

# Advantage

News from Australian Seniors Finance – The Home Equity Release Specialist

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## Welcome to our fresh new ASF newsletter!

**T**he look may be different, however, we can assure you that the same experienced and friendly team are always here to assist.

In many ways, this edition of *Advantage* reflects the changes that have occurred at ASF since the acquisition by Heartland New Zealand Limited, in April this year.

Joining Heartland has seen us go from strength to strength, once again writing new loans and positioning ourselves as the leading non-bank lender in the Australian Reverse Mortgage market.

Our primary vision is to enable independence for Australian seniors. We understand what an important decision it is to release equity from your home and recognise the level of trust you have placed in us to assist you.

I hope you find this newsletter of interest and invite you to contact us with any feedback or questions you may have on 1300 889 338. We are always happy to help.

**Julie Campbell**  
Chief Executive Officer



## Reiterating our promise

**ASF's pledge to its Lifetime Loan customers will never change**

**W**hen you decided to apply for an ASF Lifetime Loan, you put your trust in us and, in return, providing you meet your obligations under the loan, we uphold the following promises:

### **Promise 1: Lifetime Occupancy promise**

You can remain living in your home as long as you wish, provided you have observed the terms and conditions of your loan.

### **Promise 2: No Negative Equity guarantee**

When it is time for you to leave your home, our Loan Repayment Guarantee ensures that, as long as all the conditions of your loan have been met, the repayment amount will never exceed the net sale proceeds of your home. Regardless of what your loan balance has grown to – due to the effect of compounding interest or the property market at the time of the sale – neither you nor your beneficiaries will be left with a debt that exceeds the sale amount of the property.

### **Promise 3: Loan Repayment promise**

You will never be required to make any loan repayments during the term of this loan.

**Customer feedback is very important to us, and below are some recent testimonials we would like to share:**

*"Thank you and your team for helping me through a very tough time. We are holding our own now thanks to your great help."*

*"I would like to thank you and your company for assisting me with a Lifetime Loan, and to say how much it really did assist me at that time. I have now sold my home and moved to a retirement village and am very happy. I would like to add that in dealing with your company, I found everyone extremely efficient and very easy and kind to deal with. My many thanks again."*

*"My loan has given me peace of mind to pay my accounts. You have no idea what comfort that gives me."*

- The Australian Seniors Finance team

**IMPORTANT:** Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this newsletter. It is provided on the basis that the items are necessarily generalised and are not a substitute for commercial judgement or professional advice. Readers are urged: 1. to seek specific advice on any particular matter from a qualified professional person; and 2. not rely solely on this text.



# The **GRANDPARENT** connection

*It's no secret that grandparents play a vital role in their grandchildren's lives. Highly regarded anthropologist, Margaret Mead, proposed that connections between the generations are "essential for the mental health and stability of a nation"*

In today's busy families, be they dual-income or single-parent, a grandparent's presence is more important than ever. An involved grandparent has a lot to offer a child's development, while enriching their own lives by building a unique cross-generational bond that leaves a lasting legacy.

To make this happen, it is important to seize the opportunity to build those connections and the memories that go with them, whether it's once a year or every day.

## **From playmate to mentor**

Australian researchers Goodfellow & Laverty found there are four distinct types of grandparent; those whose lives revolve around their grandchildren, those who are fairly involved but also have their own interests, those who feel grandchildren are an important part of their lives but do not want to be defined by that role, and those who are hesitant about being grandparents.

Each model of interaction presents its own benefits, allowing grandchildren to gain an appreciation for their grandparents' involvement in various capacities, such as historian, tutor, mentor, role model, nurturer, playmate or other. By taking on these roles, grandparents can make a lasting impact on the younger generation.

According to recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, grandparents hold main caregiver responsibilities in 16,000 families.

While this presents its own challenges, those who take on the responsibility say it brings many rewards, including giving grandkids a sense of security, developing a deeper

relationship and keeping the family together.

With increasing numbers of children living in families where both parents work, there are a growing number of grandparents who provide regular supplementary care, which often requires a sterner approach. However, these consistent visits also allow the older generation to develop close relationships with their grandchildren and help form their values, identities and dreams.

Other grandparents, particularly those living far away, tend to focus on creating memories by taking part in fun activities and may be less inclined to spend much time parenting or disciplining their grandchildren. While visiting grandchildren overseas can be financially difficult for some, Dr Read says that creating that bond holds significant value for everyone involved.

## **Raising resilient kids**

"The love of a grandparent is often freer, more unconditional, and far less psychologically complex than a parent's love because they usually have less parental requirements," says Susan V Bosak, author of *How to Build the Grandma Connection*. This leads to a different type of relationship and is thought to have a significantly positive effect on the child's life.

A survey conducted by Oxford University and the Institute of Education in London found that children are generally happier if grandparents are involved in their upbringing.

It states that grandparents often have more time than working parents to provide support, advice and problem-solving for

children, especially those who are serving in any type of caregiving capacity. These close relationships helped buffer the effects of life's challenges, such as parental separation, because they provided stability.

"Children with a warm, loving relationship with their grandparents are more likely to be resilient and have higher self-esteem," says Dr Julie Green, executive director of the Raising Children Network in Australia.

## **Key to feeling young**

But it's not all about benefits for the kids. Grandparents have said that having their grandchildren as part of their lives has enriched it, given them a sense of purpose and increased their desire to live as long as they can.

They also report an increased sense of wellbeing, feelings of being part of a family and broader society and an improved social life through connections with grandchildren, as well as much less depression and higher degrees of life satisfaction.

## **Leaving a true legacy**

Through the relationship with their grandchildren, grandparents have an opportunity to leave a powerful legacy by making a difference in their lives through love and support.

However, retirees are often so focused on leaving a financial legacy for their families that they do so at the expense of investing in relationships that guide and form the next generations. The question then becomes; which is more valuable, more rewarding and more enduring?



# Travel is good for you

Most people love to travel and there are more benefits than one might think

**T**here was a time when retirement was looked upon with trepidation. Nowadays, most Australians aren't keen on "ageing quietly". Instead, they are looking at it as an opportunity for personal growth and trips either at home or abroad are at the forefront of their agenda!

It's no secret that most people enjoy travel. It provides new experiences, adventures and memories, and research now suggests that it can also enhance your health!

Check out the Top 4 reasons why:

## 1. Learning

Travel is inherently a learning experience. The new cultures, cuisines, sights and historical visits provide countless opportunities to experience something new. Aside from the

general interest factor, this new knowledge stimulates parts of the brain that may have been dormant and, in doing so, improves memory.

## 2. Happiness

Vacationing and relaxation often go hand in hand. Everyone needs time away from their normal environment to rejuvenate and studies have shown that holidays reduce stress, both immediately and in the long term.

## 3. Relationship building

Going on a journey with other people is a great way to build relationships and lifelong memories. If you have recently lost a partner, and fear embarking on a trip alone, going with a group of like-minded

people provides security, companionship, and could lead to lasting friendships.

## 4. Wellness

And perhaps the most compelling reason to add extra travel to your schedule is that it has been linked to a lower risk of heart disease! For example, a nine-year study of 12,000 middle-aged men found that those who took at least one vacation per year were 30% less likely to die from heart disease than their non-travelling peers. Additionally, the Framingham Heart Study, an ongoing cardiovascular research programme in the US, has shown that among 750 women, those who took no holidays were twice as likely to suffer a heart attack as those who travelled.

*Thanks to Trade Travel for their contributions to this article.*



# Driving questions

It's common to associate a certain type of car with a certain type of person, but what really drives people to choose one vehicle over another?

**A**ccording to a study from the University of California, attitude, lifestyle and values largely determine vehicle purchasing decisions.

So what does this mean for seniors? Holden has found its older customers prioritise safety over style, reflecting a widely held perception.

This does not mean they do not want a nice-looking car, it's just that certain features hold more importance than colour and shape.

According to the Australian Office of Road Safety, senior drivers have fewer collisions than most other age groups; however, when they are involved in accidents they may

experience more serious injuries and take longer to recover. To avoid this happening, Holden says there are a number of features that make older drivers feel safer.

Many vehicles now offer higher seat positions allowing for better road visibility; larger dials and a well-illuminated instrument panel for ease of operation; a rear-view camera that ensures drivers can see what's behind them when reversing; and 'follow me home' headlights, which stay on for a set time once the car is locked, to help drivers get to the front door in the dark.

Some vehicles go a step further, offering automatic park assist, blind spot alert,

forward collision alert and lane departure warning. These features are very popular across all age groups, and Holden has found them to be especially so among older drivers, as they give that extra confidence boost out on the open road.

So why not take advantage of this clever technology? The average age of a car on Australian roads is around ten years and, given the significant safety advancements since then, your old vehicle might not be doing the best job of protecting you. Perhaps now is the time to purchase a newer model that offers that extra peace of mind.

*Thanks to Holden for their contributions to this article.*

# Make the most of SUMMER

You can make delicious frozen fruit drinks year round, but doesn't summer make them that much more appealing?



It is time to enjoy all the goodness this season brings; more sunshine, longer days, trips to the beach and an abundance of fresh fruit! To make the most of the latter, here are some refreshing, non-alcoholic, fruit cocktail recipes to enjoy on these hot summer afternoons.

## Monkeylada

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

### Preparation:

Puree the bananas, diced pineapple, pineapple juice, coconut milk and ice in a blender. Divide between four glasses and garnish with pineapple wedges, cherries and an umbrella (if you wish!).

## Ingredients

2 very ripe bananas

1 cup diced fresh pineapple, plus 4 wedges for garnish

1 cup pineapple juice

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup "lite" coconut milk

3 cups ice cubes

A handful of cherries for garnish



## Strawberry-pineapple daiquiri

Serves 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

### Preparation:

Combine the strawberries, sugar, lime and pineapple juice together in a blender until smooth. Add ice cubes and blend again until frothy. Then transfer the mixture to a pitcher and serve. Garnish with strawberries to make these delicious treats even more enticing!

## Ingredients

2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups fresh or frozen strawberries (save some for garnish)

3 tablespoons sugar

2 tablespoons lime juice

$\frac{3}{4}$  pineapple juice

3 cups ice cubes

## Contact us

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**Important Notice** - Applications for a Lifetime Loan are subject to Australian Seniors Finance Pty Ltd's (ACN 108 875 636/ Australian Credit Licence No.386760) loan approval criteria. Terms and conditions will be included in any loan offer. Fees and charges apply. Credit provided by ASF Custodians Pty Ltd (ACN 106 822 780/ Australian Credit Licence No.386781). Any advice given does not take into account your objectives, financial situation or personal needs so please consider whether it is appropriate for you.