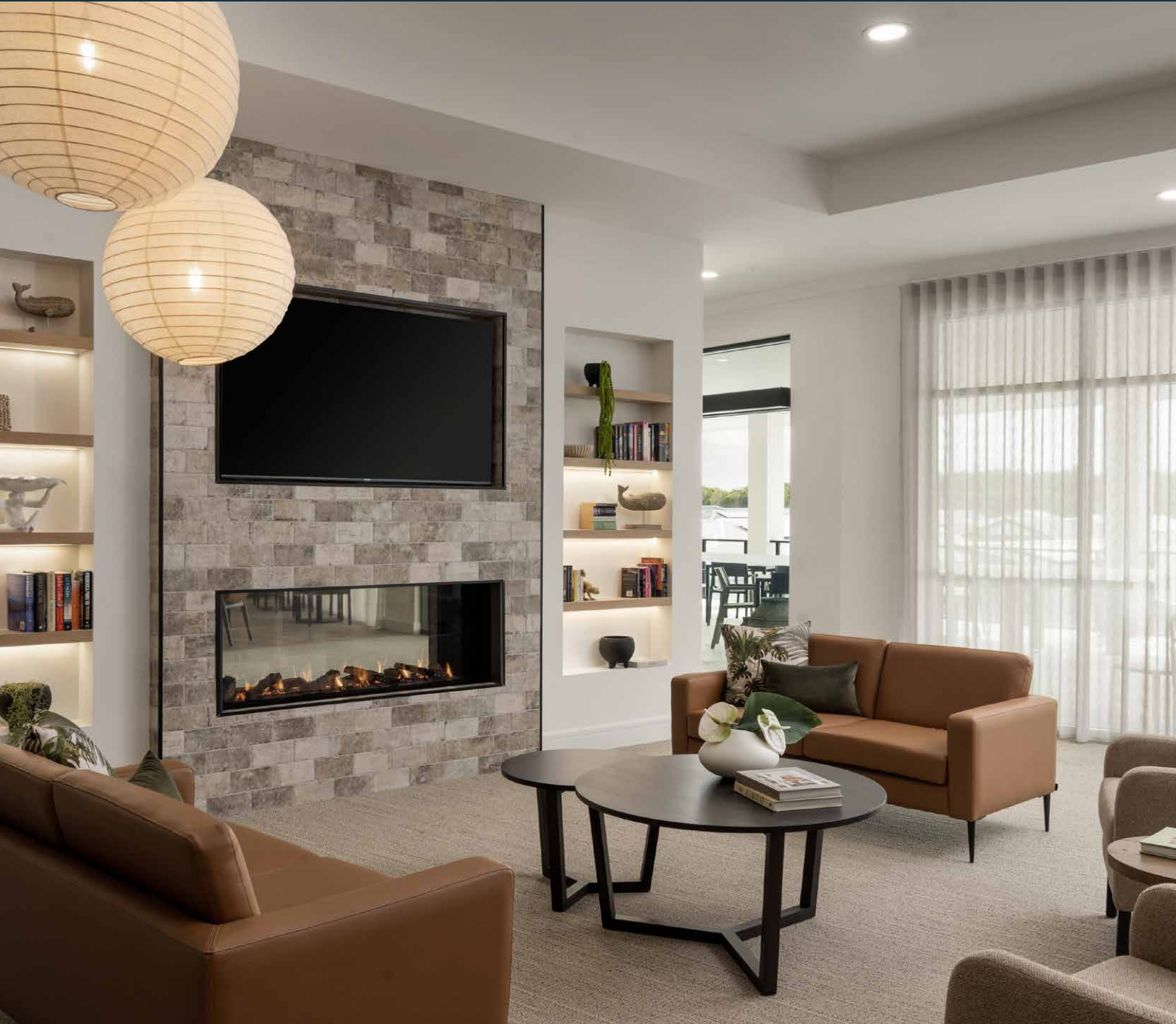




# The Difference

CALOUNDRA FEBRUARY – MARCH 2026



## IT'S THE SEASON OF LOVE

With Valentine's Day on the horizon, we look at why creating gifts for your loved ones has benefits all 'round

## MOVING WITH PURPOSE

2026 might just be the year you make your move - for myriad health benefits

## AROUND THE GROUNDS

Catch up with what your Palm Lake Care neighbours are doing here and also further afield

# Here, you're always welcome



## Palm Lake Care Caloundra

SERVICE MANAGER,  
JANENE SAYERS

As we step into 2026, I'd like to take a moment to wish all our residents, families and friends a very happy New Year. We are genuinely excited about what the year ahead holds for our Caloundra community, and there is already so much to look forward to. We have a full agenda planned for 2026, including trialling some new entertainers throughout the year. We're also thrilled to share that we have secured bookings for the Coastal Clowns, who will be visiting us during the year - something we know many residents will really enjoy. The Coastal Clowns are a volunteer group that visit aged care communities and hospitals bringing smiles to faces.

Another exciting development is the commencement of our Volunteer Program, which launched in January. Our volunteers will be known as the "Friends of Caloundra" and will support our teams by assisting with activities, one-on-one engagement and sharing their own skills, interests and time with our residents. This is a wonderful addition to our community and we are very much looking forward to seeing these connections grow.

As new residents and families join our Palm Lake Care Caloundra community, we'll also be rolling out surveys to better understand everyone's interests. This will help us refresh and enhance our activities program so it truly reflects the diverse interests of our residents. We are incredibly excited about what 2026 will bring and we look forward to continuing to support, grow and improve our community together.



## Palm Lake Care CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, DAN AITCHISON

After a very busy 2025 that saw our teams diligently focussed on transitioning into the new Aged Care Act's strengthened Aged Care Standards, we all enjoyed the earned celebrations that the festive season delivered. I feel I can speak for all seven of our care communities when I say that there's a wonderful new energy about the company right now, as we kick off a bright new year with gusto.

With the learnings of 2025 firmly bedded down, 2026 already feels like it will be a year of expansion and growth. We've seen this with the recommencement of admissions across our communities. Our company made a conscious decision to halt new admissions in the second half of last year so we could put laser focus on the roll out of the strengthened Aged Care Standards across our sites. With that transition successful, we've been welcoming many new faces right across our group. I encourage our longer-term residents to make sure they stop and say hello to any new faces they happen upon in the hallways of their community. It's been wonderful to watch the new residents get to know our staff and form friendships with their neighbours along the way.

On the topic of expansion, and in some very exciting news for our company, we'll also break ground on our eighth Palm Lake Care community in the coming months. Palm Lake Care Forster, in New South Wales, will be our first aged caring community outside of South-East Queensland. We look forward to supporting the local community at Forster with this brand new community.

## Palm Lake Care Caloundra

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

**PHONE:**  
07 5355 7100

**STREET ADDRESS:**  
95 Village Way,  
Little Mountain QLD 4551

**EMAIL:**  
caloundracaresm@pallake.com.au

**WEBSITE:**  
pallakecare.com.au

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

## Key local personnel

**SERVICE MANAGER**  
Janene Sayers  
janenes@pallake.com.au

**SERVICE MANAGER SUPPORT**  
Brandon Del Rosario

**CLINICAL MANAGER**  
Emma Hathaway

**HOUSEKEEPING TEAM LEADER**  
Lisa Wilkinson

**LIFESTYLE TEAM LEADER**  
Currently recruiting

**CHEF MANAGER**  
Michael Davis

**MAINTENANCE**  
Michael Driscoll



## News briefs

### Meeting dates

We are pleased to announce the upcoming Residents' Meeting dates, where everyone is welcome to join in and share thoughts, ideas and feedback.

Our **Residents' Meetings** are scheduled for:

- February 3
- March 3
- April 8

Our **Food Focus Meetings** are on:

- February 19
- March 19
- April 23

These meetings are an excellent way to stay connected and informed about what's happening at Palm Lake Care Caloundra. We look forward to seeing you there and hearing your valuable input.

### Always learning

Did you know, our staff will continue to receive valuable training and education right throughout 2026? Our team of Clinical Practice and Risk Advisors (who operate out of our Palm Lake Care Central Support Office, within our Clinical Governance Team) have commenced the roll out of new staff education in all our communities, starting with Toowoomba and Caloundra. Staff there have received skills training and knowledge updates to ensure the delivery of good practice, which ultimately ensures great care and service outcomes.



## Our Terry honoured as a life member

Did you know, Palm Lake Care Caloundra resident Terry Parker is the founding member of the Sunshine Coast Game Fishing Club? He was the driving force behind its formation some 45 years ago by a small group of passionate anglers. Terry's love of fishing, commitment to community and belief in bringing people together laid the groundwork for a club that has now thrived for more than four decades. His vision, generosity of spirit and his passion for the sport continues to live on through the club he helped create, and his contribution will always be remembered and respected by SCGFC members past and present, which is why Terry was recently honoured with a commemorative plaque celebrating his life membership.

From its humble beginnings, the Sunshine Coast Game Fishing Club has grown into one of Australia's most respected sporting and community organisations, members ranging from juniors to life members. The club is best known for its flagship annual event, the SCGFC Classic, as well as its strong commitment to junior education, sustainable fishing practices, and community engagement. The values instilled by the club's founders - mateship, respect for the ocean, and giving back to the community - remain at the heart of SCGFC today. Terry's contribution as the founding member helped shape these values, leaving a lasting legacy that continues to guide the club and its members today.

## Your feedback matters to us

We'd like to remind everyone that your feedback is always welcome. Feedback forms are available throughout our community, and you're always welcome to pop in and speak with the Service Manager or Clinical Manager if they're available. You can also find email addresses on Page 2 of this newsletter, for your convenience.

We strongly encourage residents and relatives to attend our monthly Residents and Relatives meeting, as well as our Food Focus meeting. Dates and times are included above. These meetings are a great opportunity to share ideas, raise concerns and help us work together to improve our services. The more people who attend meetings, the better we can accommodate everyone's needs and preferences. Thank you for being part of our truly special community.

# A Valentine's Day love story



Palm Lake Care residents Bill and Flo Hitchen have a love story that dates back almost seven decades, to a grass paddock airstrip...

In 2026, as the pair reflects on a lifetime of shared memories, it still amazes them that their entire world began one Sunday afternoon at a grassy airfield near Gilgandra.

According to Florence: "After completing my midwifery training at Crown Street Hospital in Sydney, I was eager to begin my career. Although I hoped one day to work in the United Kingdom, I accepted a temporary posting in rural New South Wales to gain independence and experience. My journey began aboard a DC3 aircraft, landing on a grass paddock airstrip. Stepping off the plane, I felt a mix of excitement and uncertainty as I looked for the taxi arranged to take me to the hospital."

According to William: "I had grown up in Gilgandra, working in my family's taxi and bus business. That Sunday, I was needed at the airfield to collect the hospital's relief staff. When the DC3 came to a stop and Florence stepped out, I noticed her immediately. She was very pretty, and her warm smile turned a routine job into a moment I would never forget. As I helped her into the taxi, neither of us could have known that this chance meeting would begin a 69-year love story."

Bill and Flo were married in 1956 and built a life shaped by partnership and hard work. Together, they ran a fuel distribution business across country New South Wales before moving the business on to Rockhampton, where they settled and raised two children, David and Deborah. The Hitchen's family now includes three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

"We have travelled widely, but our greatest joy has always been the life we built side by side," Flo says.

"Since retiring to the Sunshine Coast nearly 30 years, we remain deeply grateful for that DC3 flight that brought us together seven decades ago," smiles Bill.

## The love of creating

This time of year encourages us to reflect on what we love, what brings us comfort and what makes us feel most like ourselves.

The stroke of a brush. The threading of a needle. The folding of paper to create something new. When you make something by hand, each movement – however small – becomes an act of love. Not only for the person you may be creating it for, but for yourself, and for the joy of creating, too. And it turns out, the creative process loves us right back. Hands-on activities have long been linked to improved wellbeing among seniors. Studies show that engaging in creative pursuits can help reduce stress, support cognitive function and lift mood. But beyond the health benefits, making things offers an even greater gift – a sense of purpose and identity.

For many Palm Lake Care residents, when they look back on the decades that led them here, a love of creating is a common thread. Sewing, knitting, drawing and repairing – not to mention gardening, building and cooking – were once everyday parts of life, often done for loved ones or the simple satisfaction of doing something well. Returning to these activities can trigger memories, restore confidence and provide comfort through familiar movements and routines.

Others discover new creative interests later in life. Painting for the first time, trying a craft class or learning a new technique can be both stimulating and empowering. The joy isn't in mastering a skill or producing something perfect – it's in the process itself. Importantly, making doesn't need to be physically demanding. Even gentle, repetitive actions like folding fabric, arranging flowers or sorting pieces can be calming and fulfilling. As the year unfolds, perhaps the most meaningful act of self-love is about continuing to create – to use your hands, express yourself and find joy in making something, simply for the love of it.

## Green thumbs share a cuppa

**Pictured right and below:** We rolled up our sleeves and got our hands dirty, recently. The end result was a green thumb's delight!



## Lights, sights, delights

**Pictured left:** Our community bus has been out and about, helping our residents explore our local community. The Christmas lights tour was especially spectacular!

# Moving with purpose

Movement is an important part of healthy ageing, but staying active doesn't have to mean pushing yourself or keeping up with others. Instead, it's about choosing the right kind of movement for the right purpose – and doing what feels safe, comfortable and achievable.

Different types of movement support different areas of health, and even gentle activity can have powerful benefits. But what should you focus on?

## **Movement for bone strength**

Bones respond to movement that encourages them to carry weight. Standing exercises, supported walking and light resistance activities help signal to the body that bones are still needed. Over time, this can help slow age-related bone loss and support strength. These movements can be adapted using chairs, rails or mobility aids to ensure safety and confidence. *Try this:* Supported sit-to-stand from a chair (using armrests if needed).

## **Movement for balance and fall prevention**

Balance relies on coordination, muscle strength and awareness of body position. Slow, controlled movements – such as tai chi or guided balance exercises – allow the body to practise stability in a safe way. Improving balance can reduce the risk of falls and help residents feel more confident moving through their day. *Try this:* Heel-to-toe standing at a bench or rail. Holding on for support, place one foot in front of the other and hold for a few seconds.

## **Movement for heart health**

Gentle aerobic activity supports circulation, heart health and blood pressure. Walking, dancing or participating in light exercise sessions can raise the heart rate slightly

without strain. Regular movement helps the heart work more efficiently and supports overall endurance – not just for exercise, but for daily activities. *Try this:* Gentle walking at a comfortable pace – even indoors.

## **Movement for flexibility and mobility**

Stretching and range-of-motion exercises help keep joints moving freely. Maintaining flexibility can make everyday tasks – such as dressing, reaching or turning – feel easier and more comfortable. These movements can be done seated or standing and are especially helpful when performed regularly. *Try this:* Seated shoulder rolls, rolling the shoulders forward and back.

## **Movement for cognitive health**

Movement benefits the brain as well as the body. Activities that involve learning sequences, following instructions or coordinating movements stimulate multiple areas of the brain. This brain-body connection supports memory, focus and mental agility, while also encouraging engagement and enjoyment. *Try this:* Follow-the-leader movements, copying motions to engage your body and brain.

At Palm Lake Care, movement programs are designed with residents' safety and independence in mind. Activities are adaptable, supported by trained staff and offered at varying levels to ensure everyone can take part in a way that feels right for them.

Why? Because we know that movement doesn't need to be strenuous to be effective. Small amounts of regular movement can improve strength, confidence and wellbeing – today and into the future.

## Meet your neighbour



Our community is full of stories. Let us introduce you to one of our lovely Palm Lake Care Caloundra residents, Mary Robson.

Mary Dobson was born in Holland and has lived a life rich with family, travel, and meaningful experiences. For an impressive 21 years, Mary managed the Nick Sullivan store in Nerang, a role that reflected her dedication, reliability, and strong work ethic.

Mary is a proud mother to two children, Craig and Christine, and a loving grandmother to three grandchildren. Family has always been an important part of her life, along with her two rescued terriers, Ozzie and Tootsie, who hold a special place in her heart.

Mary and her husband, Peter, shared many adventures together. Peter served in the Army and was based in Singapore for two years before postings in Wodonga and several other locations, moving every two years. During this time, Mary and Peter enjoyed staying active, particularly through tennis and volleyball. One of her cherished childhood memories includes the rare but treasured holidays spent with her Mum and Dad, who worked very hard while she was growing up. Mary fondly recalls holidays in North Queensland, which remains one of her favourite places to visit.

Today, Mary enjoys her time at Palm Lake Care Caloundra and describes the atmosphere as “warm and welcoming”. She takes pleasure in watching daily life unfold around her, following her usual routines and relaxing with her television shows and documentaries. Those who know Mary describe her as patient, polite and always happy.

When asked for advice, Mary shares that meeting your soulmate is not always as it seems – a reflection shaped by a life full of experience and insight. Mary's calm presence and gentle nature continue to brighten our community and we are grateful to have her as part of life at Palm Lake Care Caloundra.

## Clinical Team's update

With the New Year underway, we welcome the opportunity to restart, refresh and refocus as we move into 2026 together. I hope everyone enjoyed the festive summer period and the many celebrations we held throughout our community.

To support better planning and engagement, you will notice some changes to the lifestyle calendar. These updates are designed to allow you to see activities well in advance, making it easier to plan your month and take part in the events that interest you most.

We are also excited to share some wonderful staffing news. Two of our care staff have successfully transitioned into Registered Nurse positions, which is a fantastic achievement and a real asset to our community. In addition, we have been actively recruiting across all roles to continue strengthening our team and supporting high-quality care.

As we welcome the New Year, we have recommenced all education sessions. This year will include new topics as well as new and engaging ways of delivering education to support ongoing learning and best practice across the community.

As always, we are fortunate to have a broad range of allied health services available onsite, including audiology, optometry, dental care, podiatry, speech pathology and dietetics. If you would like to access any of these services, please speak with a member of the clinical team, who can assist with consent and referral arrangements.

As previously advised, Aged Care GP has partnered with us to provide a local GP onsite each Wednesday. Dr Stewart will now be attending our community weekly and will be caring for all aged care GP residents, including those previously seen by Dr Henoh.

Finally, if you have any clinical questions or concerns, please reach out to the nurse allocated to your neighbourhood. They will ensure any matters are escalated to the Clinical Nurse or the Clinical Monitoring and Supports Nurse as required, with oversight from the Clinical Manager to ensure all concerns are followed up promptly and thoroughly.

Thank you for your continued support as we move forward into 2026.



**Clinical Manager**  
Emma Hathaway

# OUR COMMUNITIES



## Your rights, your choices, your voice

The strengthened Aged Care Standards put the power in your hands.

### Central Support Office

**At Palm Lake Care, we believe that every resident has the right to feel respected, heard and in control of their everyday life. These principles sit at the heart of the Statement of Rights, one of the new Strengthened Standards that guide how aged care services are delivered across Australia.**

Recently, the Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) highlighted the importance of embedding these rights into daily practice — not just as words on paper, but as lived experiences. This includes recognising the important role of registered supporters, family members and advocates who help residents make decisions when they need support to do so.

Supported decision-making means that residents are encouraged and assisted to make your own choices wherever possible — about your care, routines, preferences, and the things that matter most to you. It recognises that needing support does not mean losing independence or control. Instead, it's about working together so your wishes, values and voice remain central.

Whether it's deciding what time to get up, how care is provided, what activities to join or who is involved in important discussions, you have the right to be included and respected. Palm Lake Care's role is to listen, to explain options clearly, and to ensure decisions are made with you, the resident — not for you.

While the Federal Government's Statement of Rights offers a long and detailed list of strengthened rights and principles under the new Aged Care Act, OPAN has provided an abridged version. All Australian aged care providers and aged care workers are legally obliged to deliver services in line with these rights:

- **Autonomy and freedom of choice:** I have the right to make my own choices about my care, relationships, lifestyle and taking risks, with support if I want it.
- **Equitable access:** I have the right to have my needs assessed in a way that works for me including having my cultural background, past trauma or cognitive conditions, such as dementia, respected.
- **Safe, quality care:** I have the right to be treated with dignity and respect by experienced aged care workers who value my identity, culture, spirituality and diversity.
- **Privacy and confidentiality:** I must have my privacy respected and my personal information kept confidential, and be in control of who this information is shared with.
- **Communication and complaints:** I have the right to be informed in a way I understand and to raise concerns without fear of reprisal. My feedback must be dealt with fairly and promptly.
- **Support and social connections:** I can stay connected to important people, pets and culture including independent advocates. As an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander I can stay connected to Country and Island Home.

By embedding the Statement of Rights into everyday interactions, we continue to build communities where dignity, choice and genuine partnership are part of daily life — because your voice matters.



## Long time love

As of June 2025, Delma and Frank Murray are recognised as having Australia's longest marriage. Married in 1945, the Newcastle couple met in 1939 and last year marked 80 years of wedded bliss. They have two children, five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren and are acknowledged by The Australian Book of Records.



## Bargara

The love stories continue up the Queensland coast to tropical Bargara where we found a wonderful Palm Lake Care couple proudly celebrating their love.

Kel and Ngari's love story began at a small-town dance in Mount Morgan, where a chance meeting quickly turned into a whirlwind courtship. Before long, the pair was married in Maryborough, starting a journey that has now spanned an incredible 61 years together. Anyone who knows Kel and Ngari will agree — their relationship is built on trust and respect, but has always been defined by plenty of humour and laughter. They also agree that a love like theirs is the kind that only grows richer with time.



## Deception Bay

**One of our lovely Deception Bay residents, Beverly, aged 89, has just found a new calling in life: as her community's resident DJ!**

Bev first started collecting records in 1972. Last year, while tending to her home, Bev's nephew saw the record collection and decided to bring them in to Palm Lake Care for Beverly. Bev purchased a new record player to listen to the records and with so many positive comments from neighbours, she realised just how much those others of her generation would love to hear her records and the popular songs of their time. Bev decided to become a DJ and was thrilled to hold her first concert here in our community on January 21! She had so many residents turn up and enjoy the music, filled with so many memories. She plans to continue holding concerts where her friends and neighbours can join in to listen to her collection of wonderful golden songs over a morning tea.



# OUR COMMUNITIES



## Your sunny helper

Sunlight triggers the skin to produce vitamin D, which is essential for calcium absorption, strong bones and immune system support. As we age, the skin becomes less efficient at producing this vitamin so it's a great idea to get some sun on your skin - but not too much!

## Beachmere

**What's more Aussie than Christmas by the sea?**

Our Palm Lake Care Beachmere residents are very lucky to have Moreton Bay as their immediate next door neighbour, so it's little wonder that our festive season celebrations embraced the bayside alfresco energy. Fresh air, sunshine, great food, family and friends... Summer festivities are a delight at Beachmere!



## Bethania

**Getting out and about in the great South-East is one of our Bethania residents' favourite past times.**

Our community bus has taken residents to lunch outings at local taverns, for example, and also recently right into the heart of Brisbane's CBD to allow residents to keep up with the changing landscape of the city they know so well.



## Volunteers get rewards

Volunteering is rewarding because it boosts mental health by releasing 'feel-good' chemicals like dopamine and oxytocin, reduces stress, and fosters a sense of purpose and accomplishment. Not mention the reward that the recipient receives! Volunteering enhances self-confidence, connects us to our community, and provides opportunities to learn new skills while making a genuine, positive impact.



## Mt Warren Park

**Our recent highlight for our Mt Warren Park community was attending their local community centre to volunteer for "Kids 4 Kids".**

This local charity provides school supplies to families in the area who might need a financial hand. Our residents loved packing the stationery kits and giving back to their community in this way - it was, in fact, their second year of volunteering with Kids 4 Kids. Such a rewarding day for everyone involved!



## Toowoomba

**Our Toowoomba community is blessed to have a special relationship with its neighbouring Palm Lake Resort.**

For example, the Palm Lake Resort Toowoomba Ukulele Group delighted us on Australia Day by dressing up in costumes and performing a lovely concert. With a sausage sizzle and Happy Hour drinks to follow, it was a great day. Oi, Oi, Oi!



# Important information

## Meet our Central Support team

**Chief Executive Officer:**

Dan Aitchison

**Operations Manager:**

Katie Cooley

**Executive Manager – Clinical**

**Governance:** Lisa Patterson

**Executive Manager – Quality and**

**Risk:** Patricia Heke

**Operations Support Lead:**

Caroline Bosnic

**Support Services Manager:**

Steve Wheeler

**Customer Experience Manager:**

Carmel Morgan

## 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.

## 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.

## 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. You can also email your feedback directly to [plcfeedback@palllake.com.au](mailto:plcfeedback@palllake.com.au) And, of course, our Service Managers are also available to chat at any time. Their door is always open.

## 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".

## 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!