



**CLAUD SWITZER**  
RESIDENTIAL CARE | KAITAIA



**SWITZER NEWSLETTER**  
Autumn/Winter 2024

*Find out what the residents and staff at 71 South Road have been doing!*



# An update from Switzer CEO, Tina Mills

Where have the last six months gone?

It was a busy start to the year for all of us at Switzer Residential Care. A flurry of fish fileting, flying in helicopters, filing, funding, furry friends, festive events, and flipping out flooring. Phew! Now that the mornings are getting crisp and the nature around us is slowing down, I've finally had a moment to pause, collect my thoughts, and reflect on all the incredible things we have achieved together.



## Building improvements across the site

Our operations, facilities, maintenance teams, and a host of external contractors have been hard at work ensuring the buildings and grounds are in tip-top shape. We have had an upgrade of our fire sprinkler system, and we have replaced all the tired flooring in our Kowhai household. (It is no easy feat to replace flooring without stopping operations, but everyone did a fantastic job to make it happen!)

## New initiatives for staff and areas for residents and visitors to connect

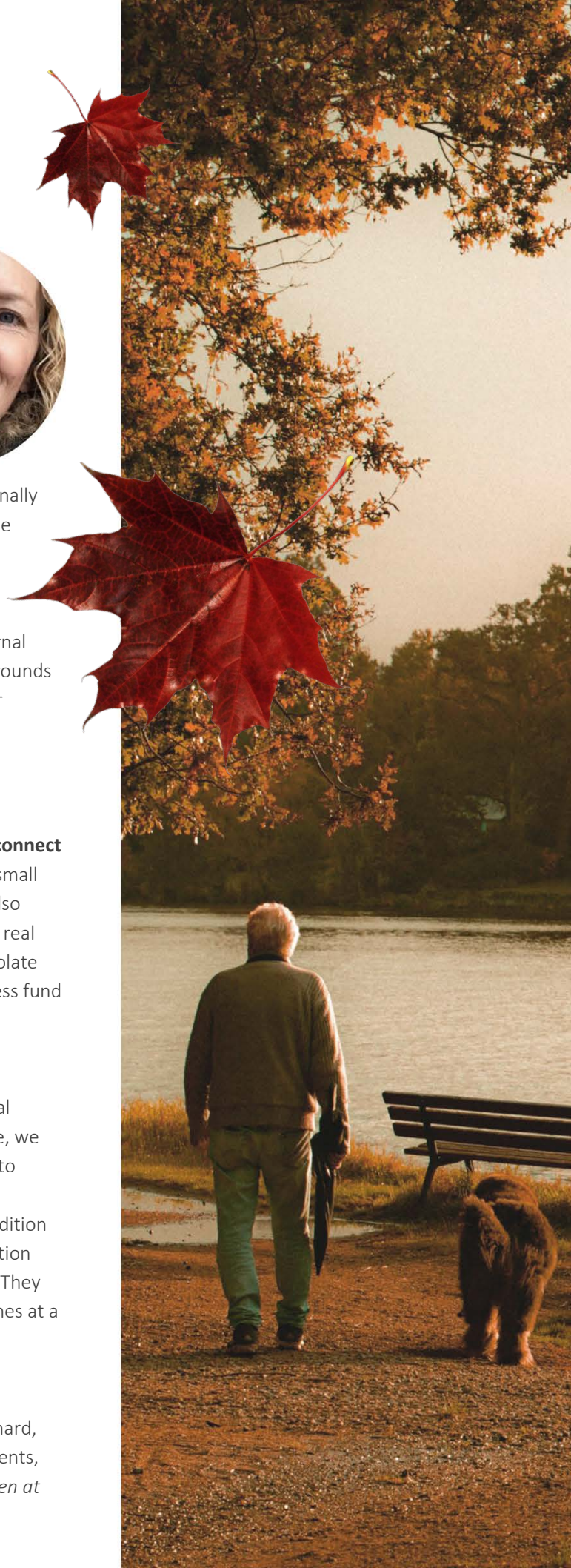
In the Switzer dining room, you will notice that we have set up a small café with tea and coffee-making facilities. A vending machine is also available to staff, residents, and visitors—and it is proving to be a real hit! (In case you're wondering, the cheese and crackers and chocolate bars are our best sellers.) All proceeds will return to a staff wellness fund to pay for rewards, activities, and gift vouchers.

## New online learning for staff

After seeking an all-in-one solution to ensure all staff met the legal compliance requirements for annual learning related to aged care, we discovered 'Altura'. We were very impressed with what they had to offer. The implementation went well earlier in the year, and staff feedback on the content has been overwhelmingly positive. In addition to enjoying the quality of the modern videos, they find the education relevant, helpful, and applicable to their real jobs in the industry. They also enjoy being able to complete the training on their smartphones at a time that suits them!

## Eden focus

Our dedicated Resident Wellness Coordinator has been working hard, sharing the magic of the Eden Philosophy with our staff and residents, and achieving great success! *Read more about how we embed Eden at Switzer on pages 8 and 9.*





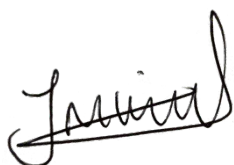
## Funding wins!

Initially left off the funding list for the Government 'rural and isolated' funding, we fought hard to ensure Switzer was seen and heard! Thankfully, we were successful, which means we can better serve our Kaitia and the wider Far North Community. We have also secured funding to have a 'digital doctor' (high-tech video conferencing system known as 'RITA'), which means our residents don't need to spend their precious time on long car trips to Whangarei to be seen for medical appointments.

## Switzer Community Housing Provider (CHP) update

Far North Holdings Ltd and Claud Switzer Memorial Trust (CSMT) announced earlier this year in the media plans to build much-needed homes for Te Hiku residents. The Western Village development will provide 28 one-bedroom units in Kaitia to house 1-2 people per unit or new homes for up to 56 community members. We are delighted to announce that we have attained resource consent and are pushing forward with the next stage of development.

As you can tell from all these updates, we have an exciting and busy season ahead. I look forward to seeing what these next few months bring as we head towards spring. Stay warm and be kind to one another.



**Tina Mills | Chief Executive Officer**

Claud Switzer Memorial Trust

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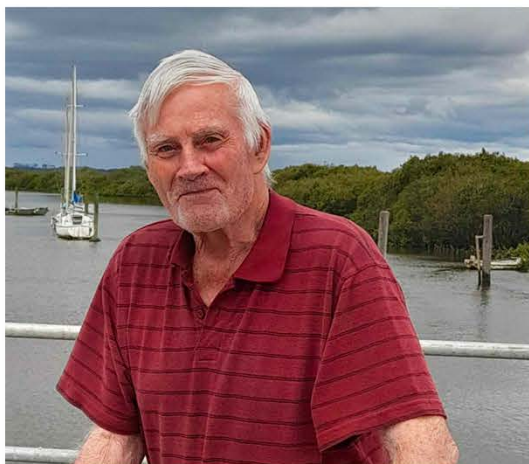


## Fishing + fun at Unahi Wharf!



Some of our residents have been exploring the great outdoors in the form of Unahi Wharf. A short van trip from Switzer and they were soon breathing the fresh ocean air!

Some tried their luck fishing, while others were content enjoying lunch and gazing out to the endless ocean. We think the smiles say it all...







## Resource consent approved! What next?

Doing amazing things takes time, but now that we have been given the green light in the form of Community Housing Provider (CHP) status and resource consent, from this moment forward there is going to be a little less paperwork and a lot more action!

As per the project timeline that has been set, the drawings and plans for the 28 units will be finalised and sent off for building consent over the coming months, and we are hoping we will be able to 'break ground' before November this year.

In addition to the earthworks and building being an exciting activity for our residents to watch, Switzer is thrilled about the impact this will have on the whole Far North community – bringing much needed housing and additional jobs to the region. Stay tuned for our next newsletter (Winter/Spring 2024) for more updates on the old campsite development.







## ANZAC week 2024







*Frank Malley started at Switzer Residential Care, initially as a volunteer, before accepting part-time work as the Volunteer Coordinator and eventually being employed full-time with the Lifestyle team as a Diversional Therapist Assistant.*

Frank initially began volunteering at Switzer following a conversation with his local pastor. At the time, he was working as a sports journalist for The Northland Age (a position he held for 17 years), so it filled his time on his day off. The intention was to offer companionship to some of the men at Switzer; as Frank noted, "it seemed there were far more women than men working in places like Switzer", and he believed some of the male residents might appreciate his presence.

Frank is a member of the Switzer Lifestyle Team, which practices diversional therapy under the Eden Alternative philosophy. While working full-time, Frank completed his Level 4 Certificate in Health and Wellbeing with CareerForce, formalising his expertise and helping him deliver enhanced support to Switzer residents. A positive, proactive individual, Frank possesses an innate ability to connect. Close friends say Frank had finally found his calling in his new career.

Frank describes his current job as fun and rewarding but also challenging.

*"The key is to continually improve the quality, variety, and number of activities offered to the residents at Switzer. The goal is to provide a comfortable environment featuring something for everybody we care for to keep their lives meaningful and connected; this means doing everything in our power to engage the residents and eliminate the three plagues of older age - loneliness, helplessness and boredom. From my perspective, the role of a diversional therapist is mainly about delivering meaningful fun. How good is that?!"*

However, one of the most important aspects of his career path with Switzer has been the encouragement and support he has received from friends and family, work colleagues, his supervisors and management, and his CareerForce tutors. Frank said this has made being part of the Switzer whanau a pleasure over the past decade. Other bonuses include having a job close to home, working alongside a close-knit and friendly team sharing a common goal, and the especially strong links Switzer enjoys with the wider community.





## The breathtaking view from the top

One of our remarkable residents had quite the adventure at the start of Autumn thanks to the kindness of Salt Air Limited in Pahia, who were more than willing to help us make a dream come true. If you need reminding that the Far North has some of the most breathtaking views AND the biggest hearts, check out the view from the top.

After our resident expressed to one of his caregivers that he wanted to fly for the first time, the carer worked hard to make it happen. Salt Air Limited in Pahia jumped into action and made a special effort to ensure this was affordable and possible.

An outing with the resident and his younger brother was scheduled for the most magical Autumn day. The weather was absolutely perfect, giving all on board the opportunity to see the 'Hole in the Rock' from above. After soaking in the majestic views over the Bay of Islands, everyone safely got their feet back on the ground to enjoy lunch and spend some precious time with family. Then, it was home to Switzer for a well-earned rest.

Where will the next adventure take us?











## All things Eden!

As we work towards embedding the Eden philosophy at Switzer, our team of Eden Star Drivers or 'ESD' (*some of them pictured here*) work alongside our Eden Custodians to spread the Eden message across Switzer.

Resident Wellness Coordinator, Jacqueline Trinder advocates for our elders at Switzer and is a key player when it comes to helping embed the Eden Alternative Philosophy. Exciting Eden news and updates include:

Job Descriptions were recently handed to each ESD to ensure they understand the expectations of their role. Each ESD has also been provided with a 'goodness book' where they can write down memorable moments to share at group meetings. ESD meetings capture what each ESD had seen, heard, and experienced throughout Switzer within Eden. The ESD team send through photos and bring their goodness books to the meetings.

Meanwhile, our Eden Custodians are a group of eight elders, who are chosen at random as part of welcoming new residents to Switzer. The Eden Custodians are also invited to attend meetings and to sit in on the recruitment process at a pre-interview stage.

**Eden training** We have regular Eden Alternative training sessions for all staff to attend, and we also have an Eden competency paper online with our education provider (Altura) for staff to ensure they are up to date in learning about Eden. Jacqueline also runs a presentation for Educating Elders in Eden each month, to keep all existing

and new elders informed on how the philosophy is embedded at Switzer. This training allows our elders to ask questions and share their thoughts.

We also offer Eden training to our community, by advertising on the Switzer Facebook page, options for families/whanau, volunteers, and the wider community to learn about Eden.

### What's new?

The **tabletop gardening group** has been introduced and comprises keen elders who want to do gardening during winter as well as enjoying sunny winter days outside.

The **Mums/Dads + bubs group** started after a notice was placed on the local community page on Facebook asking for any Mums/Dads + bubs/children to come along to Switzer for morning tea to mix and mingle with our elders.

The **nurturing animal group** will be Jacqueline's next focus. In addition to being home to eight resident cats, two birds and welcoming staff pups into Switzer, the nurturing group hopes to see foster kittens and puppies supplied by the local animal rescue... Watch this space!





## Friendship and food = joyful meals to remember

In an Eden Alternative home, dining is more than just a routine meal; it's a cornerstone of community and companionship. Eating wholesome food together nourishes both the body and the soul. Friendships are strengthened, stories are retold, and experiences are shared.

Our staff strive to enhance the dining experience by slowing down, focusing, and paying careful attention to fine details. Before commencing serving, we ensure that residents are seated and settled, often taking a moment of reflection. We spritz warm towels with essential oils (different ones for breakfast, lunch and dinner) and hand them out to residents who want to freshen up their hands or face before eating.

Residents are invited to partake in their pre-eating practices or food rituals. The dining room is often known as the heart of the home, and it is no different here at Switzer.



## Winter sun + Ahipara surf





# Samoan week at Switzer was a blast!

Samoan week holds a special place in our hearts and this year the community aimed for something truly impactful.

Our annual celebrations of Samoan week are an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of our residents. The group that performed captured the hearts at Switzer. They were of all ages, gentle, and with a joy for life. The powerful music got everyone involved and put a smile on the faces of the residents. The group managed to get the residents involved in their dance as they moved from the main stage to the audience and got the residents out of their chairs.

The group gave a meaningful farewell before moving on to share the experience with the rest of the community. They left us all with warm hearts and gratitude. We are all very thankful to be part of the incredibly supportive Switzer community, where care and growth flourish.







# The Eden Alternative

## 10 Principles

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1. The three plagues of loneliness, helplessness and boredom account for the bulk of suffering among our Elders.
2. An Elder-centred community commits to creating a human habitat where life revolves around close and continuing contact with people of all ages and abilities, as well as plants and animals. It is these relationships that provide the young and old alike with a pathway to a life worth living.
3. Loving companionship is the antidote to loneliness. Elders deserve easy access to human and animal companionship.
4. An Elder-centred community creates opportunity to give as well as receive care. This is the antidote to helplessness.
5. An Elder-centred community imbues daily life with variety and spontaneity by creating an environment in which unexpected and unpredictable interactions and happenings can take place. This is the antidote to boredom.
6. Meaningless activity corrodes the human spirit. The opportunity to do things that we find meaningful is essential to human health.
7. Medical treatment should be the servant of genuine human caring, never its master.
8. An Elder-centred community honours its Elders by de-emphasising top-down bureaucratic authority, seeking instead to place the maximum possible decision-making authority into the hands of the Elders or into the hands of those closest to them.
9. Creating an Elder-centred community is a never-ending process. Human growth must never be separated from human life.
10. Wise leadership is the lifeblood of any struggle against the three plagues. For it, there can be no substitute.

The core concept of the Eden Alternative is simple: Care environments are habitats for human beings that should promote health, wellbeing and growth rather than facilities where the frail and elderly stagnate and decline.

Switzer believes that providing human companionship, animals, children and plants help to provide opportunities for a meaningful life.

## New volunteers always welcome

Got time to spare and hobbies to share? Come on down and find out about being a Switzer Volunteer.

Members of our wider community are always welcome to join the volunteer team. Just like our volunteers, the opportunities are diverse and interesting and can be tailored to suit your interests and availability.



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## Welcome to the family!

“Hello, I’m Pallas. I was livin’ tough on the streets, but now I call Switzer my home. Now that I’m safe, I like to eat, eat eat! I’m still a little wary when I first meet someone new but I do like the occasional quiet cuddle and gentle snuggle.”

