The outstanding fundraising efforts of the Biggenden Hospital Auxiliary and the local community were celebrated at the opening of the new palliative care extension on November 1.

The extension provides the Biggenden Multi-Purpose Health Service with additional private space besides an existing palliative care room for the families of palliative care patients to stay alongside their loved ones.

Biggenden Hospital Auxiliary, local community organisations and residents raised money for more than a decade to cover the $120,000 cost of the extension.

“It’s a real pleasure to open the extension to the Biggenden MPHS palliative care unit and to thank the local community for their hard work,” Wide Bay Hospital and Health Board Chair Peta Jamieson said.

“The Biggenden Hospital Auxiliary identified the need for this space for the families of patients and they rallied the whole community behind it, resulting in this wonderful space.

“Thanks to the hard work of the Biggenden community, for years to come families will be able to use this space and spend more time with their loved ones in their final days.”

Providing families with accommodation near their dying relative is greatly beneficial to families and patients, according to Biggenden MPHS Director of Nursing Heather MacKellar.

“To be together with their partner and loved ones reduces the patient’s pain and anxiety – it’s comforting for them to have their family with them,” Heather said.

The extension room include lounges, kitchen facilities such as a fridge and kettle, cupboards, tables, drawers and more.

Groups that raised funds included the Biggenden Hospital Auxiliary, Biggenden RSL, Biggenden RSL Women’s Auxiliary, Biggenden and District Disaster Support Group and the Ruff ‘n’ Tuff Car Rally.

A number of individuals and families also donated or gave bequests to the cause.

IT’S not long now ... the countdown to Christmas is well and truly on!

And time is ticking even faster for the WBHHS Annual Christmas Decorations Competition, so don’t forget to get your registrations in.

Staff across our region are getting busy with plans to bring Christmas cheer to their areas, offering simple seasonal pleasure to patients and visitors.

There’s also the pride of winning one of several awards up for grabs, so it’s time to get cracking. Rural judging will take place from December 11-13, with Maryborough on December 13, Hervey Bay on December 14 and Bundaberg on December 15.

Judges were amazed at the effort and creativity last year, and they can’t wait to see what everyone comes up with this year.

If you haven’t received a registration form and still want to register your unit or department, email wbhhs-hsce@health.qld.gov.au

Register now for Xmas decorations

What’s Inside
• Hervey Bay Relay for Life
• Pictures make lasting memory
• Star performance recognised
• Mo-grow teams whisker up
• 60 Seconds with Anna McTear
Hervey Bay steps out in Relay For Life

Hervey Bay Hospital employees did themselves proud as they once again flew the flag for WBHHS at the Hervey Bay Relay for Life.

WBHHS entered two teams in Cancer Council Queensland’s overnight walking challenge – the Hervey Bay Cancer Care team and the Pharmacy team, whose Minions-inspired outfits won them the best costume award at the event.

The Pharmacy crew, who had a personal reason for fundraising, also topped the WBHHS charts with an impressive $6950 contribution.

Coupled with Cancer Care’s $1360, and the combined $6000-plus raised from the Maryborough and Bundaberg Relay events earlier in the year, WBHHS has raised almost $15,000 to support cancer patients this year.

Cancer Care Operations Director Ray Johnson said the Hervey Bay event – held at Seafront Oval on October 28-29 – was a lot of fun, but also served to remind all participants of the real reasons they were doing the challenge.

“WBHHS certainly had an awesome presence. One of the highlights was that we had three staff – Brad Peaker, Dr Hayden Christie and Mark Thomson – participate in the Relay pageant, which this year was a drag queen parade,” Ray said.

“Every team also participated in the Hungry Hippos game, which was a hoot. The organisers played games, they kept the music going – it was a lot of fun.

“Dr Christie also spoke at the opening ceremony as well as the fightback breakfast, and the candlelight vigil was very moving.

“We were once again reminded of why we support this terrific and uplifting event, and we’ll be back again next year.”

WBHHS staff also handed out more than 100 BreastScreen gift bags to promote screening services, and the BreastScreen pink coffee cups were highly visible thanks to coffee van Caffeine Fix using them.

“A lot of Relay participants would have had the chance to see the BreastScreen messaging on the cups, which we hope will translate into life-saving appointments for women in the target age group,” Ray said.

Dan and Geteno take mental health message to community

WBHHS has partnered with the Burnett Mary Regional Group to tackle mental health issues in the bush and support rural communities.

Dan Banos from WBHHS’s mental health team and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health worker Geteno George gave presentations at BMRG’s recent community forum at Gayndah.

The presentations dealt with the issue of tackling regional adversity from their respective areas of expertise.

The forum was attended by BMRG members, landholders and community members from across the North Burnett.

BMRG is the lead regional agency for natural resource management and, as a result, directly liaises with stakeholders in regional communities.

The forum provided a great opportunity for Dan and Geteno to address mental health issues that landholders and regional communities face on a daily basis.
Memory books prove a lasting treasure

AN initiative to create special “memory book” keepsakes for Biggenden MPHS residents is leaving lasting memories for families, as well as offering therapeutic benefits to patients.

On joining the Biggenden MPHS, each resident receives a “memory book”, which chronicles their time at the facility in a series of photos.

Recreational officer Michelle Kinbacher started the project just over two years ago and so far books have been provided for 30 past and current residents.

“The memory books serve as a purpose therapy program for the residents, but also as a gift for their families after they have left us,” Michelle said.

“They (residents) see the books every month and when they do they instantly turn to a favourite page, tell stories about the people in them and show the photos to the other residents.”

Photos are taken once or twice a week with outings, events, activities, holidays, birthdays and special occasions all remembered via the images in the books.

Just yesterday the newest photos were taken for Melbourne Cup, including of make-up being applied and race-day outfits.

Michelle said the handover of the memory books to families was always an emotional and meaningful occasion for staff as well as families. “One resident had a lot of her family overseas and they were just so rapt that they got the opportunity to see what their mum and grandmother had done over her years with us,” she said.

The local newsagency at Biggenden has been a generous supporter, donating stickers and other resources.

Top national recognition for Bundaberg doctor

BREASTSCREEN Wide Bay is celebrating after one of its own won a top national award for her work as a doctor.

Dr Denise Powell was awarded the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners’ top rural accolade, the 2017 Brian Williams Award.

RACGP President Dr Bastian Seidel said Dr Powell’s guidance and support had enabled rural GPs and GP registrars to dedicate themselves to their patients, families and communities.

“Dr Powell is known throughout Bundaberg and its surrounding region for her dedication to her patients and their families, and her passion for general practice education, and also works at the local BreastScreen Service,” Dr Seidel said.

“Dr Powell is also passionate about general practice education and has provided guidance and support for many other GPs, GP registrars, medical students, nurses and physician’s assistants.”

Dr Powell said it was an honour and a surprise to receive the special award.

“I feel that I am simply their representative because I know they, too, do what I do and so do many other rural doctors,” Dr Powell said.

“I am particularly proud to represent rural women of our profession.”

Dr Brian Williams was a rural GP, medical educator and staunch advocate for rural general practice and education at all levels.

The award is presented each year to a GP who has made a significant contribution to the personal and professional welfare of rural doctors.
TWENTY-THREE staff members and community groups have been presented with certificates of appreciation following their involvement in WBHHS’s effort to fold 10,000 stars for a high-profile anti-violence project.

The recipients, including a range of individual staff, community members and the Bundaberg Hospital Medical Imaging team, spent months weaving stars from ribbon as part of the One Million Stars to End Violence public art project for next year’s Commonwealth Games.

WBHHS stars project leader Norma Frost said she had been humbled to see the way both employees and members of the community had come together to show their support for the cause.

“Violence comes in many forms, and as health professionals and members of our community, we see it far too often,” Norma said.

“We had such great support for this awesome effort, so we wanted to make sure we recognised it because we couldn’t have reached our target without the help of every single person involved.”

Norma has also collaborated with One Million Stars artist Maryann Talia Pau to tell WBHHS’s stars story for the next regular publication Ms Pau puts out to keep the star-weaving community connected and informed on progress.

“Maryann has been really impressed with the way we’ve worked not just with our own staff but also collaborated with local schools and community members to promote the anti-violence message,” Norma said.

“We can’t wait to see how the eventual art installation looks next year, and know it will be a special way to send the message that violence is never acceptable.”

Kobie Zahl, Sally-Anne Smith and Michala Hanrahan in the children’s ward.

STUDENTS at Torbanlea State School have been busy thinking about others of late.

Inspired by School Captain Michala Hanrahan and Vice-Captain Kobie Zahl, they made bookmarks for patients in Hervey Bay Hospital’s children’s ward.

When presenting the gifts to Nurse Unit Manager Sally-Anne Smith, Michala said the goal was to let patients know other kids were thinking of them.

“I thought the bookmarks might be a way to cheer kids up a bit when they’re all alone in hospital, without their parents,” Michala said.

Kobie said they hoped patients would feel loved when they got the bookmarks.

“Hopefully they’ll know that people are caring for them and they’re not just all alone,” she said.

School principal Norman McNamara said the display of thoughtfulness was something he was proud of.

“I’m proud of all of the students but Michala was the real driving force behind this,” Norman said.

Sally-Anne said it was lovely to have gifts such as this, specially made by children.

“We have patients from all sorts of schools,” Sally-Anne said.

“It’s nice for them to see that other kids of thinking of them when they’re in hospital.”
Mo grow is on as men help others

IT’S that time of year again – when your male colleagues start to sport suspiciously seedy-looking facial hair.

That’s right, it’s Movember.

And while it might be a chore for them (not to mention their poor wives and girlfriends) to endure some crumb-catching craziness for a month, all you have to do to help their cause is donate.

Movember aims to support men’s health by providing funding into research and innovation to address issues such as prostate and testicular cancer, and mental health and suicide prevention.

There are two WBHHS teams taking up the challenge this year – the WBHHS Mo 4 Men and the Mo-nificent 12 (otherwise known as the Bundaberg Hospital Allied Health team).

Mo 4 Men team captain Darian Ward said men often struggled to address their own health issues – particularly mental health – and WBHHS employees felt it was important to get behind Movember to raise both awareness and money.

“It’s a small gesture on our part to achieve something big and important,” Darian said.

To support our teams’ fundraising efforts, just go online to https://au.movember.com, click on “Donate” and then search either for “WBHHS Mo 4 Men” or “MO-nificent 12”.

You can choose to donate to an individual or the whole team.

If you’re keen to take part and you haven’t yet registered, get in touch with Darian at Darian.Ward@health.qld.gov.au.

Recruitment staff deliver jobs talk directly to schools

WBHHS senior recruitment staff have gone back to school – but not to bury their heads in books.

Dynamic duo Michelle Kennedy and Sandy Cuthbert recently trialled a visit to St Luke’s Anglican School, Bundaberg, as part of the Recruitment team’s strategic plan to engage more with high schools.

“The idea is to talk about pathways in health and grow our own workforce,” Michelle said. “We spoke to Year 10 students so we could have the opportunity to influence their subject choices and encourage them to think about careers in health.

“We talked about all the jobs – doctors, nurses, allied health, admin, operations, technical, trades – and a lot of them were surprised at the breadth of roles we have here.”

Michelle said both the school and students were very receptive to the visit, and the plan next year was to roll the program out to as many high schools across Wide Bay as possible.

The visit comes on the back of WBHHS’s strong presence at school careers expos across the region this year.
Anna happy to be growing in sex health training role

Your role?
Clinical Nurse at Wide Bay Sexual Health.

How long have you been with WBHHS?
Eighteen months.

How do you describe what you do?
I’m in a training position at Q Clinic, so I am learning the role of clinic nurse in conjunction with completing a sexual and reproductive health certificate. The role includes sexual health screening and education, testing and treatment of sexual transmitted infections, HIV specialist management and care, screening and certification of sex workers, contact tracing, emergency contraception and general contraception advice, and outreach clinics to headspace, Hervey Bay and Maryborough.

What’s best about your job?
Working as part of a great professional team of nurses, learning news skills and extending my scope of practice.

Anna McTear enjoys working as part of a great professional team of nurses.

Standards in focus

AS WBHHS moves further into the short-notice accreditation trial, the Wide Bay Wave will start a new section focusing on our national safety standards.

From the next edition of the Wave, we’ll be regularly selecting a different standard and highlighting a team or individual whose initiatives or approaches to work are a great example of those standards in action.

Plenty of teams are pro-actively finding ways to improve the way they operate, with the national standards as their guide, and we’d love you to send us examples so we can highlight them. Please email Christina.Ongley@health.qld.gov.au with your input.

We hope the section will also provide an opportunity for the sharing of knowledge and wider application. Watch this space!

Joke of the day

THE resident in the emergency department began his examination of an elderly man by asking him what brought him to the hospital.

"An ambulance," the man replied.

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Doctor: Did you take those pills I gave you to improve your memory?

Patient: What pills?

What’s On

November 14: World Diabetes Day
November 19: International Men’s Day
November 25: White Ribbon Day
December 1: World Aids Day
December 11: WBHHS Christmas decorations judging week