



## In this edition:

- Promoting the role of Co.As.It.
- Our CEO receives the award of Cavaliere from the Italian Government
- Blooming beautiful
- And much more..

# OUR VISION

To be a leader in the provision of quality, accessible and affordable community care services for the general and CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) communities.

# OUR VISION

To be the focal point in Queensland for the promotion and study of the Italian language and culture.



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As we approach the end of another challenging year we reflect on the things that most matter to us.

Our health and wellbeing has been at the centre of our working day and the importance of family and work - life balance is evaluated continuously.

Throughout the past 3 months we have supported many in-home clients, provided social support services whilst still respecting Covid-19 restrictions.

We have had numerous conversations and communications with the Government, primarily about how quickly can we get our staff vaccinated.

We have been requested to supply vaccination numbers to the Government and watching these numbers increase slowly has provided reassurance for our clients.

Due to the restrictions and usage of masks it has been difficult to organise events but the computer, Latin dance and stay active classes continued running within safe Covid practices and the clients have appreciated the social contact.

We enjoyed meeting with clients and their friends at the recent Community Information Forum held in Chermiside where we provided valuable information on how to access support services as well as recreational and physical activities.

We were grateful to have our Board member and solicitor Tony Palella engage with the audience

about legal issues such as Enduring Power of Attorney, wills, testaments and health directives.

More than 30 Italian language teachers participated in a professional development session and celebrations of 700 years of the works of Dante Alighieri as part of the 'Settimana della Lingua Italiana'. This event is promoted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and held worldwide annually.

It was an honour to have been awarded "Cavaliere dell'Ordine della Stella d'Italia" for my work within the community and for advocating for services and for the culturally and linguistically diverse people at every opportunity.

I thank the Italian Consul Dott. Salvatore Napolitano for this recognition as well as those who nominated me for this award.

Christmas is just around the corner and we prepare to the next phase of easing restrictions - our borders will soon open. It may bring happiness to many but also concerns and apprehension of what this Christmas may look like.

Make the most of the time available without restrictions and enjoy being with your families and friend... stay safe, be happy.

*Dina Ranieri*



## PROMOTING THE ROLE OF CO.AS.IT.

RECENTLY, WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW OFF OUR FABULOUS SERVICES AT A COUPLE OF EXPOS.



### CARE EXPO 2021

There is no doubt that our talented staff created a very appealing expo site that attracted a lot of attention at the recent Care Expo in September.

Held at the Brisbane Convention Centre we were lucky to have maximum exposure as bag sponsor for the event. We were delighted to see so many participants stopping by our stand to top up the bags with flyers and merchandise.

Coordinator Michelle Calabro who was a guest speaker was met with a full house (standing room only). Michelle's talk was the sole aged care specific talk which generated considerable interest.

After Michelle's presentation, several attendees stopped our Marketing Officer to say how helpful her information was, before continuing on to our stand and wait patiently to speak to our Co.As.It. team.

### DISABILITY EXPO 2021

In October, our NDIS Program Coordinator Paola Matute represented our organisation at the Disability Expo that received enthusiastic attention by all the visitors who stopped by.

The stand was once again beautifully presented, colourful and well organised where resources and merchandise were easily accessible.

Paola was also a guest speaker and talked about our disability support services to the audience including real life stories and engaging content our experiences and real outcomes.

We thank our 'superstar' staff who made these events enjoyable and extremely useful for people in our community.

# TECHNOLOGY CLASSES

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**Bracken Ridge**  
**www.coasit.asn.au**



## MIND WELLNESS

**WE RECENTLY SAW HOW THIS TRUSTING RELATIONSHIP STRENGTHENED AND CONSOLED JOHN, ONE OF OUR CLIENTS WHO WAS ON A LEVEL 4 PACKAGE AND SUFFERING FROM A TERMINAL CONDITION.**

As counsellors and support staff promoting mind wellness, we often see some beautiful changes in people that affect not only them but also the people they love.

There are so many ways to help someone on their life's journey, we can offer a wide range of support strategies to better meet the individual needs of our clients.

These can range from informational, practical, emotional and affirmational support as well as support in fostering a sense of belonging.

But most importantly, we support our clients by establishing a relationship based on trust permitting us to provide solace and non-judgemental support.

We recently saw how this trusting relationship strengthened and consoled John, one of our clients who was on a level 4 package and suffering from a terminal condition.

When we first met John, his deepest wish was to *"Make peace with my family.."* John had been ostracised from his adult children due to what he termed was *"My unpredictable behaviour....as I used to see red when they used to accuse me of being completely unemotional.."*

Exploring aspects of Dignity Therapy with John, we outlined and respectfully discussed with him what he wanted to pass down to his adult children.

The gift of John's legacy to his loved ones came in the form of individually written testaments of love to his five children. In these letters, John was able to state 'things' to them that would have otherwise remained unspoken.

These letters provided not only 'closure' for John, but also for his children who read them at his eulogy.





# MEN'S CIRCLE GROUP



MEET MONTHLY

OUTINGS  
LUNCHES  
CARDS  
GET-TOGETHERS  
GAMES

## MEN OF ALL AGES WELCOMED

Sometimes you just need time with other blokes!

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## Amici House

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## OUR CEO RECEIVES AWARD OF “CAVALIERE” FROM THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT



We congratulate our CEO Dina Ranieri who was recently awarded the honour of Cavaliere dell'Ordine della Stella d'Italia for public service to the community.

Dina has worked tirelessly since 1987 in advancing the mission of Co.As.It. through the successful management of numerous aged and community care programs and services that addressed a wide range of individual and community needs.

From aged care for the frail aged to large community events and concerts and festivals, Dina has ensured that Co.As.It. has a recognisable identity and viable presence within Queensland.

She has worked and collaborated with the Italian government and the Italian Consulate in Brisbane to proliferate the Italian language and culture

through the Italian Language Centre ILC - a division of Co.As.It. Through her astute financial and accounting management and with the staunch support of the Co.As.It. Board, the organization has cemented its position in the aged care industry and has the financial resources to weather future changes in the field.

We congratulate Dina for her continued public service in identifying and meeting the needs of people in the community through skilled and dedicated staff.

Presented in October by the Italian Consul Dottor Salvatore Napolitano at the launch of the new Campania Association of Qld. luncheon event, Dina's award was also celebrated within our office with staff, and Co.As.It. Board member and Vice-President Cav. Tony Palella.



## CO.AS.IT.'S NEW PREMISES AT LUTWYCHE

Having grown at an accelerated pace through the last 18 months, our location at Albion had become too small and we began to look at options in the local area that could accommodate all of our staff, including ILC.

We were lucky to finally purchase a site at Lutwyche with a huge amount of floor space. Most of last year was spent refurbishing it to our needs and we were delighted when we finally got to see the end results in June 2021.

Throughout July, our staff made the transition to the new premises like a well-oiled machine. Everyone was very excited to see the new office premises and enjoy the new facility. Many thanks to our Treasurer Tony Brown who organised and managed the transfer of all of our equipment with the precision of a surgeon!

All files, office stationary, chairs, desks, filing cabinets and resources were coded, packed and locked for delivery to our new workstations.

The new facility which is quite close to Lutwyche Shopping Centre, an area where many Italians shop, meet and share coffee, now has so many areas for work, interaction, classes, meetings and events as well as interview pods, conference rooms, a function hall, two kitchens and breakout nodes where staff can pull out of their workstations for collaborative exchange.

It has made the organisation's work environment better suited to the needs of our large administrative workforce and once the Italian Language Centre moves from its old premises, we will have all of our divisions in the same place!



## OCCHIO AL DITONE!

**SEMBRA POCA COSA, MA NON NOTARE UNA UNGHIA INCARNITA O LASCIARLA SENZA CURA PUÒ PORTARE GRAVI CONDIZIONI, QUALI L'INFEZIONE DELLE OSSA.**

L'unghia incarnita è un fenomeno comune causato quando l'angolo o la parte esterna dell'unghia del piede cresce dentro il dito stesso, causando arrossamenti, irritazione, ingrossamenti e qualche volta infezioni.

Le unghie incarnite sono un fenomeno che si sviluppa normalmente sull'alluce del piede (comunemente chiamato "ditone"), e sono dovute a portare scarpe troppo strette in punta, a tagliare le unghie troppo vicino al dito o non in maniera regolare, ad avere unghie che si piegano troppo naturalmente, o in altri casi a ferite sul dito.

Sembra poca cosa, ma non notare una unghia incarnita o lasciarla senza cura può portare gravi condizioni, quali l'infezione delle ossa. Di solito ci si accorge dell'unghia incarnita - e facciamo qualcosa per farla passare - solo quando il dolore diventa insopportabile, cominciamo a camminare con difficoltà, o quando altre condizioni mediche peggiorano la situazione riducendo, come il diabete, il flusso del sangue alle estremità.

Ma non è solo il dolore che ci spinge a trovare rimedio all'unghia incarnita: ci sono altri effetti collaterali che creano sconcerto, quale l'insonnia, il non poter portare certe scarpe, e vivere con un rischio di cadute superiore al normale.

Molti soffrono di unghie incarnite - e i problemi ad essa legati - per tutta la vita. È il caso di Tony, un nostro cliente che ne ha sofferto fino dalla sua giovinezza.

Con il passare degli anni, la presenza di artrite e a seguito di una operazione all'anca, il controllare le unghie dei piedi era divenuto per Tony un problema che cresceva di giorno in giorno, fino a soffrire terribilmente anche solamente per una leggera pressione applicata sul dito, come quella causata dalle scarpe, dai calzini, e perfino dalle lenzuola!

La situazione di Tony è stata rivista da una podiatra parte dell'Allied Health Team del Co.As.It., che ha organizzato una visita totale e il trattamento necessario a Tony, che ha subito notato, con suo grande sollievo, una diminuzione del dolore sin dal primo appuntamento, e senza bisogno di operazioni o di siringhe!

Un trattamento tanto efficace quanto gentile, visto che Tony sembra abbia utilizzato le sue visite con la podiatra per farsi un pisolino!

Con il passare delle visite, la condizione di Tony è migliorata tantissimo e adesso non ha più il problema delle unghie incarnite, e la qualità di vita è salita alle stelle.



## BARB



We have many, many clients we care for who live with dementia. This can be a frightening experience for everyone, for the client, carer and family members who must adapt to the new 'person' they now have in their lives.

We know it is often confusing and isolating for the client and behaviours of concern can be triggered by frustration, anxiety and inability to express their feelings, wants or concerns. Something as simple as missing spectacles or hearing aids can make the client edgy, restless and uncooperative in chores of daily living.

It is at these times that our trained staff use their skills to divert the client's attention and unease by offering alternative engaging activities that appeal to sensory elements that also provide deeper emotional and spiritual contentment.

One of our clients, Barb, was feeling very unsettled when her care worker Tina arrived. It wasn't long before she had Barb engaged and visibly enjoying a craft activity of decorating a paper bag for Christmas as well as making a festive bracelet.

Barb was soon able to calmly enjoy the rest of her day which also included a brief manicure and nail polish application. What delighted her the most was the gluing of a diamante on the one of her nails, a tiny luxury that thrilled her.

When this activity was exhausted, our worker made a game of sorting paddle pop sticks in order of colour, an activity that Barb greatly enjoyed.

By the time Tina left, Barb was serene and visibly calmer. She had enjoyed a very creative few hours thanks to the lovely ideas and encouragement of her care worker.

What is most important is that Barb felt a sense of achievement and satisfaction in what she was doing, that it wasn't aimless or lacking in dignity.

As workers we never forget that the person living with dementia still has the ability to feel every emotion, to hear every sound and interpret our body language so we strive to make our interaction positive all the time.

## WHAT'S ON

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FREE Technology Classes for Seniors  
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Get Another 1 FREE

*Amici House*

### MON - FRI

Buy 1 Lasagne  
Get 'Cake of the Day'  
FREE





## POSITIVE FEEDBACK

to all at Co.As.it

to Paola + NDIS

to Krys

to Sue

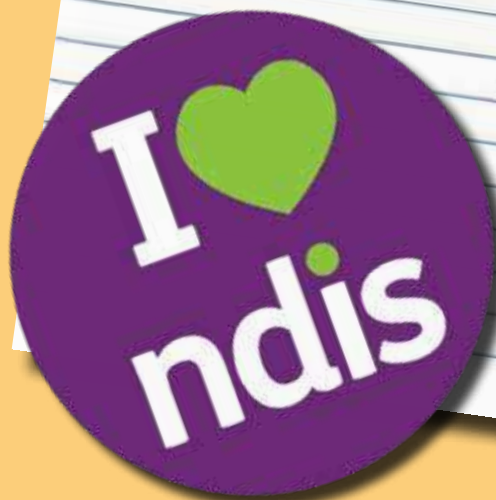
to Locky etc etc etc

RECEIVED  
11 SEP 2021  
BY: .....

31-8-2021

I thank you all very kindly for your birthday wishes towards myself. It has been hard trying to find a suitable support system to cater for my needs, in Co.As.it I feel I have found the correct group of people for just that. I in turn, wish you all a very happy birthday on your special day in time and I especially wish you all a fantastic new year and for all years throughout your lives, for each of you and for all your families, friends and supports.

Love from Adrian  
for God + JESUS CHRIST  
+ all mankind, amen



# VROOM VROOM! ACHIEVING GOALS



Following an accident over 15 yrs ago, John has been living with chronic pain as well as psychosocial and physical disability. John's inability to engage in any social activities saw his quality of life dramatically reduced and his sense of isolation was depressing for him.

When we met John, the first thing we did was to create a tailored care plan with strong support coordination, a number of in-home services and physiotherapy.

Through his NDIS funding, we have been able to build a dedicated team of people to work alongside John in building his capacity, transferring skills and improving his quality of life.

We are really happy to see that John has been able to establish meaningful relationships with his team and is working steadily in achieving his specified goals.

With our support, John is actively gaining independence with his everyday activities, he is nurturing connections within his community and

is improving his overall health so that he can start enjoying life as he once knew it.

One of the most satisfying things he has done is beginning hydrotherapy sessions which he thoroughly enjoys because he can exercise without feeling excruciating pain.

He has relearned how to budget, negotiated better deals with his home utilities and enjoys seeing his money go farther.

John used to work detailing cars, so his recent participation in a social event that included V8 racing was a thrilling adventure. He has now been to a number of social events and has met other Co.As.It. clients who have similar goals and interests.

John's journey is far from over but he is much happier, has friends, is goal-oriented and we are going to enjoy stepping beside him as he continues to make long strides in his independence.

Great work, John!



## NURSING CARE AT HOME

The clinical services team has been busy as usual. We're always happy to know that we make a practical, clinical and emotional difference to the clients we see, otherwise they would end up going backwards and forwards to their medical practitioners, hospitals or ending up in an ambulance when their health is not monitored and medication is not administered correctly.

Our client Thomas has a Home Care Package and through this, has been receiving nursing services for the past 12 months. He has fortnightly injections that neither he nor his wife are able to administer.

This would normally mean that he would need to take a fortnightly trip to his doctor, including organising and meeting the cost of transport there

and back, struggling with mobility, and generally making his life harder.

Thankfully, our nurses attend to this task for him and he doesn't have to worry about maintaining his medication because we are there on the clock at his preferred time and day.

Thomas is delighted with our nursing care and happier that our new community hub Amici House has opened.

He now attends centre-based day respite and participates in all of the social activities, connects with other people his age and enjoys a wonderful meal - all of which improve his mental outlook and his overall health.



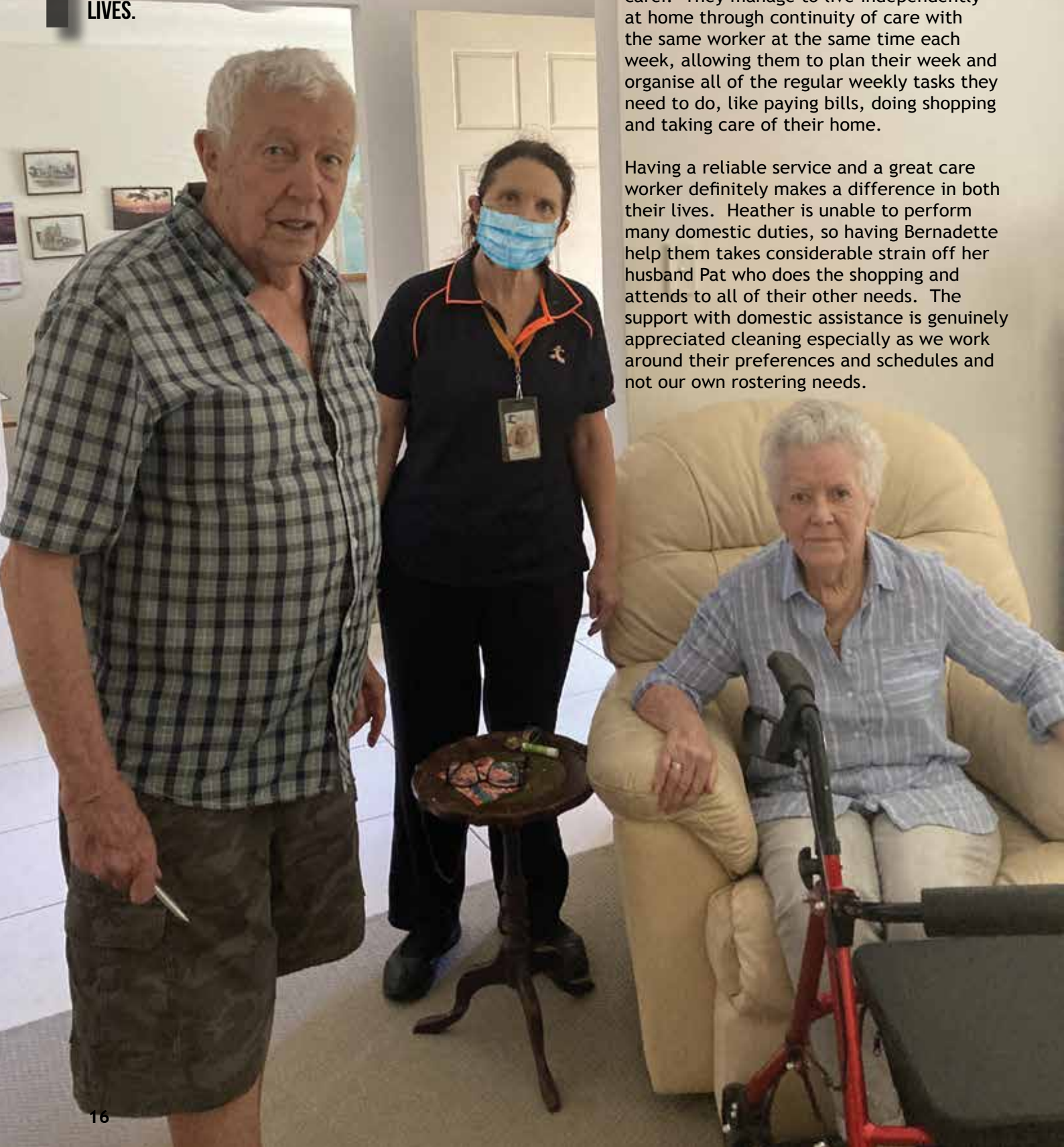
## THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

**HAVING A RELIABLE SERVICE AND  
A GREAT CARE WORKER DEFINITELY  
MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN BOTH THEIR  
LIVES.**

Heather and Pat are very pleased with the assistance from Co.As.It. that is provided through their dedicated care worker Bernadette.

Heather has poor mobility and has several health issues and her husband Pat is her main carer. They manage to live independently at home through continuity of care with the same worker at the same time each week, allowing them to plan their week and organise all of the regular weekly tasks they need to do, like paying bills, doing shopping and taking care of their home.

Having a reliable service and a great care worker definitely makes a difference in both their lives. Heather is unable to perform many domestic duties, so having Bernadette help them takes considerable strain off her husband Pat who does the shopping and attends to all of their other needs. The support with domestic assistance is genuinely appreciated cleaning especially as we work around their preferences and schedules and not our own rostering needs.





## MEET PABLO



Pablo, a refugee from Venezuela is a 43-year-old man who lives with an intellectual disability. Pablo is non-verbal and requires 24/7 care by his elderly parents, he does not yet have permanent residency so he is ineligible for NDIS.

In July, Pablo was referred to the QCSS program to not only receive social support but also to provide his parents with a break while Pablo goes on outings with his Spanish-speaking support worker.

His mother Ana tells us that the ability to communicate in their own language has been a huge bonus for them even though Pablo cannot communicate.

With only two hours of community connection support per week, Ana has stated that the QCSS services have been life changing for Pablo. Well before his community care worker Anna is due to arrive, Pablo is already dressed and waiting by the door.

Then they both go out into his local community, visiting parks, going out for lunch and generally seeing and experiencing new things in his adopted country.

He is particularly fond of strawberries so a recent visit to a strawberry farm had him grinning from ear to ear!

Pablo's mum has said how positive this time away from home is for him, she loves seeing him being out and about in the community and spending time with someone who speaks his language.

She also appreciates that she has a little time to herself to enjoy doing activities of her own, such as cooking.

We're hoping to increase Pablo's access to more support hours in the future and this will really delight both Pablo and his parents.

# CHANGES IN COMMUNICATION

**AS THE DISEASE PROGRESSES, THE PERSON WILL HAVE GREATER DIFFICULTY COMMUNICATING AND WILL REQUIRE MORE DIRECT CARE.**



For a person living with dementia, changes in the ability to communicate can vary, and are based on the person and where he or she is in the disease process.

Problems you can expect to see throughout the progression of the disease include:

- Difficulty finding the right words
- Using familiar words repeatedly
- Describing familiar objects rather than calling them by name
- Easily losing a train of thought
- Difficulty organizing words logically
- Reverting to speaking a native language
- Speaking less often
- Relying on gestures more than speaking

## **Communication in the early stage**

In the early stage of Alzheimer's disease, an individual is still able to participate in meaningful conversation and engage in social activities.

However, they may repeat stories, feel overwhelmed by excessive stimulation or have difficulty finding the right word.

Tips for successful communication:

- Don't make assumptions about a person's ability to communicate because of an Alzheimer's diagnosis. The disease affects each person differently
- Don't exclude the person with the disease from conversations

- Speak directly to the person rather than to their caregiver or companion
- Take time to listen to the person express their thoughts, feelings and needs
- Give the person time to respond. Don't interrupt unless help is requested
- Ask what the person is still comfortable doing and what they may need help with
- Discuss which method of communication is most comfortable. This could include face-to-face conversation, email or phone calls
- It's OK to laugh. Sometimes humour lightens the mood and makes communication easier
- Don't pull away. Your honesty, friendship and support are important to the person

## **Communication in the middle stage**

The middle stage of Alzheimer's, sometimes referred to as moderate Alzheimer's, is typically the longest and can last for many years. As the disease progresses, the person will have greater difficulty communicating and will require more direct care.

Tips for successful communication:

- Engage the person in one-on-one conversation in a quiet space that has minimal distractions
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Maintain eye contact. It shows you care about what they are saying
- Give the person plenty of time to respond so they can think about what to say
- Be patient and offer reassurance. It may encourage the person to explain their thoughts





- Ask one question at a time
- Ask yes or no questions. For example, “Would you like some coffee?” rather than “What would you like to drink?”
- Avoid criticising or correcting. Instead, listen and try to find the meaning in what the person say. Repeat what was said to clarify
- Avoid arguing. If the person says something you don’t agree with, let it be
- Offer clear, step-by-step instructions for tasks. Lengthy requests may be overwhelming
- Give visual cues. Demonstrate a task to encourage participation
- Written notes can be helpful when spoken words seem confusing

#### Communication in the late stage

The late stage of Alzheimer’s disease, sometimes referred to as severe Alzheimer’s, may last from several weeks to several years. As the disease advances, the person with Alzheimer’s may rely

on nonverbal communication, such as facial expressions or vocal sounds. Around-the-clock care is usually required in this stage.

#### Tips for successful communication:

- Approach the person from the front and identify yourself
- Encourage nonverbal communication. If you don’t understand what the person is trying to say, ask them to point or gesture
- Use touch, sights, sounds, smells and tastes as a form of communication with the person
- Consider the feelings behind words or sounds. Sometimes the emotions being expressed are more important than what’s being said
- Treat the person with dignity and respect. Avoid talking down to the person or as if they were not there
- It’s OK if you don’t know what to say; your presence and friendship are most important.

source: Alzheimers Association Chicago - USA”

# LA ENFERMEDAD DE ALZHEIMER

## Resumen del avance de la enfermedad

Los síntomas de la enfermedad de Alzheimer empeoran con el tiempo, aunque la velocidad a la que avanza la enfermedad varía. En promedio, una persona con Alzheimer vive de cuatro a ocho años después del diagnóstico, pero puede vivir hasta 20 años, dependiendo de otros factores.

Los cambios en el cerebro relacionados con el Alzheimer comienzan años antes de que aparezcan los signos de la enfermedad. Este período de tiempo, que puede durar años, se conoce como Alzheimer preclínico.

## Enfermedad de Alzheimer leve (etapa temprana)

En la etapa temprana del Alzheimer, la persona puede desenvolverse de forma independiente. Es posible que pueda conducir, trabajar y participar de actividades sociales. A pesar de esto, la persona puede sentir que tiene episodios de pérdida de memoria, que incluyen olvidarse palabras familiares o la ubicación de objetos cotidianos.

Los amigos, familiares y otras personas comienzan a notar las dificultades. Durante una entrevista médica detallada, es posible que los médicos puedan detectar problemas de memoria o concentración.

Las dificultades comunes incluyen:

- Problemas para encontrar la palabra o el nombre correctos
- Dificultad para recordar nombres cuando se presenta a personas nuevas
- Dificultad para realizar tareas en entornos sociales o laborales
- Olvidarse de algo que acaba de leer
- Perder o traspapelar un objeto valioso
- Tener más problemas para planificar u organizar

## Enfermedad de Alzheimer moderada (etapa media)

El Alzheimer moderado generalmente constituye la etapa más prolongada y puede durar muchos años. A medida que la enfermedad avanza, la persona con Alzheimer requerirá un mayor nivel de atención.

Durante la etapa moderada del Alzheimer, las personas pueden tener más dificultades para realizar tareas como pagar facturas, pero pueden recordar detalles significativos de su vida.

Es posible que note que la persona con Alzheimer confunde palabras, se frustra o enoja, o actúa de forma inesperada (por ejemplo, no quiere bañarse). El daño a las células nerviosas del cerebro puede dificultar la expresión de pensamientos y la realización de tareas cotidianas.

En este punto, otros podrán notar los síntomas, que pueden incluir:

- Olvidarse eventos o información de la historia personal
- Sentirse malhumorado o retraído, especialmente en situaciones social o mentalmente exigentes
- No poder recordar la dirección o el número de teléfono propios, o la escuela o universidad donde se graduó
- Confusión sobre la ubicación y fecha actuales
- Necesitar ayuda para elegir la ropa adecuada para la temporada o la ocasión
- Problema para controlar la necesidad de ir al baño
- Cambios en los patrones de sueño, como dormir durante el día y estar inquieto durante la noche
- Aumento del riesgo de desorientarse y perderse
- Cambios en la personalidad y el comportamiento, como el recelo y el delirio, o comportamiento repetitivo como retorcer las manos o cortar papeles.

source: Alzheimers Association Chicago - USA”



## SHARING STORIES IS GOOD FOR THE HEART



Sharing memories of family and parents was very close to the heart for our Italian elderly living in aged care homes.

In September on the occasion of Father's Day, we heard many stories about their dads and growing up as a young family, some stories were really poignant. Many stories were interesting but there was one particular story of a resident's father during WWII that stood out memorable.

During the invasion of Italy by the Germans, Rosaria one of the residents, remembered that her father was living in Rome at that time and that he had been forced to cook and clean for a German commandant. Rosaria's father was given no choice and had he refused the Commandant's order he would have been killed, so he devised an escape plan.

With remarkable courage and obviously a sense of daring, in the middle of a bitter European winter, as soon as it got really late and dark, he skulked away from Rome on foot with only the clothes he was wearing. Had he been caught, he would have been executed.

Trudging through harsh cold weather, driving rain and often sleet, he kept walking and used to hide from any passing German patrols or soldiers by concealing himself in the countryside away from roads. If not for the kindness of farmers who fed him and allowed him to sleep in their barns, it was unlikely he would have survived the rigours of a European winter.

He tramped along for many weeks, hungry, cold and constantly on alert but he never lost hope, and he had a strength of purpose that sustained him on his hazardous trek home.

When he got to Sicily weeks later he was dirty and emaciated from his gruelling journey on foot of over 900 kms, but he was jubilant. His family marvelled at his tenacity and resilience. They could not believe he had made it so far without being caught.

This story started a discussion about the things other residents' fathers had passed on about living through the war. Reminiscing and sharing remarkable stories like these provided the residents with an interesting morning, especially once we made the rich espresso coffee that they so enjoy.

# **VOLUNTEER WITH US!**

**Would you like to meet a new grandparent? Join our Community Visitor's Scheme and "adopt a nonna or nonno". Become a friend to someone in your neighbourhood! Volunteer training will be provided. Basic Italian, other languages welcomed!**



**T: Sarina or Luisa  
(07) 3624 6100  
Tuesdays - Thursdays  
mail@coasit.asn.au**



Australian Government

Community Visitor's Scheme (CVS)  
Funded by the Australian Government



## WHAT TYPE OF PERSON BECOMES A VOLUNTEER?

Not long ago we were delighted to welcome two new male volunteers on the Gold Coast. As males are high in demand and rather thin on the ground, we were interested in knowing what made them volunteer.

73-year-old Frank Parisio was born in Australia, his father was Italian and arrived in Australia in 1927 where he later married an Australian lady and they had three boys.

51-year-old Victor Aquino was born and educated in Milan, then travelled to Germany, Switzerland and finally Edinburgh, where he met his Australian wife. The whole family including his son and daughter came to live in Australia 8 years ago.

When we met them at the volunteer induction, we asked them how they found out about us and what made them volunteer.

Apparently, Frank had seen a poster at local Italian-Australian Club and Victor saw one of our minibuses on the road and researched our services. Frank is now widowed, retired and learning Italian.

He says that being a volunteer will not only provide companionship for an elderly person in need of a friendship, it will also help him practise his Italian.

Victor runs a small business selling children's shoes online from Italy. His family has grown and become more independent and with his wife now working full time, he finds he has more spare time and he decided he wanted to help in the community.

It seems that both men rang within hours of each other to volunteer for Co.As.It. although neither knew each other but by the time we had finished the induction, both men were already friends and planning to work together in their volunteer roles.

They want to establish a one-on-one friendship with an older person and also volunteer in an aged care facility together and we couldn't be happier to have such motivated people working with us!

We will keep you posted on their aim of starting a group visit at the aged care homes where the Italians, Germans and other CALD residents can share their love card games, bingo, music and some good old chatter!



## NOURISHING THE SOUL



Taking time for ourselves, enjoying our own mindfulness and learning about ourselves and how we react nourishes the soul.

If we add the sense of 'touch' to this formula, we can truly see how our senses, emotions and self-talk are fundamental to how we communicate, bond, maintain our emotional balance and mental health.

There are many demands on women that pull us in ambivalent directions, trying to reconcile being a mother, wife, sister, soulmate, nurturer, counsellor, coach, silent witness, confidante, lover etc. etc. can often make us feel that we are flotsam tossed about by our emotional waves and feelings.

Add all of these roles within the recent social distancing arena and it is no wonder many of our women feel overwhelmed and dissatisfied with themselves.

Our CISS Project Officer Cintia with the support of our Counsellor Laura identified the need for some special time for 10 women and organised a wonderful 2.5 hour pampering session, as well as an informative presentation that nourished the soul.

The aim was to create a multi-aged and multicultural 'safe space' where the women could create bonds with other women.

The session also supported them with strategies and techniques designed to increase introspection, boost their self-esteem and create awareness of negative 'self-talk' that is counterproductive to mental well-being.

The women all complied with the Covid processes by wearing masks and using sanitisers, and were tutored through breathing exercises to promote mindfulness.



Hypo- allergenic oil was smoothed on hands before the women did a guided 20-minute hand massage for their companion.

Recently, we have all had to adapt to the challenge of physical distancing which meant that many had been denied those everyday, often incidental touches that are taken for granted, e.g. a pat on the back, a hug, a massage.

*“To touch can be to give life”* said Michelangelo, and he was absolutely right. As the women enjoyed the sense of touch, we could see how they became calmer, less stressed, compassionate and showed trust in their companion.

Amidst much laughter and chattering, many participants commented that *“it has been a while since I’ve pampered myself and I should do it more regularly,”* and *“I’ve never done anything like this before.”*

The group watched a thought-provoking PowerPoint presentation called *“The Intricacies of Being a Woman”* where counsellor Laura Panarello highlighted the differences between a woman’s needs and wants, her feelings and emotions and how traumatic experiences and culture play a hand in her behaviour.

The women all left the session knowing that they had been part of a magical experience, they felt energised and focused on recognising their own needs and how negative thought processes can hinder nourishing their soul.

The session included lunch and was such a success that the women have requested that similar events be arranged on a 6-weekly basis.

We are looking forward to our next session. For more information contact Co.As.It. on 3624 6100.



## ST BERNARDS AND A HAIL STORM: WHAT A COMBO

Did you know that St Bernards Hotel in the hinterland of Mt Tamborine has a view that has been featured on a European TV documentary?

We decided to see this spectacular scenery for ourselves and yes, it was genuinely worth being broadcast overseas!

Leaving our bustling city behind we drove up the beautiful hinterland enjoying lungs full of the clean air and that crisp, invigorating fragrance of nature that envelopes you once you enter a rainforest. Everywhere we looked was like a postcard for a tourism advert.

St Bernards Hotel has a distinctive German feel to its architecture but what we weren't expecting was to be greeted by three massive St Bernard dogs on arrival, each one weighing between 65-90 kgs.

We didn't make the connection between the name of the hotel and its permanent residents that after greeting everyone, they lay down at the entrance

and in various parts of the fabulous foyer whilst we were enjoyed morning tea. The freshly baked scones and coffee were outstanding but nothing could surpass the splendour of the Skywalk that is 350m long and is a sensory overload of natural beauty. Getting there by bus, everyone took a leisurely walk that was liberally punctuated by many photos and gasps of surprise.

It was off to lunch at Broad Beach soon after the skywalk where we all enjoyed a feast but a severe storm warning was issued and we decided the best thing was to leave early hoping to avoid the bad weather going home.

As luck would have it, we drove right into the storm and were pelted by solid hail stones for part of the journey. There were many more gasps but not too many photos of this event!

However, thanks to our wonderful bus driver we all managed to get back safe and sound and the day was still a resounding success, hailstones to boot!





## UNO SPETTACOLO ARCHITETTONICO

La bellissima Chiesa cattolica di Springfield Lakes, guidata da Padre Mauro Conte, continua ad affascinare la nostra comunità. La ricchezza dei suoi interni e lo splendore dei suoi mosaici fa pensare ad una delle tante stupende chiese che si trovano in Italia.

Questo capolavoro del 21mo secolo è ricco di simboli religiosi e di bellezze architettoniche. Insomma, questa Chiesa va vista!

Padre Mauro è perfino andato in Italia ad ordinare i materiali principali e a convincere Padre Marko Rupnik a creare mosaici unici e lavori in vetro raffiguranti nove scene della vita di Maria. I lavori di Padre Marko sono presenti in molti luoghi sacri e le sue icone dai colori forti sono riconoscibili in chiese di mezzo mondo.

Assieme a 98 visitatori, che hanno riempito comodamente due autobus, siamo andati a visitare la Chiesa, dove ci aspettava, a braccia aperte, Padre Mauro.

Prima di iniziare la visita guidata, Padre Mauro ha offerto la colazione ai presenti. La visita è stata segnata da interessanti informazioni offerte da Padre Mauro, come ad esempio che i mosaici e le mura di marmo sono state portate dall'Italia.

Lo spazio del santuario è rivestito da il Rosso Francia - marmo rosso proveniente appunto dalla Francia, mentre il restante pavimento è rivestito dal marmo bianco della Sardegna. Per le sedie, il leggio e la fonte battesimale è stata utilizzata la pietra di Gerusalemme, e per le panche il legno di faggio della Foresta Nera.

Non vi è un centimetro di quella Chiesa che non sia stato pianificato con attenzione e le due ore trascorse nella Chiesa sono passate molto in fretta. Al momento del rientro, Padre Mauro e il personale della Chiesa si sono ritrovati fuori, salutando i visitatori fino a che gli autobus non si vedevano più.

Sulla strada del rientro ci siamo fermati al Redbank Tavern, dove tutti si sono goduti un ricco buffet di pesce, mentre si discuteva le bellezze della Chiesa appena visitata. I partecipanti sono stati tutti contenti, considerando che si era già tentato molte volte in precedenza di organizzare questa gita, che purtroppo è stata sempre rimandata - e cancellata - a causa del Covid.





## BLOOMING BEAUTIFUL



Let us share our experience of the annual Flower Festival held in Toowoomba and to which we could not go last year because of lockdowns.

Initially created to give the city's residents a chance to celebrate their reputation as a Garden City, the carnival also promoted and encouraged better economic activities after the financial hardships World War II had left behind.

A three-mile street procession of cars, bands and floats was one of the highlights of the carnival that first took place on October 21, 1950. From 1950 onwards, the carnival has taken pride of place as one of the most famous annual events in the city, and around the country too.

The Carnival of flowers is now in its 67th year and we were fortunate to be able to take a group of clients. An early morning start at 7am was necessary

as Toowoomba is a couple of hours away from Brisbane and the Queensland weather put on a stunning display of bright sunshine and clear air as the coach travelled up the mountain ranges.

Of course, being a bus full of garrulous Italians meant that there was a high degree of chatter, laughing, songs and jokes that kept everyone busy during the long drive.

On arrival in the Garden City, the local café was beseeched by 50 people eager for an espresso and a sweet to curb their hunger - just as well that the café was expecting us and they had a delicious morning tea ready and waiting.

It did not seem to matter where we were in Toowoomba, because everywhere we looked there were exceptional plantings and flowers in cheerful colours of spring that seemed to welcome us.





Queens Park in the centre of the city was a splendid burst of colour that seemed to inspire every visitor to start gardening too. Walking and visiting people's private gardens stirred up some good intentions for the avid gardeners in the group and we'll be interested to see their gardens next time we visit their homes in Brisbane.

There was a lot of growing interest in planting flowers because traditionally, Italians like to plant only things we can eat!

As we walked on we built up appetites so with hungry clients on board, the coach was off to lunch at Picnic Point where the floor to ceiling windows offered a spectacular view of the mountains.

A full stomach made some clients sleepy and they dozed off, others decided to sit and play cards and the more energetic ones still wandered around

admiring the gardens. As the afternoon wore on, everyone returned to the bus to go home. But the day finished off with a surprise from our bus driver who stopped at the Big Orange - a fruit and vegetable shop.

Re-energised with the prospect of some retail therapy every client disembarked again and was delighted to grab some fresh produce before starting back to Brisbane, accompanied by the succulent fragrance of fresh mangoes, aromatic garlic and fresh basil!

There wasn't much chit-chat on the way home, but there were distinct sounds of snuffles and light little snores as everyone nodded off!

If you would like to be a snuffler and a snorer in our Social Outing groups please contact Co.As.It. Community Services on 07 3624 6100.



## COOLER WEATHER = INDOOR ACTIVITIES



Between August, September and October there haven't been too many outings, August blustered in with windy days and in deference to the cooler weather, we all decided to stay indoors at the centre.

There were still lots of things to do - there always are thanks to the creativity of our staff.

We celebrated a record number of birthdays in the past few months - so many that we have made an exception to the rule of not featuring birthdays in the magazine because everyone will think that all we do is eat cake! Well, in the past few months, we certainly have consumed a good deal of cake indeed.

We did try to work all of the sweets off by competing in indoor bowls, playing giant jenga and listening to entertaining music makers.

The Monday group braved the outdoors by going on an outing to the Benowa Botanic Gardens to enjoy a long walk in the sunshine and to do their usual exercise routine in the fresh air and sunshine.

They may have lost a wee bit more weight than the ones who stayed behind in the warmth.

In August we celebrated Ferragosto - reminiscing about the way this holiday was celebrated in Italy and how popular it was as a tourist attraction before Covid reared its head.

We also remembered how many tourists got frustrated with the afternoon nap time and how the stores all closed early leaving many visitors rather bewildered and with nothing to do for hours.

But for now, it's back to the birthday cakes - there is another birthday on the way and as the saying goes "You can never have too much cake."



## FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS AT THE GROUP!

Many of our clients have some impressive green fingers when it comes to nourishing plants. Italians love to plant herbs, vegetables and fruit trees and their gardens are always full of basil, parsley and flowers. So when the Coordinators requested that they bring in flowers from their own garden, it became a floral tribute to their horticultural skills.

The range and colours of the blooms were indeed a sensory indulgence and the clients were rightfully proud of their gardening skills.

One clever client avoided all of the hard work in caring for real flowers and brought along some lovely handmade lace flowers to share - equally entrancing.





## INTERGENERATIONAL JOY AT AMICI HOUSE

Coordinator Barry thought it was time that the littlies from the kindy next door to our new facility Amici House were introduced to the new neighbours! So he invited the tots to come and see the new premises and spend some time with the 'nonni'.

Christina Pearson, Centre Director at Goodstart Bracken Ridge Childcare Centre said there was an *"Overwhelming response from parents who wanted their child to be involved."*

So the date was set and all of our clients eagerly awaited the arrival of the 4yr olds who entertained them with songs and presented each client with an artwork made by the kids.

The kids were delighted to see that the 'nonni' also had a gift for them made by a client and a small packet of chips that was theirs too! Spending time outdoors, everyone went to sit in the garden where a silky parachute became a magical carpet as kids and clients sat in a circle bouncing a ball



on its surface. The energy in the kids transmitted itself to the clients who equally enjoyed the antics of the ball bouncing crazily between them as they competed to keep it in the air.

Popular song "La Macarena" had all of the children bopping up and down as well as our clients' arms as they immersed themselves in the kids' energy and joy. Not to be outdone though, our client Gisele got up to dance in the circle with Audrey, one of the children, and there was 90 years difference between them!

One of our clients who attended the first time said it was a *"Perfect day"* - she came to enjoy a lovely meal and was not expecting the joyful visit from the kids.

We're looking forward to catching up with the tots again soon. Maybe they can dance the twist for us?





## SO MANY LITTLE THINGS BRINGING COMFORT



June had recently been experiencing several health issues that affected her mobility, her ability to complete daily tasks was getting harder and harder and of particular concern was that she could no longer cook for her and her husband Ian.

Additionally, due to Covid-19 she could not stay connected with family and friends who live in another state and felt very isolated despite trying to stay in contact with video calls on her mobile.

Regrettably, this too was becoming harder as the mobile and screen were tiny and arthritis affected her hands.

June discussed her concerns with her HCP Coordinator and it was a huge relief for June to be advised that her HCP could provide her with some clever resources to make her life easier.

Her Coordinator swung into action! Of priority was the purchase of orthotic devices to help improve her balance. Collaborating with her podiatrist orthotics soon increased June's comfort and self-confidence and she mobilised more safely.

The next thing her Coordinator did was to purchase an iPad through package funds to improve communication between June, her family and friends.

June stated that since she has had the iPad it has been much easier to stay in touch with her loved ones and it has also made a huge difference as she is now more socially engaged.

Lastly, to minimise standing too long in the kitchen, June gets deliveries of ready-made meals that both she and Ian greatly enjoy. They now have a wider variety of meals and food that is nutritionally balanced. June tell us that these meals have been a life changer for them.

Both are very thankful for the assistance received so far, June feels supported and more positive about being able to continue living in their own home without worrying about what tomorrow will bring.

What she does know is that we are there to jump in and find solutions that bridge the gaps that challenge their continued independence.

## COMMUNITY INFORMATION FORUM



Having had to cancel our previously planned Information Forum due to Covid lockdown, we were very pleased to be able to stage it on October 20th at the Kedron Wavell RSL Club.

Funded by COTA, the Forum was attended by 83 participants of whom 36 were from a CALD (Culturally and linguistically diverse) background.

The Forum was opened by CEO Cav. Dina Ranieri before five guest speakers took the attendees on a interesting journey through five different areas of interest.

Our Physiotherapist Leonie Poole who runs the Stay Active Program explained about the benefits of gentle exercise as we age. She brought with her two of her exercise participants who gave first hand reports on the improvements they felt and benefits they recognized in being a part of the program.

Is it any wonder there are waiting lists to attend these sessions?

Counsellor Laura Panarello presented an entertaining session on a healthy mind and healthy body.





NDIS Coordinator Paola Matute contributed her expertise on accessing in-home support services as did our Dementia Resource Officer Rita Cooney.

There was a fabulous session on the benefits of 'chair' dancing by our professional dance teacher Raffaele who runs the Latin Dancing sessions. Cav. Tony Palella, Board member and Co.As.It. Vice-President shared his expert legal advice on wills, power of attorney and other relevant legal matters.

There were many questions on the legal aspects of getting older and we noted that many younger community members attended to gain as much

information as they could before they reached their third age.

The Community Information Forum has always been a popular annual event that also provides us as service providers, with valuable feedback on what the older community members expect, need and prefer once they need to access aged care and community services.

It is also a lovely opportunity for us to meet potential new clients and existing clients who have been through the system. Like the attendees, there is always something new to learn.

## ‘BOOK CLUB ITALIANO’ AND ‘CANZONI A TEMA’ ATTRACT NEW STUDENTS

BOOK CLUB ITALIANO and CANZONI A TEMA continue to be very popular amongst students and teachers of Italian. Reading thought-provoking texts and listening to current music not only improve language skills but also bring into sharp focus the dynamic changes in contemporary Italian culture.

ILC avid readers who attended the latest edition of Book Club on Saturday mornings between August and September, discussed the novel ‘L’Appello’ by Alessandro D’Avenia.

This contemporary writer’s popularity has grown beyond Italy’s readership with his first novel now translated into 22 languages.

Teachers found the book particularly interesting because of its portrayal of the Italian school environment- completely different to the Australian one in which they teach.

‘L’Appello’ brought to light questions about the efficiency of the education system and the impact of technology and social media in teenagers’ lives.

However, there was much more to this book: numerous quotes by other authors and philosophers and explanations on the etymology of some words certainly provided stimulating discussion.

The participants are already looking forward to the next one, but they will have to wait until next year because now it’s... ‘canzoni’ time!

Yes, the new edition of CANZONI A TEMA commenced on Saturday 30th October.

After the huge success of songs inspired by ‘Le Quattro Stagioni’ ILC is now offering an amazing journey into space and beyond.

Participants will be delighted by songs that celebrate the beauty of the universe and the influence of planets in our lives.

To find out more and enrol online visit the ILC website <https://www.italianlanguagecentre.org>





## MEET OUR LANGUAGE PROGRAM LIAISON OFFICERS



ILC is thrilled to welcome Giovanna Amatruda (right) and Sonia Baldissera (left) in the roles of Language Program Liaison Officers (LPLO).

Giovanna and Sonia are not new to ILC: Giovanna has been teaching at ILC for several years, while Sonia teaches Italian at Talara Primary College on the Sunshine Coast.

ILC has always been involved in the promotion, teaching and learning of Italian language and culture in Queensland.

However, thanks to Italian Government funding ILC now has the resources to provide a better and wider support to teachers of Italian in State and non-State schools.

Our liaison officers' roles consist of:

- Connecting with Italian teachers in Primary and

Secondary schools where Italian is included in the curriculum

- Establishing 'hubs' of Italian teacher networks
- Assessing Italian teacher needs related to the teaching of language and culture
- Providing hands-on support upon request - particularly in those schools which have adopted CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)
- Create awareness of the importance of maintaining language proficiency
- Organise PD sessions to upskill and raise Italian language proficiency levels among teachers.

Giovanna works primarily with teachers based in Brisbane as well as Townsville and Cairns, whereas Sonia supports teachers in schools on the Sunshine Coast.

We wish them all the best in their new exciting endeavours promoting 'la bella lingua'

## ILC'S MOVIE NIGHT - A SUCCESS!

In August, 74 enthusiastic moviegoers attended ILC's second movie night of the year at New Farm Cinemas. Guests were greeted not only with the customary goody bag but also with a trivia booklet to test their knowledge of Italian movies.

They also had the opportunity to have a chat with the teachers to learn more about what ILC has in store for them in the next few months.

Directed by Paolo Genovese, *'Tutta Colpa di Freud'* (Blame Freud) is a romantic comedy about diversity from three points of view: age, relationships, and society today.

Francesco is a middle-aged therapist who is concerned about the romantic welfare of his three adult daughters. Sarah, the eldest, has just been through a bad break-up. Marta, the middle child,

is facing relationship challenges. Emma, the youngest, is seeing a much older man.

As a parent, Francesco has a loving relationship with his children but as an analyst, he cannot resist advising and meddling in their affairs. When a potential love interest enters his life, however, he's unable to take his own advice.

'Blame Freud' offers a comical yet serious examination of romantic foibles and the perils of parental counsel.

It was great to hear the participants laughing out loud during the screening of this hilarious comedy.

Everyone left with big smiles on their faces and had only one question for ILC staff: *"When will the next movie night be?"*





## UNA GIORNATA “ALL ABOUT ME”!



Mercoledì 8 settembre gli studenti di year 6 della scuola di St. Martin's Carina hanno ospitato i loro penpals di Our Lady of Lourdes Sunnybank per festeggiare insieme la conclusione del progetto '*All About Me*', cominciato nel primo trimestre.

L'obiettivo del progetto era quello di condividere con i penpals dell'altra scuola informazioni personali quali: l'età, la famiglia, la provenienza, le preferenze, i posti che si vorrebbero visitare in Italia e, infine, gli obiettivi per lo studio dell'italiano durante l'anno scolastico.

Con la guida delle insegnanti di italiano Enza Camuglia e Alfina Lofaro, rispettivamente di St. Martin's e Our Lady of Lourdes, e grazie al supporto tecnico di Marianne Ferguson, gli studenti hanno creato una presentazione in PowerPoint intitolata appunto '*All about me*'.

Nel primo semestre gli studenti delle due scuole si sono collegati virtualmente (via Teams) ma per

rendere l'esperienza più completa, le insegnanti hanno organizzato per l'8 settembre un pranzo alla St. Martin's e così gli studenti di Our Lady of Lourdes sono saltati su un autobus e hanno potuto incontrare finalmente di persona i loro compagni d'avventura!

Gli studenti hanno pranzato insieme nell'ANZAC Garden, hanno giocato a bocce e poi hanno affrontato le prove per uscire dall'Italian Escape Room.

A conclusione di una giornata tutta all'insegna della cultura italiana non poteva certo mancare il gelato...buonissimo!

Gli studenti sono stati così felici che hanno chiesto quando potranno incontrarsi di nuovo. Questa fantastica iniziativa ha dimostrato che l'apprendimento di una lingua è molto più piacevole e significativo se avviene in un contesto che favorisce l'incontro e lo scambio di esperienze.



# Servizi comunitari per anziani e giovani bisognosi di sostegno.

**Avete bisogno di aiuto nei lavori domestici?  
Avete bisogno di aiuto per cucinare?  
Volete incontrare nuovi amici?  
Assistete qualcuno a domicilio e  
avete bisogno di aiuto?**

Il Co.As.It. Community Services fornisce assistenza alle persone anziane e ai giovani dal 1987 e il nostro personale esperto e qualificato è capace di prestare un servizio culturalmente e linguisticamente adeguato.

La maggioranza del nostro personale è bilingue e capace di assistervi nel vostro ambiente familiare in casa vostra.

I nostri gruppi sociali offrono un pasto casalingo e la possibilità di incontrarsi con gli amici e chiacchierare dei tempi andati.

Attività di arti manuali, canzoni e balli, tombola e gite fanno parte del nostro programma giornaliero.



Contattate il nostro centro al

## 3624 6100

per ulteriori informazioni



Australian Government  
Department of Health

