

Westfield Community Family Camp

For many of our families with a child with special needs the idea of a whole week-end away as a family is usually an impossible dream. Six of our staff took ten lucky families away to the Berry Sports and Recreation Camp in late May for some much needed quality time and recreation together.

The parents had the opportunity to spend some of the time apart doing things such as visiting a local winery whilst our staff and the kids got up to all sorts of fun games and out-door activities.

The whole group got to experience soaring on a flying fox, a ropes course and a giant swing! Everyone enjoyed themselves and had fun sitting around the campfire roasting marshmallows and damper and learning the silliest of camp songs.

The camp ended with a morning canoe expedition for all the family and staff. It was a fantastic weekend away and a great opportunity for our parents to learn

from each other and for the siblings of our clients to experience special Holdsworth treatment as well.

Thanks to our many donors who made the camp possible by giving to the Holdsworth Care Fund, and especially to the staff and families of Westfield head office who held their own raffle to raise money for the Fund.



From the Director

Another financial year draws to a close with the Centre operating in an environment of unprecedented demand for our services. Numbers across all of our programs continue to skyrocket and we have been doing all we can to do everything possible to support the needs of our diverse client base. This has been our first year as a tax-deductible charity and the generosity of our supporters has been extraordinary. With tax time fast approaching, feel free to continue to support the *Holdsworth Care Fund* to help us to do even more in the year ahead. (see panel on back page).

Westfield Bondi Junction once again made Mothers day a very special day by pampering many of our mothers with treats while providing a great day at Build-A-Bear for a number of our children. Our newest supporter is the Sydney United Football Club who have chosen us as a charity partner for their pre-season clash with Sydney FC on 23 June. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to help kick off a new sporting program for children with disabilities called *Bounce into Life*.

This quarter our babies have outgrown the smaller of our rooms and now regularly fill the larger room at Playgroup. We are trialing an afternoon babies group at Rose Bay Cottage for those busy babies who can't make the morning activities. Several new Carer Groups have started up, with our first men's group and a group for parents caring for adult children now in place. With Kathleen and Jonathan as part of our Community relations team we also doing more community outreach and traditional "neighbour aid" activities, such as letter writing for clients and being a central reference point for community and services information.

My favourite photograph in this issue (see page 3) is of members of our *Saturday Night Fever* group who clearly remember all the moves from their 70s nights in the discos, or else have been studying up. Way to go!

Michael Ryan
June 2009

Baby Boom

The number of parents and young children attending Playgroup and related Family Services continues to grow. Baby Days now operate in the larger room on Thursdays and we have around 30 children under one attending over the three days that we offer special support to parents. Louise deLorenzo, who looks after Baby Days, will be holding a trial afternoon session at Rose Bay Cottage from the last Thursday of the month, beginning in June.

Our end of term 'event' this year featured a 'petting zoo'/animal farm and the irrepressible Zulu dancer and drummer Lucky Phewa. He had all the children lined up with drums and taught a couple of the dads some nifty dance steps.

Term 2 saw the return of Lucian Stofell, the Playgroup Team Leader, from a lengthy spell overseas and while we are pleased to have her back, Mary Simmonds ran things with great competence in her absence. We are also very grateful to our volunteers who provide a valuable service and are always willing to accommodate our daily demands.

The increase in numbers attending each day has the potential to put a strain on our operations. We appreciate everyone's loyalty and praise for Playgroup and ask that all parents/carers help to ensure things go smoothly. A few things that help are: supervising children at all times; cleaning up rubbish and respecting equipment, including pole protectors; on Baby Days parents of older children who can use the outside



Left: Ava enjoys the animal farm.

Below Left: Zulu performer Lucky Phewa; Below right: Neha - winner of the deLorenzo products in the Lucky Draw.



equipment are asked to keep the indoor areas for babies who lie on the floor or play on the mats.

Information and demonstration sessions in the last three months have included massage, exercises, signing and bellydancing. Suggestions for future events and resources are always welcome. Talk to our staff or email us at playgroup@holdsworth.org.au

Wednesday & Friday Clubs at Holdsworth!

Wednesday & Friday Clubs are social/recreational day groups for people who are frail aged and/or living with mild to moderate memory loss. The program operates Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:00am to 4:00pm including transport time.

Transportation is provided to and from the Day Program by Holdsworth Community Transport, a wheelchair accessible bus. Morning activities are usually at a picnic setting, and afternoon activities are based at Holdsworth Centre.



Seniors are encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities such as crafts, games, gentle exercises, memory activities, music, special events and intergenerational programs. Scheduled trips include museums, galleries, scenic tours, lunch outings and much more. Carers and participants will be informed of any special outings.

The program is offered to individuals living in Woollahra Municipality who are frail aged and/or living with mild to moderate memory loss. This can include surrounding areas if participants are dropped-off and picked-up from Holdsworth Community Centre.

The daily fee for participation in this Program is \$10.00 and includes transport, morning and afternoon tea/ coffee, biscuits, outings, activities and all art and craft supplies. Participants need to bring comfortable clothing and a packed lunch unless otherwise advised by the team leader. For example, each fortnight we go to Woollahra Seniors Centre for lunch for an additional fee of \$6.

New participants must complete an assessment before taking part in any activities. If you, or someone for whom you care, are interested in attending our Groups please ring 9302-3600 and speak to Kathleen, our Client Intake Coordinator.

Zorba the Greek

It was *OPA!* all the way at Aesop's Greek Restaurant on our Seniors' Saturday Fever Program. We received a big Greek welcome from the owners, had great food and we danced the night away to Zorba, YMCA and many other favourites. And off course that unforgettable madness of plate smashing was the icing on the cake. Now who said if you're old you can't have fun!

If you would like to experience the joys and madness that is our Saturday Night Fever, please contact the Aged Services team.

... and the photo that sums the night, Pat and Vera dancing the night away to the popular YMCA. Our pick for this quarter.



Carers Groups

We have re-started our *Carers and Beyond* support group for parents of adult children (18 plus). This group meets every second Tuesday evening from 4.15 to 6.15 pm at the Holdsworth Centre. Many carers attended and we are thrilled with the powerful input. Feedback tells us that the insights from other parents are very valuable and helpful. We are looking forward to this group continuing and growing.

Upcoming guest speakers and events include:
Safety Strategies – Protecting Valuable You with Karen Armstrong to be held on 22nd June (Monday) at the Burger Centre, 120 King Street, Randwick from 9.00 to 4.30. The workshop aims to increase self esteem and improve relationships as well as manage unpredictable attacks, verbal abuse and difficulties – focusing on defusing and prevention.

This workshop costs \$25 per head and has limited places. Lunch and morning tea is included. Book early to



avoid disappointment!

Terry Ryan's Workshop – *Care and Understanding for Families and Carers* – a life plan will take place at Holdsworth Centre on three consecutive Monday evenings commencing August 10th from 4 – 6pm. The cost is \$50 for the three sessions and again, there are limited places.

Finally if anyone is not receiving our information via e-mail and has an e-mail address would you please let us know so you don't miss out on any of our upcoming events or relevant information.

Any queries please contact Lindy Yoannidis or Louise Gourley or e-mail info@holdsworth.org.au.

Enhancing Intake & Advocacy

As Client Intake Coordinator, Kathleen Hanstein continues to provide information, referral, and advocacy to people wishing to access our services. The number of calls has increased as has the number of unusual requests for advocacy and referral. For example, an elderly Greek woman was unable to write an urgent letter effectively due to English being her second language. She had requested assistance from a number of services but to no avail. She arrived at the centre very distressed and exhausted. The letter was now quite urgent. She and Kathleen worked together to formulate a letter from her to her estate agent. She left the centre much calmer and more empowered now that she had her words on paper in English... another satisfied Woollahra Municipality resident. The saying is 'nothing is more powerful than the written word'. However, in this case it's 'there is nothing more empowering than the written word'!

Bouncing into Life

Recently we were given a small grant from the Department of Sport & Recreation as part of its strategy to encourage social inclusion in sport for children with disabilities. We are using this money to run a 20 week trampoline program, 'Bouncing into Life', commencing in third term. This program is aimed at children with disabilities aged between 5 and 18 years and will run for three hours every Saturday morning at Miranda RSL Youth Club, with bus connection from Holdsworth. As the program will run every Saturday, this allows us to offer access to up to ten clients each second Saturday with another ten clients on the alternate weeks. We will be contacting all of our families who may be interested in this exciting opportunity.

Any money we raise through our partnership with Sydney United Football Club will also be used to extend the life of this program. (see story on back page)

Volunteer news

Work in the area of volunteering has seen a rewarding new partnership with Ascham school to bring together people who, although generations apart, are all part of our vibrant community. Girls from Ascham are volunteering with Holdsworth to visit seniors in the area who live alone or are isolated or housebound.

While a very simple program on the surface this can have a profound effect on all concerned. The older people gain a lot from having visitors and the young people are exposed to people living a very different life to their own. The girls chat with them, sharing their lives and learning about each other. This is a positive arrangement for the older person, who gets visitors in what might otherwise be a lonely week and the girls gain knowledge about life over the last 70 to 80 years.

Once again this shows how the work of Holdsworth Community Centre & Services depends on, and is enriched by, people who can support their community by volunteering their time, experience and commitment.



I would like to contribute to the Holdsworth Care Fund!

I would like to make a tax-deductible donation
Amount: \$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$. . .

Name:

Address:

..... Code

Phone:

Email:

Cheque for \$ is enclosed OR charge

\$ to my Visa/Mastercard. Expiry date: __/__/__

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Name on card:

Signature:

Please contact us if you would prefer to make a regular contribution by direct deposit.

Cut out this section and mail it to us (see right).



Scoring goals for kids with disabilities

Partnerships are very important to Holdsworth and we are teaming with Sydney United Football Club to be part of their charitable work..

Sydney United will be playing host to A-League team Sydney FC at the Sydney United Sports Centre in Edensor Park in the first stage of the pre-season schedule. These games allow Sydney FC to take the stars to the fans at suburban grounds and also allow young State League players to test themselves against A-League opposition.

As well as the excitement of the game itself, the big news is that Sydney United will be donating 50% of its ticket sales to the Holdsworth Community Centre to support our new disability sports program. Not only is the club supporting us directly through the box office, but Sydney United is also generously allowing us to do additional fundraising on the night.

As well as the fundraising, it will be a great chance to extend our community and cultural links. We are privileged to have been chosen by Sydney United as their nominated charity for this event and hopefully it will be the start of a fruitful relationship. Whether watching or participating, sport is very important to all children, including young people living with a disability. We hope to be able to use any money raised on the evening to support a new sporting initiative for our children.

The game will be held on Tuesday 23rd June 2009, with kick off at 7:30pm, and Holdsworth staff and volunteers will be there. The club has also agreed to offer some tickets to the match to some of the families from our disability programs and we will be providing one or two buses to get there on the night from Holdsworth. Please contact Stefanie or Kim if you would like to be included.

Tickets are available to the general public via Sydney United on 9823 6418 Email: info@sydneyunited.com.au or see www.sydneyunited.com.au Adults: \$10, Concession: \$5, Children: \$5. This is a family friendly event and no alcohol will be allowed in the venue.



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If you would like to join the Holdsworth team as a Volunteer please call 9302 3600

