

Juniper Gerdewoonem Residential Aged Care

Newsletter | April 2024

Keeping residents connected to country

Recently, Juniper Gerdewoonem introduced a new project called 'Return to Country'.

The idea for this new initiative came from our Lifestyle Team as a way to recognise the importance of keeping Gerdewoonem's Aboriginal residents connected to their land and culture.

Through this program, our team supports residents to visit the places that they have experienced and wish to return to.

A testament to the success of this program is a recent trip to Doon Doon Cattle Station, about 110km south of Kununurra, which fulfilled a long-held wish of resident Morton Moore.

Morton, who is fondly known by his nickname 'cowboy' to his friends and family, is renowned for his love of horses.

He often regales people with his stories about Doon Doon Cattle Station and his rodeo riding days, including when he used to 'break' horses.

Gerdewoonem's lifestyle team wanted to reconnect Morton with the land at Doon Doon, now known as Doon Doon campgrounds, and also wanted to use the visit as an opportunity introduce other residents to new and different experiences.

The response was better than they had hoped, and the team look forward to planning more experiences for our residents.



Our next trip will be to Maggie's Valley with some of our female residents.

Located in Wyndham, Maggie's Valley was named after Margaret "Maggie" Lilly, who was the first person to drive a vehicle to this location in the late 1920s.

In 2020, a sign was erected at this very spot in Maggie's honour.

Stay tuned for photos!

Message from the CEO



Hello to all our staff, residents and families at Juniper Gerdewoonem Residential Aged Care Home in Kununurra!

I hope that you have all had a great start to the year.

I am proud to see how our team at Gerdewoonem are keeping connecting Aboriginal residents to their land and culture thanks to a new lifestyle and therapy program, Return to Country.

This is such a great initiative, and it is wonderful to see the big smiles on the faces of residents who have already been given the opportunity to experience the joy of revisiting the places they have always loved.

In this newsletter, you can read the latest updates and news of Gerdewoonem staff and residents.

Looking ahead, I hope 2024 is filled with moments of joy and cherished memories.

Happy reading!

Russell Bricknell
Chief Executive Officer



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Hello from Rahul

Gerdewoonem, which translates to 'Among the Boabs', is home to numerous Indigenous and Non-Indigenous elders.

Our residents are from Kalumbru, all the way up from the enormous nation of Kimberley.

Living the journey alongside our residents is our primary philosophy.

We value and embrace independence, bravery, kinship and companionship, empathy, a comprehensive feeling of interconnectedness and oneness, respect for the land and country, and a sense of duty towards others.

My crew is my backbone; they successfully maintain the daily motion to make a meaningful impact and bring a smile to the faces of those around them. We have the good fortune to have a varied permanent workforce that collaborates well.

I would like to extend a special thank you to our volunteers, including Ruah, who helps with the intergenerational care program by fostering close relationships between the younger and older generations.

A therapy dog named Shadow also brings happiness to the home and fosters a genuine sense of affection among our residents. Since there are only two seasons in Kimberley—the wet and the dry—the weather is generally very lovely.

Each has a certain beauty that evokes memories. I want to use this time to express my gratitude to everyone in the community for their encouragement, suggestions, and for fortifying our bonds in hopes of a better future for our loved ones.

I hope you enjoy reading our first Juniper Gerdewoonem newsletter!



Rahul Bhadoria
Residential Manager



Upcoming Events



- Bus Trip 'Return to Country' to Maggie's Valley with our female residents
- Visit to the local Waterfalls
- Pampering 'Spa Therapy' sessions for residents



Residents' Milestones

In July, 2024, Lily Karadada will celebrate her 103rd birthday.

Mindindil is Lily's bush name, which means 'Bubbles'. She likes to lounge in her bed outside and soak up the sun – she also likes to socialise with others.

Lily is also considered one of the most significant Aboriginal artists in Australia. She changes the subjects she writes about, but her approach has never wavered. Lily's works are identifiable right away.

Lily has painted Wandjina with a variety of totems, raindrops, lightning (Black Wandjina), turtles, and bubble-filled cave pools. Each painting is unique but distinctly Lily Karadada.



▲ This is Lily, on a day she is out and ready for lunch.



▲ Lily painting Wandjina.

Staff Updates

Let's all extend a warm welcome to one of Juniper Gerdewoonem's newest member's – baby Joel!

As many of you are aware, our multiskilled carer Adisa gave birth to a healthy baby boy on September 11, 2023.

Joel Faiz Justin Lada is now three months old. Congratulations to Adisa and her husband Justin.





Volunteer Update

On Christmas Eve, 2023, our Little Volunteer, Ruah, was out and about being Santa!

He put many smiles on the residents faces as he walked around giving out gifts to the elders and getting their blessings and kisses in return, which brought a lot of joy to him.

He was accompanied by Gerdewoonem's therapy dog, Shadow, who thoroughly enjoyed exploring the home and receiving just as much attention from the residents!



Barbecue Tuesdays a big hit!

To give our residents the impression that they have never left the bush, Barbeque Tuesdays were carefully thought out and organised.

As they watch, the meat is prepared to order and served with music.

This makes it possible for the residents to smell the flames and the meat.



Residents get movin' to Beats on the Street

The "Beats on the Street" event was organised by the Kununurra Community to engage our locals.

Aside from volunteers dancing, police cars, fire trucks, and a giant truck with enormous speakers, our residents dressed up for the event, and got into the spirit as they danced and sang along.

It was an enormous event, with Beats on the Streets starting at our Juniper Gerdewoonem Home before moving to other streets. Check out the photos!





Residents' birthdays

February

February 27: Susan Stokes

Susan Stokes recently celebrated her 70th birthday!

Susan enjoys having her family come visit, and she is thrilled when kids come or play at Gerdewoonem. Susan enjoys working with kids and was formerly a school aid.

Susan enjoys giving people hand kisses to express her gratitude. She likes to mingle with other residents at Gerdewoonem by sitting among them and enjoying music.

Happy birthday Susan!



March

March 25: Mr Quirino 'Rino' Ballaben

Mr Quirino 'Rino' Ballaben turned 90 years young in March! Italy was Rino's birthplace.

He has been an opal miner for many years and has resided in and around Quilpie. With three grandchildren, Rino immigrated to Australia in 1956. Although Rino speaks little English and Italian is his native language, after moving to Gerdewoonem, his English has gotten better.

In addition to gardening, Rino enjoys spending time with his toy dog, Peter. He also enjoys watching Italian TV, playing puzzles and card games. Rino's favourite Italian singer is Alberto Sordi.

Since Rino was a gem cutter in the past and has most of his gem collection with him, he enjoys talking about and displaying his jewellery—of course in Italian, where Google Translate is useful. Another one of his passions is dancing to Italian music.



Allied Health Update

Sue Lawrence, a full-time physiotherapist, started working at Gerdewoonem a little more than a year ago.

In addition to Kununurra, Sue oversees our homes in Fitzroy and Derby.

She has a sweet disposition, and many employees have asked for advice on working out and losing weight.

In addition, Sue is a No Lift Trainer, making sure that every new employee completes the competency.

Both our staff and residents adore and value her very much.



Farewells

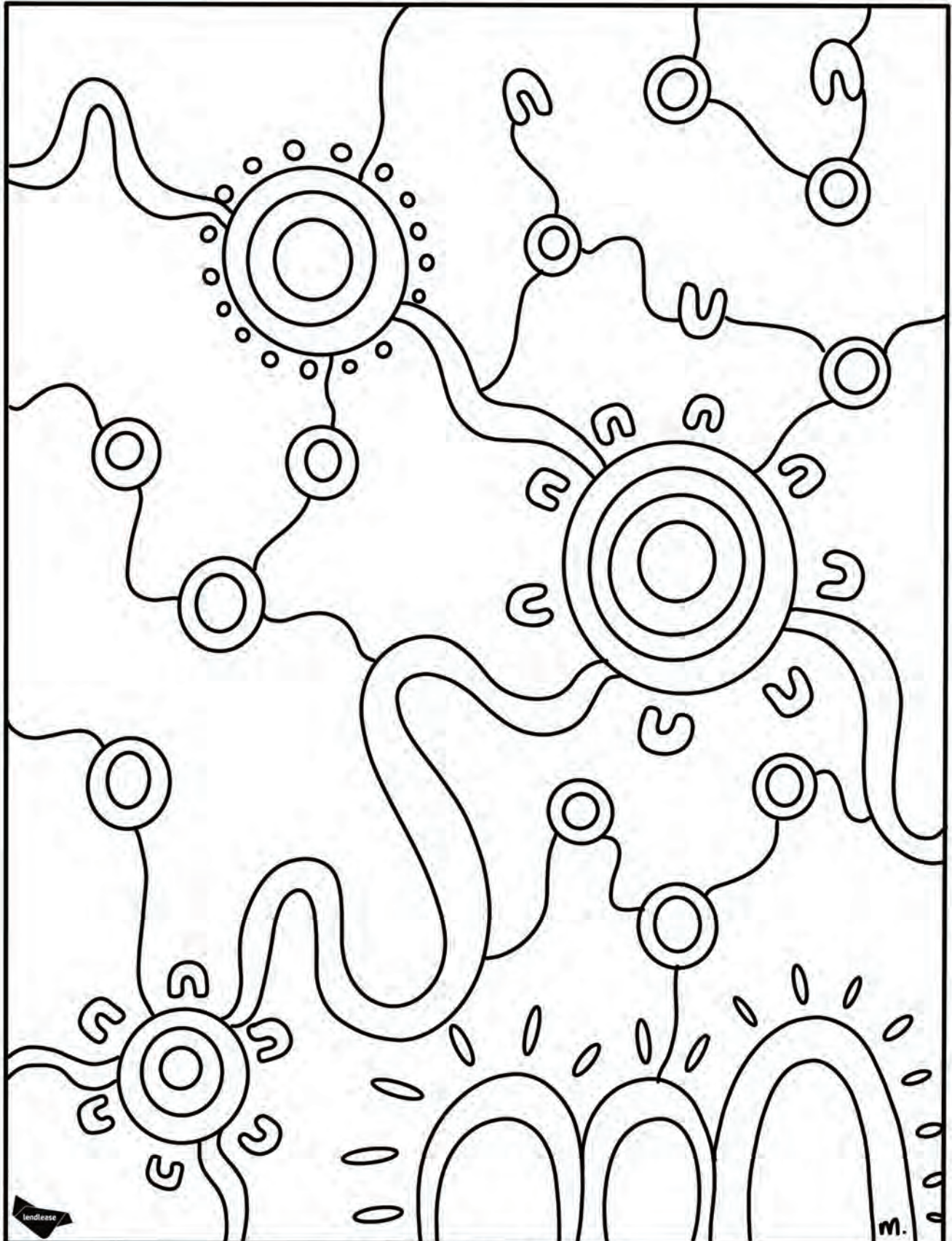
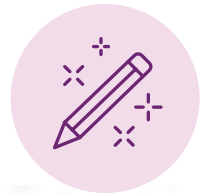
At Juniper Gerdewoonem, out of respect for our Aboriginal residents, their culture and their community, when a resident passes away we provide a smoking ceremony.

This is an age-old tradition that is practiced in Aboriginal communities and involves smouldering different local herbs to create smoke with purifying and evil-warding qualities.





Enjoy some quiet time with these illustrations to colour in!





NOW MORE THAN EVER

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK 2024

27 MAY – 3 JUNE

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