

# The Difference

PALM LAKE CARE MT WARREN PARK DECEMBER - JANUARY 2025



‘Tis the season to get festive!



Season's greetings to you all!  
We've enjoyed decorating our community together and baking our fave Christmas family recipes.

Our residents and staff also donated a wonderful array of brand new gifts to the RizeUp Christmas appeal - helping victims of domestic violence find joy this season. As well, our residents were the recipients of some lovely gifts donated by Gold Coast Seniors Round Table Network. What goes around definitely comes around!

Company awards announced

Who are our top performing team members across the company? Find out on Page 8!

Here, we are united

Check out what your fellow Palm Lake Care community members have been up to





# Here, you are welcome



**Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park**  
Service Manager,  
Vanessa Gawith

The silly season is in full swing as I am penning this message to you today! Whilst reflecting on the past six months, since I joined the Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park community, I am so appreciative of the wonderful engaging and supportive community we have – it truly is a testament to the residents, team and families that make this community special. It has been a very busy couple of months and it's been lovely to hear this week the positive feedback from you all on the eve of our festive season.

The team members at Mt Warren Park hope that you have a fabulous Christmas and enjoy your time with family and friends. We are looking forward to the New Year and the new opportunities it will bring. Merry Christmas!



**Palm Lake Care**  
Chief Operating Officer,  
Trish Heke

As we approach the festive season, I would like to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to all the staff, families, volunteers and residents who make our Palm Lake Care communities so special. This year has been one of growth, resilience and shared commitment to providing exceptional care and support to those who need it most. Together, we overcome challenges, celebrate milestones and create countless moments of joy.

Christmas is a time to reflect on the blessings of the year and look forward to the opportunities ahead. It's a time for connection, kindness and spreading cheer. I am proud of the way our team has come together to ensure that every resident feels supported, valued and loved. Their dedication, compassion and professionalism are what make our communities places of warmth and comfort.

On behalf of the entire leadership team, I wish you and your families a joyful and peaceful Christmas season. May it be filled with happiness and good health, and spent in the company of those you hold dear. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

PS. This year, all seven of our Palm Lake Care communities, along with members of the greater Palm Lake Group, supported the RizeUp Christmas Appeal. We collected a mountain of beautiful presents that will be gifted to children of families in domestic violence situations who otherwise might not have a gift under their tree this Christmas. Our efforts were for smiles we will never see, but will know were there, on Christmas morning. A massive thank you to all for your generosity.

## Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park

Looking for more information about Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park? Here's where you can find us:

**PHONE:**  
07 3444 6000

**STREET ADDRESS:**  
33 Mt Warren Boulevard  
Mt Warren Park QLD 4207

**EMAIL:**  
mtwarrencaresm@palllake.com.au

**WEBSITE:**  
palllakecare.com.au

**GET SOCIAL:**  
Follow us on Facebook  
and on Instagram  
(@palllake.care)

## Key local personnel

Service Manager: Vanessa Gawith  
mtwarrencaresm@palllake.com.au  
Service Manager Support: Peng Zhou  
Admin: Diane and Kara  
Customer Experience: Hayley Alagiah  
Clinical Manager: Maxine Heard  
Lifestyle Coordinator: Leona Counsell  
Chef manager: Jay Jepsen  
Housekeeping Team Leader:  
Tracie Hamilton



## News briefs

### Meeting dates for your diary

Communication is at the heart of all that we do. We engage, listen and respond, which is why we'd love to have you join us at our upcoming Residents' Meetings:

- **January 8**
- **February 12**

Food Focus meetings are on:

- **January 17**
- **February 21**

All meetings are held at 1.15pm in the Harlequin activity room. No RSVP is required. We look forward to seeing you there!



**Pictured above:** Our annual 'Decorate your door' competition has been fun!



### Meet Maxine

**LIKE INTEGRAL LINKS IN A VERY IMPORTANT CHAIN, EVERYONE'S ROLE HERE MAKES A DIFFERENCE, WHICH IS WHY WE'D LOVE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO CLINICAL MANAGER MAXINE HEARD...**

**What are three words that best describe you:** Firm, but fair

**Tell us about your roles leading up to your current position:** I have worked 22 years in aged care, 16 of those years as a Clinical Manager. I have also been a palliative care and stroke nurse in the UK.

**What does your average day entail, in your role at PLC:** Ensuring the wellbeing of residents. Liaising with families, dealing with clinical concerns, managing clinical staff.

**What's your favourite part of your job:** Forming relationships with my residents and listening to their stories. I love learning from them.

**How do you like to spend your downtime:** Shopping, going to the beach, walking my dogs and spending time with my grandchildren.

**What is something that our residents may not know about you:** I met my husband and married him two days later. We have been married 37 years, have six children and we have lived in 12 different countries.

**What advice do you have for others considering a career in aged care:** Be committed.



### Meet Jan

**WE WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE TO YOU ONE OF OUR LOVELY PALM LAKE CARE MT WARREN PARK RESIDENTS, JAN BISHOP...**

**Tell us about your upbringing:** I was born in Masterton, NZ. I moved around a lot as a child to different sheep farms across the middle of NZ due to my dad being a shepherd. My favourite memory as a child is my pet lamb, pig and the horse I had.

**Tell us about your working career:** Over 50+ years I had 26 jobs! My favourite one would be dressmaking in factories and at home. I think I most enjoyed this as my grandmother was a tailor and I dreamed of being like her.

**Tell us about your family and where you lived:** I have six children with a 15-year gap between the oldest and youngest. We lived in different towns in NZ and Australia.

**What hobbies/sports/special interests have you had:** I didn't like sport, however knitting and sewing were special to me.

**What's your favourite way to spend the day nowadays, here at PLC:** I enjoy reading books about true stories of life.

**What are three words that best describe you:** Now as I am older I think I am compassionate, friendly and tidy.

**What advice do you have for young adults:** Just be yourself, be honest and look after your body as it's your only one.



# Lifestyle Team's report

**WHERE HAS OUR TIME GONE THESE LAST COUPLE OF MONTHS? IT HAS FLOWN BY AS WE HAVE ALL BEEN SO BUSY HAVING FUN!**

Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park hosted a Grandparent's Day during the September school holidays (pictured this page). The event was well attended with around 60 people joining in the fun including our local Beenleigh Kindy kids. The morning started off with a variety of games, craft and a morning tea followed by a visit from Harmony Hooves Healing Hearts. Our residents fundraised for this event and donated the money to this great animal rescue organisation. It was lovely to see our residents still helping our local community where they can. Everyone agreed that it was a lovely morning and enjoyed making memories with their families

On October 9, we hosted a Mental Health Week celebration. We know it is important to look after our mental health - no matter what age. This year's theme for the event was "Connections". We hosted a morning tea and invited Palm Lake Care Bethania to join us as well as our Palm Lake Resort Mt Warren Park friends and Beenleigh Quota. Entertainment on the day was provided by our very own Palm Lake Choir who connect each fortnight through their love of singing. We were also very privileged to have Will Nicholas, our lovely Griffith Uni Intern, do a talk about how to look after our mental health. Will also showed us some breathing techniques to help us relax. It was a lovely morning. We finished off by having a virtual catch-up with some of our other Palm Lake Care locations to find out what

they had planned for Mental Health Week. We all agreed that we should be looking after our mental health every day, not just this one week every year.

October brought us Seniors Month. Our residents decided this is their month to celebrate all things aging - including what they can still do and that is to have a great time! On October 9, we visited Kedron Wavell Services Club to watch the "Dolly, I will always love you" show starring Brooke McMullen (pictured top right). The show was followed by a lovely lunch in the club and we returned home just in time before a big storm hit. On October 16, we headed off to Wynnum to watch the Andrew Sisters Show and then hit Cleveland point for a fish-and-chips lunch by the water. Our major celebration for the month was our annual Mt Warren Park Gala, as you would have seen on the cover of this newsletter (and pictured right). This year's theme was "Country and Western" and after a lot of planning and making table decorations throughout the year, a great night was had by all.

Pictured right and below, we also continue to enjoy our weekly community barbecues where our lovely residents get to socialise with their neighbours. Not only do they get to enjoy a lovely catch up, our gentlemen also get to help barbecue the food because, as we all know, the men cook the best barbecues around here - and even do a great job cleaning up afterwards!

**Leona Counsell,  
Lifestyle Team Leader**







# What a ball!

Our annual Gala Ball took on a country and western theme this year and, boy, did we get right into the spirit!



## Seasonal mental health awareness

The holidays, while festive, can also bring a flurry of emotions and stress for many of us. It's important to navigate this season with care...

First and foremost, it's vital to recognise and honour your feelings. It's perfectly normal to experience a range of emotions during this time, and giving voice to these feelings can be incredibly cathartic. Don't hesitate to talk to a staff member, a friend, or reach out to loved ones for support when you need it.

Establishing a daily routine can also be a source of comfort. Engage in activities that bring you joy, such as reading, crafting, or joining in one of our organised social events. These consistent routines help provide a sense of order and normalcy.

Connection is also key during the holiday season. Participate in as many of our community's holiday events as you can or enjoy leisurely chats with fellow residents. If you're inclined to use technology, a video chat can bridge the distance between you and your family.

Gratitude can also be a powerful tool for mental wellness. Reflecting on the aspects of your life that you're thankful for can instantly enhance your mood and outlook. Consider sharing stories of gratitude with friends during a coffee morning or in a casual setting.

If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed by the festive rush, remember that setting boundaries is healthy. It's okay to choose which activities you want to participate in and which you might skip this year. Our dedicated team members are always here to support your mental wellbeing. Should you find the season challenging, we encourage you to reach out for the support you need. Here's to a peaceful and joyful Palm Lake Care holiday season.

## Giving the gift of you

On the topic of Christmas holiday stress, many aged care residents worry about buying just the right presents for their family members - and vice versa.

But what families don't often realise is that many of the best 'gifts' are not found on any retail shop shelf - and they aren't the most expensive ones either. Have you considered some of these ideas for gift giving:

**Handmade scrapbooks:** A scrapbook filled with photos, notes and keepsakes from the past is a beautiful way to bring your family's history to life. You can curate themed pages adorned with photos, ticket stubs or mementos to reflect special memories – think family holidays, childhood memories or important milestones. Alternatively, consider a picture frame to display a collection of items that together tell a story. Vintage photographs, concert tickets or handwritten letters are all good starting points.

**Storyworth:** This website allows users to answer questions about their past, including questions that can be submitted by friends and family members. At the end of the year, the answers are compiled into a book. These stories offer insight into family traditions, adventures and life lessons. A great gift for the older generations to give to the family's younger generations.

**Digital frames:** A modern twist on a classic present, a digital frame shares hundreds of photos in a rotating display. Certain frames allow you to preload a selection of family snapshots, while others can be added to remotely (via cloud technology or even email) for a display that constantly changes as your family does. If a picture tells a thousand words, we can't think of a better way to keep your memories alive. Google Skylight Frames for a great option.

**Furniture with meaning:** Passing down a cherished piece at this time of the year can have great significance. Whether it's a rocking chair that's been used by generations or a coffee table where family game nights took place, these pieces allow memories to live on – even when the walls around them change. Make sure the recipient knows the story behind the piece – you could even inscribe dates or a short message on the underside of the furniture piece.

**Sentimental jewellery:** As some of our most treasured possessions, jewellery can carry deep nostalgia – especially when the piece has been passed down through the generations. That necklace or watch that has been gathering dust in your nightstand could become a cherished gift for your child or grandchild. Again, make sure the story/history of the piece is captured and goes to the piece's new owner as well.

Beyond all this, the holiday season is about presence - not always presents. Make sure you remember that, too.



# Here, we are united

*Pictured right: Palm Lake Care's 2024 Employee of the Year award went to Lyn Ferguson who works in Hotel Services at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba. What an achievement - well done, Lyn!*



**Overall Palm Lake Care Employee of the Year:**

Lyn Ferguson, Hotel Services at Palm Lake Care Toowoomba

**Leading Culture Support Services Excellence Award:**

Palm Lake Care Bargara

**Leading Culture Customer Services Excellence Award:**

Palm Lake Care Deception Bay

**Leading Culture Dining Experience Award:**

Larry Fernando of Palm Lake Care Toowoomba

**Leading Culture Lifestyle Services Excellence Award:**

Leona Counsell of Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park

**Emerging Leader Award:**

Yari Ottoboni of Palm Lake Care Bargara  
Hayley Alagiah of the Customer Experience Team

**Leading Culture Operational Excellence Award:**

Caroline Bosnic of Palm Lake Care Bethania  
Vanessa Gawith of Palm Lake Care Mt Warren Park

## The Central Support team

At the end of each year, we host an annual company awards event that aims to showcase the best performing team members and teams from across our seven Palm Lake Care communities.

The 2024 awards have just been run - and won - with a stellar cast of winners announced. But when you think about it, the 'real' winners are our residents who are the ones who benefit from the dedication, loyalty and care that this talent pool provides daily. We congratulate these people and teams and are so grateful that they choose to call Palm Lake Care their (work) family!

**Bargara Staff Member of the Year:**  
Yari Ottoboni, Service Manager Support

**Beachmere Staff Member of the Year:**  
Laura Joyce, Personal Carer

**Bethania Staff Member of the Year:**  
Jamie Romana, Hotel Services

**Caloundra Staff Member of the Year:**  
Elissa Carter, Personal Care Support

**Deception Bay Staff Member of the Year:**  
Tania Bell, Administration Officer

**Mt Warren Park Staff Member of the Year:**  
Zilda De Camargo Teixeira, Personal Carer

**Toowoomba Staff Member of the Year:**  
Lyn Ferguson, Hotel Services

Palm Lake Care spans seven individual communities across South-East Queensland. Given the thousands of residents and team members who call Palm Lake Care their own, there's always so much going on! In our new regular series, let us connect you with your fellow communities and take a peek at what's been making news around the grounds...

## Beachmere



Staying connected to their community is important to our Beachmere residents.

So when Halloween rolled around, the residents decided they'd like to invite the local children to stop by for some 'trick or treat' goodies. Rest assured our visitors were all offered a treat - no tricks! The residents had a great time, smiling and talking with the visiting children who all came in costume. Some of our cheeky residents even scored a bag of Halloween lollies for themselves!

## Bethania

It's definitely the season for festivities - and we've seen it all at Palm Lake Care Bethania over the past few weeks!

From Melbourne Cup day 'Fashions on the Field' and more, to ghoulish costumes for Halloween, to the bright and wonderful Diwali cultural celebration, to all our various Christmas festivities, it's been a fun ride! One thing that we know for sure at Bethania is that their Lifestyle team brings the fun!





# Here, we are united

Palm Lake Care spans seven individual communities across South-East Queensland. Given the thousands of residents and team members who call Palm Lake Care their own, there's always so much going on! In our new regular series, let us connect you with your fellow communities and take a peek at what's been making news around the grounds...

## Bargara

Life is filled with great stories and one emerged during Bargara's commemorations for Remembrance Day last month.

At the November 11 Remembrance service, Palm Lake Care had two gentlemen gathered among the crowd who it turns out were both Warrant Officers at the Royal Australian Air Force base at Amberley back in the day. Pictured below, they are Barry Dahl (seated) and Don Jones. The pair hadn't seen each other their whole lives until recently when Don moved into our community. What a lovely and timely reunion.

Mavis Blackwood, who is 102 years old, helped lay the wreath at our service. Back in World War II, Mavis served in the Australian Royal Woman's Navy as a Wireless Telegraphist. She was also a Cryptographer and a Braille Translator.



## Caloundra



**Hip, hip, hooray to our friends at Palm Lake Care Caloundra on marking their second birthday!**

If there's one location that doesn't do things by halves it's our Caloundra community. Recently celebrating their 2nd birthday, the Caloundra team used the opportunity to stage a Gatsby Gala Event that Jay Gatsby himself would have been impressed with. The finest of food, 1920s-style fashion, bubbly refreshments and a host of excited residents combined to create an atmosphere that will be remembered for a long time to come. Two foundation residents and a handful of foundation team members were on hand to cut the official birthday cake. And to top off a wonderful event, team member Alissa Carter was announced as Employee of the Year for Palm Lake Care Caloundra! So many reasons to celebrate!

## Deception Bay

At Deception Bay, we're lucky to have such an engaged and proud multicultural team.

It was our contingent of Nepalese staff members who decided to bring some of their homeland culture to Deception Bay via their regular 'Fantasy Cruise' Happy Hour series.

The wonderful Nepalese staff shared their traditional music, dance and vibrant customs while also allowing residents to sample some authentic and delicious Nepalese dishes. We heard that the dancing was especially memorable!

We are so grateful to all our staff for sharing their beautiful and diverse cultures with us. Our residents love learning and these types of themed days allow them to reminisce about their exciting past travel adventures as well.



## Toowoomba



**It was Palm Lake Care Toowoomba's time to shine, when their annual 'Gala Ball' rolled around.**

This year's dazzling event was made even more special by a host of local businesses who came together to offer their services, free of charge, to ensure our residents had the time of their lives. Wilsonton Terry White Chemmart Pharmacy provided free beauty products and three make-up artists to help our residents get dolled up to the nines. Local hairdressers Mandy, Brad and Carissa offered their services as well. St Vincent de Paul even came to the party, providing ball gowns and formal attire for those who needed a hand with their wardrobe. And, to top it all off, local photographer Kim Solomon donated her time to capture all the stellar fun and ensure the memories lived on for our residents and their families long after this night was over. It was a truly special evening and congrats must go to our very talented kitchen team who provided an incredible five-star banquet! Oh, what a night!



# Important information

## Meet our Central Support team

**Chief Executive Officer:**

Dan Aitchison

**Chief Operating Officer:**

Trish Heke

**Operations Support Lead:**

Eleanor Morgan

**Clinical Governance Manager:**

Melissa Ostrouhoff

**Support Services Manager:**

Steve Wheeler

**Customer Experience Manager:**

Blake Johnston

## We love your feedback!

We highly value all types of resident and family feedback - it enables us to continually improve our already high standards. There are so many ways you can provide feedback but the easiest way is to complete a feedback form. Blank forms are available from our Reception desk and, once complete, can be submitted in the Feedback Box, also found at Reception. Our Service Managers are also available to chat at any time. Their door is always open.

## What should I do in an emergency?

**FIRE:** Spotted a fire? Let a staff member know and press the alarm, if I can.

**EXITS:** I need to remember my closest way out. Leave things behind and get out quickly.

**CRISIS:** If something else happens, I'll stay calm. I'll help my neighbours if it's safe to.

**PREPARE:** I'll remind myself of safe places and the best way to leave, if needed.

Note to self: If I'm unsure, I'll ask a staff member.

## Volunteers are the best people

We are always on the lookout for volunteers to stop by and support our community. You might like to help our Lifestyle Team facilitate their regular group activities? Or you might like to spend some one-on-one time with our lovely residents? Many love to share a cuppa and a chat! Maybe you have a specific skill you can share? If you'd like to volunteer in our community, and enjoy the reward that comes with it, simply contact our team via the details on Page 2. You can also go to our website and click on "Join us".

## Care is a noble profession

If you've been looking for a career that is meaningful and rewarding, maybe aged care is for you? We have an ever-changing list of vacancies across a variety of positions, from housekeeping and admin to carers and grounds staff. To find out what vacancies are currently available in each of our Palm Lake Care locations, go to our website and click on "Join us". We look forward to welcoming you to our team.

## Your meals, your choice

At Palm Lake Care, your choices shape our menu. Our dedicated chefs create meals that not only nourish but also cater to your tastes. Through our Food Focus Group meetings, your feedback directly influences our culinary direction. We value your voice, ensuring that your dining experience is truly tailored to our residents' preferences. Share your thoughts and savour the difference!