

Woomelang and District Bush Nursing Centre



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Annual Report 2019-2020

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Mission Statement, Vision and Values

Our Mission

The aim and purpose of the Woomelang and District Bush Nursing Centre (WDBNC) is to provide a holistic service to the community universally, with the highest quality of health and wellbeing services to every individual without prejudice.

The WDBNC will strive to maintain a healthy and safe environment in which community members are treated with respect. The WDBNC will also strive to provide high quality care and be a source of health information through the provision of skilled health providers.

Our Vision

To offer a holistic health and wellbeing service that is responsive, flexible and always improving.

Our Values

Social Inclusion and Social Justice

Valuing the uniqueness of every individual, and responding without prejudice.

Honesty and Transparency

To be a source of truthfulness and integrity reflecting open communication.

Connectedness

Caring about our community, partners and wider relationships.

Innovation

To be creative, inventive and responsive to our community.

Partnering

To provide a united and improved effort through beneficial associations with other people, agencies and associations.

Excellence

To offer best practice through qualified and credentialed staff and volunteers.

The Woomelang and District Bush Nursing Centre is on the lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk Nations and we wish to acknowledge them as Traditional Owners.

We would like to pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and to Aboriginal Elders of other communities who may be here today.

Strategic Directions 2018-2022

The strategic directions set out broad goals for the WDBNC. In order to carry out our mission and align with the Victorian Government's Rural and Regional Health Plan (VRRHP) 2012-2022. The plan has been developed with due consideration to the health priorities framework from the above VRRHP and other more local and regional plans associated within the Grampians/Wimmera catchment.

WDBNC has a proud history of responding to community and social needs.

This Strategic Directions document has regular review and reflection built within it through the development and implementation of an annual Operational Plan; to ensure that we are responsive to emerging social trends and needs, both locally and nationally.

WDBNC looks forward to continuing to offer excellent, collaborative health services for the benefit of the local communities of Woomelang and districts.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1:

Maintain and Strengthen Organisational Capability and Viability

GOAL: To maintain flexibility and respond dynamically to the changing environment.

Strategic Objectives:

Ensure partnerships to enable corporate and clinical good governance and risk management.

- Secure and retain appropriately qualified staff who are culturally sensitive to the needs of the Centre and community.
- Provide transparent and accountable financial management to ensure viability.
- Respond to opportunities for 'Client Driven' service growth and Centre viability.
- Maintain and enhance facilities and capital works.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2:

Responsive, Accessible, Timely and Flexible Health Care

GOAL: To achieve health services that reflects a holistic approach to health and wellbeing.

Strategic Objectives:

- Develop partnerships and services that are identified as areas of special need and growth within and by the community
- Strengthen client engagement and participation in health to address their health needs, literacy and promotion
- Create processes to ensure we are client driven

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3:

Ensure Quality and Safety

GOAL: Providing the highest quality and safest care to clients and safe service environment for all

Strategic Objectives:

- Ensure adherence to all governance frameworks
- Ensure the orientation of new, and the ongoing education off all Staff, Board Members and Volunteers, including in quality and safety
- Identify opportunities for and participation in quality improvement

Current Services and Groups

AVAILABLE SERVICES

- Nurse on Duty
- Emergency Nursing
- District Nursing
- Post-Acute Care
- Pathology Collection
- Maternal and Child Health Service
- Prescription Service
- Health Promotion
- Visiting Doctor
- Podiatrist
- Medical Transport Services
- Bus Transport
- Yarriambiack Library fortnightly service
- Continence Nurse
- Telehealth
- Equipment Hire
- Health Education and Literacy
- Photocopy/Facsimile
- Scan/send emails
- Free Wi-fi
- McGrath Nurse
- Gym – in progress

Referral to nearest:

- Hospice Services
- Dietician
- Diabetes Educator
- Wellbeing Coordinators
- Physio
- Occupational Therapy

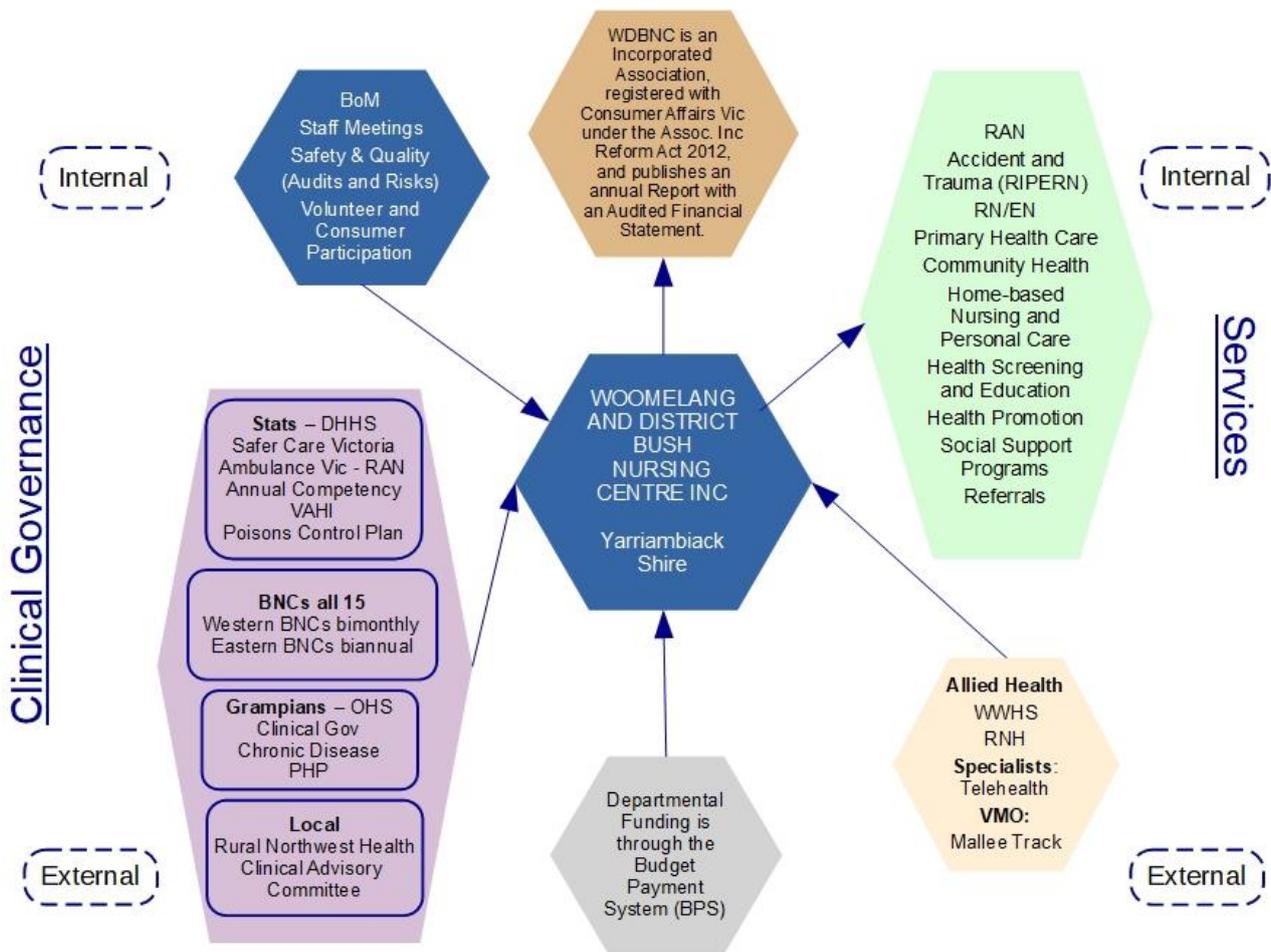
COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Garden Club
- Crafty Ladies
- WOW—Women of Woomelang through to the end of 2019
- Connecting Lunches from Feb 2020
- Woomelang Walkers
- Men's Shed



Women's Health Week in 2020 - socially distanced!

Clinical Governance and Organisation Chart



Woomelang and District Bush Nursing Centre Organisation Chart



Introduction

Woomelang is an isolated and remote town, predominantly a farming area of 201 people (2016 Census), 360km NW of Melbourne's GPO on the Sunraysia Highway. The average age is 58 years.

With the demographic of an ageing population, services and transport remain central to community support and viability.

The Woomelang and District Bush Nursing Centre was first established on October 8th, 1965, through the hard work and determination of our local community members, who saw a need for a health service in our town.

The service is evolving as we adapt to the Covid-19 restrictions, with many services unable to travel to us. The expansion of telehealth has been invaluable with online education for clients to access these services either on site or at home. This telehealth with phones, iPads or computer access, will continue into the future.

The return of services is anticipated, however at present our dedicated volunteers/drivers assist in transport to appointments in neighbouring health services.

There is an ever increasing need to support members of the community to stay at home for as long as possible, as residential aged care services are only available in neighbouring towns.

Without the support of our voluntary Board of Management we would not be able to function.



The WDBNC Complex from above

President's Report

Chris Kelly was our Chair of the Board until May 2020. We would like to thank him for the service he provided to the Centre over the seven years he was on the Board.

As Acting Chair of the Board of Management I would like to thank all the Board members, staff and volunteers for your dedication and time commitment to ensure the Centre functions at its best.

The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) standards assessment was in September 2019 and we were formally accredited on the 9th December 2020. The embedding of all the processes required to maintain this accreditation is ongoing and a credit to all to ensure the best possible service is delivered to the community.

The Bushfires affected so many areas in the east of the state and along the border, that put enormous stress on all services and the Bush Nursing Centres. We are grateful to have been able to contribute to some fire relief in March with Carol Paech, Centre Manager relieving at Swifts Creek for two weeks.

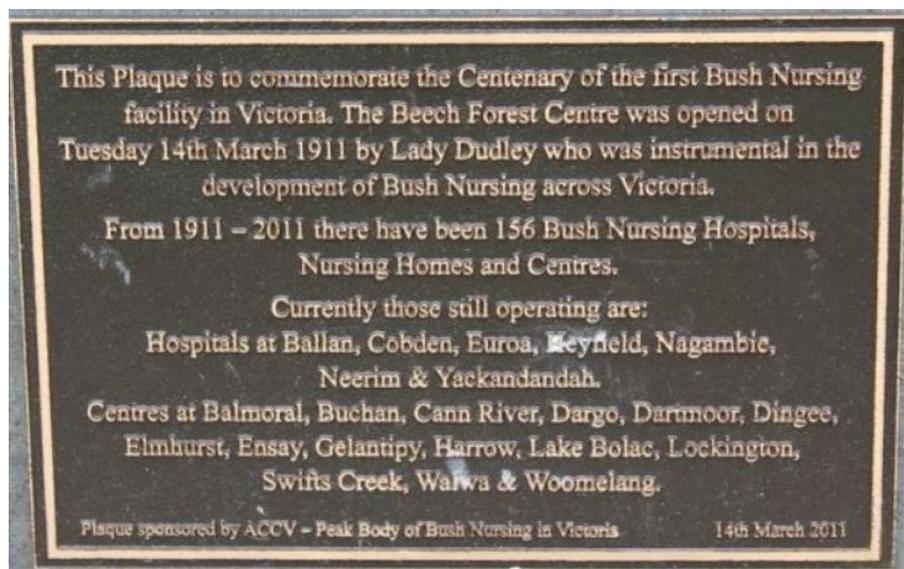
As Covid-19 advanced across the globe and began to have an impact on our lives in Australia, we adapted as a community to the directives from the Premier and the Department of Health and Human Services. Our lives have changed and possibly forever in some areas and I commend everyone for adhering to the restrictions and keeping everyone safe. The Centre adopted the changes, restrictions put in place and yet the service stayed open. I would like to thank all the staff for their perseverance in adopting the endless changes put forward. It's not over yet however I look forward to the 'new normal' for the Centre's service delivery and daily activities.

Our Board is changing as the community recedes; we need local representation on the board to ensure the community needs and wants are represented well. We also need specialty areas to be covered to meet the NSQHS standards, that are not always available locally. With this in mind, these areas can be outsourced e.g. Clinical Governance is provided by Rural Northwest Health, Financial Governance is provided by an accountant from Bendigo, Governance education for board members is provided by Governance Evaluator team. With Covid-19, we have expanded into telecommunication for meetings, mostly via Zoom so the outsourced expertise can attend our meetings from anywhere.

Thank you again

Ian Norris

Acting Chair



Bush Nursing Centres - looking after us for more than a century!

Board of Management

President

Chris Kelly
Primary Producer
Elected 2010

Vice President

Ian Norris
Semi-Retired/Bus Driver
Elected 2008

Treasurer

Sandra Mott
Primary Producer
Elected 2010

Member

Helen Ballentine
Shire Councillor
Elected 2015

Member

Grant Doxey
Social Worker
Elected 2016

Member

Mandy Bailey
Retired Farmer/Teacher
Elected 2018

Member

Jason Collins
Primary Producer
Elected 2019



*Speaker Rhiannon Kelly from
Ambulance Victoria
at the last WDBNC AGM*

Centre Manager's Report

The highlight for 2019 was the culmination of two years' preparation to achieve accreditation in the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) standards second edition.

Bush Nursing Centres are now gazetted under the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 for Rural and Isolated Practice Endorsed Registered Nurses (RIPERNS) to work to their capacity and we are taking steps to have this implemented at the Centre.

Like so many others we felt helpless during the devastating fires over the summer that affected many other communities and Bush Nursing Centres. It was a privilege to assist in 2 weeks' fire relief at Swifts Creek Bush Nursing Centre in March this year, that allow for some much-needed holiday relief.

We started the year with plans to embed all that was new, to be confronted with Covid-19 where restrictions were introduced in March and escalated over the next few months to keep everyone safe.

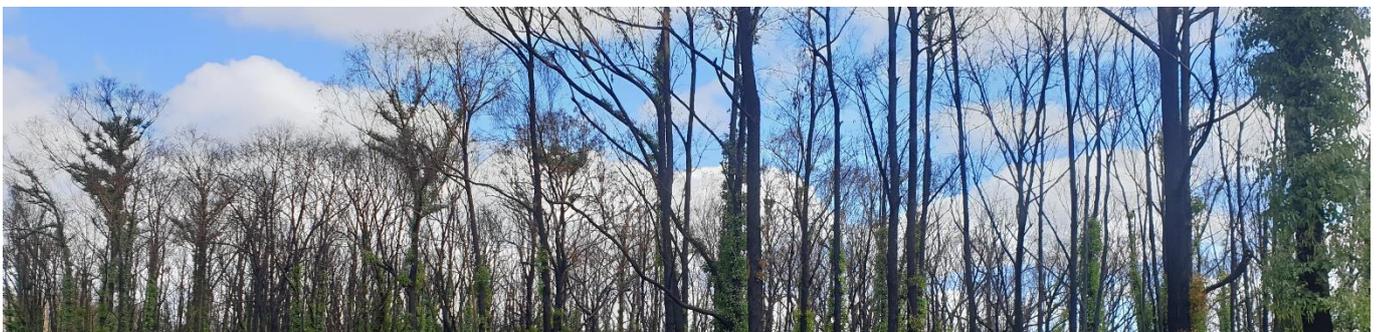
The entire community, staff, board and volunteers, you all deserve the greatest of respect for your tolerance and resilience in accepting and managing the changes. You made a major impact on helping the halved staff to continue to deliver a much-needed service. It is a perfect example of how pulling together in times of disaster helps everyone. Thank you to you all.

Our Strategies

1. Maintain and Strengthen Organisational Capability and Viability – Covid-19 has certainly highlighted the need for an increased need for different forms of communication in the area of telehealth, not only for specialists but everyday communication, staying connected on a variety of platforms and educating community members, being isolated did not mean being alone. This will be an area of growth in the future.
2. Responsive, Accessible, Timely and Flexible Health Service – Flexible is the key word in this strategy as we have been creative in how to deliver care as has many other health services. There has been an increase in liaising and coordination with other health services on behalf of the clients to ensure care is received.
3. Ensure Safety and Quality – This started with gaining accreditation and flowed onto all the Covid-19 safety precautions for everyone; that included the directives from the Department of Health, additional education, pandemic stock and plan and starting a Flu vaccination capability for the centre.

This year has certainly been out of the realm of so called 'normal' – interesting, challenging, the adjectives could go on. I am optimistic that the coming year will be different, a new normal created in which to live and work. Thank you again.

Carol Paech



Renewal beginning after the fires at Swifts Creek

COVID-19

COVID 19 changes to the organisation in 2020



WDBNC has not been immune to all the changes that Covid-19 brought to our community. With many community members over 65 years of age with or without a chronic disease that is high risk in relation to Covid-19, we adapted how service delivery occurred. Many directives came from the Department of Health and Human Services to keep both staff and the community safe from the virus.

Some of the changes implemented are to address crowd control and ensure social distancing is adhered to. 'The drop in' ability has been a major change to the Centre, requiring an appointment to be made prior to arriving at the Centre

Clinical services have been focused to the mornings and non-clinical activities in the afternoons.

Communication has been a key strategy to keep everyone informed and as a result our weekly newsletter has been born.



Covid-19 Cleaning

To keep the Centre COVID-19 clean, we have expanded our Environmental cleaning products from Ecolab to help 'Clean, Disinfect and Sanitize'.

All surfaces are sanitized after each client visit, each time there is a staff change at a workstation, and at the end of each day.

There have been regular education sessions about COVID-19 requirements for all staff.



Staff

Clinical Staff

Centre Manager: Carol Paech

Remote Area Nurses (RANs): Miranda Conlan, Tracy Hynam, Carol Paech

Registered Nurses (RN's): Megan Vallance, Deb Schilling, Deb Funcke

ENs: Ruth Mitchell

Administration Officer

Cindy Wooding

Reception:

Kaye Symes

Environmental Staff

Sharon Gallagher

Julie Mitchell



Remote Area Nurse Report

Woomelang Bush Nursing Centre currently has three accredited Remote Area Nurses (RANs). These nurse's complete annual competency-based skills training for the provision of first line emergency care in the event of a medical or trauma emergency. The current RANs at Woomelang Bush Nursing Centre are Carol Paech, Miranda Conlan and Tracy Hynam.

Training consists of a written examination and two days of skill training and practical assessment. The practical component is usually conducted at the Victorian Emergency Management Institute (VEMI) at Mount Macedon however, due to COVID restrictions, it was conducted on site this year.



Online workshops were conducted on the 20th May, and Paramedic Community Support Coordinator (PCSC), Sean Duggin, attended the Centre on the 15th June for practical skills training and assessment. An enjoyable day was had by all.

The WDBNC also has a dedicated Paramedic Community Support Coordinator (PCSC), who is available for training and advice all year.

RANs refreshing in Midwifery

Ongoing Education, Skills Acquisition and Mandatory Training

To say that 2020 has been a big year for Education is an understatement!

Our non-Clinical staff (Admin and Environmental Services) have been kept busy with relevant education as diverse as hand hygiene, fire warden training and cyber security.

Our Clinical Staff (Nurses) have powered through hours and hours of online education to ensure that we not only kept up with all of our Clinical competencies and completed our annual Remote Area Nurse Training with Ambulance Victoria, but were also all over Covid-19 regulations.

A snapshot of what our fabulous nurses have been doing follows...

Remote Area Nurse Training - 50 hours!	Covid-safe Practices	Cybersecurity
Hand Hygiene	Child Safety	Medication Safety 2020
Recognising & Responding to Clinical Deterioration	Introduction to Triage	Clinical Handover
PPE Training	Partnering With Consumers	Stroke Update for Rural & Regional Nurses
Fire Awareness & Extinguisher Training	Recognising & Responding to Deterioration in Mental Health	Supporting Older Australians in Home Care
Taking A Best Possible Medication History	Assessment & Management of the stable patient in Urgent Care	Introduction to Antimicrobial Prescribing

Doctor



Dr Ros McCallum. M.B.B.S., DRANZCOG, has been visiting Woomelang fortnightly on a Wednesday this year.

She also consults at Mallee Track Health & Community Services and has a special interest in women's health, family medicine and mental health.

Connecting Lunch

This year the Woomelang Bush Nursing Centre decided to introduce a new activity called Connecting Lunch. Connecting Lunch aims to bring together members of the community for a tasty lunch and planned activity.

In February, Outreach Worker Alistar Baker talked about mental health first aid; in March, the Woomelang Bush Nursing Centre put on its very first baby shower for staff member Megan Vallance. A tasty lunch was provided on both occasions and both these events were well attended and enjoyed by all.

Unfortunately, due to COVID and social distancing laws, there have been no other Connecting Lunches this year but, as soon as Regional Victoria can take the next step, we plan to hold some exciting lunches.



Partnerships and Alliances



[All other Bush Nursing Centres in Victoria \(click to open in your browser\)](#)

Safer Care Victoria

Partnering in healthcare – WDBNC statement of intent for 2019-2020

A framework for better care and outcomes.

The Centre chose to focus on two Partnering in healthcare domains during the year:

- Partnering in healthcare domain 1 – Personalised and holistic
- Partnering in healthcare domain 2 – Working together.

During the year we decided to improve our client interactions to be more personalised and holistic with the expansion of our care plans for regular clients. The care plans are client focused and include personal goals, both health and lifestyle.

The second domain of working together focused on expanding the Centre's partnerships, in particular in the telehealth arena. We started predominantly with the Royal Flying Doctors but now use up to 5 options, depending on the Specialist request.

Personalised and Holistic



Carol, Tracy and Alistar Baker of the Rural Outreach Program at the Men's Health Night.

Working together

Woomelang Walkers, still going strong after 10 years!



**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
Woomelang Walkers
Walking Group
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF WALKING!**



Our Valued Volunteers

We thanked our Volunteers in December 2019 with a Christmas lunch. The Volunteers spoke of what is special about Volunteering such as giving pleasure to others, a feeling of satisfaction and a feeling that everyone has something they are good at and that interests them.

With Covid-19 restrictions in place the volunteers' activities have been severely curtailed. Reception duty has ceased since lockdown and transport has been restricted, with volunteer transport taking place under severe infection control restrictions.

We were unable to hold our traditional "Thank You" lunch during Volunteer Week in April, but a coffee and cake voucher was sent as a thank you.

Our Volunteer program is currently under review with the hope of attracting more volunteers and introducing another tier with a "Friends of WDBNC". This tier will work with consumers in an advisory capacity, reading and commenting on documentation and information and offering suggestions on how to improve the service.

Our Volunteer transport vehicle changed in August and our lovely new RAV is appreciated by our driver and passengers alike. A new lightweight foldable wheelie walker is also available to assist clients when travelling to appointments.



Programs and Services

Crafty Ladies:

Crafty Ladies' annual Stitches' Retreat took place in October with 18 ladies attending. The weekend was enjoyed by all with lots of crafting and laughter. Thanks go to Woomelang Hotel and Monica's Café for the catering. The ladies were issued with a craft challenge: a project to design, create and bring to our next Retreat.

In March we sent four quilts with Carol to Swifts Creek to be given to people who had lost their homes in the bush fires, hoping that the kind thoughts and a warm quilt would be a comfort.

A quilt has been made to raffle for the Biggest Morning tea.

As all activities have lapsed in 2020 the Crafty Ladies are fortunate that they have an interest they can continue in home isolation and we look forward to being able to get together again soon.



Sharon and Kaye with gifts for the Crafty Ladies



Two of the quilts donated to families that had lost their homes.

Men's Shed:

December saw DEFIB training with Ambulance Victoria. Four men from the Men's Shed attended along with three visitors. All were very interested by the demonstration and amazed that the procedure of using a defibrillator is so easy as the machine gives step by step instructions.

During the year, the men have not worked on as many projects as usual, owing to the COVID-19 restrictions.

The Plumbing Grant the Men's Shed gained last year was carried over; spouting, downpipes, the water pump and an instant hot water service are now all completed.



Isolation Activity:



Wonderful warm blankets for someone!

With the introduction of social isolation in March several Activities were set up to assist people to stay connected with worthwhile activities.

In April, a kit of red wool and a poppy pattern was distributed, and knitted poppies were placed at the Memorial for Anzac Day.

Wool and patterns for blanket squares were also distributed so we now have a wonderful display of colorful, cosy knitted blankets. These are to be distributed to worthwhile causes.

A pantry list with lists of basic foods was compiled and distributed. The list included basic foods with long shelf life to have on hand in case of illness or limited food availability.

Book Exchange

The BNC book exchange was increased, and jigsaw puzzles included as a free exchange program available for all clients.