

The Companion

EST. 2007

OUR PEOPLE ARE WITH YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

WINTER 2010

Winter wonderland!

It is the time of the year when tills are ringing with the sound of end of financial year sales, as families busy themselves with tax claims and shopping. The end of a financial year is a good time to reflect on the past 12 months.

I'd like to express a huge thank you to all of our staff, residents, volunteers, families and friends for their constant support this year. All your hard work and understanding is greatly appreciated.

The past 12 months have brought a lot of change in the Health landscape. With the Commonwealth takeover of aged care and an election just around the corner, we can expect even more changes to come.

Government research shows that over the next 40 years the number of Australians aged 85 and over will more than quadruple. In real terms, this means that while Australia currently has around 400,000 seniors, this number will sky-rocket to around 1.8 million by 2050. Obviously this has huge implications for the aged care industry, as it will be forced to adapt and change to meet the growing pressures of the ageing population.

On a political front, Dousta Galla has been collating its recommendations for the Productivity Commission Inquiry into aged-care services in Australia. As we continue to provide care in the culturally and socially diverse Western suburbs of Melbourne, the need for interpreters and the provision of culturally appropriate food and activities is important to our residents. We will be putting in a submission focusing on the need for flexible funding in order to meet the needs of our culturally diverse residents.



It's great to see there are also other groups out there lobbying to improve aged care. The Grand Plan (see page 4) established by the Campaign for the Care of Older Australians (CCOA) offers the public the chance to directly communicate with the Government to help improve aged care services.

In a year of changes it's great to see that one thing hasn't changed – Dousta Galla staff and volunteers are still just as committed to providing quality care and support for our residents. As you'll see in the following pages, our facilities are full of happy celebrations and gatherings! The cold weather definitely did not keep residents at Yarraville from having fun in the park, while Elvis paid Woorneck a visit in a fun-filled afternoon of music.

One other thing that has not changed in 50 years – the love and commitment between the Squires, two residents at Harmony Village Shepparton. Celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in style, the Squires were a picture of happiness. Congratulations!

As we enjoy the last months of winter, stay warm until the spring comes again.

Mark Anderson
Chief Executive Officer



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Jack Frost who?



Zivko and Nadka Pusovski enjoying the picnic.

Yarraville residents, staff and families were treated to a mid-winter picnic in Hyde Park on Saturday July 10th. Residents rugged up before heading to the park for a lovely afternoon of food, games and music.

All residents, friends, family and staff pitched in to help make the day a great success. With the air full of the pleasant aroma of the sausage sizzle, guests participated in a general knowledge quiz before tucking into a delicious feast of barbeque delicacies.

An afternoon of games followed, with guests enjoying surprise parcel and a lucky-dip draw. The rain held off most of the day and hearts were warmed by the never-ending supply of hot tea and coffee.

Made possible by the help and enthusiasm of staff, residents, family members and volunteers, the picnic brought much enjoyment, happiness and laughter on an otherwise drizzly July.

GET THE COMPANION VIA E-MAIL!

If you haven't already, sign up to receive *The Companion* by e-mail. Not only will you get it straight off the press, you can forward it on to other family members to keep them up to date as well. Go to: www.douttagalla.org.au

Second time a charm.

Residents and staff of Harmony Village in Shepparton recently united to organise a very special 50th wedding anniversary celebration for residents Robin and Ruth Squire.

The Squires renewed their vows in a touching and very emotional ceremony on 18 June, surrounded by 90 friends and family. Held at the Community Centre on the Harmony Village grounds, residents were involved with every aspect of the celebration. On the day it was all hands on deck, with the residents helping to decorate the Community Centre, as well as clean up after the ceremony.

Harmony Village Manager, Margie Richardson, baked a delicious three-tiered wedding cake for the occasion and every resident contributed to the afternoon tea. Many of the residents donated their good china and best linen, ensuring the bridal table was the picture of class and style.

Mary Pell, the Independent Living Units Coordinator, found the enthusiasm of the residents and success of the day extremely heartening, "It was great to see the residents come together to really embrace and support this family. The day was just fantastic, everyone felt touched and inspired by the ceremony."

The event was covered by the local newspaper and received a full page feature.



The happy couple on their day of celebration.

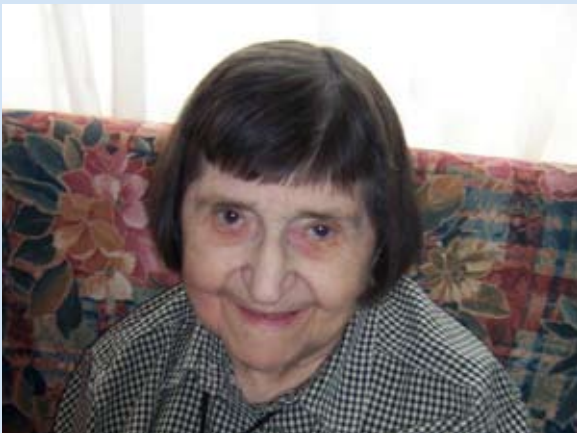
90 years young!

Woorack resident Athena Pandza celebrated her 90th birthday in style on July 5th. She was joined by family and friends at the residence grounds, and thoroughly enjoyed the birthday festivities.

Originally born in Greece, Athena was married in 1948 and has raised three children. Athena and her family arrived in Australia in 1958, and they have had five happy decades in Australia.

Athena loves everything and anything to do with old-time movies, from watching her favourite classics to flicking through books of her most adored movie stars.

With a twinkle in her eye; Athena is a delight to have around Woorack. She always has a story to tell and a laugh to share, and we wish her many more happy birthdays.

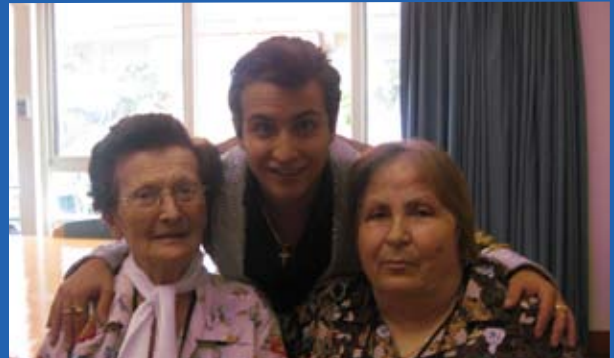


Athena Pandza smiling on her birthday.

Singing, dancing and Woorack

On 6 April, Woorack residents were treated to an hour of toe-tapping songs from the Monash-Aires, a vocal group that plays at nursing homes in and around Melbourne. Founded by 79-year-old Joe Hopkins, the group has been playing in Victoria for the past 15 years. The Monash-Aires had Woorack's residents singing along to songs from the 30s, 40s and 50s.

The King is back! Elvis visits Woorack.



Elvis with residents Georgia Lappos and Vicki Manganaris.

The heyday of rock 'n' roll music was back, with Elvis Presley making an appearance at Woorack on 26 March. Dressed in full Elvis attire, the Woorack residents were treated to all the old classics from The King. After inspiring an hour of singing and dancing among the residents, Elvis kindly posed for photos with his new fans. Elvis was so popular no one wanted the show to end.

Staff Profile:

Ali Ibrahim
Facility Manager,
Woorack, Grantham Green

Having started his career as a scholarship recipient to study medicine in Budapest Hungary, Ali Ibrahim moved to Australia in 1992. He went on to complete a Bachelor of Nursing (Division One) at the Australian Catholic University in Sydney.

Ali joined Doutta Galla in September 2009, after spending seven years working as Director of Nursing at a local 86 bed, high-care Aged Care facility. Putting his management and operation skills to use at Woorack, Ali recently added managing the Grantham Green residence to his portfolio.

Ali also works as the Clinical Care Coordinator for both facilities. This means Ali still has a very hands-on nursing role ensuring he has plenty of opportunity to spend time with residents and get to know them on a more personal level.

For Ali, the best part of his job is knowing that all the residents are happy, comfortable and well looked after.

A call to Government.

Melbourne's west, where most of Dousta Galla's facilities are located, is a unique melting pot of cultures. Our residents and staff come from diverse backgrounds, adding character to our facilities. Through celebrating multicultural festivities, recruiting bilingual volunteers and providing world entertainment and cuisine, Dousta Galla supports our residents to maintain their cultural roots.

Aged care providers with a broad demographic of residents often need a different level of funding. In the Western suburbs, extra funding is needed to ensure we continue to meet the needs of all our residents, regardless of where they were born and what language they speak.

The Government allocates funding consistently across the entire aged care industry, regardless of differing expenses due to facility location and demographic. The percentage of non-Anglo seniors is predicted to grow to a quarter of the aged population next year, meaning a more flexible funding system will be required. Funding must be more focussed on how to best provide for residents needs in particular areas where facilities are located.

Doutta Galla will be submitting its recommendations for a more flexible funding system to the Productivity Commission's "Caring for Older Australians" public inquiry.

Our submission focuses on addressing workforce challenges as well as location, socio-economic and cultural diversity in aged-care facilities. It provides recommendations that focus on improving care for our residents.

The submission will be put forward to the Productivity Commission on July 30. The Commission is expected to provide a final report in April 2011, which the Government will review and announce its response. The Companion will continue to keep you updated on the progress of the inquiry.



Be part of the Grand Plan!

If you recently received a bright pink electronic postcard with the words "I think you are grand" on it, you played an important role in improving aged care services in Australia.

The Grand Plan email campaign, established by the Campaign for the Care of Older Australians (CCOA), helps the public voice their concerns for an improvement of care services in Australia.

The Grand Plan seeks to inform politicians that Australians want an easy-to-navigate aged care system which lets older people and their families have genuine choice of service types and providers. It also seeks to change the way aged care is funded to enable it to meet the actual cost of care provided. This initiative is built on the conviction that every older Australian should be able to live with dignity and independence in a place of their choosing. As the Australian ageing population increases, it is vital that funding keeps up with the increase in demand for services.

If you would like to take part in The Grand Plan, visit www.thegrandplan.com.au and follow the quick and easy steps to register your support. On the website, you can send an e-card to your favourite Grand Person and simultaneously send an e-mail to their local MP asking for greater funding. You can also send an e-mail to the Federal Minister and Shadow Minister responsible for Health & Ageing and add your name to the call. Be a Grand Fan and be part of the Grand Plan!