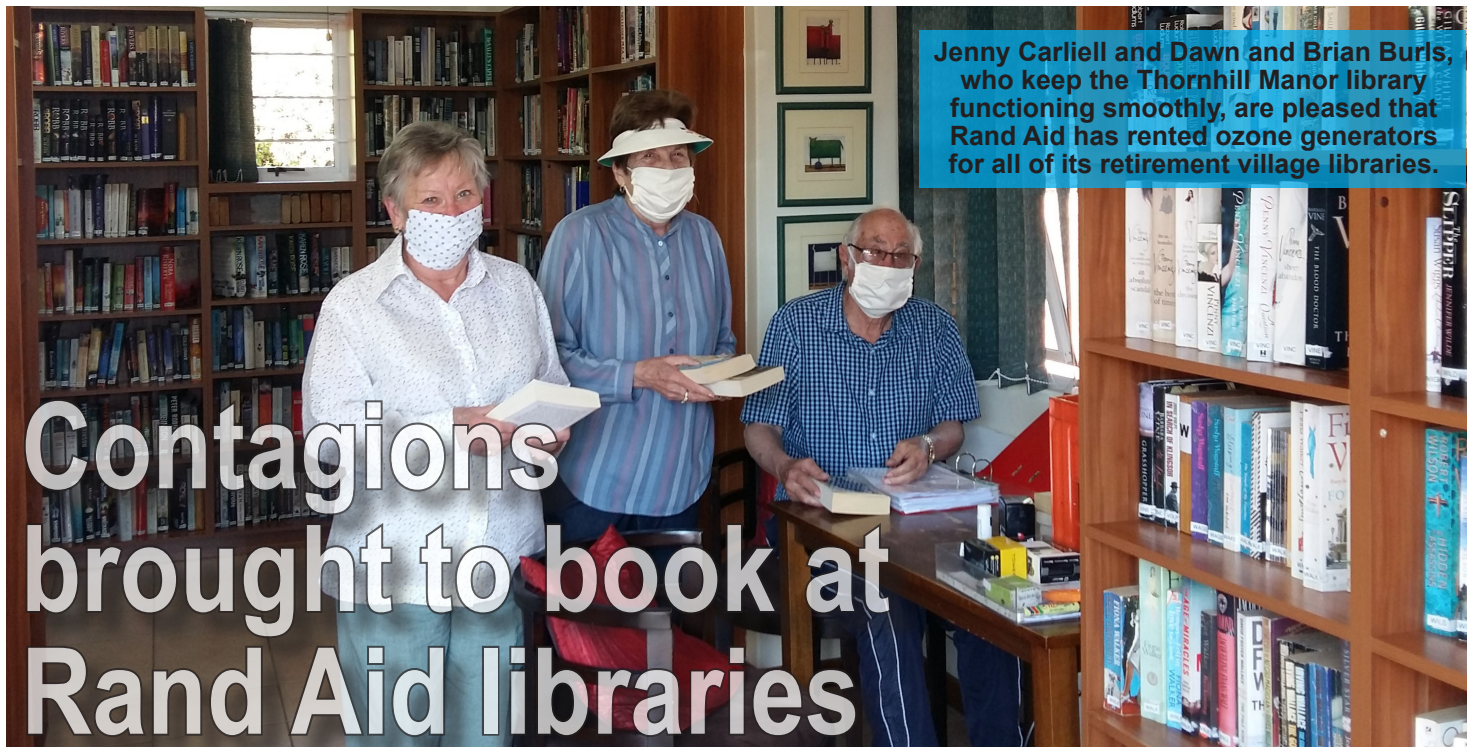


Rand Aid review

Tel: 011 882 2510 or 010 100 3656

SEPT 2020

Email: info@randaid.co.za



Contagions brought to book at Rand Aid libraries

Rand Aid Association has acquired ozone generators for the libraries at all four of its retirement villages to enable residents to continue to safely enjoy the wonderful pastime of reading, despite the coronavirus pandemic. The ozone generators convert ambient oxygen into ozone. A powerful gas capable of high levels of disinfection, ozone can be effective in inactivating viruses. The libraries are fogged overnight, which ensures that returned books are safe for use by the next readers.

Cheers to Wedge Gardens' inspirational nurses

SANCA Wedge Gardens toasted its nursing staff recently for the excellent job they did in caring for their substance abuse recovery patients during the worst of the coronavirus pandemic.

On September 4, the nurses were all presented with a specially-made coffee cup that reads: *Never underestimate a nurse who survived the 2020 coronavirus pandemic.*

Sister Estelle Raath, the deputy manager of the rehab centre, says nurses demonstrate bravery, endurance and dedication. "To all the nursing staff of Wedge, we appreciate all your hard

work. Thank you so much for making sure the patients at Wedge receive the care they need to be safe. You are all superheroes for working so hard during these challenging times."

Estelle says the hours put in by the nurses over the past few months were gruelling and they were very aware that they were putting themselves at risk of contracting the disease while the majority of South Africans sheltered at home. "My hope is that everyone will come to have a greater appreciation for those who work in the medical field."

With regard the ongoing pandemic and possibilities of further surges in the infection rate in South Africa, she says:



Enrolled nurses Julia Mokoena and Lydia Maseko with Sister Estelle Raath (middle), with their specially branded mugs.

"Let's take it one day at a time. Don't let scary thoughts win; we will beat the virus, overcome our fatigue and find the strength we need to carry on."



World Chocolate Day savoured at Inyoni Creek - Every year on July 7, World Chocolate Day enables lovers of all things cocoa to enjoy their favourite treat without the guilt. At Inyoni Creek, residents received a sweet surprise when employees Johanna Lebisi and Jolly Mokau walked through the retirement village bearing a basket of chocolates which they happily shared. "We felt this was a great opportunity to lighten the hearts of our residents in these trying times," says Inyoni Creek manager Jenny Tonkin. Pictured is Jolly with her basket of assorted chocs.

Frans' 45-year journey of growth

When Frans Mpete started working at Rand Aid Association, he was an energetic 20 year old. Forty-five years later, he is still working tirelessly for the non-profit organisation – itself a whopping 117 years old.

Frans stood proud on August 20, 2020, when CEO of Rand Aid Peter Quinn presented him with his 45-year long service award and shared details of his interesting career with the small audience, which this year was limited to main award recipients only in line with current coronavirus protocols.

A resident of Lombardy East, just a short distance from Rand Aid's head office in Lyndhurst, Frans joined the organisation in 1975 as a gardener. Two years later, he was promoted to supervisor and five years after that, took responsibility for the mail and other deliveries.

"In those days, Rand Aid did not have a vehicle so Frans did all his deliveries by bicycle," said Peter.

In 1989, when Frans was in his early 30s, Rand Aid was instrumental in him obtaining his driver's licence and he has been a driver for the organisation ever since. Before being transferred to head office in 1998 – where he has remained for the past 22 years, he would ferry residents of Rand Aid's Elphin Lodge retirement village to nearby shopping malls and hospitals.

"Frans is a very responsible and reliable worker who, in the time we have worked together, has never had a bad driving report, been late for work or ever let me down," says his supervisor Erica Woodward.

Married, with two children, Frans today knows the streets of Johannesburg

and Pretoria like the back of his hand.

In total, 47 employees were recognised for their long service this year. Apart from Frans, two 25-year awards were given, three 20-year awards, 11 10-year awards and 30 five-year awards.

In addition, four people who are part of the Wedge Gardens' team were honoured for 10, 15 and 20 years of service.

25-year awards

Receiving his 25-year service award was Samuel Masindi, a security guard at Thembalami Care Centre. In all that time, the dedicated, loyal employee has never been late for work! The second 25-year award went to Sizeka Makhubele, a security guard at Inyoni Creek. Sizeka prides himself on the relationships he has built with the residents and staff and is known for his great sense of humour.

20-year awards

Laetitia Goosen, the deputy manager of Tarentaal retirement village, worked at Wedge Gardens as a therapist for many years before taking up her current position in October 2016. Always cheerful, Laetitia says her time at Tarentaal has enabled her to learn new skills and has been immensely fulfilling.

Another deputy manager who has been with Rand Aid for two decades is Thornhill Manor's Jackie Scott, who started out as the personal assistant to then executive director of Rand Aid, Leon Ghalvalas. Jackie was instrumental in instituting maternity leave benefits at the organisation. In 2003, when phase one of Thornhill Manor was completed, she requested a transfer there

and has been a vital part of the village ever since.

Heading up Cookchill, Rand Aid's in-house catering division, is Steve Burton, whose 20 years of service have been characterised by the preparation of around 35 500 meals each month. Trained in the UK, Steve's achievements are legendary – including the fact that regardless of any emergency that has come his way, not a day has gone by without residents receiving their meals from Cookchill.

Other awards

Ten-year awards went to Ntuthuzelo Goso, Dukie Lekoloane, Thivhonalali Mabasha, Vhelaphi Machimane, Epulane Mbewe, Magezi Mbhungele, Hopewell Mdulashe, Hennie Mostert, Khanyiso Ndamase, Thamsanqa Ningi and Siboniso Mkhize.

Awards for five years' service went to Helena Bezuidenhout, Debbie Christen, Busisiwe Dhladhla, Amanda Diener, Godfrey Hlongwani, Raisibe Ledwaba, Mampai Lephala, Lusani Mabulele, Ramadimetja Maja, Raesibe Maloka, Craig Maltman, Sekgokong Matshidi, Sipho Mazibuko, Khumbuzile Meyiwa, Florence Mhlango, Sanzile Mkwabane, Sibongile Mohale, Nomsa Molefe, Eric Monyela, Nkete Mphahlele, Tshilidzi Mphephu, Mashudu Nembaye, Thina-wanga Netshifhefhe, Madala Ngobeni, Refilwe Sedibe, Phuti Sefamela, Neeri Stroebel, Jenny Tonkin, Luambo Tshikalange and Vutivi Mabunda.

■ Wedge Gardens team members who were recognised for their long service are Damien Lawson and Tommie Woest for 10 years, Andy Brummer for 15 and Richard Ogilvie for 20.



Employees with staying power:

Rand Aid CEO Peter Quinn (second from left) with long service recipients who between them have 155 years of service: Frans Mpete (45 years), Jackie Scott (20 years), Laetitia Goosen (20 years), Sizeka Makhubele (25 years), Steve Burton (20 years) and Samuel Masindi (25 years).

New retirement village on the Glendower Golf Course

Work continues to make Rand Aid's new retirement village a reality, albeit at a very slow pace due to the impact of COVID-19 regulations on the processing of the Town Planning application.

"We trust that the change to Alert Level 1 will have a positive impact on the availability of officials to consider the application," says Zabeth Zühlendorff, Rand Aid's GM Services and Advance Division.

Dozens of people have put their names on the waiting list for the life right retirement village, which will be built on land purchased from the Glendower Golf Course.

The inviting and environmentally conscious lifestyle estate for people aged 65 and over will offer carefree living in a secure, low-maintenance green environment.

To put your name on the waiting list, contact Erica Woodward on weekdays before 2pm at 011 882 2510.



FROM THE CEO'S DESK

Within a month of joining Rand Aid as CEO, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted life as we know it in South Africa.

This put a stop to my orientation visits and limited my availability to meet the staff and residents.

Fortunately, I found two very strong general operation managers in Zabeth Zühlendorff (GM Advance Division) and Ayanda Matthews (GM Compliance & Social React Division), who are ably supported by Wim Pieterse (GM Finance).

Initially, because it was a new virus, global knowledge of COVID-19 was limited but within a short space of time, there were daily announcements and new findings being made.

We had to keep up with these to determine which were relevant to Rand Aid.

From the start, we had a daily COVID-19 meeting to review developments and refine our protective measures.

We took the decision upfront that the lives of our residents and staff had to be protected to the best of our abilities and finances.

Having implemented stringent risk reduction measures early in the process, these were continually updated as we found further measures to include.

We also decided that it was better to invest in risk reduction and preventative measures upfront, rather than being affected and then having to invest substantially to control any outbreak. So far, Rand Aid has spent R2.5 million on its COVID-19 response.

Despite the buy-in from staff and residents – who showed tremendous commitment to keeping themselves and others safe – it was inevitable that with our many high-risk residents, people would contract the disease within the Rand Aid family.

The first positive case and later the first death felt very personal as we were trying so hard to keep everyone safe.

There have been many compliments on the way Rand Aid is managing the pandemic, as well as a few grumbles, but I can honestly say that considerable energy, expertise and expense was invested into managing the disease throughout the various lockdown levels.

Communication with residents and their families was not overlooked as we instituted a number of initiatives to share information with all those affected.

Although our staff were at high risk and a number contracted the virus, we are fortunate to report that not a single death among our many employees was recorded. Their dedication throughout the long, hard months during which the COVID-19 cases in Gauteng continued to grow, was amazing.

I personally contracted COVID-19 – from where, I cannot say; there are so many possibilities – but fortunately my most severe symptom was fatigue. I slept 20 hours every day for four days.

I believe that the initial steps taken by Government and then by the team at Rand Aid were effective in limiting the impact of the disease on the Rand Aid family.

South Africa is now in lockdown level one, which means in many ways, it is business as usual. With this new freedom, comes new risks. The possibility of a resurgence in cases cannot be dismissed and I believe that it is now the responsibility of each and every one of us to minimise our chances of contracting COVID-19.

Doing so does not require very onerous measures – we must simply maintain social distancing (including at personal gatherings), wear a mask when in public, wash our hands regularly and refrain from touching our eyes, mouths and noses.

Keep safe and thank you for your continued commitment to helping us keep COVID-19 at bay.

PETER QUINN
CEO, RAND AID ASSOCIATION

Still motoring at age 100

Elphin Lodge retirement village resident Molly Waddington celebrated her 100th birthday on September 9, 2020.

A long-time resident of the Rand Aid retirement village in Lyndhurst, Molly was born in Cape Town in 1920 and remembers seeing the troop ships passing through Cape Town Harbour during World War II.

"Molly exemplifies active ageing," says Zabeth Zühlendorff, Rand Aid's GM Services and Advance Division. "She still lives independently in her own cottage, drives her car around the village and is as bright as a button."

During her working life, Molly was employed at Barclays Bank, Strand Street Branch, Cape Town.

On September 16, 1944, just before the end of war, she married Edgar and soon thereafter they moved to Johannesburg where they bought a house in Mondeor, then a new suburb south of Central Johannesburg.

After 47 years of marriage, Edgar passed away in 1991. Two years later, Molly sold their home and moved to Elphin Lodge in 1993. Phase 4 of the village was newly built and she joined Norman Chilvers and Maurie and Elaine van Heerden as the early residents of Phase 4.

"Molly has lived happily at Elphin Lodge for 27 years and has made special friends who make her life happy and contented," says village manager Helen Petrie.

Molly has a daughter, Brenda, who lives in Benoni, and three grandchildren – Sean, who lives in South Africa; Bronwyn, who lives in Australia; and Elroyd, who lives in Prague with his two boys.



Molly Waddington.

Jerusalema dance challenge accepted!

Ron Smith Care Centre has experienced a challenging time over the past few months. Even though its elderly frail residents have handled the restrictions necessitated by the coronavirus pandemic with grace, Matron Avril Maltman says that all care centre staff have found themselves working in stressful times and under extreme pressure. Nevertheless, they are totally dedicated to giving wonderful, loving care to the residents and have worked tirelessly to curb the spread of infections and to keep everyone's spirits up.

Local artist Master KG's Jerusalema has become a global sensation and videos of people dancing to the hit are spreading positivity far and wide.

When Enrolled Nursing Auxiliary Evelyn Shilubane, who works on the River Lodge 3 residential wing, first found out about the Jerusalema dance, she thought that RSCC should take up the challenge and promoted the idea to her colleagues. Charge Professional Nurse Leanie Bessinger then spread the idea to the staff of the five other wings and dance practices were set up with Debbie Christen, Recreational Manager, teaching the choreography to various groups.

Debbie comments: "Staff from all departments – nursing, housekeeping, kitchen, maintenance, admin and coffee shop – were encouraged to join in, making this dance challenge a fun and spirit-filled team building exercise, which really brought the whole care centre community together in such a joyous way. In a sense, this was also a chance to relieve some of the stresses of the lockdown period and to celebrate survival of COVID-19."

Dr Carmella Mielke's husband, Greg Fine, very kindly assisted with video footage using his drone, and Sister Leanie edited and put together some 59 video clips from staff and created the final version. She says: "Unity and light relief

are much needed in the world right now and I want to put out the challenge to other care centres to join the #JerusalemaDanceChallenge."

When Zabeth Zühlsdorff, Rand Aid GM: Advance Division, saw the video, she was blown away and responded: "I have watched it three times already! Many thanks to everyone who organised, participated in and supported this fantastic initiative. You are an awesome team and I am privileged to work with each and every one of you."

Families on the various WhatsApp groups have also commented favourably:

Thank you to all. It brought tears to my eyes – it was so beautiful! What wonderful, caring ladies and gents you all are!

Awesome! Brilliant!

A lovely, happy video. Not only are the staff totally dedicated, but are also wonderful dancers!

What a wonderful show of togetherness!

RSCC staff and residents have challenged all other Rand Aid complexes to take up the Jerusalema Dance Challenge. Tarentaal and Inyoni Creek were the first to accept the challenge, and the latest response has been from Rand Aid's CEO, Peter Quinn, who messaged: "This is an excellent production – I really was so impressed. Well done to all involved. You challenged us – and even though we [at Head Office] are highly impressed with yours... we accept! Watch this space!"

At the time of going to print, Inyoni had made good on its promise, with staff having done the dance as part of the village's spring day walk on September 16.



RSCC staff members doing the Jerusalema Dance.



Inyoni Creek staff members were the first to accept RSCC's challenge.

RSCC residents receive bags of love

Rand Aid's Ron Smith Care Centre arranged for care packages to be sent by family members to their loved ones to, in some small way, fill the gap left by the no-visitor lockdown regulation that was in place at the time.

"The families bought carefully selected goodies to warm their loved one's heart," says social worker Debbie Beech.

"With the lockdown then being indefinite, we brainstormed ideas about connecting families with their loved ones without actual contact. Hence the idea of sending individualised care packs or gifts for their loved ones to let them know they are missing them and thinking of them.

"The families responded really positively and gifts ranged from a tin of condensed milk to teddies and chocolates. The gifts are accompanied by a letter or card or photos of the family.

"We also had a couple of donations of extra items for residents with no family so we could put something together for them," says Debbie.



Resident Irene Green after receiving her goodie bag.

103-year-old survives coronavirus

After 14 days in isolation, 103-year-old coronavirus survivor Kitty Venn was happy to return to her pretty room at Ron Smith Care Centre.

"It is exceptionally remarkable that someone of her age has survived a pandemic that has ravaged old age homes throughout the world," says Dr Christina Eleftheriades, who cared for the centenarian during her time in the care centre's isolation facility.

Dr Eleftheriades is one of two in-house doctors with practices at the Rand Aid Association-run care centre. She and colleague Dr Carmella Mielke worked tirelessly with Ron Smith Care Centre's dedicated nursing team to ensure Kitty and other aged residents who contracted the virus received professional yet loving care.

Kitty's daughter Carol Cunningham was in Australia when South Africa went into lockdown and was sheltering there until the nation's borders re-opened. The news of her mom's

illness left Carol feeling extremely anxious, given the distance separating them.

"Fortunately, the care centre's Sr Leanie Bessinger contacted us daily to report on Mom's condition, which gave us incredible peace of mind," says Carol.

"Huge thanks must go to Dr Mielke, Dr Eleftheriades and Sr Bessinger and her team who tenderly nursed my mom through this awful virus," says Carol. "They made her comfortable, administered her oxygen and for 24/7, nursed her back to health."

"Mom has always been a special lady with a heart of gold. She never complains, is kind, generous and compassionate. She always said: 'If you don't have anything nice to say, then don't say anything'."

Elphin Lodge – the retirement village where Ron Smith Care Centre is based – was her happy home for over 15 years until she moved into the care centre four years ago.

"Mom was always an active lady and played tennis until she was 89."



Kitty Venn, who played tennis until she was 89, is an 103-year-old coronavirus survivor from Ron Smith Care Centre.



MUSIC GETS MARIA THROUGH COVID-19

Apart from Kitty Venn, a number of other Ron Smith Care Centre residents of advanced age survived the virus, including 98-year-old Maria Roberts (pictured, right). "Maria had a very positive attitude through her journey with COVID-19. She had her small radio on all the time and provided music for the whole of the isolation unit. She is very strong willed," says the care centre's Sister Leanie Bessinger.



SHOFAR BLOWING AT ELPHIN LODGE

The Hebrew month of Elul is the last month of the Jewish year and the month preceding Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. Traditionally, observant members of the Jewish faith should hear the sound of the Shofar (rams horn) every morning during Elul. This is due to its inherent ties to the Days of Repentance (Jewish New Year and Day of Atonement) and the inspiration that comes with hearing the Shofar's piercing blasts. Rabbi Pini Pink and Rabbi Alex Carlebach (pictured) took turns to blow the Shofar for Elphin Lodge's Jewish residents every morning, except for the Sabbath when it is not blown. Elul usually corresponds with August or September on the Gregorian calendar.

Tarentaal retirement village's dads denied the pleasure of visits from their loved ones on Father's Day as a result of the national coronavirus lockdown, still had a moment of sweetness, when village staff and the members of the residents' committee handed out a chocolate bar to all male residents on Friday, June 19. Pictured is resident Kevin Harris, who was very impressed with the chocolate he received from the committee.



Tarentaal's 'Ah, sweet' moment

People matter at Thornhill Manor

'People Matter Here' has been adopted as the Thornhill Manor retirement village motto. It was coined by the new village chairman, Dr Dave Webster, who discussed it with the rest of the village committee.

They decided it would be a great motto for the village because it captures the essence of what the residents and staff deem important – which is the people who call the village home, the staff members who work there and the visitors who come calling.

"The motto is in line with Eden Alternative principles, which the village and staff are very passionate about," says deputy village manager Jackie Scott.

The Eden Alternative is a small, not-for-profit global organisation making a big difference in the world. The core belief is that ageing should be a continued stage of development and growth, rather than a period of decline.

Rand Aid's Ron Smith Care Centre recently became the first organisation in Africa to achieve Milestone Two on the Eden Alternative Registry and the Eden Alternative philosophy is being rolled out at all Rand Aid retirement villages and care centres.

In line with the 'People Matter Here' approach, Thornhill Manor's village committee has decided to issue a monthly newsletter called the Gazette, which will contain news about the residents' successes, achievements, challenges and ideas.

The Gazette will complement the weekly and monthly newsletters compiled by the village's management team.

Come home to Thornhill Manor

Thornhill Manor is a sought-after retirement village in a country-style environment, situated in the historic area of Modderfontein.

The village currently has two-bedroom, two bathroom units for sale. If you are interested in viewing a unit, gaining further information, or wish to purchase, please contact Jackie Scott or Esme Erasmus at 011 608 2480 for assistance. All enquiries welcome.

Man cave for Thornhill Manor

Thornhill Manor do-it-yourselfers recently launched a spanking new man cave.

The well-equipped workshop is a result of a proposal made to the village's manager, Esmé Erasmus, in May.

In line with RAA's Eden Alternative philosophy to promote ageing as an extension of life's joys rather than a slippery slope to oblivion, Esmé met with the village's acting chairperson, Dave Webster, to discuss the proposal. It was decided that it could be a practical proposition.

A pair of storerooms in the village could be made available and, if the wall between them was demolished, it would result in a practical size for a workshop.

A quotation was obtained to knock down the wall and install two windows in the back wall for additional light and ventilation. The cost was R26 000, an amount that was within the Thornhill Village Fund's capabilities.

The expenditure was approved by village residents and the contractor moved onsite early in July. Money for the Village Fund is raised by residents through a number of fund-raising activities, including the highly successful annual Family Fun Day and Fete which, last year, raised over R30 000.

Equipment for the workshop has all been donated by residents and includes wood- and metalworking lathes, drill press, band saw, circular saw, specialist grindstones, many hand tools and some very nice timber.

Due to the pandemic, social distancing is enforced in the workshop, so it's necessary to book time in advance. Masks and sanitisers must also be used.

Prior to the official opening, which was a very low-key affair due to the virus, resident Al Zylstra and Johnny van Leeuwen had undertaken 26 projects, ranging from repairs to toasters, knife sharpening and carpentry of various degrees of difficulty.

They also completely refurbished 24 bridge tables for the village bridge club while the club was in recession. Another planned project is a custom-built cupboard to house occupational therapy games in the Thornhill Community Centre. "We make every effort to facilitate many different occupational and therapeutic hobbies and pastimes," says Esmé.

* Article by Robbie Vermont



Thornhill Manor stalwarts: Robbie Webster, Johnny van Leeuwen and Al Zylstra in the man cave.

Knitters continue tradition of caring

Thornhill Manor's Knit and Knatter Group has continued to extend a helping hand to those in need, despite the global coronavirus pandemic.

"Just because we are in lockdown, it does not mean that our generosity, desire to assist and charity work ceases. The needs of others continue, no matter what," says Jackie Scott, the deputy manager of the Rand Aid retirement village.

"Resident Eunice Harris, who is part of the Knit and Knatter group, annually donates wool to the group. This was used to make beautiful items for the neonatal intensive care unit and baby wards at the Edenvale Hospital," says Jackie.

The knitters have also continued with their Mandela Day tradition of doing their bit to keep vulnerable people warm over the winter months. This year, the ladies knitted and crocheted nearly 20 double bed blankets for 67 Blankets for Mandela.

All aboard! Inyoni Creek gets moving

A bright, metallic red golf cart is set to become a familiar sight on the streets of Inyoni Creek village. The golf cart will make life much easier for the staff members of the retirement village.

Due to the size of the property, office staff have been finding it difficult to get around the village to attend to various matters in the cottages and apartments and the golf cart will help ensure they are in a better position to deliver an efficient and effective service to the residents.

Although primarily for the staff, the golf cart will be used to transport residents in certain circumstances.

"As a result of the coronavirus, residents are encouraged to order in their groceries rather than risk busy shops. These groceries are delivered to the office which becomes problematic for residents without cars. The golf cart will be so handy in transporting these residents' purchases back to their homes," says village manager Jenny Tonkin.

Inyoni Creek resident Doris Ferri, deputy manager Marinda Looyen (behind the wheel) and employee Johanna Lebisi.



Scones served with a side order of camaraderie

Even though South Africa has moved to Alert Level One of the national coronavirus lockdown, Rand Aid's Inyoni Creek retirement village continues to follow social distancing guidelines.

When resident Dugald Paterson and friends decided to serve freshly baked scones with strawberry jam and cream to the Inyoni Creek community on 19 August, during lockdown level two, it was agreed that the treats would be available as take-aways instead of being enjoyed together in the village clubhouse.

Although friends and neighbours did not get to make a morning of it as normal, there was some level of interaction as people popped in and out to collect their teatime treats and the sense of community for which Inyoni Creek is known was as warm and comforting as the scones.

Over 200 scones were baked by Dugald and fellow residents Denise Simonson and Tommy Hamilton.



Tommy Hamilton delivers another tray of freshly baked scones, while resident Jenny Cubitt slathers her order with butter, jam and cream.

Inyoni Creek extends a helping hand during COVID-19 lockdown

Rand Aid Inyoni Creek retirement village residents have once again opened their hearts to a handful of elderly Alexandra grandmothers.

The women are part of the Zamokuhle outreach programme run by Thembalami Care Centre, another Rand Aid property.

As Zamokuhle beneficiaries, the Alexandra women spend three days of the week at Thembalami, enjoying their meals there and taking part in social and recreational activities like knitting, crocheting and exercises.

Since the lockdown, they have been unable to visit Thembalami and without the meals and support they get there, have been finding things more challenging than normal.

"We appealed to our residents to donate grocery items for the Zamokuhle gogos," says Inyoni Creek manager Jenny Tonkin. "This is the second appeal that we have done, following the donation of food parcels in April."

"The residents donated generously and we even managed to give each gogo a hand-crocheted blanket, which was gratefully received," says Jenny.



Marinda Looyen (Inyoni Creek deputy manager) and residents Jean Garlick and Sue Benjamin with the parcels ready for delivery. Jean came up with the initiative and was keenly supported by her fellow residents.

LEFT: Inyoni Creek resident Gloria Maddison, who crocheted many of the blankets that were donated to the gogos.

Candles in memory of lost loved ones

"I felt her body next to mine; she was cold. I tried to wake her, felt for a pulse, nothing. I carried her to the shower and tried to revive her. I did CPR but it was too late. Four years later, the scene still replays clearly in my mind. Such a waste of somebody with so much talent. I would trade places with her if I could."

These words, by a former patient of Sanca Wedge Gardens treatment centre in Johannesburg, capture the devastation of losing someone you love to an overdose.

International Overdose Awareness Day, held on August 31 each year, gives people a chance to remember those who passed on due to an overdose of either a licit or an illicit substance.

Worldwide, people are encouraged to show their support by wearing a purple or silver ribbon.

Wedge Gardens commemorated the day by inviting the men undergoing rehab at the centre to light a candle in memory of someone they have lost.

"We are here today to commemorate all those who lost their lives, accidentally or otherwise, as a result of overdose," said Adèl Grobbelaar, who heads up Wedge Gardens.

"Every overdose is a loss; those ignorant enough to say they deserved it have absolutely no understanding of the epidemic we are fighting. With every overdose, someone loses a son, daughter, friend or loved one. Nobody has the right to judge.

"My wish for you is that you will never feel that hopeless, that overdose appears the only way out. Remember we are here for you and we care."

International Overdose Day aims to:

- Raise awareness of overdose and reduce the stigma of a drug-related death.
- Acknowledge the grief felt by families and friends in remembering those who have died or have a permanent injury as a result of drug overdose.
- Spread the message that the tragedy of overdose death is preventable.

* For help with addiction recovery, contact Wedge Gardens rehab centre in Johannesburg.
Visit www.wedgegardens.co.za or phone 010 534 6596.



Adèl Grobbelaar (far left), who heads up Wedge Gardens, invited everyone to light a candle in memory of those they have lost to an overdose.



Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association are blessed with large, beautiful grounds. Residents enjoyed a **NATURE WALK** recently which enabled them to get some exercise while interacting in a safe manner with their fellow residents. Pictured is Pierre Badenhorst pushing Rita Rother. Doreen Calder in the background.



A landscaped water-wise garden was created at Taren-taal village in celebration of spring. Grounds manager George Vermeulen (not pictured) and his team: Mpho Nkoana and Jerry Mofokeng were assisted by three Servest employees: Lesley Moichela, Kegaugetswe Tsebe and Elby Mulaudzi. In a month or two, when the plants are fully established, the garden will become another village focal point.

Sue lets the needles fly for Mandela Day



Long-time Inyoni Creek resident Sue van der Neut cast out a challenge to her fellow residents – knit 67 squares each for Mandela Day. The residents of the close-knit Lyndhurst-based Rand Aid retirement village accepted and 1 529 squares were the end result. These were handed to

67 Blankets for Nelson Mandela Day to be made into blankets for people needing assistance in keeping the winter chill away. Pictured is Sue, who personally made 212 squares.

Our mission: To provide the best possible care on a holistic basis to all people accommodated in our facilities — focusing primarily on less advantaged senior citizens, both ambulant and frail, as well as men suffering from substance abuse.

Visit www.randaid.co.za or phone Erica Woodward at 011 882 2510.