



# Hello, March

Welcome to the March Edition of;  
“On the Grapevine”  
The Myrtleford Lodge Residents/  
Representatives Newsletter  
2019

“Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.”  
— Albert Camus

## Palliative Care: March 2019

Death. It's hardly the go-to topic of conversation you would like to read in the newsletter and most of us go to such lengths to avoid talking about it with our loved ones.

Ironically, death is thrust in our faces almost every day and will happen to all of us. Below is an excerpt from the 'Aged Care Carer blog' on the 10 signs end of life is near and what you can do to support this process.

Caring for someone at the end stage of life is one of the hardest things you will ever do. It can be emotionally and physically draining. We all want to feel that we have done everything we possibly can for a family member. When death comes suddenly this isn't always possible.

Dementia is a progressive disease meaning an individual's condition will get worse over time. This can be distressing to watch, sometimes taking years. It can be hard to comprehend that dementia is a terminal illness but the symptoms associated with dementia do contribute to death.

People with later stage Alzheimer's are normally confined to bed, dependent on others for all their care. Everybody is different but there are some signs that indicate death is approaching.

1. Profound weakness and fatigue, difficult to rouse
2. Bed-bound and loss of strength, dependent on others for repositioning
3. Loss of appetite, difficulty swallowing and unable to take fluids
4. Weight-loss
5. Increased pain, confusion or restlessness
6. Changes in level of consciousness, non-communicative, may still be able to hear you



- 7 Incontinent of urine and bowel movements
8. Unable to or not interested in showering or eating
9. Changes in colour as blood circulation slows, feet can appear blue and cold to touch
10. Irregular breathing patterns, breathing can be shallow, gurgle or rattle, it can stop and start

An inability to communicate means many caregivers find it hard to determine a family member's wishes.

When death is close, your main goal is to relieve symptoms and provide comfort. Either at home or in residential aged care, health professionals will make sure they do everything possible to keep your family member free of pain.

This may mean using a number of different medications including morphine. Medications for pain can now be given orally, via a patch or via a subcutaneous infusion or syringe driver.

Always notify the RN in charge or care staff if you feel your loved one is in pain. Medication will often need adjusting to ensure a person is comfortable and pain free.

Towards the end stage of life a person can show signs of agitation and restlessness. This can be very distressing for a dying person and a carer. Calling out, moaning or confused speech can be associated with delirium or discomfort.

Describe these symptoms to your doctor as they can be relieved by medication or could be related to problems with constipation, medication or urinary retention.

### Things you can do:

- Allow the person to sleep as much as possible, ensure a quiet environment with soft lighting
- Reposition a person if it makes them comfortable.
- Moisten a person's mouth with a damp cloth (lanolin to dry lips)
- Use a cool cloth or fan if a person is too hot, light blankets as opposed to Heavy doonas.
- Place a fan close by if a person is experiencing breathlessness
- Play a person's favourite music
- Continue to talk to a person; they may be able to hear you.
- Be reassuring and comforting
- Continue to touch a person, lightly massage or stroke their hands
- Limit visitors and ask if they can identify themselves
- Ask a nursing home to place a bed nearby for you to sleepover
- Write anything down a person says as it may be comforting
- Give medication as required and report to a doctor or nurse any signs of pain, anxiety, restlessness and noisy breathing.



Remember to ask questions when you need to and seek out the support of others when you can. A Care staff and specialist palliative care nurses can support you and your family at such an emotional time.

Many family members decide to keep a vigil by remaining at a person's bedside for hours at a time, remember to rest and take turns with friends and family. It's not unusual for a dying person to slip away when family members leave the room.

We want to encourage all residents to:

- make their end of life plans such as wills and health directives
- share these wishes with their families
- get informed about end of life and death care options
- be better equipped to support family and friends experiencing death, dying and bereavement.

We hope this information provides you some useful tips to use when the time comes. If you would like to discuss anything related to resident's wishes and the Limitations of Medical Treatment form please see your GP or senior staff at Myrtleford Lodge.

Marita Seamer  
Director of Nursing

### *Resident/Representative Meeting*

*Residents & Representatives Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month. This is a great forum for discussing ideas for improvement, ideas or suggestions for activities, menu etc. All Residents and Resident Representatives are most welcome to attend.*

*Next Meeting: Tuesday 12th March @ 11.30am*



## Activities at Myrtleford Lodge

From the Garden to the plate;

Myrtleford Lodge Residents assisted by activities staff were very busy making pesto using fresh basil lovingly grown by our resident gardener, Tedd Fenn . The fresh pesto was then enjoyed as a meal of freshly made gnocchi with either pesto or



house made bolognaise sauce.

Residents in attendance of the luncheon enjoyed the meal immensely.

Thankyou must go to our lovely group of ladies who very much enjoy cooking their favourite recipes for the enjoyment of all.



## Activities at Myrtleford Lodge

Elsje Mull, Francesca Crispo and Isabel Robertson all enjoyed a beautiful cooked breakfast together to celebrate their birthdays celebrated during February. March birthday

breakfast will be held on the morning of the

13th February.



A large variety of daily activities are available to residents including puzzles, games and what looks to be building or mechanics.





## Activities at Myrtleford Lodge

March signals the arrival of Autumn and currently we are experiencing a very warm start to the new season. With the cooler mornings though Residents are enjoying getting outdoors and enjoying a morning walk and the gazebo which provides a beautiful shady spot to sit.



Paola Castagna and her daughter Margueretta were captured recently enjoying each others company as well as the weather.

Marg Oakley, Fay Fear and Rosemary Capocasa enjoy a game of cards together most afternoons.

There are a variety of board games available for use in the Activities area, Residents, families and friends are encouraged to enjoy the games or cards when visiting.





## Activities at Myrtleford Lodge

Happy Hour continues to be a very popular activity at Myrtleford Lodge as it brings together Residents and at times family members to enjoy a very informal afternoon of relaxing, much laughter and chatter can always be heard.



Pictured is Teresina Nero, June Shepherd and Morrie Gaylard enjoying each others company.

Lynn Smith one of our regular entertainers and volunteer, continues to provide an opportunity for a sing-along each month.

As always we all appreciate Lynn's time, her sing-along's are always very much looked forward to and enjoyed.



## Activities at Myrtleford Lodge

School has resumed for the year and Myrtleford P-12 College students have recommenced their visits to Myrtleford Lodge under the guidance of Rosemary Bunge.



Rosemary in conjunction with our activities team devise a program that encourages the interaction of both students and residents.

This term, year 10 students from the college will be attending their formal class each fortnight. Residents are invited to attend and assist with their knowledge.

Pictured is the first class of 2019 which was thoroughly enjoyed by both students and Residents.





# March Birthdays



Lynn King

~ 1st

Johanna Vandoodewaard

~ 6th

Fraces Bailey

~ 14th

Myrtleford Lodge Residents and Staff wish you all a very Happy Birthday, may you enjoy your special day surrounded by those you love.





## Everyone is Irish on St Patricks Day!



Saint Patrick's Day, or the Feast of Saint Patrick, is a cultural and religious celebration held on 17th March, the traditional death date of Saint Patrick, the foremost patron saint of Ireland.

In Australia, we enjoy joining in with this celebration with wearing a touch of green and joining in the telling of Irish jokes.

What do you call an Irishman who keeps bouncing off of walls?  
Rick O' Shea!

An Irishman was flustered not being able to find a parking space in a large mall's parking lot.



"Lord," he prayed, "I can't stand this. If you open a space up for me, I swear I'll give up drinking me whiskey, and I promise to go to church every Sunday." Suddenly, the clouds parted and the sun shone on an empty parking spot. Without hesitation, the man said, "Never mind, I found one."



'Ah, that was a lovely dress,' announced Colleen, 'and it would have fitted me if I could have got into it, so it would.'

'Shay, do you understand German,?' 'To be sure, I do if it's spoken in Irish.'

Reilly is walking through a graveyard when he comes across a headstone with the inscription "Here lies a politician and an honest man." 'Faith now,' exclaims Reilly, 'I wonder how they got the two of them in one grave.'





Special events on the Calendar

1st & 22nd March ~ Happy Hour

4th March ~ Smoothie Cafe open

5th March ~ Shrove Tuesday

Making pancakes to celebrate.

6th March ~ Ash Wednesday

5th—11th March ~ Myrtleford Festival

Festival programs available from Reception

9th March ~ Myrtleford Festival Princesses and Partners will visit Myrtleford Lodge. Presentation to Residents in the main lounge.

11th March ~ Labour Day Public Holiday

12th March ~ P-12 College year 10 students to commence classes at Myrtleford Lodge, interacting with Residents.

~ Resident's Meeting

~ Savoy club lunch outing

13th March ~ Birthday Breakfast A Wing.

15th March ~ Friends of the library

17th March ~ St Patricks Day.



# *In Loving Memory*

*Mary Zamperoni ~ 1st February*

*Vanda Rinaldo ~ 6th February*

*Betty Pigdon ~ 8th February*

*Anna Dagoli ~ 17th February*

*Molly Love ~ 24th February*

*Myrtleford Lodge Residents and Staff  
extend sincere condolences to the families  
and friends of Mary, Vanda, Betty, Anna and  
Molly during this sad time.*

*May loving memories ease your loss and  
bring you comfort.*

*May they rest in eternal peace.*



Suggestions, Complaints, Improvement forms;

Residents /Resident Representatives are reminded that we welcome your thoughts and feedback. Improvement forms are available from the front entrance area, please ask Administration Staff for assistance should you require it.

Residents Property Lists:

Each Resident has a Property List of valuables on file. Should Residents or Representatives bring in additional property, clocks, iPads, Headphones etc, please ask Administration Staff to add these items to the list so the lists remain current and up to date at all times.

Skype @ Myrtleford Lodge:

Residents continue to enjoy being able to talk with their families and friends by Skype, should you wish to set a time to enjoy skype, please call us on the day to set up a suitable time, this will ensure that everything is ready to go at the nominated time.

Residents / Representatives Newsletter:

We would love to add you to our contacts list to receive the monthly Newsletter and calendar of events by email. Just either let us know verbally when you are visiting or send us an email; [admin@myrtlefordlodge.com.au](mailto:admin@myrtlefordlodge.com.au)

Enjoy the Myrtleford Festival " Love the Life"

