



The Order of Australia Association

NSW Branch Newsletter

January-February 2026

Patron: Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of NSW

PO Box 561, Parramatta, NSW 2124 | www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/nsw



From your NSW Chair

John Gullotta AM



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Dear NSW Members,

I wish you all a Happy New Year and we look forward to an exciting 2026!

It is pleasing to see that our membership is increasing. There has been increased cultural diversity in our new recipients as well as a close match in gender.

We recently held our successful 2026 Annual Australia Day Harbour Cruise Luncheon aboard MV Captain Cook III. It was a well enjoyed day on our beautiful Sydney Harbour with more than 140 members and friends attending and enjoying the festivities in the air and on the water and foreshore.

The NSW Branch is attending as many regional events as possible and a sincere thank you to our Regional Director, David North OAM and our Hon. Secretary, Dianne North OAM for representing the NSW Branch in our regions, the lifeblood of our Association throughout regional and remote NSW. For groups that need some extra help we will be arranging meetings in our major regional hubs to assist them, as it is my aim as NSW Chair to visit as many regional groups as I can.

I would like to thank all the hardworking NSW Branch Committee members for their support and tireless dedication throughout the year and I look forward to a bigger and better 2026!

I look forward to seeing you all at our AGM on the 19th March 2026 and at other upcoming events.

John

Dr John Gullotta AM

NSW Chair

Email: chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au | Mobile: 0418 233 069

From your NSW Branch Chair

From your NSW National Director

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From your NSW National Director David North OAM

Order of Australia Association National Conference 2026

The Order of Australia Association will host its 38th National Conference from 16–19 April 2026 at Rydges South Bank Brisbane.

This important annual gathering will bring together members from across the country and will feature:

- National and branch meetings
- Welcome receptions
- Keynote speakers and panel discussions
- The Annual General Meeting
- Member forum
- Conference Dinner
- Farewell Lunch

The conference provides an opportunity to reconnect with fellow members, celebrate service to the nation, and contribute to the ongoing development of our Association. For program updates, registration details and pricing, members are encouraged to visit the official Association website.

Membership Update

As of mid-February 2026, national membership stands at 8,047 and continues to grow. We are encouraged by this positive trend and remind all members of the importance of welcoming and encouraging Australia Day 2026 (AD26) recipients to consider joining the Association. Personal invitations and regional engagement remain key to strengthening our membership base.

August 2025 Member Survey – Implementation Progress

Following the August 2025 Member Survey, a broad implementation framework has now been developed for several high-priority initiatives.

These include:

- Enhancements to The Order magazine
- Refined and more targeted recruiting messages
- Increased participation of Foundation scholars
- Expanded hybrid conferencing capability
- Greater cooperation with the Menzies Leadership Foundation
- Development of a youth and schools programme
- An integrated national communications strategy

Further updates will be provided as these initiatives progress.

50th Anniversary of the Order of Australia Association in 2030

As we look ahead to the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Order of Australia Association in 2030, preparations are beginning to document and celebrate this significant milestone.

Regions and members are invited to identify:

- Significant members
- Notable occasions
- Important milestones and achievements

To coordinate this important historical project, we are seeking volunteers to form a team to collect and compile material for publication and archival purposes.

Members interested in contributing are invited to contact the NSW Branch Chair at: chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Website Enhancements

Recent improvements have been made to the Association's website, including a new provision enabling regional pages. This development will allow each Region to establish its own webpage within the national site, improving communication, visibility, and engagement at the regional level.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the values and mission of the Association as we work together "to celebrate and promote outstanding Australian citizenship."

Kind regards

David

David North OAM

NSW Branch Nominated Director

Email: dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

New Members

The Order of Australia Association NSW Branch welcomes the following new members and we look forward to meeting you at our upcoming events.

Mr Chris Gryllis OAM
Mr Omer R Incekara OAM
Mr David Blakeley OAM
Mr Michael J Berry OAM
Mr A Peter Read OAM
Mrs Deborah A Brassey OAM
Ms Caitlin A Delaney AM
Professor Matthew D Dun OAM
Dr Andrew P Wines AM
Ms Sandra Chipchase AM
Mr David R Chandler AM
The Hon Peter L Johnstone AM
Mr Grahame Hill AM
Mr Robert N Lewis OAM
Professor Nicholas Manolios AM
Professor Dr Jim R Macnamara AM
Mr Peter A Roach OAM
Mr Peter J Collings OAM
Dr Andrew Y Kwong OAM
Mr Jeremy Steven Dunkel OAM
Mr John Winston Hollis OAM
Professor Dr Fiona Elder Stewart AM
Mr George Moscos OAM
Mr Neville John Holz OAM
Mr Robert Michael O'Toole OAM
Mr Kenneth Neil Hutt OAM
Mr Christopher John Robison AM
Ms Melanie Victoria Rose Willis AM
Mr Stewart James McLeod PSM OAM
Ms Danielle Sandra Mulholland OAM
Mr Graham Richard Peart OAM
Mr Christopher Noel Colvin OAM
Mrs Patrizia Lucia Cassaniti OAM
Mrs Carol Ann Cope OAM
Mrs Maile Katherine Carnegie AM
Mr Brett Peter Weymark OAM
Mr Naguib Kaldas AO
Professor Andrew Paul Sindone AM

38th National Conference The Order of Australia Association Brisbane 2026

BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE

16th – 19th April 2026



Rydges South Bank Hotel & Conference Venue

Accommodation Reservations open

<https://www.rydges.com/private-page/order-of-australia-association/>

April is a great time to enjoy a Brisbane Autumn at the fabulous South Bank

2026 ORATION

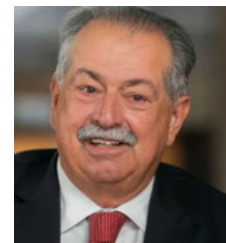


Major General Emeritus Professor John Pearn AO, AM, GCStJ, RFD – globally renowned clinician, academic, philosopher, orator and widely published author.

KEYNOTE PRESENTERS



Shelley Reys AO, is the Chair of the Council for the Order of Australia. Partner of KPMG, a member of Chief Executive Women (CEW).



Andrew N. Liveris AO is a distinguished international business leader and engineer. He is President, Brisbane 2032 Olympic Organising Committee

Experience Brisbane's Art



Service at Historic Anzac Square



Uni Qld Sculptures



Organ Recital - Evensong

Secure Your Conference Booking Here

<https://events.humanitix.com/the-order-of-australia-association-national-conference-2026>

2026 OAA BRISBANE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The 2026 National Conference will be held in Brisbane.
There is an exciting program being developed with more details
via the link above.

We hope you can all attend and support our National Conference.

Order of Australia Merchandise

To see the range of OAA Merchandise available for purchase please click on the link

[OAA MERCHANDISE SHOP](#)

A tip to save on postage and handling is for regional groups to place a “group order” to reduce and spread the postage and handling costs. Multiple items will be put in one postage pack where possible.

For any enquires please call Barb on 0413 008 571

OAA Merchandise is available for all to purchase

Enjoy a scarf, tie or cufflinks



Blue
Knit scarf
\$26.00



Grey
Knit scarf
\$25.00



Blue
Silk scarf
\$52.00



Tie **\$30.00**



Cufflinks
\$35.00



All items and others in the OAA range can be purchased at
www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/shopping-cart

OAA NSW Branch celebrates unity and cultural diversity on Australia Day 2026!

Australia Day is about so much more than the events of one day – it is about where we have come from, who we are as a nation and what we aspire to be. The date of January 26 is an important date in Australia's history that has evolved over time.

On our national day we can reflect on our complete and complex history and understand that acknowledging and reconciling our past helps lay a path to a stronger future. We respect and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' survival, resilience and over 65,000 years of continuous culture. It's also a day we can pay respect to the stories, histories and contributions of the Australians who lived, worked and fought for the values and freedoms we sometimes take for granted.

It is a day that will mean different things to each of us. We are all shaped by our own experiences, and we celebrate living in a dynamic, multicultural nation where everyone's views, beliefs and contributions are valued.

Australians recognise the importance of celebrating our national day – an inclusive day where we acknowledge our traditional owners as well all the other nationalities that make our land so multicultural, so special to live in and be a part of, with its diverse and long-standing culture as we all unite as Australians. Australia Day is a day to reflect, respect and celebrate the Australian spirit and the best of this country – our mateship, our sense of community and our multicultural diversity.

This year a capacity crowd of NSW members and guests enjoyed the Australia Day Harbour cruise and luncheon, a longstanding annual event for our branch. It was a most enjoyable, relaxed day on Sydney Harbour aboard the Captain Cook III on a glorious summer day. Everyone enjoyed the atmosphere with good food, drinks and importantly exchanging stories and life experiences with other Order of Australia recipients from all walks of life and different cultural backgrounds. All aboard had front row seats to the tri-forces ceremony. It began with the Australian Army's 21 Gun Salute echoing across the water from North Sydney. HMAS Canberra, the Royal Australian Navy's flagship, took centre stage as a seahawk helicopter swept overhead, proudly carrying the Australian National Flag in a breathtaking aerial display. High above the Royal Australia Air Force joined the moment with a F-35 Fast-Jet flypast, timed to the final notes of the national anthem at midday, followed by an exhilarating handling display, a testament to precision and skill. This was followed by the Australia Day Ferrython Race, Navy Seahawk Helicopter flag display, Maritime Mayhem water show, Australia Day Harbour Parade, the Tall Ships Race and the 190th Australia day Regatta.

The Order of Australia Association NSW Chair, Dr John Gullotta AM welcomed members and guests and highlighted the importance of The Order of Australia Awards in recognising the significant work and service of our fellow Australians especially in rural and remote areas across our Nation. He also highlighted the importance of unity and inclusivity of all cultures on Australia Day, especially after the events that sadly have occurred over recent months. He thanked everyone for attending and supporting this special day and acknowledged the tremendous contribution that Order of Australia recipients have made to our nation via their hard work, service and dedication.

It was a very successful and enjoyable day and we look forward to reflecting, respecting and celebrating, with unity and cultural inclusivity, every day leading up to Australia Day 2027!















**THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION
NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH**

Members and guests are cordially invited to attend

THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION NSW BRANCH

2026 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

To be held on

Thursday 19th March 2026

in the Cellos Room at **The Castlereagh Boutique Hotel Sydney**

The AGM is open to all financial members and
will commence at **11am sharp.**

The AGM will be followed by the Annual luncheon.

AGM Speakers are

Alyssa Jeffries - Recipient OAA NSW Youth Community Service Award

Jade Harrison – Recipient 2024 Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship

Guest speaker at luncheon to be confirmed

OAA Members for AGM only – No Cost

Please note that only current financial members can vote at the AGM

The final date for submission of proxies is the 12th March 2026.

Proxies must be sent to Hon. Secretary Dianne North OAM – dianne_north@bigpond.com

OAA Financial Members including luncheon - \$70.00 pp (Inc GST) Plus booking fee

Non-members and guests for luncheon - \$100.00 pp (Inc GST) Plus booking fee

Dress: Lounge suit / day dress with decorations (Full size large Medals)

Following the AGM a seated 2 course luncheon with tea and coffee will be served.

Beverages can be purchased from the bar. Bookings essential via the link below.

RSVP ESSENTIAL: NO LATER THAN 12th March 2026.

Please reserve your ticket(s) via this link www.stickytickets.com.au/8FQFKI

OFFICIALCONFIRMATIONANDENTRYTICKETS WILLBE EMAILEDVIASTICKYTICKETS.

Parking available at

Castlereagh Boutique Hotel (\$55/day. Must be prebooked)

Secure Parking Piccadilly Complex (\$30/hour)

Queen Victoria Building (\$59/2 hours)

Wilson Parking 324 Pitt St (From \$15/hour if booked online), 55 Market St (From \$29/hour if booked online)

For further enquires please phone Hon. Secretary Dianne North OAM on 0429 774 363



From your Regional Group Co-ordinator David North OAM

NSW Branch AGM – 19 March 2026

To all members of the Order of Australia Association NSW Branch, our Annual General Meeting and luncheon will be held on Thursday 19 March 2026 at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Castlereagh Street, Sydney.

For our regional members who may be visiting Sydney at that time, we warmly invite you to join us for this special occasion. It will be an opportunity to reconnect with fellow members, enjoy an excellent luncheon, and hear from our special guest speaker. Please note that the election of two committee members is pending.

We look forward to a strong attendance from across the state.

NSW Branch Youth Community Service Award 2026

Information regarding the NSW Branch Youth Community Service Award 2026 will be distributed shortly.

Building on the magnificent 2025 result of over 90 nominations, organisers are preparing for an even greater response this year. An increasing number of NSW high schools are participating in the program, with principals playing a vital role in nominating outstanding students who demonstrate exceptional commitment to service. Award presentations will again include a prestigious ceremony at Government House, providing students and their families with a memorable and inspiring experience. Clear nomination guidelines will be circulated to schools, outlining eligibility, assessment criteria, and key dates.

Encouraging young people to embrace community service reflects the core aims of the Association—fostering leadership, citizenship, and a lifelong commitment to contributing to society.

Australia Day 2026 Honours – A Magnificent NSW Result

For the Australia Day 2026 (AD26) Order of Australia Awards, there were 606 recipients nationally. Of these, 209 were awarded to NSW citizens, distributed across the regions as follows:

- Blue Mountains – 12
- Central Coast – 6 (including 1 Military OAM)
- Central West – 6
- Clarence/Richmond – 5
- Hastings/Coffs – 4
- Dubbo – 6
- Far South – 4
- Hunter – 12 (including 2 Military OAMs)
- Illawarra – 11
- Manning Great Lakes – 2
- New England – 10
- Riverina – 3
- Shoalhaven – 1
- Southern Highlands – 9
- Metropolitan/Northern Beaches – 111
- Southern Tablelands – 7 (operating with the ACT Branch)

This is a magnificent result, with recipients representing an extraordinary diversity of service and achievement. Honourees include leaders in health and medicine, education, agriculture, community welfare, emergency services, local government, defence, arts and culture, environmental stewardship, multicultural engagement, and charitable organisations. Together, they reflect the breadth of contribution that strengthens communities throughout metropolitan and regional NSW.

The Best Position on the NSW Branch Committee

Serving as NSW Branch Regional Coordinator is truly one of the most rewarding roles within our Branch.

Accompanied by Dianne, our NSW Branch Secretary, and fellow committee members—including the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Membership Convenor—I have the privilege of attending Australia Day (AD) and King’s Birthday (KB) regional receptions.

So far in 2026, since AD, we have attended regional events in:

- Hastings
- Illawarra
- Hunter

We look forward to upcoming visits to Far South, Riverina and other regions as invitations are received.

There is great joy in meeting newly appointed recipients in their home regions—hearing their stories firsthand, celebrating their achievements within their own communities, and witnessing the pride of family and friends. Equally rewarding is reconnecting with longstanding members and strengthening the bonds that unite our statewide network.

NSW Branch Calendar – Strengthening Connections

The NSW Branch Calendar for 2026 is almost complete, although several regions are yet to confirm dates (or months with days to be advised) for planned AD and KD awardee events and other activities throughout the year.

Regional activities often include:

- Awardee receptions
- Local Government citizenship ceremonies
- Community recognition events
- School and youth award presentations
- Regional member luncheons and gatherings

A robust and coordinated calendar provides significant advantages. Members travelling within NSW can plan to attend events hosted by other regions, fostering interregional engagement and deeper connections across the Branch. These visits strengthen relationships, broaden perspectives, and reinforce the shared purpose of celebrating and promoting outstanding Australian citizenship.

38th National Conference – Brisbane 2026

The Order of Australia Association will host its 38th National Conference from 16–19 April 2026 at the Rydges South Bank Brisbane.

Attendance at a National Conference offers immense benefits to regions and members alike. It provides:

- Opportunities to share successful regional initiatives
- Insights into governance and best practice
- Inspirational keynote addresses
- Networking with members from across Australia
- Fresh ideas for youth engagement and membership growth

Regions that actively participate often return energised, with new strategies to strengthen local programs, expand community visibility, and enhance member engagement.

As NSW Branch Regional Coordinator, it remains a privilege to witness firsthand the remarkable contribution of our members across regional communities. Together, we continue to uphold and promote the values of service, leadership and citizenship that define the Order of Australia

Kind regards

David

David North OAM

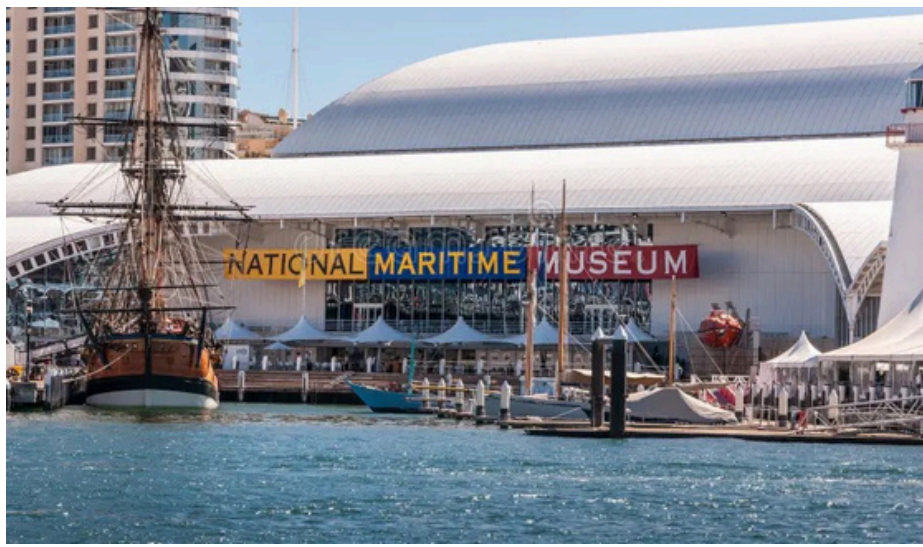
NSW Regional Group Coordinator

Email: dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

AROUND THE REGIONS

We look forward to invigorated engagement in all our regional groups in 2026!

The NSW Branch is able to assist in coordinating events if required via our Regional Group Coordinator, David North OAM.



INVITATION

ILLAWARRA RG VISIT TO NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM - 18TH March 2026

The OAA Illawarra Region invites NSW Members to a special visit to the National Maritime Museum in Sydney on Wednesday 18th March 2026. We have been very fortunate to secure the services of Volunteer Tour Guide, Lindsay May OAM.

We will be catching the train that leaves Wollongong at 7.57AM to Central. We then catch the L1 Light rail to The Star where we will be met by Lindsay and taken on a personal tour of the museum.

For groups of 10 or more there is a 20% discount on admission. Concession is \$30 (\$24 after discount).

We will tour all ships open on the day, HMAS Vampire, HMB Endeavour, Duyfken, and HMAS Onslow, the permanent galleries, the special exhibition Ocean Photographer of the Year (end date 3rd May 2026), and Ultimate Depth, featuring James Cameron's Deepsea Challenger.

Lunch will be at Ripples Maritime Museum Cafe, or feel free to make your own arrangements.

After the tour we can catch the light rail back to Central to catch either the 15.04 train or 16.01 train back to Wollongong. For those more adventurous we can catch a ferry from Pyrmont Wharf back to Circular Quay to catch either the train or light rail to Central for the train back to Wollongong.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested in coming. We need to give expected numbers to the Museum and make our group booking in the cafe. You are welcome to bring family members or friends. The more the merrier!

Kindest regards

Di

Dianne North OAM B.Pharm

OAA NSW Honorary Secretary

OAA Illawarra Event Co-Ordinator

M. 0429 774 363

E: dianne_north@bigpond.com

OAA Illawarra Region High Tea - 20th February 2026

The Order of Australia Association Illawarra Region gathered on Friday, 20 February, at the Fraternity Club in Fairy Meadow to celebrate this year's Australia Day Honours recipients. The event brought together 57 attendees, including eight awardees from the Illawarra and one from the Shoalhaven.

Convenor Phil Thompson OAM introduced each recipient, acknowledging their outstanding contributions to the community:

- Jennifer King OAM – for service to youth through Scouts
- Robert Lambourn OAM – for service to basketball as an official
- Ian Mackay OAM – for service to the Illawarra community
- Margaret Snelling OAM – for service to hockey
- Ross Taylor OAM – for service to surf lifesaving and to the Illawarra community
- John Weeks OAM – for service to secondary education
- Shane Wicks OAM – for service to the community through emergency response organisations
- Anthony Zuiderwyck OAM – for service to youth and to the community
- Ken Hutt OAM (Shoalhaven) – for service to the Shoalhaven community through a range of roles, including Rotary

Representing the OAA NSW Branch, Gary Smith AM congratulated the recipients and reflected on the 50th anniversary of the Australian Honours system, established by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in 1975. He presented each recipient with a commemorative 50th anniversary lapel pin. The OAA NSW Hon.Secretary, Di North OAM, spoke about upcoming activities and encouraged members to register for the National Conference in Brisbane.

OAA National Board member, David North OAM gave an update on National activities.

Guests enjoyed a delightful High Tea featuring scones, savoury pastries, slices, and sandwiches, adding to the warm and celebratory atmosphere.

The Illawarra Region was especially pleased to welcome several members from the Shoalhaven, including Joan Crabb OAM, who received her award in the 2025 King's Birthday Honours for her contributions to speleology and community service. Now in her 90s, Joan remains an active and inspiring community member.

The event was a heartfelt celebration of service, dedication, and the remarkable individuals who continue to strengthen communities across the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.



In Memoriam

We remember our members that have recently passed as well as their selfless service and the significant contribution they made to our community.



“Forever in our hearts”

**Mr Graham N Nock AM OBE
Dr John H Anker AM
Dr George M Stathers OAM
Dr Janet McCredie AM
Mr George K Boyd AM
Ms Lynn Andrews OAM**



Wearing and replacement of your insignia

Please see below for further details but remember if you are wearing the full-size or miniature medal do not wear the lapel pin or brooch at the same time.

WEARING AND/OR REPLACEMENT OF YOUR INSIGNIA

We are pleased to provide this useful information for our Members; it is suggested you fold this small sheet in two and place it in your insignia box for future reference.

Members of the Association are sometimes confused as to the appropriate wearing of the insignia of the Order. Guidelines have been set down but the advice from the Honours Secretariat is that they are '**guidelines**'.

The full size medal is worn in the daytime on ceremonial occasions such as Australia Day, Anzac Day, Church Services, Investitures and the like or as indicated on an invitation. For evening wear (after 5pm), the Miniature is worn, except for Companions and Officers who wear the full size insignia on all occasions.

The lapel badge or brooch should be worn by Members whenever possible to mark their membership of the Order. The insignia is worn either on a ribbon

around the neck or on the left breast, depending on the Award, and when worn with other decorations must be in its proper Precedence.

In writing post-nominals after a surname, the Order of Australia awards are placed in front of most other awards. Further advice on the order of wearing insignia, *eg* for those who have received more than one award, is available from: Honours Secretariat, Government House, Canberra ACT 2600 - Phone 1800 552 275 or (02) 6283 3533.

REPLACEMENT - *Lapel pins and ladies brooches* are available for purchase by contacting the Honours Secretariat, Government House, Canberra. The prices for these can vary so it would be advisable to phone for current prices prior to requesting purchase.

The phone number to ring is (02) 6283 3617. Payment for these can be made by cheque/money order to "The Collector of Public Monies" or over the phone by quoting your credit card details.

***Should your insignia be lost or stolen* you may request the purchase of a replacement from the Honours Secretariat.** The request is to be accompanied by a Statutory Declaration and, if possible, a copy of the Police Report.

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WITH THE BEST COMPLIMENTS OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION, NSW BRANCH

On behalf of our Chairman and the NSW Branch Committee

Thank you for reading!