make contact with people we might otherwise not think of, just to make sure they are okay.

Fortunately we have most of our family around us, so it was only a few long weeks while under lockdown that we didn't see the children and grandchildren. I feel for friends and relations whose family members live far away, and whom they might not see again for a very long time.

Everyone I talk to has the same words of gratitude that we are, for now at least, in a safe haven. We comment on how hygiene standards have held colds and flu at bay: these habits should stay with us for a lifetime – such a simple way to slow the spread of contagious illnesses.

The Yamim Norayim will be different this year. We must apply by ballot for seating at the services of our choice, rather than taking our seats in a Shul for granted. A small price to pay, given that we will be celebrating Rosh Hashanah and breaking the Fast with family who live in nearby suburbs.

And the rest of the time? To daven at home. To sit in a comfortable chair, perhaps in the sun, and read the machzor with all the sincerity one would apply if in a Shul (or more, given the level of chatter that happens in Shul). Like the Anzac Day message the buglers spread on the street corners we can feel the bond with others who are doing the same as us – especially those who live in places where they cannot go outdoors at all.

We will say 'we' instead of 'I' in the penitential prayers with even more conviction, because such is our solidarity.

If we miss the sound of the shofar, then please G-d we will hear it next year.

Shana Tovah to you all! May the coming year bring good health, happiness, peace and fulfilment to all.



SUE LEVY

Sue Levy is a lifelong member of Jewish community organisations. She has been an NCJWA member since 1990, a State Board member from 1994 to 2014 and previous Section President of WA, and a National Board member during the tenure of Robyn Lenn. She is currently the Vice-Chair and Secretary of Netanya Group and works for Menora Charity.

ABOUT THE ELUL PROJECT

An initiative aiming to share stories and teachings from Jewish women leaders in our community. Whilst many of us are stuck at home, or isolated from family over Elul and the High Holy Days, we hope this project will serve to inspire, nurture, and uplift during this difficult time.