

Rand Aid RAND AID review

Tel: 011 882 2510 or 010 100 3656 Q1 2025 Email: info@randaid.co.za



FLU SHOT DRIVE
AT INYONI CREEK

5



FAREWELL HELEN
AND WELCOME DEBBIE

6 & 7



Thili Madiba, Denise Friederichs, Willem Myburgh and Jenny Evans at one of introductory sessions and pledge-signing ceremonies for The Rand Aid Way.



The Rand Aid Way

It's all heart

Have you seen the colourful hearts around Rand Aid? They symbolise something special: 'The Rand Aid Way'! This exciting initiative is about building a vibrant, supportive community where everyone thrives. Want to be a part of it? Consider taking the HEARTS Pledge and committing to compassion, support and enrichment. Find out all the details and sign your pledge on pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter! Don't miss out on being part of this wonderful journey.

HEARTS Pledge

I,as a staff member / resident of this community, hereby pledge to embrace the principles of the Rand Aid Way and commit to creating a compassionate, supportive, and enriching environment through our HEARTS:

H – Honesty & Humility

I pledge to approach each day with honesty and humility, recognising the value and dignity of every individual. I will be truthful in my words and actions and embrace everyone's humanity, imperfections, and potential for growth.

E – Empathy, Encouragement, & Equality

I pledge that I will show empathy by listening to others and understanding their unique experiences. I commit to offering encouragement, recognising strengths, and to promoting equality so that everyone feels included and valued.

A – Accountability & Assistance

I pledge to be accountable to myself and others. I will take responsibility for my actions and the impact they have on the community. I will assist where needed, creating a spirit of helpfulness and cooperation.

R – Respect

I pledge to show respect in all that I do, honouring each person's individuality, choices, and contributions. I acknowledge that respect is the foundation of trust and a sense of belonging.

T – Trust, Teamwork, & Transparency

I pledge to build trust by being consistent in my communication and actions. I will be a team player and participate in a transparent manner.

S – Safe Space, Support, Self-Worth, & Sensitivity

I pledge to create a safe space by honouring the needs of others, acknowledge one's self-worth with sensitivity while offering support and sharing mutual goals for the betterment of the community.

I will be an active member of the community where everyone feels valued and empowered.

By signing this pledge, I aim to embody and live and work by these principles.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Colour

Reason

BLUE

TRUST, SINCERITY AND CALMNESS

GREEN

GROWTH, HARMONY AND SUPPORT

YELLOW

POSITIVITY, CLARITY AND ENERGY

PURPLE

DIGNITY, WISDOM AND COMPASSION

ORANGE

WARMTH, ENTHUSIASMS AND CONNECTION

RED

CARE, PASSION AND PROTECTION



Let's have a heart-to-heart

Rand Aid Association has officially launched 'The Rand Aid Way', the initiative that was reported on during the second half of 2024.

This campaign extends the relationship-orientated focus and culture that Rand Aid is hopeful will become part of life at all Rand Aid villages and care centres, focusing on creating vibrant and fulfilling environments where residents thrive.

'The Rand Aid Way' emphasises prioritising strong relationships, supporting individual development and empowering residents to actively participate in their community. These core values will shape interactions between staff and residents, fostering a more caring and supportive atmosphere.

Launch events were held at Elphin Lodge and Thornhill Manor retirement villages, as well as Thembalami Care Cen-

tre and SANCA Wedge Gardens treatment centre on February 10 and 13.

Leading up to the launches, colourful hearts were displayed at Rand Aid Association villages and care centres, accompanied by teasers in weekly newsletters and on notice boards, prompting residents to 'come find out why there are coloured hearts all around Rand Aid'.

At each launch, residents and staff were invited to consider and, if comfortable, sign a HEARTS Pledge, committing to the principles of 'The Rand Aid Way'. Parts of the pledge read:

"We, as staff and residents of this community, come together to embrace the principles of the Rand Aid Way and commit to creating a compassionate, supportive and enriching environment through our HEARTS. By embodying these principles, we commit to building a community that enriches lives, uplifts spirits and promotes well-being.

"I will be an active member of the community where everyone feels valued and empowered. By signing this pledge, I aim to embody and live and work by these principles."

The speaker at the events was Willem Myburgh, a Geratec care mentor. After the event, he said it was an 'honour to be part of Rand Aid's continuing journey of growth and improving the lives of elders, which started 13 years ago'.

"The launch of 'The Rand Aid Way' signifies our ongoing commitment to providing exceptional care and fostering a strong sense of community for all its residents," says Rand Aid CEO Gert Coetzee.

For those who were unable to attend and would still like to commit, a copy of the HEARTS Pledge is available at the respective offices. Exciting information-sharing sessions are in the pipeline that will explain more of this journey Rand Aid has embarked on.



Gerald Mills (middle) commits to 'The Rand Aid Way'.



ABOVE LEFT: Sisters-in-arms... Germinah Baloyi and Prudence Sengeoneng.



ABOVE RIGHT: Eugene Atie, Liebe Meyer and Willem Myburgh.
LEFT: Lyndis Harvey and Willem Myburgh.



The launch of 'The Rand Aid Way' signifies our ongoing commitment to providing exceptional care and fostering a strong sense of community for all its residents
— Rand Aid CEO Gert Coetzee

Residents tuck into extended dining options

Residents of Rand Aid's retirement villages enjoy a wide range of dining options thanks to the success of on-site eateries.

These vibrant hubs not only provide convenient meals but also foster a strong sense of community, offering a place for residents and their families to connect. While Rand Aid's in-house catering arm continues to provide balanced and affordable meals, these independent eateries offer a welcome alternative and social setting.

The first to open within the Rand Aid family was Elphino's, situated on the grounds of Elphin Lodge and Ron Smith Care Centre. Run by the warm and welcoming Wanda de Groot and her team, Elphino's has been a beloved fixture since 2012. Wanda says it is more than just a place to grab a coffee; it's a community hub where residents and visitors can connect and create lasting memories.

Zea Fredericks, the driving force behind Good2Go, opened a venue at Inyoni Creek in September 2023 and expanded services during December 2024 to Thornhill Manor. She says her regular diners are like family to her.

"These on-site eateries provide a valuable service to our residents," says Amanda Diener, Rand Aid's GM Commercial and Compliance.

"They offer convenience, choice, and a vital social outlet, contributing significantly to the overall well-being of our community."



Enjoying good food at conversation at Good2Go at Inyoni Creek Clubhouse are Alan and Jackie Klein and Fred and Sheryl Morawitz.

Hours and catering

■ Good2Go is open from Tuesdays to Saturdays, 9am to 2pm, and Sundays from 12pm to 3pm. Deliveries are available on Mondays.

■ Elphino's is open Tuesday to Sunday, 9am to 4pm.

Deliveries are available for less mobile residents, and take-aways are also an option.

■ In addition to their regular service, Elphino's and Good2Go also cater for events in the village halls, from birthday celebrations to memorial services.



Charming decor and delicious meals and treats are on offer at Elphino's.

EVER-POPULAR ELPHINO'S

Elphino's, with its quaint décor, has become a beloved spot for both residents and visitors.

"From the very beginning, I knew that Elphino's was about more than just serving a cup of coffee; it was about building a community," says Wanda. "Elphino's quickly became a meeting place, where people could gather for a chat, enjoy a leisurely breakfast, delicious lunch or indulge in a sweet treat."

Wanda and her team have cultivated a deep understanding of what their customers enjoy, and their extensive menu reflects this personal touch. "From hearty all-day breakfasts to delicious lunches, there's something for everyone. Elphino's is also renowned for its Sunday roasts, featuring lamb, beef or pork."

"Through the years, Elphino's has become a home away from home for many at the Rand Aid villages. It's a place where the warmth of a good cup of coffee is matched only by the warmth of the community that surrounds it," says Wanda.

Nutritious, delicious, convenient

Zea has been delighting residents with an à la carte menu featuring everything from gourmet toasties and burgers to fresh salads and delectable sweet treats.

A daily special offering a balanced meal of protein, carbohydrates and vegetables, provides a nutritious and convenient option. Sundays are particularly special, with a buffet, plated meal or gourmet experience, complete with dessert, on offer.

The flexibility of their menu allows for customisation to meet individual dietary needs, says Zea.

The Inyoni venue, located in the village's scenic waterfront clubhouse, boasts indoor and outdoor seating for approximately 80 people.

Zea's passion for food and community shines through. She reveals that her toasted chicken mayo is a particular favourite amongst residents, praised for its flavour and consistent quality.

Heartwarming Christmas

One of her most cherished memories is catering Christmas lunch at Inyoni last year.

"We were meant to be closed but we had so many requests from people who would have ended up eating egg on toast alone. I could not let that happen, so I planned a meal, expecting limited responses. However, 122 people ended up booking. It was heartwarming to see people chatting and laughing and knowing that I was instrumental in ensuring their Christmas Day was not just another day."

Zea, who previously worked as a group sales manager for Dunlop, finds immense fulfilment in her current role despite having less income.

A resident and regular customer, Dr Everard Polakow, says he is grateful for Good2Go Catering's ongoing efforts and the positive impact they have made on the lives of those in the community. He says their 'kindness, professionalism and thoughtful approach' are appreciated.

Inyoni flu shot blitz: 100 vaccines in a day

One hundred vaccines. That is how many jabs were given by Sr Jana Bezuidenhout on March 27, as residents of Rand Aid's Inyoni Creek retirement village lined up for their flu shots.

In South Africa, flu season usually starts in April, and usually peaks in June.

Health experts suggest that people, especially those with ongoing health conditions like diabetes, lung disease, tuberculosis, heart disease, kidney disease, and obesity, as well as people aged 65 and older, should get the flu vaccine by late March or early April.

It takes about two weeks after getting the flu shot for your body to build up protection. While it's best to get vaccinated before the flu season begins, getting it later can still protect you for the rest of the season.

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases advises that you seek medical treatment if flu symptoms don't improve within three to seven days, or if they worsen during that time. People who are very sick with the flu might need to go to the hospital.

"Those at higher risk of serious flu complications should seek medical help sooner rather than later," says Sr Jana.



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It is not too late to get vaccinated

Kevin Doherty, Merle and Roger Matthews, Sr Jana Bezuidenhout, Len Webb, Val Aarons (sitting) and Yvonne Webb during Inyoni Creek's vaccine drive.

Isobel Kohll turns 102: A century of grace and resilience

Isobel Kohll, who turned 102 on November 13, continues to keep fellow Scrabble players on their toes.

Isobel was a resident of Rand Aid's Elphin Lodge retirement village for more than 21 years, before relocating in March to Ron Smith Care Centre, which is situated on the same expansive property.

It was at the complex's coffee shop, Elphino's, that she celebrated her birthday in the company of loved ones.

Born in Boksburg North in 1922, Isobel has witnessed a century of extraordinary change, from party lines to smart-phones and no after-hours retail to 24-hour convenience.

She married Raymond in 1947 and they embarked on a journey that took them to Zimbabwe and back to South Africa. The couple had two sons, Malcolm and Jeffrey. Interestingly, Isobel's sister, Joyce, married Raymond's brother, Edgar.

Multi-talented

Isobel's passions have extended beyond family and friends. She was a talented actress and dancer, and a dedicated teacher of speech and drama. Her love for the arts has enriched the lives of countless individuals.

As Isobel always wanted to travel, she worked at a travel agency to benefit from discounted tickets and travelled to many places around the world.

She took up painting in her 90s and is a formidable Scrabble player.

Even in her advanced years, Isobel's wisdom and kindness continue to shine. She encourages younger generations to embrace tolerance and compassion. Her advice: "Always be kind and understanding and find the good in people."



Isobel Kohll.

**Thornhill Manor homes available:
Join the Rand Aid family**

Thornhill Manor has **two and three-bedroom homes** available on a life rights basis. All units feature two walk-in showers. Those interested in viewing the units and the village can contact Jackie Scott at 011 608 2480 or via email at jscott@randaid.co.za



COMINGS & GOINGS

Administrative clerk's inspirational journey to deputy village manager

Hlumela Anderson's career at Rand Aid has been nothing short of inspiring.

Beginning as an administrative clerk at SANCA Wedge Gardens and now stepping into the role of deputy manager at Elphin Lodge, her journey is a testament to dedication and growth.

As she transitions into this new position, she reflects on the valuable lessons she has learnt and her aspirations for the future.

Having spent 13 years at SANCA Wedge Gardens, Hlumela has gained profound insights into human nature.

"I have learnt that people share basic needs – the need to belong, to be accepted, to be loved and to be heard," she says.

This understanding will guide her approach at Elphin Lodge retirement village, where she plans to foster a compassionate and supportive environment for residents and staff.

Major transition

Elphin Lodge presents a different setting from SANCA Wedge Gardens, shifting from a therapeutic rehabilitation environment to a retirement village.

Despite the differences, Hlumela is eager to embrace this change.

"I look forward to learning from the staff and residents," she says.

"I also want to deepen my knowledge about dementia and its impact on the daily lives of residents."

Hlumela's academic background and her completion of the Humanitas course have reinforced her belief in a holistic approach to well-being.

"People often just need someone to listen to them," she explains. "My studies have equipped me to recognise when someone needs a safe space to express themselves and when a simple, casual conversation can brighten their day."

This philosophy will be central to her work at Elphin Lodge, ensuring that residents and staff feel valued and heard.

Priorities as deputy manager

As she takes on her new role, Hlumela's primary focus is on employee well-being.

"I believe that happy employees provide high-quality care, and when staff are ful-



Hlumela Anderson.

filled, residents will benefit too."

By fostering a positive and supportive work environment, she hopes to enhance the overall quality of life at Elphin Lodge.

Beyond her professional achievements, Hlumela is a devoted wife and mother.

She lives in Kew with her husband of 13 years, and together, they are raising two sons, aged 18 and 8.

In her free time, she enjoys watching live performances, theatre plays, and bird-watching – passions that bring balance and joy to her life.

As Hlumela embarks on this new chapter at Elphin Lodge, her compassion, dedication and commitment to holistic care will undoubtedly make a lasting impact on the community.

Farewell SANCA Wedge Gardens

It was with both pride and a touch of sadness that SANCA Wedge Gardens bid farewell to Hlumela, whose dedication and compassion left an indelible mark on the substance use treatment centre.

Hlumela's career at Wedge Gardens began in 2011 as an administrative clerk, where she adeptly managed medical aid claims and accounts. But her true calling lay in helping others, and she pursued it with unwavering determination – first excelling as a top graduate in social auxiliary work, then earning her BA in Psychology cum laude.

Her commitment to holistic care led her to further qualify as a wellness counsellor through the esteemed Humanitas course last year.

Helen retires after dedicated 32-year career

Helen Petrie, the much-loved manager of Elphin Lodge, retired at the end of January.

Her remarkable journey with Rand Aid began in 1993, and her dedicated service over the years has left an indelible mark on the organisation and its residents.

Helen's career at Rand Aid started humbly as an admin clerk, a role she diligently fulfilled for 12 years.

In 2005, she was promoted to deputy manager of Elphin Lodge Retirement Village, and by 2008, she took on the position of complex manager.

For the past 17 years, she has led with vision and compassion, overseeing significant growth and change within the community, while often out in the gardens interacting with residents and ensuring that they felt at home.

Milestones and memories

Reflecting on her time at Rand Aid, Helen recalls many memorable moments.

"I witnessed the change and growth of the entire complex. Phase 4 was built and occupied, the Ron Smith Care Centre was extended to include River Lodge 3 and Woodlands block, and the clubhouse was constructed."

One of Helen's proudest accomplishments is embracing and implementing the Eden Alternative philosophy in 2012. This shift moved the community away from a formal, institutional approach to a more relaxed, person-centred environment.

"Our goal was to create a life worth living in our community," she explains. This change has profoundly impacted the culture at Elphin Lodge, fostering a warm and welcoming atmosphere for residents and staff alike.

Over the years, Helen has observed how the needs and expectations of residents have evolved.

Initially, home-based care was not an option, but as attitudes shifted, this became a viable and preferred choice for many.

"Aging in their home rather than frail care is a choice many residents and their families are now allowed to make," she notes. This flexibility has enhanced the quality of life for many within the community.

CONTINUED ON PG 7

COMINGS & GOINGS



Barry Tedder, Helen Petrie and Debbie Beech.

DEBBIE STEPS INTO NEW ROLE – THE RAND AID WAY

Debbie Beech's journey with Rand Aid has been one of dedication, growth and passion.

Recently promoted to the position of manager of Elphin Lodge retirement village, Debbie started her inspiring journey with the NPO as a social worker.

Her commitment to improving elders' lives and incorporating the Eden Alternative ethos into the village has made a lasting impact.

Debbie's interest in working with elders began during her tenure as regional manager at Alzheimer's SA.

"It was never a field I consciously thought about working in, but I discovered that I absolutely love it," she shares.

"I love hearing people's stories and life experiences; the older generation is so interesting, and we can learn so much from them. There is a saying: 'When an old person dies, you lose a library'. There is a lot of truth to that."

Career growth at Rand Aid

Debbie joined Rand Aid in February 2019 as a social worker for Elphin Lodge and Ron Smith Care Centre (RSCC).

Her dedication and expertise led to her promotion to deputy manager of Elphin Lodge in 2022. On February 1 – Debbie's sixth anniversary with Rand Aid – she stepped into her current role as manager of Elphin Lodge.

One of Debbie's key focus areas is embedding the Rand Aid Way philosophy into Elphin Lodge.

"The Eden ethos is well established at RSCC and has been rebranded and launched in Rand Aid's retirement villages," she explains. "The Hearts initiative and pledge provide a practical way for residents and

staff to understand the Eden Alternative, as it often feels quite abstract."

She believes her background in social work plays a vital role in her management approach. "My experience has taught me important people skills, especially empathy and the ability to view situations holistically," she says. Her previous work in prisons and addiction recovery has also equipped her with the ability to stay calm in a crisis and think on her feet.

Debbie's expertise in dementia care began unexpectedly when she joined Alzheimer's SA with no prior knowledge of the condition.

"I have always been fascinated by how the brain works, having worked in psychiatric hospitals for many years," she says.

Over the years, she has conducted training in numerous retirement homes and frail care facilities, advised on dementia-friendly spaces, and spoken on various media platforms, including TV and radio.

In 2018, she represented South Africa at the Alzheimer's Disease International University in London, where she contributed to discussions on developing a national dementia plan.

As for the future, Debbie is looking forward to engaging with new residents, helping them transition into village life, and spearheading projects that encourage meaningful engagement.

Beyond her professional achievements, Debbie enjoys a fulfilling personal life.

She lives in Edenvale with her daughter and maintains close relationships with her two stepsons.

Her parents, both 90, are a source of great pride, and her older brother resides in Swaziland with his family.

In her free time, she enjoys reading, socialising with friends, walking, watching TV, rugby and going out dancing.

Helen puts her money where her mouth is

CONTINUED FROM PG 6

Helen's work has been deeply influenced by Rand Aid's mission and values.

"Helping to create a special retirement village affects how you see the world of seniors," she shares.

The community she has helped build is one where residents feel a sense of belonging, staff are secure in their roles, and everyone works together to create a vibrant, supportive environment.

As Helen enters retirement, she and her husband Charles are excited about the possibilities ahead.

"For the first time in many, many years, we have options open to us," she says. However, she has no immediate plans and looks forward to this new chapter with anticipation.

To the residents, staff and board of Rand Aid, Helen offers heartfelt thanks.

"Thank you for your support throughout my working life here. It's always been nice going on leave, and it's even nicer coming back!" she says with a smile.

She emphasises the importance of caring for older adults, highlighting Rand Aid's stellar reputation for warmth and kindness. "False perceptions about retirement living need to be overcome. Moving to Elphin Lodge is a positive, happy event, not a sad portal to old age."

As she prepared to leave her managerial role, Helen had one last personal note: "I've put my money where my mouth is, and our name is on Elphin Lodge's waiting list for 'one day'."

Helen's legacy at Elphin Lodge is one of transformation, compassion and unwavering dedication.

Her impact will be felt for years to come, and her presence will be missed by all who had the privilege of working with and knowing her.

COMINGS & GOINGS

INYONI CREEK SOCIAL WORKER: CHAMPIONING FULFILLING LIVES

Michelle Matsolo, Inyoni Creek's new social worker, brings a wealth of experience and passion to this role, with a focus on empowering residents of the retirement village and improving their quality of life.

Michelle's journey into social work was inspired by a desire to make a positive impact on the world. She has a particular interest in working with older adults, having witnessed the challenges they face in healthcare settings.

"Every individual deserves the opportunity to grow and develop, and I am passionate about fostering an environment where this is possible. Through encouragement and support, I strive to empower others to realise their potential and navigate their paths toward a fulfilling life," she says.

Safe space for self-actualisation

As a social worker at Inyoni Creek, Michelle will be working to address the unique challenges faced by older adults in retirement villages. This includes loneliness, isolation, loss of purpose, grief, and adapting to a changing world. She aims to create a supportive environment where residents can thrive and feel connected to their community.

"My role is to promote mental health and well-being, promote empowerment to enable older persons to live a life with dignity and to offer a safe space for self-actualisation."

Capabilities of older people recognised

While working in healthcare, Michelle observed that many physical rehabilitation hospitals and step-down facilities overlooked the potential for older adults to live fulfilling lives. "It became painfully clear that the approach taken towards these individuals was often vastly different to that of younger patients. For instance, I frequently heard comments like, 'She is 88 years old; she should just get a carer and go home'. Such statements reflected a pervasive mindset that marginalised older adults, reducing their potential for recovery and reintegration into their lives."

This experience ignited a passion in Michelle to advocate for a more compassionate and holistic approach, one that recognises the capabilities of older adults and actively supports their journey back to a fulfilling life.

Michelle is currently pursuing a master's degree in social work healthcare at the University of Pretoria.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY, BONISWA

A warm welcome to Boniswa Sithole, who joined Elphin Lodge retirement village as its new accounts clerk on February 17. While she has only been in her new role a short time, Boniswa says she loves the warm environment and Elphin Lodge's people. "The beautiful landscape is an instant mood enhancer and a positive contribution to my mental health. "Everyone is friendly and we are all a family," she says.



Michelle Matsolo, Inyoni Creek's new social worker.



Who knew you could get so creative with pool noodles? This is exactly what Vicky Keenan, a Thornhill Manor resident and retired occupational therapist, did when she created games from pool noodles for the retirement village's Happy Chatters group. The games improve residents' hand-eye and hand-eye-foot co-ordination. Pictured is Ann Goodfellow taking aim with her pool noodle.

A game a day keeps the doctor away

The Happy Chatters from Thornhill Manor Retirement Village kicked off the new year with a day full of fun, games and camaraderie.

Karen Griesel, Thornhill Manor's social worker, explained that as we age, hand-eye co-ordination often decreases.

"Reflexes, speed and accuracy tend to decline, possibly due to vision changes, health issues or shifts in brain wiring."

But while the Happy Chatters enjoyed their lively games and shared plenty of laughs, these activities served a deeper purpose too – helping to maintain vital skills for daily living.

"Hand-eye co-ordination is essential for independence because it relies on the information your eyes take in and how your brain directs your arms and hands," Karen explains.

Residents took part in games like floor darts, bowling and shuttlecock toss, all of which involve catching and throwing exercises that strengthen reactive balance.

"Reactive balance – the ability to maintain stability when faced with unexpected challenges – is key. It allows us to counteract external forces that could throw us off balance," says Karen.

She says that timely balance reactions, such as reactive stepping, are critical for preventing falls.



Marina Sartor focuses on knocking down the skittles, assisted by caregiver Margareth Magodi.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Gentlemen on the hunt



The Gentlemen Only Ladies Forbidden (GOLF) social group at Rand Aid's Inyoni Creek retirement village enjoyed a hunting and conservation presentation by Leon du Preez on March 10. The presentation, supported by an excellent array of kit, samples of dung and other items, was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Blooming good show



The Ron Smith Care Centre's recreation team hosted a delightful flower-arranging party on January 17, bringing joy and creativity to residents. Held at the care centre's recreation centre, the event featured a vibrant assortment of flowers and greenery, with florist Lauri Kruger on hand to assist the residents. Debbie Christen, the care centre's outgoing recreational and training services facilitator, says the activity evoked fond memories for many residents of gardening in years past, reconnecting them with the joy of tending to their plants and flowers. Pictured, from the top, clockwise: Carol Murphy, Elizabeth Marshall, Helmut Gschnaidtner and Doreen Woodward.

Singer Ruan touches hearts



Thembalami and the Max Ordman Deaf Association residents and staff celebrated their January birthdays with a joint party. The celebration was enlivened by the performance of Ruan Tennant, a talented singer who captivated the audience with his diverse repertoire and engaging stage presence. The monthly birthday parties are hosted to celebrate the birthdays of residents and staff, fostering a sense of community and creating opportunities for joy and social interaction. Pictured is Alice Jardim and Ruan.



Happy smiles from Simoné Botha and Irving Aremband as he reveals his 'double happiness' card.

Cultural journey: Ron Smith celebrates Chinese New Year

The recreation team at Ron Smith Care Centre hosted a vibrant Chinese New Year celebration on February 7, immersing residents in the rich traditions and customs of this special occasion.

As residents entered the recreation centre, they were greeted by the lively sounds of traditional Chinese music and stunning decorations – including Chinese calligraphy on the walls, elegant fans, lanterns and red-and-gold floral centrepieces.

Chinese New Year is a major festival celebrated by Chinese communities worldwide, typically lasting 15 days. This year, festivities began on January 29 and concluded with the Lantern Festival on February 12.

Marking the Year of the Snake, 2025 continues the 12-year cycle of the Chinese Zodiac, where each year is linked to an animal sign believed to influence personality traits.

"Residents and staff had fun consulting a zodiac chart to find their Chinese animal sign," says Debbie Christen, the care centre's outgoing recreational and training services facilitator. "It sparked lots of conversations, with residents sharing their birth years and laughing over the personality traits associated with their signs."

Adding to the festive spirit, each guest picked a card featuring a Chinese character representing qualities like love, wisdom, happiness and peace. Two lucky guests who drew the 'double happiness' symbol won special prizes.

The celebration continued with an exciting chopstick-and-popcorn competition. "This was a fantastic activity that engaged the brain, encouraged fine motor skills, and, most importantly, brought plenty of laughter and cheers," says Debbie. Carol Murphy claimed victory in the resident category with an impressive 80 popcorn kernels, while special carer Letwin Mahlengwe won among staff with a score of 72. "It was wonderful to see how delighted residents were when they successfully used chopsticks – it gave them a real sense of accomplishment," she adds.

Following the games, everyone enjoyed freshly made chicken and vegetable spring rolls, served with sweet chilli sauce, alongside a choice of jasmine tea, Five Roses or coffee. The spring rolls were a hit, offering a welcome change from the usual menu.

For Chinese residents George Lai and Josephine Kew, the celebration was especially meaningful. "It was a joy to share this part of our culture with everyone."

VALENTINE'S DAY

Sundowner dinner a blaze of red

Thornhill Manor Retirement Village residents celebrated Valentine's Day a little early this year with a special Sundowner dinner held on February 12.

The village hall was transformed for the occasion, with decorations creating a romantic atmosphere. Residents embraced the theme, dressing in festive red and white attire.

"The décor ladies did a wonderful job making the hall look beautiful," says Jackie Scott, deputy manager at Thornhill Manor. "It added to the ambience of the evening."

The evening proved a resounding success, enjoyed by all in attendance.



Ursula Kaminske, Bernadette Hunkeler and Olwin Kustner rock their red outfits.



Movie and music magic

Love was in the air at Thembalami Care Centre and Max Ordman Deaf Association as residents kicked back for a Valentine's Day movie, complete with delicious popcorn! After the film, they indulged in scrumptious muffins and refreshing juice – because what's a celebration without a little sweetness? The cherry on top? A magical musical performance by Ian Nel and Berenice Crause had everyone smiling. It was a day full of love, laughter and unforgettable moments! Pictured are Errol and Merle Townsend, Tsakani Shihlomule and Elize Raath.



Clifford and Hester Impey enjoying a cuppa.

Laughter and shopping: Tarentaal Valentine's Day market a big hit

Tarentaal Retirement Village embraced the spirit of love with a lively Valentine's Day morning market, filled with fun, food and fantastic finds!

From samosas and sweet treats to stylish shoes, handbags and clothing, there was something for everyone. Shoppers also browsed White Elephant treasures and skincare goodies while enjoying freshly baked scones, toasted sandwiches and flapjacks – all in support of the residents' fund.

Residents from all of Rand Aid's retirement villages were welcome to join the festivities, which saw many people donning red and white to set the perfect Valentine's mood.

"This brought the hall to life," said Tarentaal's manager, Tammy Neilson. "The market was a huge success and thoroughly enjoyed by all."



Love was in the air at Inyoni Creek

On February 13, Inyoni Creek residents embraced the spirit of love with a delightful Valentine's tea! A total of 56 residents gathered for a morning of sweet treats, laughter and beautiful piano melodies by Carmel Borland. The atmosphere was warm, the company was wonderful and the joy was contagious. Pictured are Lorraine Pintusewitz, Iris Clark, Syliva Nelson (standing) and Sally Lamb wearing red and white.

Uplifting day for Thembalami Care Centre's Ibis wing residents

Thembalami Care Centre recently hosted a heartwarming Forget-Me-Not event, specifically designed for their Ibis wing residents living with dementia.

The recreation and nursing teams collaborated to create a beautiful and engaging activity day, focusing on providing joy and stimulation for the residents.

The event featured a variety of activities, including:

■ **Ball games:** Fun and interactive games to promote physical activity and cognitive engagement.

■ **Muffin icing:** A hands-on activity that allowed residents to express their creativity and enjoy a delicious treat.

■ **Hand printing:** A meaningful activity where residents' handprints were framed alongside their pictures and names to create a cherished memory board.

"By organising such events, we aim to enhance the quality of life for individuals living with dementia and create lasting memories," says Thembalami occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlomule.



Thoko Chonco and Patricia Maki play a colour-coding game.



Kevin Doherty, Clive Cubitt and Ron and Val Bartram.

Street braai reignites friendships

Inyoni Creek's street braai on February 6 was a feast to remember!

Organised by residents Clive and Jenny Cubitt, with generous support from Shelley and Steve Sherwood and the Street crew, the event was set up in a double parking bay – only to be swiftly relocated to Iris Clark's garage when the rain rolled in.

Despite the weather, spirits remained high.

Resident Mel Stamelman called the braai a smashing success, with everyone savouring the good food and great company.

Inyoni Creek manager Jenny Tonkin echoed the sentiment, saying it was the perfect way to unwind and connect with the community.



Clinton du Preez, Mel Stamelman and Fransie du Preez.



Thembalami and MODA residents on their arrival at the park.

Nature outing and picnic lifts spirits

Modderfontein Bird and Sculpture Park provided a refreshing outing for residents of Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) on March 12. The trip, which included a picnic by the dam, proved to be a delightful experience for all involved.

"It was wonderful to see everyone enjoying the fresh air and sunshine," says Peggy Kupa, a recreational therapy assistant at Thembalami. "The residents were fascinated by the various sculptures, and some even got quite competitive with a game of dominoes."

Enriching environment

The day was filled with activities, including bird watching and enjoying the scenic views of the dam and willow trees.

"The park is home to a variety of birdlife, including ducks and geese, creating a truly picturesque and enriching environment for our residents," says Shirley Sibeko, recreational assistant.

The residents were treated to hot dogs, refreshing drinks and snacks, all enjoyed in the shade of the park's picnic spots.

"The smiles on their faces said it all," Shirley adds. "It was an energising outing, and everyone appreciated the chance to connect with nature."



The residents and staff of Ron Smith Care Centre took a short flight to the recreation centre to enjoy some of the **wonderful traditions and culture of Scotland** on March 14. The centre was decorated with tartan bunting, purple Scottish thistles on the tables and pictures of Scotland on the walls, while Scottish dance music played in the background. Those present enjoyed learning about Scotland and being taken back in time to their previous trips to Scotland. Residents Charles Power and Irvine Sinnet did a reading of the poem: *A Red, Red Rose* by Robert Burns. Pictured are Beauty Buthelezi and Berenice Jawitz.

Thembalami's Shirley Sibeko (recreational assistant), with residents Inge Karle and Carol Schneider, Tsakani Shihlomule (occupational therapist), and a Spur employee.



Wheelchair-bound pair get out and about

Thembalami Care Centre's recreation department has launched a new initiative to enhance the quality of life for residents experiencing mobility challenges.

These time-out sessions are designed to provide residents with opportunities to engage in social activities and enjoy outings, even if they are unable to shop independently.

Towards the end of last year, residents Carol Schneider and Inge Karle were treated to a special outing, accompanied by Thembalami occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlomule and assistant Shirley Sibeko. Carol indulged in a beauty session at Dis-Chem Pharmacy while Inge happily browsed at Pick n Pay and Dis-Chem. The four ladies then enjoyed a snack at Spur.

"These time-out sessions are invaluable for our residents," says Tsakani. "They provide a much-needed break from their daily routines and allow them to socialise and feel valued."

Thembalami Care Centre is committed to providing comprehensive care and support to its residents. By organising these time-out sessions, the centre aims to promote mental well-being and enrich the lives of its less-mobile residents.

Glasses raised to honour Rand Aid's valued social workers

Social workers play a crucial role in Rand Aid's retirement villages, care centres and substance use treatment centre, providing essential psychosocial support. To honour the work they do, a champagne breakfast was organised on World Social Work Day on March 18.

"Social workers help individuals navigate emotional challenges such as grief, loneliness and major life transitions, offering counselling and crisis intervention when needed," says Ayanda Matthews, Rand Aid's GM: Care and Human Resources. Amanda Diener, GM: Commercial and Compliance, acknowledges the evolving role of social workers, particularly where families are geographically distant. "In many cases," Amanda explains, "social workers effectively become the 'next-of-kin' for residents, providing essential support when loved ones cannot be present."

Rand Aid's social workers prioritise providing vital psycho-social support to residents in need of their services. Recognising the feelings of isolation and challenges of declining health among some residents, they proactively conduct care visits, ensuring no one is overlooked.

Present at the breakfast held at Inyoni Creek's clubhouse were Rand Aid's many social workers – some who work in the field and others who have been promoted to managerial positions.

"Social work is more than a job. It is a mission, a never-ending attempt to end the misfortune in the world," says Karen Griessel, the social worker at Thornhill Manor retirement village, one of Rand Aid's four retirement villages.

She says the morning was invigorating, enabling colleagues to mingle, something they don't often get to do.

Elize Raath, the deputy manager of Thembalami Care Centre, took the lead in organising the event.

■ Read what the Rand Aid social workers have to say about their work. Visit www.randaid.co.za. Click on 'blog' and scroll to find the article 'Unsung heroes: The vital role of social workers'



Rand Aid's social workers and managers who are qualified social workers: Michelle Matsolo (Inyoni Creek social worker), Adèl Grobbelaar (SANCA Wedge Gardens manager), Lynn-Marie Barrow (Tarentaal social worker), Debbie Beech (Elphin Lodge manager), Elize Raath (Thembalami deputy manager), Lara Hurwitz (Thembalami social worker), Laetitia Goosen (SANCA Wedge Gardens social worker), Ulricka Beukman (Tarentaal deputy manager), and Amanda van Staden (SANCA Wedge Gardens social worker). Front: Shaun Victor (Thornhill Manor manager) and Karen Griessel (Thornhill Manor).