

# Keeping In Touch Newsletter

May 2020

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## Note from Deb...

It's been another couple of surreal weeks as we adjust to a new way of life with the Covid-19 restrictions in place. What I took for granted a couple of weeks ago has certainly changed. However, I don't have to look too far to see what a great community we have.

A quote I'd like to share by Aesop - 'No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted'. That has certainly been the case in our community over the past couple of weeks. A lot of our volunteers have been phoning in to see how we are getting along and to find out how the clients in their programs are. Thank you.

Jan Crago has also put an article in this newsletter about the donations we have received which we've been able to deliver to the Meals on Wheels clients.

As the restrictions remain in place we have been exploring virtual volunteering options that you can get involved in. More on that on page 5 of the newsletter.

This week we are celebrating National Volunteer Week 18-24 May 2020. We would normally be celebrating with morning and afternoon teas at the various BASScare sites. This year we have arranged a special delivery to you so please keep an eye on your letter box!

Even though you are not with us in person we still thank you for your commitment to our clients and our volunteer programs.

We are all looking forward to the day we can open our doors to our clients, volunteers, visitors and loved ones. But until such time stay safe and keep in touch.

Deb

## Important Flu Vaccine

You may have seen in the media that the Commonwealth Government has made it mandatory for everyone entering a residential aged care facility to have the 2020 flu vaccination.

This requirement will apply to all our Faversham House Volunteers. If you've already had the vaccine we are required to see your 'proof of vaccination certificate', and retain a record for audit purposes.

For all our Volunteers we would strongly encourage you to have the flu vaccine, as it will help protect our older community.

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NATIONAL 18-24 MAY 2020  
**VOLUNTEER**  
WEEK  
CHANGING COMMUNITIES.  
CHANGING LIVES.

# Volunteer Program Updates

## Canterbury Centre And Marwal Centre Social Support Programs

The Social Support staff have been keeping in touch with all the clients via one on one calls or they have been doing conference calls with the regular group participants. Each week the group calls have grown in numbers. One of those has been the movie group – each week they choose a movie, watch it and then phone in to give their opinions and decide on the next weeks movie.

Our podiatrist Angela has been doing home visits, following strict social distancing regulations. We hope to be able to introduce a few other one on one activities. All the social support clients have been contacted about Meals on Wheels and from those calls a further 40 clients are now receiving regular meals and welfare checks.

Social support are sending out a bi weekly newsletter to all their clients. They've included a step by step guide how to join a conference call to encourage more clients to phone in to a group chat. The next step is to include a guide how to join a Zoom call. I am sure many of you have been using this platform to keep in touch with your family and friends. You can find the Social Support Newsletter by visiting: <https://www.basscare.org.au/category/news/>

Canterbury Centre also welcomed a new client liaison officer, Rebecca Barnard. She is answering calls and scheduling all the activities from Canterbury Centre from Monday to Wednesday.

## Meals on Wheels

Anne, Fran, Bev, Trish and Geraldine have done a great job to ensure that everyone in Boroondara who wanted a hot meal delivered daily has received one.

Our meal numbers are up 60% so it's been a huge team effort. The deliveries have been done by myself, Tahlia, Social Support staff and City of Boroondara drivers and our CEO, Craig. The clients ask about their regular volunteers and are all looking forward to getting back to seeing you when you deliver next.

## Maranoa House

Maranoa House Dementia Day Care Centre staff have been keeping in contact with the clients, their carers and volunteers regularly via Skype or Facetime. It's been a great success.

Whilst the staff are not involved in regular activities at Maranoa they've been helping in the assisted memory unit at Faversham House. Which has been fantastic as residents have not been able to have many in person visits from their families and friends.

## Faversham House

Faversham House has measures in place to restrict entry to ensure the safety of the residents.

For the past two weeks:

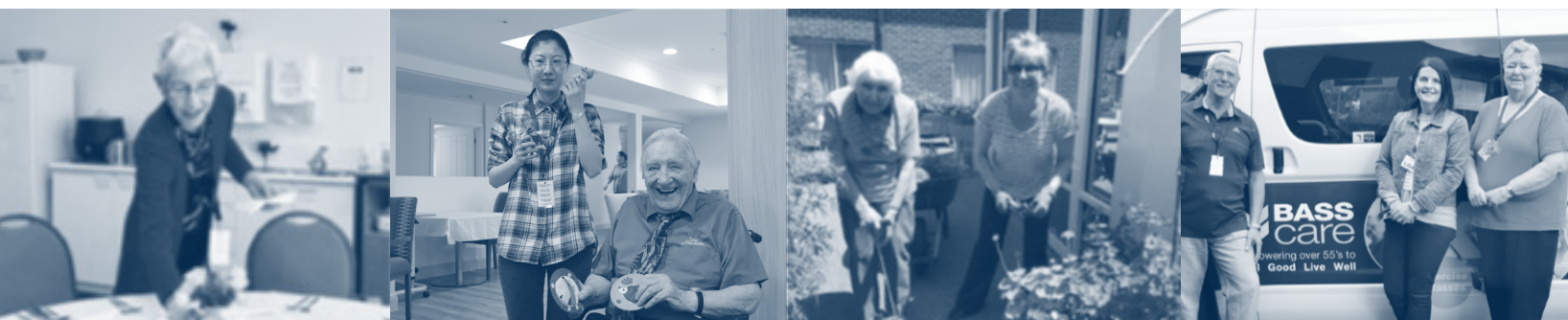
- Family and friends have been able to 'visit' at one of two windows,
- Three staff members ensure that residents are able to chat to family online via Skype or Facetime,
- The Lifestyle team has been keeping residents very active with numerous activities, exercise classes and theme days, and
- The biggest hit has been the addition of two cute rabbits.





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**VOLUNTEER**  
 CHANGING COMMUNITIES.  
 CHANGING LIVES. **WEEK**

BASScare would like to give our heartfelt thanks to all Volunteers. You are all fabulous, caring people and we are so grateful for all that you do and the positive impact you bring to our community. Thank you so much for your dedication and effort.



## Volunteers in Focus

Faversham House Volunteer Eric Zhang is keeping busy whilst isolating at home. Recently completing an intricate and beautiful Origami "Pagoda Tree". He shared his thoughts that Origami has positive effects on his negative emotions, by creating an outlet he can focus his attention on.

Eric has shared his work online and with fellow BASScare Volunteers as a way to connect and support others who are going through challenges. Reminding everyone that whilst we are in social isolation, we need not feel alone.

The link to Eric's recent community art exhibition can be found at:

<https://carlavanlaar.com/pagoda-tree/>



We wish Liz Cuckson all the best as she settles into her new home, having moved closer to family in the rural community of Yea. Liz is a well-known and valued volunteer at Faversham House and Canterbury Centre, helping with Arts & Crafts Groups and Learn Laugh Lunch Program over the last 4 years.

Whilst we didn't get a chance to say good bye and thank Liz in person, our thoughts and best wishes have been conveyed. Liz plans to visit when she is in Melbourne. We look forward to seeing her again.

# The Power of Community and Our Heartfelt Thanks

We are fortunate at BASScare to have such a committed and active volunteer community who ensure our clients are kept active and engaged. It's at times like this that you reflect on what community means and how we can support one another. Support has come from many different sectors of our community.

We've received three care parcels with artwork from local students. The reaction from the clients to getting something so thoughtful has been so heart-warming. .

A local community organisation, the TzuChi Foundation, donated over 300 masks for our Meals on Wheels drivers to use whilst they are delivering meals.

Families have donated flowers from local flower growers to residents at Faversham House. In doing so they have also been supporting small businesses too.

Late one afternoon we received a phone call from TKMaxx at Doncaster Shopping Town, they had their entire stock of Easter eggs to donate to our clients. There were so many Easter eggs that we were able to share them with other Meals on Wheels providers. The clients loved getting a special surprise with their meal delivery the Thursday before Easter.

Woolworths delivered a pallet of toilet paper to one of the other meals on wheels providers in the Eastern suburbs. They phoned us to collect as much as we needed for our clients. We have been able to deliver toilet paper to all the Meals on Wheels clients. The situation at the grocery stores is much better now but 6 weeks ago it was a different story. Who knew toilet paper could make someone so happy!

Janet Crago

## Keeping in Touch

As the weeks have gone on its become even more important that we have regular contact with our clients as the feeling of loneliness and isolation may have increased. If you would like to have a weekly chat with one of our clients that are in the group that you Volunteer in please let us know. You will dial into a conference chat, Skype or Facetime. Faversham House Volunteers are also welcome to explore the option of visiting resident clients at 1 of the 2 windows. However, any visits will need to be booked in advance. Please let Deb know if you are interested.

Volunteers are invited to keep in touch with each other using the Volunteer Facebook Group. To join the Facebook Group:

- Create or open up your Facebook profile
- From your News Feed click Groups in the left menu.
- In the search bar at the top, enter keywords for the group you're looking for "BASScareVolunteers".
  - Select the group then click + Join Group below the cover photo.
  - Select whether you'd like to join as your profile or your Page and click Join Group.
  - Read and agree to the terms and conditions.
  - Wait for a group admin to approve your request\*.
  - Once your request is approved you can read, post and share messages with fellow volunteers.

\*If you have sent a request and not received an approval within a week, please let me know and I will follow up with our Facebook page administrator.



@BASScare  
Volunteers

# What Is Virtual Volunteering?

Virtual volunteering is a way in which volunteers can still contribute time and services, away from the physical site of an organisation. It's certainly beneficial given the number of temporary site closures and safe distancing measures around COVID-19.

Some Volunteers programs have been able to switch over to virtual/remote volunteering easily, including:

- Swinburne Digital Stories – Faversham House,
- Phone calls to clients/family members - Maranoa House, and
- Brain Games Research - Canterbury Centre.

Whilst we cannot change every volunteer opportunity to a virtual role, if you have some spare time and would like to help out please consider the virtual volunteering opportunities below:

## Virtual Volunteering Opportunities

Week days:

Have a chat with clients via regular phone calls, (engage in general conversation and see how they are doing) by:



- Dialling into scheduled conference calls or
- Making phone to calls to clients.

Flexible options:



Sewing of: Walking frame bags, shopping bags, sensory mats for dementia clients, aprons or scrubs to be used at Faversham House. Copies of patterns and material can be provided if needed.



Become a pen pal, write letters to clients/residents with hearing difficulties,



Put together a bouquet of flowers from your garden, to share with residents at Faversham House,



If you're keen on knitting, make a small knee blanket for residents or clients in need, or



If you have a musical talent or skill of interest- record and share it with us .

If you are interested in any of the above opportunities or have any other suggestions, please get in touch with Deb.

## Meals on Wheels Volunteering Opportunity

BASScare social support staff and City of Boroondara drivers have been delivering meals on wheels. However, we are hoping in the coming weeks for the Meals on Wheels Volunteers to resume delivering.

We would urge you to consider advice from the Department of Health and the Government in respect to age and health concerns before resuming volunteering. Your health is important to us. Let me know if you would prefer not to resume volunteering.

There are other virtual volunteering opportunities that you can do at this time (see my ideas on left hand side).

For our volunteers who are resuming to Meals on Wheels we have had to change how we deliver eg contactless delivery. We have put together a short update in our handbook. You will be required to undertake a short re-orientation before you can commence.

There are new sign in procedures at each site including health information you are required to comply with.

## Caraniche Employee Assistance Program

Call 1800 099 444

In these challenging times we wish to remind you that our Employee Assistance Program run by Caraniche is available to our Volunteers. Caraniche can provide you with up to 3 free counselling sessions. Any information you provide remains confidential.