

## RAVENHALL CORRECTIONAL CENTRE MARKS FIVE YEARS



From left: Julia Nepia, Tim Hargrave, David Fitzwilliam, Soma Shanmugam, Rick Dobson, Alan McVilly, Tony Mannweiler, Fiona Murphy, Allana Osborne, Daisy Devitt and Col Caskie.



On Monday 14 November, Ravenhall Correctional Centre celebrated and marked the fifth year of operation with a ceremony signifying the milestone.

Since 2017, The GEO Group and supporting Alliance partners – Correct Care Australasia, Forensicare, Honeywell, Bendigo Kangan Institute TAFE and the YMCA - have delivered and maintained Ravenhall as a defining example of contemporary operational practice and service delivery.

The Ravenhall team was pleased and honoured to have numerous special guests attend the celebration. These included Corrections Victoria Commissioner Larissa Strong, Assistant Commissioners Scott Jacques, Jenny Hosking, Sarah Miles and Megan McClelland, The GEO Group Australia Managing Director Pieter Bezuidenhout,

CEO Forensicare Margaret Grigg, Deputy CEO Correct Care Australasia Christine Fuller, Executive Manager of YMCA Youth Services – Youth Justice & Social Enterprise Mick Cronin, and many others.

This event marked the first opportunity for the Ravenhall community to meet as a collective and celebrate the success and achievements over the last five years. Staff from multiple organisations and disciplines came together to share

their passion and goal of providing care and support to prisoners and ultimately deliver positive outcomes for the Victorian community.

Speakers, including the Commissioner, GEO's Managing Director and Ravenhall General Manager Col Caskie, all reflected on the dedication and commitment of staff and Alliance Partners in providing better practice corrections and services to the Victorian people.



Corrections Victoria Commissioner Larissa Strong addresses staff at the anniversary event.



## MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR



Our final newsletter for 2022 showcases some of the milestones and achievements celebrated by our staff, along with our partners and key stakeholders.

Last month I had the pleasure of attending Ravenhall Correctional Centre for a formal celebration to mark five-years of operations. Ravenhall and its associated community reintegration centre – The Bridge Centre – are a model for how dedicated pre- and post-release support services can help men successfully rebuild their lives back in the community.

There are always great examples of charitable activities being undertaken in our centres, which are providing the men in our care with the opportunity to learn new skills while helping the local community. Recent examples include the restoration of chariots at Junee Correctional Centre for the local Lions Club, and the creation of toys for donation at Christmas at Fulham Correctional Centre.

I would like to congratulate our Research and Evaluation Team on its continuous work assessing the integrity and value of our programs. Only through ongoing review and an approach of continuous improvement can we ensure we can provide the most effective support for participants.

Finally, we might be talking less about COVID-19 right now, but the impacts of the pandemic are still being felt in our centres. The ongoing level of commitment shown by staff towards health and safety is highly commendable and appreciated.

On that note, I wish each and every one of you and your loved ones a safe, healthy and happy festive season.

*Pieter Bezuidenhout*  
Managing Director

## Team of inmates guarantees chariots are ready for race day

Staff and inmates at Junee Correctional Centre have helped give the South Wagga Lions Club's fleet of chariots a new lease of life in time for this year's Cancer Council's Relay for Life.

Ten chariots were ready to race at Wagga Wagga's Connolly Oval on 7 October, after a project to refurbish them was completed following an approach by the Cancer Council.

Gleaming in their fresh coats of paint, the chariots were handed over to representatives of the Lions Club, along with members of the Cancer Council's Relay for Life event team, on Friday 9 September.

Junee Correctional Centre General Manager Dom Karauria said this was a great opportunity for the men involved to hone the skills they are learning in the centre's industries area.

"A team of four inmates was employed to strip the chariots back to bare metal, repair any damaged frames, prep for painting, apply a variety of colours, and then polish the wheels," Mr Karauria said.

"Projects like this offer inmates a chance to give back to the community and they feel a great sense of pride in undertaking this kind of work – it is this positive use of vocational skills and teamwork we hope inmates will use to support their reintegration into the community once they are released."



From left: South Wagga Lions Club's Bob Gnezdilodff and Bob Smith, Cancer Council Relay for Life's Michael Gordon and Greg Johnson from, supporter Tony Christie, and Junee Correctional Centre Trade Supervisor Peter Holt.

The Cancer Council's Relay for Life is a fun and moving experience that raises vital funds for the Cancer Council's research, prevention, and support services. The event is a chance for the community to recognise and celebrate local cancer survivors, those going through a cancer experience, their carers, to honour and remember loved ones lost, and to raise money to help save more lives.

Cancer Council Wagga Wagga's Relay for Life chair, Alan Pottie, thanked Junee Correctional Centre for its support in refurbishing 10 chariots in the lead-up to this year's Relay.

"Without efforts from passionate, community-focused organisations like the correctional centre, we would not be able to continue with such successful events as the annual Relay, which is Wagga Wagga's biggest cancer fundraiser," Mr Pottie said.

"Relay for Life brings the community together to celebrate survivors and recognise the unsung heroes - their carers - while also honouring those we've lost as we continue to raise funds to support people affected by cancer, fund research and prevention programs."



From left: Red Knights Chapter 6 President Andy Young, Fulham Correctional Centre's Helen Dolan, Rose Ljubicic and Natalie Greenfield, and Chapter 6 Vice-President Neville McKenzie, with toys handmade by prisoners. Photo: Tom Parry, Gippsland Times.

## Handcrafted toys donated for Christmas

For many years Fulham Correctional Centre has donated handmade toys made by prisoners to the Red Knights Motorcycle Club for their annual Latrobe Valley charity toy run.

This year more than 40 soft toys and wooden toys were designed and handmade by the men with the knowledge that they will be donated to charitable organisations at the end of the year for children.

With the support of a GET Textiles Trade Officer, several men were creative and designed new soft toy patterns, including teddy bears and woolly mammoths. All the toys are hand stitched by the men within the Textiles Workshop.

Additionally, Fulham donated handmade wooden toys made by the men in the Construction Learning Centre. The men have also offered to make wooden toys from timber off-cuts to donate to children in the community.

The men take great pride in creating gifts which will be donated to a good cause.

Fulham General Manager Natalie Greenfield said: "Fulham Correctional Centre is proud to have donated more than 40 toys to the Red Knights Motorcycle Club. Every year, the men participating take great pride in creating gifts they know will be donated to a good cause."



## Staff take time out for R U OK? Day

Staff at Ravenhall Correctional Centre marked this year's R U OK? Day, on 8 September, through a myriad of activities intended to slow life's ever-moving fast pace.

To kick-start proceedings, staff were

greeted with a short R U OK? video shown on the Gatehouse television, which played throughout the day. A complimentary hot meal was served for lunch, with a fruit kebab to fuel a healthy body. Staff were also given a playlist of meditative songs they could play via their computers and a list of self-care activities they could engage in after checking in on one another.

In line with this year's theme - "No qualifications needed to ask R U OK?" - each unit was offered a variety of interactive games to participate in. Finally, as a reminder to all staff that every day is the day to ask R U OK?, each unit was offered a set of ceramic R U OK? mugs.



## POSITIVE REMAND AND RESPONSE

### RATE RESULTS

The Research and Evaluation (R&E) team recently reviewed the Keeping Your Cool program, which aims to increase participants' ability to effectively manage anger. Facilitated at Ravenhall Correctional Centre by GEO Clinicians, the 12-hour program targets remanded men who have experienced anger management problems in the past.

Following a detailed examination of the evidence, the results suggest the program helped prisoners change. All four of the targeted short-term outcomes were achieved, with increases in awareness of strategies that can help to manage anger an area of strength. Feedback from participants on the delivery of the program was also very positive and opportunities to fine-tune the program were noted.

There has also been great progress in our response rates to our evaluation surveys following staff consultation. Response rates reflect our ability to listen to the men in our care, which then allows us to learn and act on what we hear.

The R&E Team sought and then huddled on feedback from clinicians on our program integrity process last year. Themes and actions were then identified, shared and endorsed. More than 10 substantive changes were developed, including the creation of the individual change calculator and streamlining of all information related to what evaluation surveys are required and where to find them.

The measures were launched earlier this year and the rate has steadily and significantly increased and is now five times higher. Thanks to all involved.



## IN BRIEF

### Surfing Santa takes top prize



Surfing Santa by Findlay Clarke.

More than 70 artworks were submitted to this year's GEO Group Australia Christmas Card Design Competition, with a surfing Santa by Findlay Clarke, 12 (care of Junee Correctional Centre) chosen as the winning design.

Every year, the children and grandchildren of its staff members are invited to participate in a competition to design our corporate Christmas card, which offers a top prize of \$200.

We had a lot of wonderful entries across the two age categories of Junior, 5-10 and Senior, 11-16, so thank you to all of the staff who encouraged their children and grandchildren to join in.

Congratulations to Findlay and to the following finalists who each received \$100:

- Georgina Callaghan, 7, Head Office
- Alice Street, 12, Fulham
- Jaxon Booker, 13, Fulham
- Mairead Baxter, 7, Fulham
- Zoe Booker, 11, Fulham
- Kira Stahlbock, 12, Ravenhall
- Ebony Jones, 9, Junee
- Chloe Mattingly, 7, Junee
- Robert Gilchrist, 8, Junee.

### Governance and Risk Committee

GEO's Governance and Risk Committee held its latest meeting at Fulham Correctional Centre.

Committee members - Director of Governance and Continuous Improvement Kim Blinkhorn, and Contract and Performance Managers Michael Horne (Junee), Dale Rob (Fulham) and Tony Mannweiler (Ravenhall) - were joined by Peter Highman from JLB and consultant Craig Bates via video link.

The discussions centred around future opportunities for improvements in governance and performance including a re-launch and upgrade of TRIM - GEO's records management system,

audit training for key correctional centre personnel, the Governance Risk and Compliance Manual and recent audit findings and remediation methodologies.

There was also discussion around the capacity of the GEO Tracker system and a push to have more relevant staff - including the Senior Leadership Team members from each centre using the data base.

### Clinical Governance Workshop



GEO's Governance and Risk Committee and Senior Leadership Team members at Fulham Correctional Centre.

The final 2022 GEO Group Clinical Governance Committee Workshop was held on 9 and 10 November in Melbourne. The workshop included both the National Medicines Safety and Advisory Committee Meeting and the National Clinical Governance Committee Meeting.

Attendees included GEO Director Governance and Continuous Improvement Kim Blinkhorn, Health Services Managers at Junee and Fulham Correctional Centres Erin Godwin and Julie Bond, Director Health Services David Grace, Medical Advisor Dr Richard Matthews, Clinical Advisor Maureen Hanly and Ravenhall Correctional Centres Clinical Quality Coordinator Rory McGuire.

The two agendas included a broad range of contemporary health services issues with discussions regarding ongoing research opportunities, policy revisions, medication administration tracking program implementation, use of telehealth, personal care for patients, Health Services Action Plan update, high risk health issues including obesity management and the establishment of an Aboriginal Health/Worker/Liaison Officer Network.

The last few years has seen significant challenges for all correctional centre staff including health services - with COVID-19 management and the associated disruptions to normal health service delivery being impacted.

Junee Correctional Centre has been fortunate to secure a new Health Services Manager, Erin Godwin, who has already made her mark in the implementation of Junee's new health services model and a significant improvement in the performance of contractual requirements. Welcome Erin!

### Fulham 25-Year Anniversary Dinner

Fulham Correctional Centre's 25 years of operations was celebrated at a formal dinner in Sale on 28 October.

The event, which followed a special Town Hall for staff in April, recognised the valuable contribution of staff, partners and key stakeholders to the successful operation of the centre.

Guests included Corrections Victoria Commissioner Larissa Strong, Wellington Shire Mayor Ian Bye and GEO's Managing Director Pieter Bezuidenhout.

