

Rand Aid

review

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Thornhill Manor retirement village enjoyed the perfect day for its **annual fete** on October 5. With only a light breeze and warm sunshine, the atmosphere between the stalls and visitors was vibrant, and all of the food vendors sold out. Rudi van Niekerk kept the crowd entertained, with lively music that had everyone singing and dancing. "A fantastic time was had by all, and it was wonderful to see so many of our new residents participating for the first time," says Jackie Scott, deputy manager of Thornhill Manor. "Social interaction is crucial as we age, helping to combat loneliness, boredom and a sense of helplessness," she adds. All proceeds from the fete will go towards the village fund, with residents deciding how to use the money for special projects to enhance the community and benefit everyone. Pictured are Jen Cruickshank, Danielle Sealy-Fisher and Dale Cherrington selling recycled cards.



LEFT: September 23 was a special day for Tarentaal Retirement Village, as residents and staff gathered to celebrate **Heritage Day**. The festivities included a braai, with everyone enjoying traditional boerewors rolls. Pictured is Xoliswa Nyakambi in traditional dress.



MEET CEO GERT COETZEE
AND LEARN MORE ABOUT
THE EXCO MEMBERS

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CEO's year-end message:

Community and care celebrated

As we approach the end of 2024, I want to take a moment to reflect on a year marked by both challenges and triumphs.

It has been an honour to serve as your CEO since August. During this time, I have been deeply impressed by the dedication and compassion of our staff. Their tireless efforts ensure that our residents enjoy excellent living conditions and receive the highest quality care. I would also like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our exco members, whose expert management has been instrumental in guiding our organisation. This was especially true during the period of transition between the former CEO vacating his position and my appointment. Ayanda Matthews, Wim Pieterse, Zabeth Zühlsdorff and, later, Amanda Diener ensured that residents and staff were not impacted during this time.

We have experienced significant changes this year, including my appointment, the appointment of Amanda to the exco and shifts in areas of responsibility. Read more about this on page 2. We also bid farewell to Zabeth, whose legacy will continue to inspire us. Additionally, we welcomed new management appointments in our villages, each bringing fresh perspectives and expertise.

Construction at Tarentaal Village was concluded a few months ago, creating a more welcoming office block, reception, and improved facilities for our staff.

During the past year, we intensified our commitment to our Eden Alternative journey, with a core leadership team appointed to facilitate greater uptake across all villages and care centres. We remain passionate about creating a home-like environment that fosters meaningful relationships, personal choice, and a sense of belonging, all of which are aligned with the Eden philosophy.

Despite the economic challenges facing South Africa, our villages and care centres have remained steadfast in their commitment to our communities. We have continued to host fun events and activities for our residents, fostering a sense of belonging and joy.

I want to express our sincere gratitude to our residents and their families for their continued support of Rand Aid Association.

As we look forward to 2025, I am filled with optimism. Together, we will continue to build on our successes, adapt to changing circumstances, provide exceptional care to our residents and ensure our staff feel valued.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas, a Happy Hanukkah, and a joyous holiday season. May the New Year bring you peace, health, and prosperity.

Gert Coetzee

MEET THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

AMANDA DIENER: GM COMMERCIAL AND COMPLIANCE:

With her diverse legal background, including academic and corporate experience, as well as international administrative roles; her empathy for people; and the value she places on fairness and justice, Amanda Diener is a valuable addition to Rand Aid's executive committee (exco).



Amanda joined Rand Aid in November 2015, when she was appointed to fill the newly created compliance officer position. When exco member

Zabeth Zühlsdorff retired at the end of April 2024, Amanda was identified to take on certain exco functions. A few months later, Gert Coetzee was appointed as Rand Aid's CEO and he made Amanda's position permanent, effective from September 1.

As the commercial and compliance GM, Amanda is responsible for the villages and the statutory and regulatory aspects applicable to the association and the services it provides to residents and clients.

Dignity for all

Her vision for Rand Aid is a 'unified, non-discriminatory space for the dignity of all'. "If staff members are happy at work – respected and acknowledged to such an extent that they serve the residents and clients to the best of their abilities – the culture of excellence will continue to thrive. Rand Aid will cement its position as a desirable place to live, our waiting lists will be extensive and our residents happy," she says.

Amanda says during her years at Rand Aid, she learnt much from exco member Ayanda Matthews, who has been with the association for more than 30 years and oversaw compliance.

The most memorable projects she has been involved in over the past years include establishing the Employment Equity Consultative Forum, working for culture change, doing the anti-harassment risk assessment and, currently, rolling out the Eden Alternative throughout Rand Aid together with Ayanda.

Amanda values camaraderie, especially the 'different senses of humour of my colleagues in Rand Aid'.

The Parkhurst resident was raised in the picturesque Free State town of Bethlehem, where her mother – who recently turned 90 – still lives.

A cat lover, Amanda enjoys travelling, reading and cooking.

Experience

Amanda returned to South Africa in January 2015 after spending six-and-a-half years in Oxford in the United Kingdom with her husband, who took a research position there. While living abroad, she gained administrative and managerial experience, both in the private and academic spheres.

She holds a post-graduate law degree and is a qualified attorney and conveyancer with corporate and company secretarial experience.

After qualifying, she lectured for three years and then practised as an attorney, mainly doing conveyancing and administration of deceased estates. She subsequently gained extensive legal and company secretarial administrative experience in the corporate world – she was the company secretary of a JSE-listed company, a subsidiary of Anglo American.

Exco changes reflect culture change journey

Rand Aid's executive committee (exco) members have been given new titles and areas of responsibility. These became effective on November 1, 2024.

"The changes reflect our commitment to providing a unifying environment where older persons can thrive and live empowered lives, regardless of their circumstances and changing abilities," says Rand Aid CEO Gert Coetzee.

Ayanda Matthews, who previously was GM Compliance and Social React Division, is now GM Care and Human Resources. She is responsible for the care facilities (Ron Smith and Thembalami care centres and Wedge Gardens substance use disorder treatment centre) and all HR-related matters.

The title GM Services and Advance Division is replaced with GM Commercial and Compliance. Newly appointed to the position, Amanda Diener will be responsible for the villages (Tarentaal, Elphin Lodge, Thornhill Manor and Inyoni Creek) and all statutory matters.

Wim Pieterse is the GM Finance and Services. He remains responsible for all financial matters, ITC and security and, in addition, will head up the other services departments (Cookchill catering, the laundry and workshop).

WIM PIETERSE, GM FINANCE AND SERVICES:

With a Bcom Honours CA in Accounting and Finance to his name, Wim started working at Rand Aid 16 years ago and says he remains proud to be part of such an 'impressive entity'.

Rand Aid's staff are its heartbeat, he believes. "People enjoy working at Rand Aid, which provides a safe and nurturing working environment. This is reflected in the low staff turnover.

"Rand Aid's operations and the condition of its assets are amazing, and the quality of services and facilities provided are top class."

The evolution of Rand Aid since Wim was appointed in 2008 is impressive. He says staff numbers doubled when outsourced workers were permanently employed; an in-house control room, emergency call centre, security installations and individual electricity metering for life right villages were installed; social workers were employed to monitor residents' holistic well-being; coffee shops were opened in three of the villages; and various building improvements or additions have been made.

"Rand Aid strengthened its internal capabilities by hiring



additional staff with relevant expertise. This reduced reliance on external suppliers and enabled us to achieve accelerated growth and improved oversight," he says.

The laundry, workshop and catering divisions that fall under Wim's area of responsibility are vital to the smooth running of Rand Aid.

Cookchill has a unique system that provides about 30 000 affordable yet nutritious meals every month. The workshop can do almost any repair required, from motor vehicles, plumbing, and electricity to a complete refurbishment of housing units, while the laundry has top-quality equipment enabling it to launder on average 10 tons of individual garments and linen per month.

Wim says he lives in Brakpan but considers Rand Aid his second home. He has three daughters and two grandchildren – with a third on the way.

What does Rand Aid's number cruncher do to relax? "I have always loved sports and currently, I do mountain biking when time allows."

MEET THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Inclusive leadership and passion for excellence

Since taking the reins as CEO of Rand Aid on August 1, Gert Coetzee has immersed himself in the association, learning about its operations and its people and visiting the villages and care centres.

His first impression? The scale of the 121-year-old NPO is 'something to behold'.

Learn about Gert's management style and vision, and get to know the man behind the title in this Q&A:

What leadership style do you bring to Rand Aid and how will it impact the association?

I have always embraced an inclusive style, allowing staff the opportunity to make decisions, take responsibility and show initiative within the greater framework set. I encourage staff to speak their minds, make comments and offer advice to myself and each other. The only caveat is that it should not be done with any malice and the receivers should not try to read malicious intent into what is said. This will foster a culture of inclusivity and ownership and emphasise the fact that everyone, irrespective of what they do, is an essential part of the organisation.

What is your vision for Rand Aid?

Rand Aid is already known as one of the foremost organisations within the industry. I see it as my responsibility to build on the legacy of those who came before me to ensure that Rand Aid becomes the most sought-after destina-



CEO GERT COETZEE

tion for retirees by being at the forefront of innovation, operational efficiency and service delivery.

What do you consider to be the biggest challenges facing the care of older persons in South Africa?

Sustainability. Government support, be it financial or legislative, for our industry is waning every year. NPOs like us have the responsibility to be as dynamic as any other for-profit organisation, without losing sight of our altruistic purpose.

What is most rewarding about your job?

Society tends to discard those who are perceived as having outlived their productiveness. Being part of residents

rediscovering their role within our little society and how they flourish once they have settled in never ceases to fascinate me.

What drew you to the non-profit sector, specifically working with the elderly?

I landed up in the gerontology space quite by chance. Having come from a strict financial background, I wanted to try my hand at something more operational. Flower Foundation at the time had just acquired a new village and afforded me the opportunity to use my financial acumen to drive the village's operational success. Looking back I can only think that it was kismet.

What first impression have you formed of Rand Aid?

The scale of the operation is something to behold. I get the impression that staff and residents alike lose sight of the impressiveness of the organisation that they are part of.

Who is the man behind the CEO?

I have been married for 21 years to a lovely lady, who took my breath away the first time I saw her. She is a life partner in the true sense of the word, someone who supports me in all my endeavours but will also not hesitate to call me out if she deems it necessary.

I am a keen golfer. The fact that I am terrible at it does not stifle my enthusiasm one bit. I enjoy reading when I get a chance. Because of time constraints, I have turned to audio books and podcasts.

What is the key message you want to convey to residents and staff?

I am always approachable and willing to assist with advice and/or action.

WHAT GERT BRINGS TO THE TABLE:

A management accountant by profession, Gert has a thorough understanding of the retirement industry. He joined Flower Foundation Retirement Homes in 2012 as an area manager and served as the CEO from 2020. Before joining the Flower Foundation, he had a varied career in finance and accounting, having started his career with SARS and subsequently holding accounting and financial management positions in several companies.

AYANDA MATTHEWS, GM CARE AND HUMAN RESOURCES:

With her people-first philosophy, Ayanda is well suited to the HR portfolio.

She says the 'giving spirit of our staff' inspires her. "I marvel at those staff members who keep on smiling despite their circumstances. For instance, there are careworkers who stay in Pretoria and wake up at the crack of dawn to be at work at 7am, yet still find the reserves to sing to residents with dementia in the afternoon. The picture tugs at my heartstrings."

Ayanda has been a member of the Rand Aid team for more than 30 years and in that time, has witnessed 'relentless change'. "Through innovation and competitiveness, Rand Aid continues to stay relevant in our sector. With our powerful strategies, we managed to move from being dependent on government subsidies to generating much of the needed revenue on our own. Our human resources are the most important element that keeps the wheels rolling and we can only get



better and better."

She lists achieving equal pay for equal work and the trust relationship she has with staff members as highlights of her Rand Aid career.

An avid reader and keen traveller, Ayanda is a divorcée and mother of six – the last two were adopted when Ayanda's younger sister passed away, leaving two toddlers behind. She is proud that all six are graduates.

"My prayer to God has always been 'please keep me, oh Lord, till my babies are independent'. God has seen me through. I now have a grandson, Elikia, who has me wrapped around his little finger and so my prayer starts again."

Ayanda joined Rand Aid as a nurse with a three-year diploma in nursing and a fourth year of specialisation in midwifery. She then completed a business management diploma and later a labour law diploma.

Spring welcomed with a song and a dance

Wintery weather but a warm welcome characterised Ron Smith Care Centre's spring celebration on September 20.

Debbie Christen, the care centre's recreational and training services facilitator, says international flags were strung from the ceiling, and pots of sunflowers and flags adorned the tables, which brought sunshine and good cheer to the indoor area.

The staff were decked out in their traditional costumes and represented the diverse African tribes and cultures of our nation and beyond. "They opened the programme with a lively cultural dance, which brought a spirit fun to the morning," says Debbie.

"The rest of the entertainment programme was filled with a line dancing performance by the Rodeo Girls, Rodeo Club Dancers, and Boot Scootin SA, interspersed with Shams Muller singing a selection of country rock songs. At one point, the dancers got everyone moving to the song *Singin' in the Rain*," she says.

"They also taught everyone how to do an easy line dance. All the singing, dancing, and interactive activities triggered happy smiles and laughter."



Stella Murphy at Ron Smith Care Centre's cold but cheery spring celebration.

Warm hearts, hot water and a happy ending

Elphin Lodge Retirement Village and the Ron Smith Care Centre's (RSCC) Rahima Moosa Mother and Child Hospital Mandela Month Project culminated in the handover of a 200-litre geyser on October 10.

Neeri Stroebel of Elphin Lodge says the funds were donated and raised through raffles. The geyser will be installed in the hospital's Kangaroo Mother Care Unit.

Earlier in the year, at a meeting between an Elphin Lodge and RSCC team and paediatrician Prof Keith Bolton, it emerged that the unit did not have hot water. Changing this became the core focus of this Mandela Month project. In addition, a care pack, blanket, and hand-knitted teddy were handed to each mother in the unit on July 26, and the hospital's Willow therapy room was revamped.



Gustav Cilliers (Rahima Moosa facilities manager) and Gavin Tonkin (Rand Aid's deputy maintenance manager) with the geyser.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Happy Chatters roam the zoo

Who knew animal viewing was such good exercise? When members of Thornhill Manor's Happy Chatters occupational therapy group visited the Johannesburg Zoo recently, they walked around 10 000 steps.

Village social worker Karen Griessel says the group grasped the opportunity offered by the zoo of free entry for senior citizens and their caregivers.

"The ladies did so well, taking around 10 000 steps, calculated by my smartwatch, while enjoying the greenery and animals. For some caregivers, this was their first time seeing animals like tigers and lions, so there was lots of excitement in the air," says Karen.

"I could see that the outing meant a lot to the residents and their caregivers who are mostly home- and village-bound."

Eden Worldmakers song

Earlier this year, the Eden Alternative challenged Ron Smith Care Centre to produce a song about being Worldmakers.

At Ron Smith Care Centre, being a Worldmaker means ensuring that the care centre is a good place for the residents to live and the staff members to work.

It's about helping to create a world where residents' lives are worth living, and we do this by interacting and engaging with residents with love, joy, hope, patience, kindness, trust, understanding, freedom and fun.

Watch Ron Smith Care Centre's Worldmaker song on Rand Aid's Facebook page. Search 'Worldmaker'

Cockings and friends change lives

Elphin Lodge residents Colin and Linde Cocking, along with friends, have transformed the Willow therapy room at Rahima Moosa Mother and Child Hospital. Inspired by Mandela Day, they donated funds and care packs for new mothers and babies.

The revamped room will now serve various purposes, including counselling, sonars, and staff support. The hospital staff expressed deep gratitude for the generous donation and the beautiful transformation.

Sing-along promotes well-being

The Happy Chatters occupational therapy group recently enjoyed a special treat as Thornhill Manor's resident band played golden oldies, filling the room with familiar tunes and smiles. The group clapped along, savouring every beat and melody.

Music can be transformative at any age, and for older adults, it can deeply impact emotional, social and physical well-being.

"Singing together, even in a simple group singalong, can help build social connections," explains Karen Griessel, Thornhill Manor's social worker.

For those with dementia, music or humming can offer a way to express themselves when words are hard to find.

"Music can spark positive emotions and a sense of connection to the world and people around them," Karen adds.

Interactive Heritage Day at Wedge Gardens

SANCA Wedge Gardens' clients came together on Heritage Day to celebrate together and talk about their traditions and culture, with each one placing a piece on a map to represent where they come from (pictured).

A sports day was also held, with clients being divided into teams and competing against each other. Lots of fun and laughter were enjoyed by all, followed by delicious cake – resembling the South African flag – baked by Caryn Berman, SANCA Wedge Gardens' occupational therapist.



Rand Aid's path to resident and employee well-being

A core leadership team (CLT) has been appointed to drive culture change throughout Rand Aid.

The team comprises staff members from all Rand Aid establishments and will help ensure that the change is actively embraced by all members of the Rand Aid family.

The focus is to ensure older individuals can continue to live meaningful, active, and fulfilling lives. It is best summed up on www.edenalt.org: "We provide an approach to care that supports the whole person, that upholds their right to a life full of purpose, connection, empowerment, and possibility... regardless of age or changing abilities."

Rand Aid is at the forefront of this transformative approach to ageing and care in South Africa. In late 2016, Ron Smith Care Centre achieved Milestone One on the Eden Alternative Registry, becoming the first organisation in Gauteng – and the second in Africa – to achieve Eden Alternative Registry membership. Four years later, it became the first organisation in Africa to achieve Milestone 2.

Full steam ahead

In the years that followed, other Rand Aid retirement villages and care centres started implementing Eden-directed culture changes. This process is now being intensified, thanks to the creation of the CLT.

The team held a three-day growth and leadership workshop at the start of October, where ethics of honesty, individuality, integrity, and dignity were cemented. Regular follow-up sessions will be held.

"The emphasis is on listening with purpose, acting with kindness, respecting differing perspectives, recognising the importance of diversity, being humble, willing to learn, and practising consistency in actions and accountability," says Rand Aid exco member Amanda Diener.

Shaun Victor, the manager of Thornhill Manor, will champion the resident pathway, while Tarentaal deputy manager Ulricka Beukman will focus on the employee pathway. Debbie Beech, the deputy manager at Elphin Lodge will be the Rand Aid Eden champion responsible for communication and liaison between the CLT and The Eden Alternative South Africa, while Ayanda Matthews and Amanda will be the exco members supporting the process.

Rand Aid CEO Gert Coetzee confirmed the commitment of exco and the board to support the CLT in 'effecting change in service delivery and care throughout the organisation to create a caring workplace'.

Ageing is an remarkable journey, says Tarentaal's Ulricka

Ulricka Beukman, an experienced social worker who joined Rand Aid in 2019, took over the reins as deputy manager of Tarentaal in January when Laetitia Goosen retired.

After having worked as the village's social worker over the past five years, she is a familiar face to residents and their families. "My experiences caring for my parents, who lived with dementia, have shaped my understanding of ageing," Beukman shares. "Working at Tarentaal has further deepened my appreciation for the importance of strong family bonds and a meaningful life."

Raised in Port Elizabeth, Ulricka's mom was a hospital matron and her father was in the police service. She studied social work at the University of Stellenbosch and started her career in mental health before focusing on employee assistance programmes within



the workplace. During that time, she completed her Honours in Public Administration.

While at Rand Aid, she completed a University of Cape Town diploma in palliative care and a geriatric management diploma through the University of Kennesaw in the USA. She continues to take part in Eden Alternative training in people-centred care.

"I am privileged to be associated with Rand Aid and all our residents and believe that ageing is an extraordinary process where you become the person you always should have been, with a new stage of opportunities and strength."

Ulricka and husband Barnard, who is the editor of *Beeld*, have two children. Lidia, who is married and lives in Ireland, and Eduan, who is a candidate attorney at a law firm in Johannesburg. "My family is my hobby and the centre of my being," she says.

Lynn is all about justice and equality

With a deep-rooted passion for social justice and a wealth of experience in working with seniors, Lynn-Marie Barrow brings a valuable addition to the Tarentaal team.

The newly appointed village social worker's career path was

inspired by a desire to make a positive impact on the lives of those in need.

"As a young girl, I was moved by the injustices and inequality in the world."

Her six years at a frail care centre provided her with invaluable insights into the challenges faced by older people and their families.

At Tarentaal, Lynn plays a vital role in supporting residents and their families. Common issues faced by older persons in a retirement village setting include falls, declining health, technological challenges, and maintaining strong family relationships. Lynn-Marie is dedicated to providing support and guidance in these areas, ensuring that residents receive the assistance they require.

"One of the most rewarding aspects of my work is the joy I see in the eyes of a resident I have been able to help. That is priceless," she says.

Lynn holds a Bachelor of Social Science (Rhodes University, 1992) and has a wealth of experience in the field of social work. Since joining Tarentaal, she has been impressed by the sense of togetherness and shared commitment among the staff and residents to create a welcoming and supportive environment.

When not working, the Kensington resident enjoys reading, listening to music, dancing, gardening, staying informed about current events, and walking her dog. She is also a proud grandmother to Azriella, who was born on Christmas Day, 2023.

"Her presence at Tarentaal will ensure that residents continue to receive the support and care they need to live their lives with dignity and independence," says village manager Tammy Neilson.

Lynn started at Tarentaal at the beginning of August. She took over the reins from Ulricka Beukman, who has been promoted to village deputy manager.

"I live by the motto – borrowed from Mahatma Gandhi – that 'the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others'," says Lynn.





Spring was certainly in full bloom at Inyoni Creek's festival to welcome the new season. Residents, their families, and those from other Rand Aid retirement villages came together to enjoy a variety of activities and fun stalls, offering everything from plants to books and much more! Pictured are braai masters Clive Cubitt and Stan Brauns.



The Gentlemen Only Ladies Forbidden (GOLF) social group at Inyoni Creek retirement village, along with their partners, turned up the heat with a lively bring-and-share braai on September 23 to celebrate Heritage Day! The evening was filled with sizzling grills, shared stories, and a spirit of camaraderie as members gathered at the clubhouse for a fun-filled night of great food and even better company. Heritage Day couldn't have been celebrated in a more festive way! Pictured are Douglas Garner, Bill Bergman, Clive Cubitt, Derek Dickson, Ron Bartram, Leon Du Preez, Kevin Doherty, Gordon Roberts, Bob Wilmot and Clive O'Connell gathered around the braai. Mel Stamelman took the photo and organised the braai.

RIGHT: Spring Day was celebrated under a bright blue sky at Thembalami Care Centre on September 2. "Residents and staff gathered outside to play games and listen to music – with Elvis Presley's songs being a hit," says occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlomule. Various games, including egg-and-spoon races, were played and staff and residents enjoyed ice lollies. Pictured is Cecilia Rottcher trying to keep her egg safe. Looking on is Shirley Sibeko.



Six years of fun occupational therapy activities in a social environment were celebrated on September 16 when Thornhill Manor's Happy Chatters group turned six. Started by resident Vicky Keenan, the group promotes active bodies and minds. Pictured are Ann Goodfellow, Juliet Mukasa, and Margot Taverner-Smith at the birthday party.



Taking advantage of the lovely sunshine and blue skies on October 18, the residents and staff of the Ron Smith Care Centre were invited to a special tea at the lake. The recreational team whipped up a big batch of strawberry shortcake and served it to the residents and staff who gathered in the beautiful area beside the lake. The peaceful, relaxing morning outdoors contributed to the well-being of all. Pictured are Carol Pieterse and Germinah Baloyi enjoying the fresh air.





September 27, was a day to remember at Inyoni Creek Retirement Village as residents and staff came together for a vibrant Heritage Day braai, filled with fun, food and tradition! “The excitement began at the clubhouse, where the staff donned colourful traditional outfits, bringing the spirit of Heritage Day alive,” says Inyoni Creek manager Jenny Tonkin. “Residents who joined the celebration enjoyed a lively braai, savouring delicious food while sharing laughter and stories,” she adds. But the festivities didn’t end there! In a beautiful blend of Heritage Day and Arbor Day traditions, the team moved to the pool centre for a special moment – planting a lavender tree that was donated by Servest. “With the new footbridge at South Block as the backdrop, staff and Servest came together to plant the tree, symbolising growth, unity, and the deep roots of Inyoni Creek’s community. Pictured are Margaret Machaba, Sylvia Tsebe, Shelda Semanya and Lindiswa Bongweni celebrating in style.

Tarentaal Retirement Village held a fire drill on November 11 to ensure that in the event of an emergency, the necessary safety procedures are in place. “Fire drills at retirement villages are crucial to ensure the safety of residents, especially older individuals who may have limited mobility or require assistance during emergencies,” says village manager Tammy Neilson. She thanked the fire committee for the time and energy they put into fire safety. Pictured are the committee members: Margaret McFadden (fire warden), Karen Fitzwilliam (fire committee chairperson), Charlotte Duncan (fire warden), Conrad Stanley (resident), David Bull (fire warden) and Allan Neilson (fire warden).



On October 11, students from the Beacon of Hope project, aged 15-17, visited Thembalami Care Centre. Esme van der Walt, Thembalami’s manager, and social worker Lara Hurwitz led a discussion on aging and its challenges, aiming to foster empathy and respect among the young people. The students and residents enjoyed a fun-filled afternoon of games, laughter, and shared stories. This annual tradition, initiated by Beacon of Hope Director Bianca Shimkins, has become a cherished event, bridging the generational gap. The students also generously donated soap to the residents. Pictured is Robert Webster playing Snakes and Ladders with one of the learners.



Thembalami brought South Africa’s rich diversity to life in celebration of Heritage Day. The day kicked off with a special documentary screening that took the audience on a journey through all nine provinces, showcasing must-visit destinations, unique cultures, traditional foods, and lively dances from across the country. After the documentary, Thembalami occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlomule and her team, dressed in traditional attire, took centre stage. They explained the significance of their clothing, shared insights into their cultural backgrounds and performed traditional dances. Everyone then tucked into traditional South African food. Pictured are Zanele Marufane (Tswana), Busi Binda (Zulu), Aletta Mnisi (Venda) and Agreement Khoza (Tsonga).



Tarentaal Retirement Village turned up the volume on October 22, throwing a rock and roll bash that took everyone straight back to the swinging 60s! Organised by the village committee, the party had residents dancing to classic hits, with the energy of peace, love, and rock and roll filling the air. Fuelling the fun were tasty chicken wraps and cool Eskimo Pies for dessert, perfect for a night of celebration. Pictured is the Tarentaal village committee: Wendy Laver, Doreen Steyn, Nan Haslehurst (chairperson), Charmaine Datt and Rhoda Heyns. Back: David Picton.



Alice Jardime and Matron Paulina Namoto at Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association’s September birthday bash.

Tarentaal village unveils new service block

Rand Aid Association's Tarentaal Retirement Village recently completed a significant construction project that has greatly enhanced the living experience for both residents and staff.

The new service block, which was constructed between April and September, features a range of modern amenities designed to improve accessibility, comfort, and overall well-being.

The catalyst for this project was the need to address the limitations of the existing facilities. "The old offices were cramped



Lynn Barrow (village social worker) and Ulricka Beukman (deputy village manager) in the new reception.

have a change room with showers and toilets, and a storeroom.

"These upgrades have significantly boosted staff morale and productivity, creating a more positive and inspiring work environment," says Ayanda.

"Residents and staff alike have expressed immense satisfaction with the new facilities. The calming colour scheme chosen for the public areas, combined with the improved accessibility and overall design, has created a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere," says Tammy Neilson, the manager of the village.

The security team has also benefited from the upgrades, with the renovation of their control room and the addition of new ablutions contributing to a more dignified and comfortable working environment.

Tammy expressed her gratitude to the Rand Aid board for their approval of the renovations and their support throughout the construction process.

She also highlighted the positive impact on residents' well-being of the new social worker, who has quickly become a valued member of the Tarentaal village community.



The existing building's interior is gutted in preparation for the make-over.

and difficult to navigate, especially for elderly residents, and lacked adequate privacy. To remedy these issues, the new service block incorporates spacious and aesthetically pleasing areas, including a clinic waiting room, consultation rooms, and a reception area," says Ayanda Matthews, Rand Aid's GM Care and Human Resources.

The new block also includes a staff canteen with change rooms and showers, an admin office with reception, a boardroom, a kitchen, and offices. Servest gardeners now



Thornhill Manor's Alzheimer's awareness initiative has brought joy to Ron Smith Care Centre's River Lodge 3 dementia wing. The village's 'knit and knatter' team donated soft toys to comfort residents, while colourful artificial flowers and new decor will brighten the space. Karen Griessel, Thornhill Manor's social worker, emphasises the positive impact of such initiatives on dementia patients' well-being. Pictured are Mosima Mojela, Karen and Esmeralda Rusike.



Thembalami Care Centre and Max Ordman Deaf Association residents roared with excitement on their recent adventure to the Johannesburg Zoo! Two wild trips, on October 16 and 18, ensured everyone got the chance to join in on the fun. With the occupational therapy team by their side, residents strolled through the zoo, soaking in the sights and sounds of their animal friends. Between safari strolls, they enjoyed snack breaks and a hotdog lunch to recharge. Pictured are residents and staff posing for a photo.