

THEMBALAMI & MODA

CARE CENTRE



Place of hope

APRIL 2025

Picnic in the park

Mavis Knight, Cecilia Röttcher (MODA), Hansie Griessel (MODA), Donald Cochrane (front), Sidney le Sueur (MODA), Theunis de Bruin, Alexander Hayes, Mario Agostinho, and Peggy Kupa with Jane Schwikkard (MODA).

Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) residents enjoyed an excursion to Modderfontein Bird and Sculpture Park on March 12.

Their day, featuring a tranquil picnic beside the shimmering dam, offered a welcome change of scenery and a wealth of sensory experiences. "Witnessing the pure joy of everyone immersed in the open air and radiant sunlight was truly heartwarming," shares Peggy Kupa, an occupational therapy assistant at Thembalami. "The artistic creations sparked much curiosity, and a lively dominoes match added a touch of friendly rivalry."

The park provided a tapestry of activities, from bird watching to simply appreciating the serene landscape of the dam and its graceful willow trees. "The beautiful surroundings left the residents feeling refreshed," says Shirley Sibeko, recreational assistant.

The residents savoured hot dogs, cool beverages, and tasty treats, all enjoyed at picnic tables.

"The sheer happiness reflected in their expressions spoke volumes," Shirley concluded. "It was a revitalising outing, and the opportunity to reconnect with the natural world was valued by all."

Thembalami's dam was almost empty before the wonderful rains in late February and March. The dam not only provides a beautiful backdrop to the centre's expansive gardens, but also a temporary home to the geese that raise their babies there each year. Feeding the ducks is a special delight for the residents.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Residents:

01 Edward van Dyk	83
03 Elizabeth Walton	80
05 Jeanette Coode	84
06 Doreen Calder	99
06 Themba Dladla	66
06 Louise Cooper	85
09 Hansie Griessel	76
12 Edward Abrams	77
14 Nellie l'ons	87
14 Sydney Le Sueur	75
15 Rina Meyers	94
17 Megan Brooke-Norris	85
18 Philippe Michailidis-Coutoupes	82
18 Tommy Woest	76
27 Pierre Badenhorst	84

Staff:

02 Elizabeth Mamabolo
03 Jane Msibi
05 Mashudu Nemukula
16 Poppy Maile
17 Jobson Nkuna
24 Tsakani Shihlomule
25 Elizabeth Binda
27 Benson Manganye
30 Rumbie Chatikobo

SNIPPETS

WELCOME TO:

Ria van der Westhuizen
Eunice de Jager
Hilda Pienaar

REST IN PEACE:

Shirley Abrams

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 12: Family Day (curry and rice on sale)
April 16: Birthday Bash

DONATIONS

We would appreciate any donations or fundraising ideas. Should you wish to chat with Thembalami's manager Esme van der Walt about your ideas, contact her at:

Email: evanderwalt@randaid.co.za
Phone: 010 534 8771

Should you wish to make a once-off or regular donation:

MODA

Standard Bank
Account no: 420279571
Branch code: 051001
Reference: MODA Supts Fund

Thembalami Care Centre

c/o Rand Aid Association
Standard Bank, Greenstone
Branch code: 051001
Acc no: 001788701
Reference: TH Supts Fund



HOME-GROWN GOODNESS: Garden maestro Amon Maluleke's vegetable garden provides a good serving of healthy produce. Thembalami deputy manager Elize Raath says his Hubbard squash and white-skinned boer pumpkin taste 'better than what you get from the shops'.



ABOVE LEFT: Terence Green shows his birthday spirit by wearing a festive hat.

ABOVE RIGHT: Patricia Maki with her gift parcel.

Pan flute and song: A gift of music at birthday bash

Ryan Walt's pan flute playing charmed the residents and staff of Thembalami and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) at the care centre's monthly birthday bash on March 19.

The lives of those residents with a birthday in March were celebrated through music, good food and the company of others.

Joining Ryan as the day's sponsored entertainers was his brother, singer Steve Sterling. Both are known for their stage presence and beautiful performances.

"Unfortunately, Joan Keylock, who turned 97 in March, was unable to attend the function because of ill health," says Thembalami deputy manager Elize Raath.

The youngest birthday 'boy' was Stuart Brown, who turned 66 in March, and the only MODA resident with a birthday in the month was Shaun White, who turned 69.

"Every song the brothers performed was heavenly, uplifting the residents' spirits and sparking happy smiles and increased interaction," says Elize.



ABOVE LEFT: Steven Sterling and brother Ryan Walt delight the audience.

ABOVE RIGHT: Roslyn Cronin with her gift.

Social workers celebrated for essential support

This World Social Work Day, celebrated on 18 March, Rand Aid paid tribute to its social workers, who play a crucial role in the organisation's retirement villages, care centres and substance use treatment centre, providing essential psychosocial support.

The association's many social workers – some who work in the field and others who have been promoted to managerial positions – gathered for a breakfast on March 18, World Social Work Day, to honour this important career.

Ayanda Matthews, Rand Aid's GM of Care and Human Resources, says that social workers help individuals navigate emotional challenges such as grief, loneliness and major life transitions, offering counselling and crisis intervention when needed.

Surrogate family members

As South Africa experiences a significant outflow of its younger population, a quiet crisis unfolds: The leaving behind of elderly parents. "With their children seeking opportunities abroad, many seniors are left behind, facing loneliness and vulnerability. Into this void step dedicated social

workers. They become more than just service providers; they become surrogate family members, offering not only practical assistance but also the essential human connection," says Ayanda.

While Lara Hurwitz is the Thembalami and Max Ordman Deaf Association social worker, the centre's deputy manager Elize Raath is also a professionally trained and experienced social worker.

I just called to say I love you

Elize agrees that one of the challenges some Thembalami residents face is loneliness because their families live far away.

"However, the ability to phone family members via tablets helps significantly. Some residents have set times to speak with their loved ones, and it's heartwarming to see how these conversations lift their spirits and bring them joy," she adds.

Elize took the lead in organising the special breakfast, which was held at Inyoni Creek retirement village's clubhouse. She and Lara put together personalised goodie bags for their colleagues.

A MOVING TESTIMONIAL

In celebration of the awareness day, Elize was asked to share her insights into the work done by the Thembalami social work department:

She shared the story of a Thembalami resident who, as a result of a stroke, was wheelchair-bound, incontinent and depressed. He also lacked self-esteem and was dependent on the care centre's social workers and care staff.

The team began passive exercises and gradually encouraged him to walk short distances, with a carer placing a wheelchair further away to motivate him. He gained confidence, and with help from a physiotherapist, the carers learnt exercises to aid his recovery. The social workers provided emotional support throughout.

With encouragement, he reconciled with his ex-wife and son, leading to improved health. He stopped wearing incontinent wear, began walking, and moved out of frail care, says Elize.

A life transformed

He visited his ex-wife on weekends and even travelled to Greece with his family, sending photos of his happy holiday. He became a much-loved, witty gentleman before passing away from prostate cancer at Thembalami.

"It was so rewarding to witness his transformation from a fragile man to a vibrant one, with a renewed purpose," says Elize.

"We cheered for him as he reached each milestone. For me, it was the wonder of seeing how he transformed into a vibrant man who wanted to live again."



Thembalami Care Centre deputy manager Elize Raath - a qualified social worker, and Lara Hurwitz, the centre's long-time social worker.

A poem that says it all...

Adèl Grobbelaar, the manager of Rand Aid's SANCA Wedge Gardens, shared this poem:

Being a social worker means ... (author unknown)

You will never be bored.
You will always be frustrated.
You will always be surrounded by challenges.
So much to do and so little time.
You will carry immense responsibility
and very little authority.
You will step into people's lives
and you

will make a difference.
Some will bless you.
Some will curse you.
You will see people at their worst
and their best.
You will never cease to be amazed
at people's capacity for
love, courage, and endurance.
You will see life begin and end.
You will experience resounding
triumphs
and devastating failures.
You will cry a lot.
You will laugh a lot.
You will know what it is to be human
and to be humane.

*A heartfelt
thank you to each
social worker who gets up
every day to fight the good
fight - Karen Griessel,
Thoruhill Manor
social worker*