

Pendine Park News

The newsletter of the Pendine Park care organisation

Issue 1



Helping to make North Wales a centre of excellence

We have unveiled ambitious plans to create a "world class" centre to care for people with dementia problems.

A planning application for the £3 million centre has been lodged with Wrexham County Borough Council.

If approved, the facility would create 75 new jobs taking the total number employed by the Pendine Park group in the Wrexham area to more than 500.

With so many people living longer these days, dementia in its various forms is a growing problem. It can also afflict a surprising number of younger people.

The idea for a new specialist centre has already been greeted with a chorus of support from professional agencies together with our local AM and MP.

The newly-elected Assembly Member, Lesley Griffiths, and Wrexham MP Ian Lucas voiced their approval after a visit to Pendine Park.

They were given a guided tour by the proprietor, Mario Kreft, and among their ports of call was the new £2 million Penybryn unit.

We're delighted to announce that Gwenda Thomas AM, the Deputy Minister for Social Services in the Welsh Assembly Government, has agreed to officially open Penybryn on Thursday, October 11.

It opened recently to cater for up to 38 younger people who have

suffered head injuries or have other neurological disorders like acquired brain injury and conditions like Multiple Sclerosis and Stroke.

Following her visit, Lesley Griffiths said: "It's very impressive, very light and airy and I can see that young people would feel very much at home here.

"It's a very specialist area and I am sure it's one of the most impressive places in Wales.

"The reputation of Pendine Park is very well known throughout Wales, somebody mentioned it to me in Cardiff the other day.

"There is also a need for a dementia care centre in the Wrexham area. Hospitals can't provide that sort of specialist care."

Her views were echoed by Mr Lucas who said: "I know there's a huge need for a dementia care centre and it will be an increasing need in years to come.

Mr Kreft said: "I was delighted that they came to see Penybryn and what we're doing at Pendine Park.

"We believe it's a very important part of community support for Wrexham and the area."

STOP PRESS

In the next edition of the newsletter read how a trio of staff and Smartcare Training have been nominated for top awards

Care organisation goes international

Pendine Park is gaining an international reputation for excellence,

So much so that students from as far afield as Finland are beating a path to Wrexham to see how things should be done.

They're coming here from the

Health Care Institute of Hyvinkää as part of a European exchange programme, the Leonardo Da Vinci Mobility Programme

Their International Co-ordinator, Terttu Aaltonen, said: "We are delighted that it is possible for us to send our teachers, students and supervisors here to Pendine Park.

"Pendine Park take excellent care of their residents. It's a good place for our students to come and learn."

Pendine Park proprietor Mario Kreft said: "I think an exchange like this is very important. We can learn a great deal from our friends in Finland and they are very eager to come over here and look at the way we do things.



coming next time

In the next edition, read how Trudi Walker fared when she scaled the slopes of Kilimanjaro, the highest freestanding mountain in the world.

First solo exhibition for old master

A former county architect is the daddy of them all when it comes to being an old master in the art world.

Robert MacFarlane, from Wrexham, is 14 years older than the 85-year-old painter Lucien Freud.

And he celebrated the opening of his first solo exhibition on his 99th birthday at, Pendine Park.

We believe that Pendine was the first care organisation in Wales to appoint a resident artist, Sarah Edwards, who runs regular classes.

Mr MacFarlane is one of her stars and specialises in beautiful watercolour paintings.

A native of Perthshire, in Scotland, he is a former county architect. He retired in 1968.

He moved to Pendine Park just over 12 months ago after undergoing a major operation.

According to Mr MacFarlane, the art classes helped him settle very quickly as he'd enjoyed painting, on and off, over the years.

Mr MacFarlane said: "I started off painting birds because I'm very keen on birds – I think I painted every bird there is and then we branched out. I've

Painted lots of things, including buildings.

"The painting has given me great pleasure and it helped me to settle down here. I am pleased about the exhibition and I am looking forward to it.

Artist in residence Sarah Edwards said: "Art in health is becoming more popular these days but we were the first in Wales and the second in the UK to do this kind of thing.

"I think it gives the residents a focus away from their illness, it provides escapism and creativity – and something different. It's a popular activity. I think it enhances the quality of life hugely.

"Robert was quite apprehensive about coming here but when he found out there was an artist here and that I would take him out to exhibitions, he settled.

"We visit art galleries whenever we can, not just Robert but other residents as well.

"We go to the Tate in Liverpool, the Lady Lever Gallery and the Lowry Gallery in Salford."



Care staff show they've got spirit

A ghouls night out at a haunted mansion raised spirits – and plenty of cash for a good cause.

Staff from Pendine Park went on a paranormal vigil at one of the most haunted houses in Wales.

They followed in the footsteps of pop stars Girls Aloud by spending the night at Plas Teg, near Mold.

The girl band filmed their spooky experiences for a television programme, Most Haunted.

But the aim of Pendine Park's sponsored fright night was to raise money for our residents' fund.

In the event, the group of 12 staff members amassed £400 to pay for special treats for the residents.

As the spine chilling antics were for such a good cause, Pendine Park proprietor Mario Kreft stumped up the £40 registration fee for each of the brave participants.

And the would-be ghost busters weren't disappointed – because the Plas Teg spooks certainly weren't shy on the night.

Senior Care Practitioner Claire Venables said: "It was pretty intense really, I'd love to do it again though – I'm a lot braver now. It was amazing.

Receptionist Sue Owens was equally impressed with the spine-chilling experience – so much so that she's now considering becoming a paranormal investigator.

Mario Kreft said: "I take my hat off to them, they've all been exceptionally brave but it's in a very good cause.

"I think their caring attitude just underlines the fact that we have a really excellent group of people working here at Pendine Park."

Top picture: From left, Tracey Smith, Leon Hall and Sue Owens
Bottom picture: Claire Venables.

Award-winning Lisa swaps quips with the Duke

THE Duke of Edinburgh has been given a lesson in 21st-century accounting by a local mum.

Lisa Davies swapped quips with him at a ceremony in St James' Palace at which she was presented with a medal and certificate of excellence.

Twenty-eight-year-old Lisa, who works for Wrexham chartered accountants Coxey's, originally received a City and Guilds award for her NVQ Level Four in management at a ceremony in Cardiff.

The management course run by Smartcare Training, which is part of the Pendine Park care organisation, usually takes up to two years but Lisa managed it in

just 10 months, even though she was pregnant at the time.

To mark her achievement she was then chosen to represent Wales at St James' Palace, where she was presented with the medal a second time – this time by the Duke, who is patron of the City and Guilds Institute.

"It was all a bit daunting but he made us all feel very relaxed," said Lisa, who was accompanied by Coxey's director Gill Atkinson.

"After the presentations we went into the Throne Room where he chatted to all of us separately, and when we told him we worked for a firm of accountants he joked about still using an abacus," said Lisa.

"Though it was quite a formal occasion he helped put us at our ease and took a real interest in everyone. The whole day was wonderful," she added.

Lisa is in charge of a team of 14 at Coxey's and has been accepted as an associate member of the Institute of Leadership and Management.

She is also in charge of training and has inspired three members of her team to follow in her footsteps by gaining NVQ Level Three in management.

Gill Atkinson commented: "We're very proud of Lisa – she will be an inspiration to other members of staff as they strive to develop their professional qualifications."

Mario Kreft, the Proprietor of SmartCare Training, added: "We are naturally all extremely proud of Lisa and were pleased that we were able to play a part in helping her to achieve her goal."



A virtuoso performance from Llyr

The Pendine Park care organisation helped bring an evening of world class musical entertainment to Wrexham.

They provided sponsorship for the Rhos Male Voice Choir's Annual Concert at the William Aston Hall.

It enabled them to engage the services

of the hugely talented pianist, Llyr Williams.

Originally from Pentrebychan, near Wrexham, Llyr is one of the most outstanding pianists of his generation. He has been receiving world-wide plaudits as a soloist, accompanist and chamber musician

After the concert, the Pendine Park contingent met Llyr and were able to congratulate him on a truly magnificent performance.

Caption: In the foreground is pianist Llyr Williams with, from left, Megan Simpson, Lilian Jones, Gwynfor Jones, Mario Kreft, Gill Kreft, Margaret Jones, Alun Jones and Peter Simpson.



Cooking up a treat for Carol

Supercook Carol Roberts really knows how to make a meal of things – and now she’s been rewarded for 20 years of loyal service.

She works for Pendine Park who showed their appreciation by giving her a special treat – by paying for her and a guest to have a luxury weekend in London.

The trip included tickets to two top West End shows, Phantom of the Opera and Les Miserables.

A surprised but delighted Carol said: “I didn’t expect all this but we had a great time.”

Appropriately, the treat was awarded by Pendine Park proprietor Mario Kreft who is himself celebrating more than 20 years of voluntary service in the care sector.

He has worked tirelessly to drive up standards in the care industry in Wales for more than two decades. He is Chair of the North Wales Care Homes Association and the honorary chief executive and a founder member of Care Forum Wales.

Previously vice-chairman of the National Care Homes Association, Mario has represented the sector at Westminster and more recently with the Welsh Assembly Government.

Amongst his proudest achievements are the creation of the annual

Wales Care Awards and the recently-launched Academy of Care Practitioners.

He said: “The Wales Care Awards are like no other as they only recognise the people who really matter – those at the sharp end.

“I am a great believer in rewarding excellence, commitment and loyalty which is why I felt it was important to recognise Carol’s dedication to Pendine Park and our clients.

“Our working lives have taken a parallel path for the past two decades so you could say it’s a case of 20:20 vision in the care sector.

“Carol is very important to us because, like an Army, a care organisation like our runs on its stomach. We couldn’t do without her.

“Carol is a thoroughly nice person and we were delighted to organise a weekend in London for her. It’s our way of saying thank you to a model employee – it’s a special treat for a special person.”



Top chef brings extra Dai-mension

An award-winning chef is going to mastermind a new kitchen regime and menus at Pendine Park.

A former captain of the Welsh culinary team, Dai Chef starts as our Executive Chef in October.

During his illustrious career, Dai has cooked for a whole host of celebrities and even royalty – among them the operatic icon Luciano Pavarotti.

Dai’s culinary expertise will also help to tantalise the taste buds of residents at our five residential and nursing homes together with the people looked after by our domiciliary care company,

Independent Living Options.

He said: “There is a big emphasis on staff training at Pendine Park – they even have their own Teaching Care Centre – and I will be developing the staff’s culinary skills.

Pendine Park proprietor Mario Kreft said:

“I think above all Dai is known as a motivator of people and, because the food and the whole issue of nutrition in a care home is so important, we felt he would bring an extra dimension.

