

Rand Aid *review*

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Tony Peters, a resident of Thembalami Care Centre, helps a little visitor from Willowbrook Montessori Preschool decorate a cookie. Children from the preschool visited the care centre recently and had a lovely time with a few of the residents. Inter-generational interaction benefits both older people and children, with the older people gaining satisfaction from passing on skills, and the little ones loving the attention. The school and care centre hope to make the visits a regular occurrence. ■ Full story on pg 5.

Inter-generational *connection*

New village latest: Progress being made

At long last, Rand Aid Association had a favourable outcome on its town planning application to the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. The municipality has approved the subdivision of the land purchased from the Glendower Golf Club and the establishment of a new township for the development of the proposed Glendower Retirement Village.

The approval provides for the development of 138 retirement housing units on the 8.1 hectares of land. However, there is still a multitude of standard official requirements to be negotiated and implemented before the township register can be opened and the property transferred to the RA Welfare Development Trust, the property arm of Rand Aid.

In the meantime, we are working closely with the different professional consultants to refine design and cost options. This will inform decisions on the size and type of units, unit pricing and the timeframe for the development. We appreciate the patience of the many people who have expressed an interest in this development. We will communicate with you when we have more detailed information to share.

Anyone wishing to place their name on the expression-of-interest waiting list may phone Erica Woodward at 011 882 2510 (mornings only).



The competition was fierce and the laughter loud when the 'Special Olympics' was held at the Ron Smith Care Centre. Participants competed in four events: Balloon Volleyball, Paper Airplane Race, Bean Bag Toss and the Skyscraper Building Challenge. Pictured is resident Arthur Nortje, who won an award for his enthusiastic spirit. ■ Full story on pg 6.

MANDELA DAY: GIVING AND RECEIVING IN THE SPIRIT OF UBUNTU



Gwenda Caplan and Val Bartram.

Knitters break previous year's record

Inyoni Creek retirement village residents again reached out to support non-profit organisation 67 Blankets for Nelson Mandela Day, donating an impressive 1 966 squares to the organisation for those in need. Every year Inyoni Creek's hard-working knitters and crocheters come together to make as many squares as possible to help keep those less fortunate warm in winter.

"This year, our residents com-

pleted 1 966 squares, beating last year's record of 1 602 squares. That's an impressive increase of 364 squares. A huge thank you to everyone who made this possible and reached out to help those in need," says Inyoni Creek's manager Jenny Tonkin.

To celebrate, the residents who took part enjoyed muffins and cocoa around the fireplace on Mandela Day, kindly sponsored by Inyoni Creek's deputy manager Marinda Looyen.

Lots of love – with a dollop of spice

Who said older people always need to be on the receiving end of community generosity? The residents and staff members of Ron Smith Care Centre were the ones who did the giving this Mandela Day when they baked cookies for a nearby youth centre.

Busy hands and happy hearts characterised their full-day bake-a-thon on July 18. The result? Around 140 home-baked and beautifully decorated gingerbread biscuits that were joyfully donated to Refilwe Legae Home and the Ikemeleng Community Youth Centre in Alexandra.

The morning was spent mixing and rolling out the dough and using cookie cutters to create gingerbread people. Creativity was unleashed in the afternoon, as the decorators set about giving each gingerbread person a unique identity.

"This was a wonderful project showing that frail older persons needing care can also reach out and give care to others, which is one of the principles of the Eden Alternative," says Zabeth Zühlisdrorf, Rand Aid's manager of services and the advance division.



Cathy Basterfield, Ellen Quinn, Isabel Peddie, Lorraine Lowden and Joan Mullan.

"It is also very fitting that it took place on Mandela Day as reaching out and giving back resulted in a great sense of achievement for our residents," she adds.



Nompumelelo Malatsi gives a snooze scarf to MODA resident Thomas Mans.

Scarves and songs for Mandela Day

Thembalami Care Centre and Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) residents received snooze scarfs from Prestige Clothing Joburg, a manufacturing arm of The Foschini Group, for Nelson Mandela Day.

As part of its clothing skills programme, Prestige Clothing Joburg hired 90 hearing impaired learners to teach them manufacturing skills and how to sew T-shirts that are sold in various stores and factory outlets.

For its 67 minutes for Mandela Day, the company also wanted to give back and assist organisations that cater for the hearing impaired by donating snooze scarfs to residents.

A group of the learners, many from St Vincent School for the Deaf, visited MODA and Thembalami on Mandela Day, sang with the residents and handed out 130 snooze scarfs, which were appreciated by all.

Twice the fun as care centre and village unite

New friendships were forged recently when residents and staff of two Rand Aid facilities – a retirement village and a care centre – came together to enjoy fun outdoor and indoor activities.

The occupational therapy morning held by Thornhill Manor retirement village's Happy Chatters Walkers group on 25 July, was initiated by discussions between Thembalami's management and Thornhill Manor.

Started three years ago by occupational therapist and Thornhill resident Vicky Keenan – and now joined by social worker Karen Griessel – Happy Chatters sees residents enjoying a weekly walk and treats, followed by various creative and fun occupational therapy activities.

The group and its activities further entrench one of the Eden Alternative philosophies, which is to stimulate residents' growth and well-being and ensure a life full of purpose, connection, empowerment and possibility, regard-



Happy Chatters with Thembalami residents.

less of age or changing abilities.

Residents from Rand Aid's Thembalami Care Centre, accompanied by their occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlo-mule, her team and first-year occupational therapy students, were thrilled to be asked to join in on the group's fun.

"Thembalami's residents really enjoyed the outing and everyone met some new people. We will continue with the collaboration, building the relationship between Thornhill and Thembalami's occupational therapy groups under Vicky's guiding hand," says Karen.



Rhona Burnham, Joan Mullan and Ria Milburn with some of the cupcakes.

Joy in giving on Mandela Day

The Edenvale Care Centre Hospice, which has been helping people in their darkest hour since 2002, was recently on the receiving end of community goodwill.

As the hospice has not received its small grant from the Department of Health for a year, it has been relying on fundraising and donations from the public.

Residents and staff from Elphin Lodge retirement village and Ron Smith Care Centre thus joined forces to bring in much-needed donations for the hospice and its patients, as its Mandela Month project.

Everyone went all out to assist, donating 20 boxes of groceries, four boxes of clothes, 40 comfort bears and 47 blankets for the patients, and four dozen cupcakes for the patients, staff and helpers.

"The care centre's chef Maureen Khumalo was over the moon as we unloaded box after box of groceries. When we started to unpack, she said the hospice would now not have to buy groceries for several months," says Debbie Christen, Rand Aid's manager of recreational programmes.

Perseverance pays off for Hlumela

Hlumela Anderson, an administration clerk at SANCA Wedge Gardens, has her sight firmly set on obtaining her honours degree in psychological counselling.

Hlumela joined Wedge Gardens in 2011 and has always wanted to progress to the therapeutic side of the substance use treatment centre's Full Circle Recovery Programme.

She first took on a social auxiliary course and finished first in her class. That's when she decided to start her degree in social work. However, as UNISA had placed its Bachelor of Social Work degree on hold, due to Covid-19, she opted for a degree in psychology instead.

She graduated on 28 March, with 10 distinctions, and is now already studying towards her honours degree in psychological counselling.

"I love putting families at ease when they call and book for their loved ones at SANCA Wedge Gardens. I



enjoy watching our clients grow in the programme and see themselves capable of turning their lives around," says Hlumela.

"I enjoy facilitating groups because I get to equip our clients with life skills they lack. It is rewarding to watch them grow, from joining the group to being discharged. It's also reward-

ing when a client who has left the programme comes to tell me how meaningful the groups were for them, and how they are using the skills they learnt to deal with the challenges they come across," she adds.

"This is a tough young woman, with resilience and determination to reach her goals. The Wedge team is very proud of her achievements," says Adèl Grobbelaar, SANCA Wedge Gardens' manager.

For more information about SANCA Wedge Gardens and its Full Circle Recovery Programme, visit www.wedgegardens.co.za



Tons of fun had at Tarentaal's fete: It was a lovely spring day on 3 September when Tarentaal retirement village held its first fete since 2019, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The fete was a huge success and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Pictured is Yvonne Butts, who worked very hard at the plant stall.

CENTENARIANS CELEBRATE MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

101 candles on Irene's cake



Irene Watson and daughter Fiona Martin.

Ron Smith Care Centre resident Irene Watson celebrated her 101st birthday on 8 September.

Irene was born in 1921 in County Durham, England. Her father Richard was a farmer, while her mother Harriet assisted the local midwife.

"My first job was in the counting house of a huge department store. To transfer money, we put it into a tube and into a special shoot, where it would go whooshing through to its destination," she says.

Irene

met her husband Reginald at a dance in Darlington and they married as soon as the war was over in 1945.

After Reginald got a job in Bulawayo, Irene travelled by ship with her two young children, for 15 days, from South Hampton, England, to Cape Town. "Then we travelled by train for two days to Bulawayo," says Irene.

She enjoys listening to light music on the radio; and loves the lake, trees, flowers, gardens, birds and ducks at Ron Smith Care Centre.

Tarentaal retirement village resident **Mary Louise Hattingh** (née Carratu) celebrated her 100th birthday on 24 July at a lovely birthday party hosted by the Tarentaal Residents' Committee.

According to Mary's son Gerhard, who is also a Tarentaal resident, Mary – the youngest of eight children – was born at home in Cava de' Tirreni, in the Province of Salerno, Italy, on 24 July 1922.

After her mother died of Spanish Flu at the age of 47, her father brought his children to South Africa on the HMS Edinburgh Castle in February 1930.

Mary married Vic Hattingh in 1947 and they had three sons, Gerhard, Michael and John, who all grew up in Springs. In 1985, she relocated to Edenvale and, 25 years ago, became a resident at Tarentaal Retirement Village in 1997.



School. "My first job was working for Roistone Motors," she says.

Marie met her husband Lawrence at the local roller rink in Malvern and they were married for almost 72 years. He passed away in November 2013. The couple had two sons, William and John, seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Ron Smith Care Centre resident **Marie Roberts** celebrated her 100th birthday with family and friends on 27 August.

Born in De Putten, near Zeerust, in 1922, Marie grew up with six sisters and two brothers, and attended a farm school for the first ten years of her life. "That's where I learnt to speak Tswana. We used to go to school on a donkey cart," says Marie.

During the depression in 1932, the family moved to Johannesburg where Marie attended Commercial High



ARBOR DAY

Thembalami Care Centre, the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA), Inyoni Creek, Thornhill Manor, Elphin Lodge and Tarentaal retirement villages and Wedge Gardens Treatment Centre celebrated Arbor

Week by each planting an evergreen, indigenous wild olive tree, kindly donated by Servest.

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment's national Arbor Month campaign aims to sensitise South Africans to the need to conserve, protect and plant trees.

"It's wonderful to have another tree in our garden that our residents can appreciate and enjoy. Thank you to Servest for this lovely gesture," says Thembalami and MODA manager Esme van der Walt.

Thornhill Manor arranged a tea after the planting of the tree and Wendy Hunt, the village's Garden Club chairwoman, spoke about the tough, indigenous Pompom tree, this year's tree of the year.

Thornhill Manor residents and staff members, with two members of the Servest team, at the village's Arbor Day ceremony.



Thornhill Manor residents and staff members, with two members of the Servest team, at the village's Arbor Day ceremony.



MODA resident Hansie Griessel with Thembalami resident Daan van den Berg and Amon Maluleke and Jeff Ngwenyame from Servest.

Volunteer your time to bring joy to the elderly

Ron Smith and Thembalami and Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) care centres are in need of volunteers who enjoy spending time with older people and can spare a few hours a week to spread some love and joy amongst the residents.

Both Ron Smith and Thembalami have residents of varying abilities and both have some residents who have Alzheimer's disease.

The care centres are committed to creating a warm, life-affirming care environment in which each person matters and everyone has an opportunity to participate in activities that bring meaning, joy and fun to their lives.

Volunteers play a huge role in helping to create this life-affirming, caring environment and add significantly to the

quality of life and general well-being of residents.

"The volunteer programme had to be put on hold as a result of Covid-19, but the recreation team has now regrouped and redesigned activities for our residents," says Debbie Christen, Rand Aid's manager of recreational programmes.

Ron Smith Care Centre is looking for musicians, singers and dancers who can come and perform for residents, or lead sing-a-longs or musical groups. Gardening, one-on-one friendly visits and sensory stimulation work with residents living with dementia are also activities in which volunteers can get involved.

Thembalami and MODA are specifically looking for singers and musicians

for its monthly birthday bash. Residents love singing to music. Entertainers who do drumming – or use other vibrational sounds – will also be greatly appreciated by the deaf residents, as they are able to feel the vibration of the music.

■ Anyone who is interested in becoming a volunteer and freely giving of their love and time can contact:

Ron Smith - Debbie Christen preferably by email: dchristen@randaid.co.za or phone 011 882 6296. Ron Smith Care Centre is located at 222 Modderfontein Road, Lyndhurst.

Thembalami and MODA - Esme van der Walt or Elize Raath at 010 534 8771 or send an email to evanderwalt@randaid.co.za or eraath@randaid.co.za. The centre is based in Lombardy East.



Sister Jana Bezuidenhout, Val Bartram, Shaun Victor, Fany Bauman and Dave Koff.

Sister Jana joins Inyoni Creek

Sister Jana Bezuidenhout, who has been part of Rand Aid's family as Tarentaal's village sister since May 2019, joined Inyoni Creek retirement village on 1 July.

Jana took over as Inyoni Creek's village sister, following Sister Hannie Combrink's retirement at the end of June.

Tarentaal's manager Tammy Neilsen says Jana was 'incredible' at Tarentaal and turned the clinic around. "She was amazing with the residents and has very good admin skills. Our residents love her and will miss her."

Jana says she's enjoying being part of Inyoni Creek's team and being able to provide the best care for residents. "All of the residents and staff have been so welcoming and I am looking forward to getting to know them," she adds.

"The Inyoni Creek team is excited to have Jana on board and we look forward to a long and rewarding working relationship with her," says Inyoni Creek manager Jenny Tonkin.

Inter-generational connection forged

Thembalami Care Centre and Willowbrook Montessori Preschool in Buurendal have teamed up to initiate an inter-generational project between Elders and the younger generation.

Four residents from Thembalami Care Centre recently visited the preschool to spend some quality time with the children.

The residents – Heather Abrams, Aisla Lee, Maureen Wigoder and Tony Peters – enjoyed reading, building puzzles and baking with the children. These interactive activities were followed by delicious cake and tea.

The children loved singing to them and the residents, singing along, were taken back to their childhood.

"The outing made our residents extremely happy. They were beaming and thanked us for the experience. The children also really enjoyed their time with the residents," says Thembalami's manager, Esme van der Walt.

"We plan to do this every second month. It will give our residents something to look forward to, which will significantly contribute to their happiness and well-being," she adds.

70th anniversary



It was seven decades ago that Inyoni Creek retirement village residents Mike and Golda Britany said their vows and pledged to spend the rest of their lives together. The happy couple, both in their early 90s, celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on 24 August. Mike and Golda have two children, six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. "They all say that we are an example to them and they look up to us," says Golda.

60th anniversary



Thornhill Manor residents John and Lorna Fell celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on 30 June. The couple had two sons, Craig and Gavin, and a daughter, Leigh, and have six grandchildren. "Highlights of our lives, besides our honeymoon, was a trip to the USA, visiting Orlando, New Orleans, the Big Apple and enjoying a seven-day crossing of the Atlantic on the QE2... Not to mention our many trips to the Kruger," says John.

Good fun had by all at 'Special Olympics'

A spectacular week of fun and games was enjoyed from 6 to 10 June when residents from the six residential wings of Ron Smith Care Centre dressed up in their team colour and competed in the Special Olympics in four events: Balloon Volleyball, Paper Airplane Race, Bean Bag Toss and the Skyscraper Building Challenge.

There was also a fun Hug-a-Balloon race for staff.

The four days of competitions culminated in a glorious Awards Ceremony, in which the winning team, Lakeside, was pronounced the Grand Champions and individual members were crowned and presented with medals.

Throughout the four-day event, the levels of team spirit, excitement, singing, dancing, cheering, clapping, determination and friendly competitiveness were thrilling to witness and experience.

Most of the residents enjoyed themselves and some who don't normally participate in recreational activities, really came alive during the competitions. Others, who thought they wouldn't be able to manage some of the events, were encouraged to give it a try anyway, and were totally amazed and delighted at the results of their efforts.

Judging from the reaction and feedback from residents, staff and families, the Golden Games Special Olympics was an exceptional event that brought joy to the care centre community.

It was pronounced a phenomenal success by all!

Mad fun at Inyoni Creek on Spring Day

Tons of fun was had by Rand Aid's Inyoni Creek retirement village residents at its Mad Hatters Spring Birthday Tea on 2 September, when residents dressed up in funky hats to welcome the season of renewal.



Yvonne Petersen.

Congratulations to Hanni Britton who won the prize for the best hat, and to Elaine Glogauer, who won the prize for being the most creative!

A special thank you to Café on the Creek for sponsoring the prizes.



Staff members and gogos doing aerobics with occupational therapist Patricia Shihlomule.

Care centre embraces spring with Waya Waya challenge

Celebrating spring was a joyful occasion at Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) on 2 September, when residents, staff and the 'gogos' from Alexandra dressed up brightly to welcome the new season.

Colourful tutus were the order of the day, as the care centre's occupational therapist and other staff members led various activities to improve social interaction amongst residents and employees.



Thembalami resident Elizabeth Andrews and occupational therapy assistant Shirley Sibeko.

The Waya Waya dance challenge was an absolute hit!

South African musician and record producer Kgaogelo 'Master KG' Moagi has another smash hit that has gone viral just like Jerusalem, and people across the world are taking on the challenge.

"Our residents and staff thoroughly enjoyed our Waya Waya dance, and we challenge all Rand Aid villages to do their own Waya Waya dance," says Thembalami and MODA manager Esme van der Walt.

Other activities included aerobics, led by occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlomule; and the Trust a Friend Challenge, where a staff member and a resident navigated an obstacle course together.

"The staff member was blindfolded and the resident had to direct them through the obstacle course," says Elize Raath, Thembalami Care Centre's deputy manager.

Residents also enjoyed a boiled egg spoon race and a marshmallow on a string challenge, in which residents sat on a chair and had to eat a huge marshmallow off a string.

In between all of these fun activities, everyone enjoyed an ice cream! "It was wonderful to have our 'gogos' from the Zamokuhle outreach programme join us on the day and take part in the activities," says Esme.

The programme was launched by Rand Aid in 2009 to assist Elders in need in nearby Alexandra, River Park and East Bank. Run from Thembalami three mornings a week, the programme assists pensioners so that they can remain within their own community for as long as possible.

The residents ended their day with a delicious boerewors roll, kindly braaied by staff members Solly Teka, Jacob Bahumi and Jerry Mofokeng.

Veteran employees celebrated

The amount of time that Rand Aid’s employees dedicate to the non-profit organisation is a testament to the wonderful work it does for its life-right retirement villages, frail care centres, and substance use treatment centre.

Three of the organisation’s staff members received awards for 20 years’ service to the organisation this year, while a number of others were congratulated on 15, 10 and five years’ service. In total, 155 staff received an award with a total of 1 055 years of service!

Morky Mongwe from Cookchill, Marinda Looyen from Inyoni Creek and Johan Labuschagne from SANCA Wedge Gardens were all congratulated on their 20 years’ long service.

Rand Aid employee Steve Burton, who manages the Cookchill, says he can’t recall a day that **Morky** has ever called in sick. “He even came to work the day after rolling his car, battered and bruised,” says Steve.

Marinda started working half day at Rand Aid in 2002, at the cash office at SANCA Wedge Gardens. She was then transferred to Thornhill Manor as a receptionist, in a full-day position where she worked for about two years. She then moved to the reception at Head Office, where she assisted with the planning, marketing and sales of Inyoni Creek, and was promoted to deputy manager in 2007.

Johan has been working at SANCA Wedge Gardens’ workshop for many years – first repairing lawnmowers and now assisting in Stores. He is well-known for his strawberries, which he started growing outside his room as a small project, which soon progressed to a much bigger one.

“It is because of the special people like you that Rand Aid is the successful, caring organisation it is today,” says Rand Aid’s CEO Peter Quinn.



Tilly Bryant and Josephine Kew.

Pamper parties for RSCC residents

Ron Smith Care Centre turned Women’s Day into a week-long event, transforming its recreation centre into a day spa – complete with low lighting, candles and tranquil music.

Starting on 8 August, three spa afternoons were held for residents from all six residential wings to relax, unwind and enjoy manicures and much-needed massages.

“They really appreciated this bit of relaxation time and loved being pampered,” says Debbie Christen, Rand Aid’s manager of recreational programmes.

Residents then enjoyed a lovely high tea, with singer Roy Edwards, sponsored by AVBOB, on 12 August.

“Roy entertained the large crowd with golden oldie music, which brought back many fond memories for the residents. Recognising many of the songs, they were inspired to dance or move to the music, which brought fun and joy to all. Many commented how wonderful it was to have live entertainment after a long dry spell as a result of Covid-19,” says Debbie.



Rand Aid Chairman Paul Carter with Marinda Looyen and Rand Aid CEO Peter Quinn.

FIRST FAMILY DAY AFTER COVID

During Covid, the residents of care centres across the country were not able to spend as much time as they usually would with their family and friends.

Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) were thus excited to be able to hold their first family day, since Covid-19 hit.

Everyone gathered in Thembalami’s lapa to enjoy curry and rice, cake, tea and coffee and spend some much-needed quality time with each other!

“AVBOB Edenvale kindly donated 8kg of mince and two large cakes, and we had rice that had been donated previously,” says Esme van der Walt, Thembalami and MODA’s manager.

The residents enjoyed interacting with a local learner who came to work as a volunteer on the day. She helped to serve tea and cake and also washed the dishes.

“Many members of the deaf commu-



Brian Collier with his partner Jackie Smith.

nity also joined in the fun, which was wonderful to see, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed their day,” says Esme.



SANCA Wedge Gardens’ Adele Nel has left the substance abuse treatment centre after 15 years of loyal service to start a new life in Cape Town. Adele’s experience with trauma counselling and employee assistance programmes not only served SANCA Wedge Gardens, but the entire Rand Aid. “She always brought a new view to the table,” says Adèl Grobbelaar, SANCA Wedge Gardens’ manager.



OT students learn at SANCA Wedge Gardens: Zahraa Ahmed, Joy Ayisi, Muaazah Abdul and Tahseen Mosam celebrate completing their first psychiatric occupational therapy practical session at Wedge Gardens. These third-year University of the Witwatersrand students spent five weeks working with occupational therapist Caryn Berman and treating patients. "They had a great practical and learnt a lot. Our clients loved having individual therapy daily and benefitted from the intervention," says Caryn. Well done ladies!

Farewell darkness, my old friend

SANCA Wedge Gardens commemorates International Overdose Day

SANCA Wedge Gardens substance abuse treatment centre commemorated International Overdose Day on 31 August.

"Working and being with people who suffer from substance use disorder exposes us to a variety of feelings – some of hope and celebration.

"Sadly, we all too often see the dark side of the disease – when some people accidentally or intentionally commit suicide," says SANCA Wedge Gardens' manager Adèl Grobbelaar.

Adèl was speaking at a function held to commemorate those who were in such a deep, dark place that taking their own lives was the only solution they saw at the time.

Death usually moves us to powerful feelings of grief and a great sense of loss, but with suicide, people can also struggle with anger, guilt and confusion. Some of the initial feelings of grief after a suicide may include anger, shock, confusion, numbness and disbelief that they didn't have a chance to say goodbye. Guilt usually emerges because people blame themselves for not seeing the direct or indirect warning signs, said Adèl.

"A person's life usually reflects two dates – their date of birth and date of death. People should strive to do all they can between these two dates because life is short. The best way to change and enjoy your life is by starting today. Make every moment count. Today we are going to let go of all the negative feelings around grief that prevent us from moving forward and living life to the fullest," said Adèl.

She explained that grieving must include letting go. "This is the only way forward. Letting go doesn't mean we don't love and miss the people who have left our lives. There is still room for cherished memories, keepsakes and regrets. Loss is a part of life. It is part of what gives life meaning.

"Letting go is the process of freeing yourself from obsessive

thoughts and unhappy feelings. When you let go, you allow yourself to relax in the moment. Emotions such as peace and happiness are then more accessible. When you let go, your body relaxes and becomes healthier. Deep, dark, obsessive grief, on the other hand creates a strong physical tightening in your body," said Adèl.

"Letting go means finding out who you are without the person you have lost. It means allowing yourself to fall in love again. It means forgiving your best friend and perhaps finding a better one.

"Letting go is hard because it means that you need to free yourself from some aspects of your past. Things that have become a part of yourself – of what makes you who you are today. Most people understand this as getting rid of that 'something' that would change who they are. This can be scary because it means making changes," said Adèl.

Don't pretend loved ones were never part of your life, but move forward with your own life to honour them and care for yourself, she added.

Following her talk, SANCA Wedge Gardens' patients took part in a mental exercise – blowing up balloons

and blowing bubbles – to help them breathe deeply and blow away the negativity that causes feelings of hopelessness.

The patients then looked up and let go of their balloons. "We always look up to our higher power as it brings on positive feelings. After letting go of their balloons, our patients then imagined themselves being left behind with feelings of anticipation for the new person they can become and the circumstances that can improve their lives moving forward," said Adèl.

■ For more information about SANCA Wedge Gardens, visit www.wedgegardens.co.za



SANCA Wedge Gardens' employees Lydia Maseko, Estelle Raath (deputy manager) and Miyalani Machuchi.