

# Rand Aid review

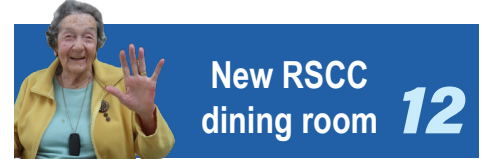
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## WAGGING TAILS, WARM HEARTS AT THEMBALAMI

The residents of Thembalami Care Centre enjoyed a morning of warm companionship on March 11, when a special visit from the Paws 4 U therapy dogs brought a wave of joy. The therapeutic power of animals was on full display as they engaged with their four-legged visitors, both in communal outdoor areas and during more personal room visits. The gentle nature of the furry visitors ensured that every resident could experience the simple, profound comfort of a dog's company. These visits are a vital part of the holistic care provided at the centre, as interaction with therapy animals is known to help reduce feelings of loneliness and encourage social engagement among seniors. Pictured is Roslyn Cronin with Chase.



# New Supportive Services division helps residents age in place safely

Rand Aid has launched a new division – Supportive Services – aimed at providing high-quality home-based care for its residents. The move follows a board resolution in February 2026 and is part of the organisation's broader Supportive Living vision.

Sister Jana Bezuidenhout, who joined Rand Aid in 2019 and has served as village sister at both Tarentaal and Inyoni Creek, will head up the division from Rand Aid's head office.

Supportive Services will offer internal home-based care to residents living in independent units. While the structure of care remains largely the same as that provided by private carers, the new model focuses on oversight, quality management and legal compliance. Carers will be fully trained, vetted and supervised, with regular check-ins and documented care plans to ensure residents' needs are consistently met.

"The internal supportive living care model provides an additional layer of protection through formal oversight, accountability, and clear operational policies," says Jana. "Residents and families will have a clear point of contact within the organisation should any concerns arise, allowing issues to be addressed promptly. This structured approach helps reduce the risk of misunderstandings, boundary issues or potential exploitation that can sometimes occur in informal or privately arranged care situations."

Ayanda Matthews, Rand Aid's GM of care and human resources, emphasises that the model also supports ageing in place. "Moving is very traumatic, especially for the elderly," she says. "With our continuous monitoring and involvement of family members, residents can remain in familiar surroundings for as long as possible. Acute conditions are managed promptly and complications averted, ensuring both residents and carers are protected."

The new division reflects Rand Aid's commitment to the well-being of its residents while providing families with peace of mind. By keeping residents in their units longer, the Supportive Living division promotes continuity of care and allows the organisation to adjust support as residents' needs change.



RIGHT: Sister Jana Bezuidenhout.

## Board approves solar approach for retirement villages

The Rand Aid board has approved a plan to expand the use of solar power at its independent life-right villages following frequent electricity interruptions over the past year.

Residents at Elphin Lodge, Inyoni Creek and Thornhill Manor will now be compensated for the value of solar systems installed at their units.

When a life-right unit is sold and already has a solar installation, a surcharge will be added to the selling price, and the departing resident will receive compensation based on the depreciated value of the system. Solar installations will be depreciated over seven years.

Rand Aid CEO Gert Coetzee says the aim is to encourage residents to invest in solar while ensuring fairness when units change hands.

In addition, when vacant units are refurbished for new residents, a basic solar system will be installed as part of the upgrade. The proposed system

includes eight solar panels, a 5kW inverter and a 5.1kWh battery, with a surcharge of R50 000 added to the selling price.

Residents will remain responsible for maintenance of the solar system, and all installations must be approved by village management and carried out by Rand Aid-approved suppliers.

The board considered several other options but decided against them. Allowing residents to draw funds from the 70% termination benefit to pay for solar installations was rejected because solar components have limited lifespans, particularly batteries, which are costly to replace. This could have led to repeated drawdowns over time.

The board also decided not to allow residents to rent solar systems from external providers at this point in time. If a contract ended when a resident moved out, the equipment could be removed, potentially causing damage and leaving Rand Aid responsible for repairs.

### Solar at Tarentaal village

Tarentaal village, which offers rental accommodation, has a grid-tied system that consists of solar panels and inverters, but no batteries. This means the system generates power during the day and helps reduce electricity costs, but it shuts down during load-shedding and does not provide power at night.

Residents are therefore encouraged to use electricity-intensive appliances such as kettles, irons, washing machines and tumble dryers during the daytime when solar power is available.

Electricity used at night still comes from City Power, so limiting appliance use overnight can help keep costs down for everyone.

Coetzee said Rand Aid will investigate the possible installation of batteries at Tarentaal in the next financial year.

## Connection is at the heart of everything Rand Aid does

Common ground, a warm coffee and a great conversation – this is The Rand Aid Way in action.

Rand Aid's GM of commercial and compliance, Amanda Diener, recently caught up with Ron Smith Care Centre resident Irvine Sinnett at Elphino's coffee shop. Irvine is a familiar face around the village and joined staff and a fellow Rand Aid resident for an Eden Associate training workshop.

Despite a lifetime of achievements, including a successful career in materials management and a legacy as a provincial soccer captain, Irvine says the training gave him a renewed sense of purpose. He shared that the experience helped him realise just how much he still has to contribute to our community.

Rand Aid is not just about providing care; it builds relationships. Its Eden Alternative journey gave rise to The Rand Aid Way, which is all about creating a home where residents like Irvine are empowered, heard and valued.

As the saying goes: "Nothing about me, without me."



Amanda Diener and Irvine Sinnett.



During the power outage, Elaine Horwitz and Nan Haslehurst served a hot meal to Tarentaal residents.

## Community spirit shines during December power outage

In December 2025, a major power outage left Rand Aid's Tarentaal Village, Elphin Lodge and Inyoni Creek without electricity for nine days while cable faults at the Westfield Substation were repaired.

Despite the disruption, communities rallied together.

At Tarentaal Village, staff and the residents' committee set up generators in the hall, creating a central hub with charging stations, hot water and warm meals, including a boerewors braai and cottage pie. Medical needs were supported, and essential systems remained operational. Residents expressed heartfelt gratitude for the care and teamwork.

At Inyoni Creek, the generator-powered clubhouse provided hot water, charging points and a working restaurant, while neighbours with backup power assisted others. At Elphin Lodge, generator support from Ron Smith Care Centre kept the clubhouse and administration running.

Rand Aid CEO Gert Coetzee kept residents informed throughout. He praised the strong sense of community, noting how residents and staff went the extra mile to support one another. Importantly, frail care services at Ron Smith Care Centre continued uninterrupted.

# Proposed changes to levy: Transparency and sustainability

Rand Aid is reviewing how levies are structured and how the Levy Stabilisation Fund (LSF) is to be used in its life-right villages.

According to CEO Gert Coetzee, the goal is to make levy increases more predictable while ensuring funds are used to benefit residents across all villages.

"After completing my first budgeting cycle at Rand Aid, it became clear that the current system does not always achieve its original purpose of smoothing levy increases. We therefore looked at ways to make the process simpler, more transparent and more sustainable," he says.

## Why the fund is being reviewed

The LSF was introduced in 2011 to help protect residents from unusually high levy increases.

The fund grows through a small allocation from the resale of life-right units – after refunds to departing residents and refurbishment costs have been deducted. Since its creation, more than R26 million has been allocated to the fund across the villages, with about R4.4 million currently remaining.

However, the growth of the fund depends on factors that cannot be predicted – such as when residents leave units, the size of the units sold and refurbishment costs. This can cause large differences in how much funding is available at different times and in different villages.

## Differences between villages

Because villages have different numbers of units, the benefits residents receive from the fund can also differ.

In practical terms, when the same amount is drawn from each village's fund, residents in smaller villages receive a larger benefit per unit than residents in larger villages. The current 'silo' approach can lead to inequality in how much assistance each resident actually feels.

## Proposed changes to levy calculations

To make levy increases more stable and easier to manage, Rand Aid proposed that levies focus only on day-to-day operational costs.

Under the proposal, levies would include:

- Operational expenses – such as rates, water, security and administration
- The contribution to recuperative care
- The contribution towards the head office administration

The following items would no longer form part of the levy calculation:

- Planned maintenance and infrastructure improvements
- Major asset purchases

By separating these costs from levies, annual increases can be more closely linked to realistic inflation levels.

## How the fund would be used in future

The LSF is not being removed. Instead, it is proposed that the remaining funds be pooled and used for planned maintenance and infrastructure improvements across all Rand Aid villages, rather than being limited to individual village funds.

"This would allow Rand Aid to plan larger projects more strategically and ensure that funds are used where they are most needed," says Coetzee.

## Next steps for the transition

To ensure this new system is fair and clear, the following steps are being followed:

- Detailed cost breakdown: Management is providing village committees with a list that identifies exactly which costs are operational and which are infrastructure.
- Consultation: Management will continue to discuss the application of the fund with the village committees and the RAA Residents Committee.
- Trustee approval: As the fund is held by the RA Welfare Development Trust, the final decision on using and pooling these funds rests with the Trustees.

This process aims to create a more stable levy structure for residents while ensuring long-term maintenance needs across the villages are properly supported.



Olive Jew with daughter Elizabeth Wallis on her 102nd birthday.

## RSCC's Olive Jew turns 102

There were smiles all round at Rand Aid's Ron Smith Care Centre when resident Olive Jew celebrated her 102nd birthday on February 3.

According to Simoné Botha, the care centre's occupational therapy and recreation manager, Olive remains as vibrant as ever.

"Mrs Jew is still healthy, strong and full of smiles as always. She regularly comes to the recreation centre and joins in all our events," says Simoné.

Olive marked the occasion with a beautiful birthday cake, her trademark smile lighting up the celebration.

Born in Johannesburg in 1924, Olive moved to Rand Aid's Elphin Lodge Retirement Village in 1997, where she lived for many years before relocating to Ron Smith Care Centre six years ago.

Her daughters, Carol-Ann Hallam and Liz Wallis, previously attributed their mother's longevity to her upbeat outlook on life.

Over the years, Olive has enjoyed a wide range of interests, including art, sewing, bridge, gardening, travelling and entertaining. A talented watercolourist, she also started the Art Club at Elphin Lodge nearly three decades ago.

Married to engineer Harold for 49 years, Olive spent most of her life in Johannesburg, Benoni and Edenvale, becoming known for her warm nature and genuine interest in others.



Board games and group activities are a cornerstone of **Ron Smith Care Centre's occupational therapy programme**. These moments foster social interaction, cognitive stimulation and, most importantly, a lot of laughter. Pictured is Miriam Benjamin enjoying a game.

## THROUGH THE CAMERA *lens*



The Gentlemen Only Ladies Forbidden (GOLF) social group at Rand Aid's Inyoni Creek retirement village regularly holds bring and braais (fondly called *Vlam en Vleis*) events at the clubhouse, offering a chance for members to catch up, unwind and enjoy time together. Pictured around the coals are Brian Berry and Norman Caplan.



Ian (pictured) and Debby Davis have donated six poop bag dispensers, now installed around Inyoni Creek. They help keep dog walks clean and fun. Shad-ow, their husky, can barely wait to hit the path. "Now there's no excuse – **please leave only pawprints behind** when walking your furbaby," says village manager Jenny Tonkin.



Residents and staff's spirits were raised throughout February at Ron Smith Care Centre, culminating in an inspiring performance of *You Raise Me Up*. The **month of love** saw residents crafting Valentine's cards to decorate for décor and to share with loved ones, while music bingo and a Valentine's quiz added fun and engagement in the weeks leading up to the main event. The highlight was the Valentine's Day Tea on Friday, February 13, where singer Chris Coetzer captivated the audience with love songs. The performance concluded with a moving rendition of *You Raise Me Up*, during which residents and staff held hands, sharing a powerful moment of connection. Pictured is Elisabetta Morgia being serenaded by Chris.



Residents from the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) and Thembalami Care Centre had a day of fun and laughter on March 9, taking part in a **friendly game of putt-putt** at Adventure Golf at Stoneridge Centre, where they were given free access to the mini golf courses. The visit provided a refreshing break from routine, with residents spending the day playing, laughing, and interacting in a vibrant outdoor setting. Pictured is MODA's Shaun White.



Instead of the jingle of reindeer in the night sky, the residents of Ron Smith Care Centre were delighted by the patter of paws in the week before Christmas. A long-time team member of Elphin Lodge retirement village, Tanya Switala – who was on leave at the time – arrived with daughter Caitlynn and their four-legged family member, Chloe, for a visit on December 18. They walked around the care centre, giving the residents a chance to greet and touch Chloe, while reminiscing about their own pets. Pictured are Monica Russell and Chloe.



Valentine's Day took on a heartwarming twist at Tarentaal, as residents were treated to a surprise visit filled with flowers and cheer. Madelie Olivey, owner of Iris Bloom Florist Atelier, arrived at the village bearing bouquets to spread goodwill. She was joined by her niece, Janessa Viljoen, and a friend, Marlene Nel, who helped deliver the thoughtful gestures. Pictured are Marlene and resident Jacqueline Mackley.



On February 23, Tarentaal hosted a birthday tea, honouring all residents born in February. "The village's residents committee pulled out all the stops to spoil the **'February babies'** – with the hall gaily decorated and tea and cake served," says village deputy manager Lynn Barrow. Fellow resident Carmel Borland, who regularly performs at village events, delighted guests with her piano performance.



Tarentaal came alive on Friday, March 13, as residents and visitors flocked to its **popular monthly morning market**, held in the village hall on the second Friday of every month. The event, a highlight on the village's social calendar, combines shopping, treats and camaraderie in a lively, community-focused atmosphere. Pictured is resident Auriel Wittert with an array of baked goods.

**THROUGH THE CAMERA** *Lens*



Staying active in mind and body is key to healthy ageing. At Thornhill Manor, Vicky Keenan – both a resident and a retired occupational therapist – finds fun ways to do just that. This resident-led approach **encourages active involvement and reinforces a sense of purpose and inclusion** within the village. The Happy Chatters group, which Vicky co-ordinates, meets every Monday to engage in various therapeutic activities. One way they support both physical and cognitive health is through hand-eye and foot-eye co-ordination games, which help maintain agility, balance and concentration, while also bringing plenty of laughter. Through initiatives such as this, the Rand Aid Way is reflected in everyday village life. Residents remain active and connected, with a continued focus on independence and overall quality of life. Pictured are Marina Sartor and Vicky Keenan playing table-top shuffleboard.



Which singer made famous a quirky love song with the line: Not sophisticated, I'm the plain and simple kind? If you knew that Eartha Kitt sang *Just an Old Fashioned Girl*, you would have scored a point for your team at the Valentine's-themed quiz held at the Elphin Lodge clubhouse on February 24. Organised by resident Crystal Smart, ably assisted by quiz master Sue Dickinson (pictured), the quiz was great fun, despite only three teams entering. Keep an eye on the village newsletter for the next quiz – bring a team of four or come on your own and join an existing group. The cost is R20 per person, including tea and refreshments, and you'll likely leave having made a new friend or two.



Elphin's feathered friends: How often do you walk past a flock of sacred ibis without a second glance? While a common sight across large parts of Africa, the many ibis that gather on the lawns of Elphin Lodge add to the feeling of being at **one with nature** in the retirement village. With its dam and water features, mature trees, beautiful gardens and walking paths, the village offers a serene environment where residents can enjoy the sights and sounds of nature every day.



The Elphin Lodge hall was transformed into a hub of excitement and friendly competition on March 11 as residents gathered for an **Easter-themed quiz night**. The event was organised by Elphino's. It offered both mental stimulation and social connection. With teams ranging from four to six people, the competition was fierce but friendly. For R90, participants enjoyed more than just a quiz; the evening included a full meal, with options including a classic chicken à la king and a popular snack basket featuring BBQ meatballs, chicken wings and other savoury treats



Residents of Inyoni Creek retirement village gathered for their monthly birthday tea in March, **celebrating 16 birthdays with a lively St Patrick's Day theme**. Around 50 residents joined the morning of music and merriment, enjoying a much-loved community tradition. Village manager Jenny Tonkin had everyone laughing with classic Irish jokes, while Carmel Borland provided the perfect soundtrack with Irish tunes. As usual, the event featured a lucky draw for the celebrants, and March was no exception: three prizes were drawn from a hat, giving each birthday guest a chance to win. Pictured with his prize is Bob Wilmot, alongside Marinda Looyen, Jenny Cubitt and Fransie du Preez.



Elphin Lodge residents have **shared the spirit of giving this Easter** by donating three batches of Easter eggs to the Edenvale Community Drive. Easter eggs are being collected by Rex Performance Clinic and the Little Wish Foundation. On Saturday, April 4, Johannesburg car club ST-1 Crew will lead a convoy of performance cars through Edenvale, delivering sweet treats and smiles to children across the community.



For **International Flower Day**, Ron Smith Care Centre residents planted long-lasting flowering succulents before enjoying tea, coffee, and flower-shaped biscuits. Pictured are Ria Milburn and Susan Esbend.

**THROUGH THE CAMERA** *lens*



Excitement filled the hall at Tarentaal Retirement Village on February 18 as residents turned out in their numbers for the year's first friendship draw – with some very **special four-legged guests** from People and Wonderful Souls 4 U Therapy Dogs stealing the show. "The presence of therapy dogs encourages social interaction and creates a relaxed environment where residents can connect," says village deputy manager Lynn Barrow. Pictured are Judith Woodward with Chammy, Chris Begbie with Chase, resident Nan Hastlehurst and Maggie Swinson with Buddy.



On November 22, the Max Ordman Deaf Association treated its residents to a fun-filled day of **food, games and laughter**. The menu featured two steaming pots of homemade potjiekos – one chicken and one beef – which proved a huge hit. Residents played a variety of games, including bingo – with numbers displayed rather than called aloud – Jenga, finger snooker and mini golf. Pictured playing Jenga are Basil McIntyre and visitor Bentley Swanepoel, the son of social worker Lara Swanepoel.



Christian Family Church Welfare, led by Dineo Nkabinde, visited Thembalami Care Centre on March 14. The team shared **companionship and spiritual support**, leading devotionals, singing and playing interactive games with residents. They also treated everyone to burgers and cake. Pictured are Pulane Motloung with Donald Cochrane.



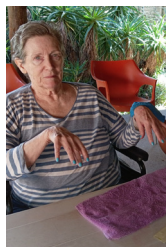
Thembalami Care Centre and Max Ordman Deaf Association's **family day** on February 28 gave residents and loved ones a chance to connect over food in a festive setting. Although attendance was lower than hoped, guests enjoyed boerewors rolls, chips, drinks, and ice cream, with music and lively chatter in the dining room. Pictured are Janet Green with her daughter, Delaney and Jose Maia. The events are regularly held and everyone is invited.



True to Ireland's reputation for rain, a few showers on March 17 couldn't stop the residents of Tarentaal village from joining in the **St Patrick's Day** celebrations. They tucked into a hearty social braai, laughter and chatter filling the village hall as everyone soaked up the festive spirit. Pictured are Imelda du Toit, Bonny Davies, Wendy Laver and Laura Avagliano.



Residents and staff at Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association enjoyed a **lively birthday celebration** for 10 residents and seven staff members on March 17. One of the birthday celebrants was Joan Keylock, who turned 98 on March 14. Guests were entertained by Pastor Roy Edwards. This monthly celebration is about more than birthdays – it is a chance for everyone to connect, share joy and feel part of our community. Pictured are Peggy Kupa, Stuart Brown and Jo-Ann Weyermans-Noble.



**A pampering session** was held for residents of Thembalami and the Max Ordman Deaf Association on February 23. Held outside in the lapa, activities included nail care and hand massages. Pictured is Annette Verskin.



Residents from the Ibis memory care wing at Thembalami Care Centre took part in a day of **outdoor games** on February 6. The games were designed to improve mobility, provide stimulation and encourage social interaction. Many residents who rarely participate were actively engaged, moving, laughing and enjoying time with their peers. The day ended with a relaxing tea in the garden. Pictured are occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlomule with Gertrude Xabanisa, watched by Coen Steenkamer.



They say good things are worth waiting for, and that was the case on February 19 when **Tarentaal Retirement Village held a belated Valentine's dinner**. Organised by the village's residents' committee and held in the festively decorated hall, the event was well supported. "Residents put on their finest red and white outfits and enjoyed the two-course meal and good music," says Tarentaal deputy manager Lynn Barrow. Pictured are Lorraine Warner (standing), Naomi de Villiers and Geraldine Lonsdale.

**THROUGH THE CAMERA** *Lens*



Meet Charlotte de Silva, a resident at Thornhill Manor since 2016. After living alone following her husband's passing, Charlotte found the perfect companion in her little dog, Zoey. Every day, Charlotte and Zoey enjoy walks around the village's beautiful grounds and paved paths. These strolls keep Charlotte active, while also offering a chance to bump into fellow residents for friendly chats along the way.

■ Did you know? Several Rand Aid villages are pet-friendly. This depends on obtaining prior permission and sterilising the animals.

**Thornhill Manor:** Small dog or a cat (older, larger dogs may be considered)

**Inyoni Creek:** Dogs and cats (conditions around fencing)

**Elphin Lodge:** Older cats are welcome

**Tarentaal Village:** Cats welcome.



In a meaningful expression of community spirit, the Thornhill Manor Retirement Village Chapel Committee recently donated essential cleaning products and incontinence support products to the Edenvale Care Centre Hospice. The chapel congregation donated cash and essential supplies, with a total value of R4 100. Hospice care prioritises comfort and quality of life over curing disease, offering holistic, person-centered support for those with terminal illnesses. Pictured is Enid Dixon, the chairperson of the Thornhill Manor Chapel Committee, with Edenvale hospice staff members.



Residents of Thornhill Manor ushered in the holiday spirit with creativity at their annual **Easter bonnet parade** on March 26. The morning began in the hall, where the monthly tea and community lotto draw are now held. These events have recently been moved to the hall to accommodate their growing popularity. The tea was followed by the excitement of the community lotto draw. However, the true highlight was the parade of handcrafted headwear that saw residents showcasing an array of imaginative designs. Congratulations to the winners: Vicky Keenan, who received the award for most appropriate; Nathan Herscovitz, who was recognised for the funniest creation; and Enid Dixon, who was awarded prettiest. Pictured are Maisie Walters, Maureen Leishman, Loretta Allasio, Wendy Hunt, Brenda Bromfield (behind), Maureen Stewart, Vicky Keenan, Carol Fiorentino, Nathan Herscovitz and Enid Dixon.

**Welcoming and functional: Makeover for Thornhill Manor community centre**

Thornhill Manor's community centre has been transformed into a modern, welcoming hub for meetings, activities, and social gatherings, thanks to a partnership between residents and Rand Aid.

"For a while, the centre was looking a bit tired," says village manager Shaun Victor. "Some favourite spots had been 'borrowed' for other uses. But the village committee and Rand Aid have completely revitalised the space."

The makeover was a true community effort. From the Man Cave residents lending hands-on support to a hand-painted mural by resident Joanne Jourdan, the project brought everyone together. The centre now hosts Bridge, Rummikub, Scrabble, Bingo, movie nights, major sports screenings, and occupational health sessions, while larger events like exercise classes, line dancing, and Sundowner dinners are held in the main hall.

Soft furnishings and finishes had become outdated, and small meeting spaces were lacking. "Residents were consulted at every stage, and many of their ideas shaped the final design," says village committee member Maureen Stewart.

The Indaba Room has been reclaimed for meetings, a section of the main room now houses a permanent beautician salon and a storeroom for games and puzzles, and a small service bar remains for refreshments.

Funding was a combined effort: residents contributed R100 000 from the village fund for aesthetic upgrades, while Rand Aid managed structural work, including drywall partitioning, re-tiling, repainting, and upgraded lighting. Residents helped remove and reinstall library shelves, strip out old fittings, and assist contractors. The décor team replaced dining chairs, reupholstered lounge seating, added tables, roller blinds, and modern lighting, creating a bright, inviting space.

"Residents now have a cheerful place to relax and enjoy time together," says Shaun Victor. "The modern finishes have revitalised the area, and reclaiming the Indaba Room restored a much-needed venue for smaller gatherings."



**The Knit and Natter group in the newly refurbished lounge.**



**LEFT:** The intimate seating areas offer a quiet retreat for conversation in the beautifully upgraded community centre.

## COMINGS AND GOINGS

### Moving tributes as Thornhill Manor says farewell to Jackie

Thornhill Manor retirement village celebrated the remarkable career of Jackie Scott at a farewell ceremony on January 29.

Jackie was a dedicated member of the village management team for an incredible 23 years. "The retirement send-off was a heartfelt occasion, filled with tributes, speeches and reflections on Jackie's profound impact on both residents and staff," says village social worker Karen Griessel.

Colleagues and residents gathered to honour Jackie's years of commitment, compassion and professionalism. Some shared personal stories highlighting her kindness, resilience and the positive difference she made in the lives of everyone she encountered.

"Her dedication to creating a warm, supportive environment for residents, as well as her mentorship, particularly to her successor, Christine Human, has left a lasting legacy at Thornhill Manor," says village manager Shaun Victor.



**LEFT: Jackie Scott:** "We have gone through so much together. There has never been a morning when I haven't wanted to go to work," she adds.

## LASTING MEMORIES

Over the years, Jackie has experienced many highlights, including training in the Eden Alternative, which she describes as a 'paradigm shift' that changed both her approach to life and her perspective on elder care.

She treasured having her mother live at Thornhill Manor, allowing her to be present for her daily, and values the friendships she has formed with staff over the years.

Some moments at the village have brought Jackie both laughter and lasting memories. One she recalls fondly involved a group of residents who had to rush a friend to the hospital one night with a broken leg. "They all got into the car in their pyjamas – one wearing a leopard skin gown and fluffy slippers – with the broken leg sticking through the open window. The sight made me laugh, and the doctor in the emergency room couldn't contain himself either," she recalls.

Jackie says the residents have taught her invaluable lessons about calm, patience and accepting that 'everything happens when it is supposed to'. She has witnessed significant shifts in elder care over the years. "Everyone needs to feel wanted and have a purpose. Autonomy is key, and simple pleasures are vital. A hug is so important for those without family close by. Taking time to listen and assist, especially with technology, has become increasingly crucial."



**Dudu Morgan, the new deputy manager of SANCA Wedge Gardens.**

**'Believe in your potential'**

From cabin crew to care – Dudu Morgan takes on leadership role at SANCA Wedge Gardens

A career that began in the skies has come full circle on the ground, with Dudu Morgan stepping into her role as deputy manager of SANCA Wedge Gardens, a treatment centre for men with substance use disorders, in February.

Dudu brings a diverse background spanning aviation, education and leadership development, ultimately leading her back to her passion for working with people. Although she holds a social work degree, she initially pursued a career as a flight attendant and safety procedures instructor before shifting her focus to education and community development.

After having her second child, Dudu returned to her hometown of Kabokweni, Mpumalanga, joining Kamagugu Inclusive School as a social worker and IT teacher in a special needs environment. She had already earned an Honours degree in education, specialising in online learning systems, while teaching at Parktown High School for Girls. She graduated in 2017.

From 2022 to 2025, Dudu held various leadership roles at Kamagugu, including life skills co-ordinator and committee chairperson, while overseeing school events and skills development initiatives. In 2023, she began an MBA at Regenesys Business School, now finalising her research.

"Leaders need emotional intelligence – you cannot be impactful if you have not addressed your own issues," she says. "I realised I wanted a leadership role where I could positively impact people."

Her connection to Rand Aid began in 2024 when she presented at a tablet donation handover at Kamagugu, meeting a Rand Aid representative. Months later, after expressing interest in relocating to Johannesburg, she was invited to interview for her current role.

"What stood out was Rand Aid's longevity and strong culture – over 100 years of service with committed staff," she says. Although new to rehabilitation work, her experience in special needs education exposed her to challenges faced by vulnerable families, often referring learners and their families to organisations like SANCA and NICRO.

### People need to be seen and heard

Her approach to recovery is holistic, addressing both clients and their families. "If the individual gets better, the family improves, and the community benefits," she says, highlighting that many clients are future fathers, uncles, and community leaders. Therapy often extends to relatives who have experienced trauma from addiction, and Dudu stresses that healing requires personal accountability for everyone involved.

### Outside work

Dudu practices yoga, runs, and engages with motivational content to maintain her well-being. She lives in Randpark Ridge with her family and is mother to an adult son and a five-year-old daughter.

She encourages families to remain hopeful when supporting loved ones with substance use disorders: "Relapse may happen, trust may be broken, but families must keep listening and remain open to therapy. If SANCA Wedge Gardens, the client, and the family commit, there is hope. This is not the end – believe in your potential."

## COMINGS AND GOINGS

## Elphin Lodge welcomes new social worker with a heart for older adults

Elphin Lodge retirement village has welcomed a new social worker, Thuli Ngoma, whose passion for people and advocacy for older adults guides her career.

Thuli joined Elphin Lodge following Nadine Radford's move to Ron Smith Care Centre. She previously served both Elphin Lodge and the care centre. Both facilities are run by Rand Aid and share a property, enabling continuity of care and collaboration.

For Thuli, social work has always been about human connection and giving people a voice – especially those who are too often overlooked.

"Growing up, I always wanted to work with people and reach out to them, to make a difference one person at a time," she says. "They have lived remarkable lives and shaped communities, yet their voices are often muted.

As a social worker, it became my passion to reach out to them and advocate for their rights as senior citizens – their voices matter."

Thuli brings seven years of experience as a social worker at a step-down facility, where she focused on discharge planning and home-based care for people living with disabilities, including elderly patients. It was there that she began to question what happened once patients returned home.

"My journey would often end when patients left rehabilitation, but I kept asking myself how they were coping back at home and whether their care plans were still working," she explains. "Coming to Elphin Lodge is where those questions were answered. Even when care plans are in place, ongoing support is still needed – and I am here to help with that."

Building trust with residents who may be experiencing loneliness or health challenges is central to her role. Thuli believes this starts with respect and consistency.

"You build trust by being compassionate and consistent, and by prioritising residents' dignity and autonomy," she says.

"My role is to support residents through their health challenges, refer them to relevant resources, and help simplify things like technology – even assisting with phone issues when they arise," she says.



Thuli Ngoma.

Outside of work, Thuli lives in Soweto and is a proud mother to her seven-year-old daughter, who started Grade 2 this year. She enjoys reading, journaling and hiking – pursuits that mirror the reflective and grounded approach she brings to her work.

## Rand Aid strengthens staff support with appointment of first HR manager

In a move aimed at strengthening staff support across its retirement villages and care centres, the Rand Aid Association has appointed its first human resources (HR) manager – a newly created position focused on staff development, wellness and organisational alignment.

Having joined the organisation in January, Khanyi Seleka brings nearly two decades of experience in the field, including roles in the NGO healthcare sector. She says the opportunity to work within a care-focused environment aligned closely with her interest in community upliftment.

"I've worked for NGOs before, and being part of an organisation that gives back to the community made this role feel like a natural fit," she says.

As the first person to hold the position, she will be responsible for consolidating HR policies, strengthening internal processes and ensuring staff across Rand Aid's facilities are adequately supported in their roles.

One of her priorities has been the development of a comprehensive induction programme to ensure both new and existing employees are aligned with the organisation's policies, values and employment conditions.

"It's important to understand what each team needs," she explained. "By working closely with managers, HR can partner with them to provide support that goes beyond standard services."

### Happy, healthy employees

In a care-based environment, she believes employee wellness is one of the most critical aspects of effective HR management.

"Staff are often working in emotionally demanding situations. We must provide access to wellness programmes, debriefing sessions and one-on-one counselling where needed. Supporting employees emotionally is just as important as supporting them physically."

Her plans for staff development include strengthening performance management systems to help employees track their progress and grow within the organisation.

"When employees feel valued and listened to, they are more likely to give their best to residents. That ultimately leads to better care and ser-



Khanyi Seleka.

vice delivery."

Before joining Rand Aid, she began her HR career in 2006 through an internship programme with Massmart and later worked as an HR officer at Makro Woodmead. In 2013, she transitioned into the NGO healthcare sector, spending six years with Right to Care as an HR generalist, followed by another six years as an HR manager at the Anova Health Institute.

### Aligned with The Rand Aid Way

She says her NGO experience provided valuable insight into the importance of caring for both employees and the communities they serve.

Her appointment also comes as Rand Aid continues to embed its relationship-focused culture – HEARTS – which is part of 'The Rand Aid Way' initiative launched in 2025.

The Rand Aid Way aims to create vibrant, fulfilling environments across Rand Aid villages and care centres by prioritising strong relationships, supporting individual development and empowering residents to actively participate in their communities.

Internally, Khanyi says she hopes to contribute to this culture by fostering an environment where staff feel heard, supported and empowered in their work – ultimately enhancing the care experience for residents across the organisation's facilities.

Outside of work, she lives in Roodepoort and is a mother of four, making a conscious effort to be fully present at home after hours while managing her leadership responsibilities.

**COMINGS AND GOINGS****Christine takes the reins as deputy manager at Thornhill Manor**

Thornhill Manor has a new face at the helm – Christine Human, who officially stepped into her role as deputy village manager on February 2, following the retirement of Jackie Scott.

Known for her warmth, dedication and deep connection with the residents, Christine is set to bring fresh energy to the Rand Aid-run village.

Christine joined Thornhill Manor in October 2023 as the receptionist and administrator, quickly making an impression with her commitment and care.

Living in Modderfontein, Christine comes from a close-knit family and draws inspiration from her upbringing. “My mother raised me as a single parent, and she was the most loving and selfless person I’ve known, always giving more than she had. With her, my grandparents and one of my uncles played a big role in my upbringing. Every day, I try to live by the example my family set for me: Caring, generous and always striving to give my best.”

**Value of community**

Her time at Thornhill Manor has taught her valuable life lessons. “I’ve learned the importance of resilience, kindness and the value of community. The residents have shown me that life’s challenges can be met with grace, that every story carries wisdom worth sharing, and that gratitude for the present moment is essential. They’ve reminded me that while routines matter, there is always time for laughter, celebration and a good party.”

Working with older adults has also reshaped her views on ageing. “Ageing once felt like a distant concept to me, often framed as a story of decline and loss. Yet, through my time at Thornhill, I’ve come to see it differently. Watching residents adapt, remain active and carry humour into their daily lives has revealed the remarkable resilience and vitality that ageing can embody. I’ve also grown to deeply value perspectives and meaningful contributions that older adults continue to share.”

Christine is drawn to the Thornhill community for its strong sense of belonging. “One of the first things you notice at Thornhill is the sense of belonging. The community radiates a genuine atmosphere of care and connection, where staff, residents and families come together to create a supportive environment. It’s a place where everyone feels valued, respected and part of something meaningful.”

Looking ahead to her new role, she says, “I welcome the opportunity to make an even bigger impact on a community I care so deeply about. The deputy manager position will allow me to grow as a leader while supporting staff and residents in continuing to create a safe community where connection thrives.”

Elphin Lodge appointed **Ntombizodwa Mthombeni as the new village receptionist** on December 1. Having worked at the Rand Aid call centre for over 10 years, she brings a wealth of experience to her new role. Born and raised in Johannesburg, with family roots in Mpumalanga, she is a mother of two. “I’m honoured to continue serving our residents and am excited about this new role,” Zodwa says. Her appointment followed the retirement of Marlene Sirchia.



**Christine Human, Thornhill Manor's new deputy manager.**

**Check your mate: Tarentaal resident crafts chess sets with precision**

At 80 years young, Ray Wainman of Tarentaal retirement village is proving that creativity and craftsmanship only get better with age.

Ray moved into Tarentaal in March 2023, encouraged by his sister, Sharon Bolel, who felt he would thrive surrounded by people rather than living alone.

Shortly after settling in, Ray joined The Men's Shed, a Rand Aid facility for DIY enthusiasts, where he spent mornings three days a week honing his skills. “Full credit must go to the team there,” he says. “I gained much knowledge from their expertise.” Yet after six months, he left to pursue a personal dream: Making high-quality chess sets.

Ray's journey with woodworking has deep roots. After 35 years in the screen printing industry, where he became a director and part-owner, he faced the upheaval of company politics and chose to sell up. With his supportive family by his side – his son Mark, daughter and sister – Ray had the freedom to explore new passions.

His leap into craftsmanship was inspired by a simple family request. “My sister handed me a broken wooden Sabbath lamp and said, ‘Ray, please fix this for me. But better still, why don't you make your own?’”

At the time, Ray was unemployed, and the challenge sparked the next chapter in his creative life. With no formal carpentry training but the support of his family, he taught himself the skills needed to construct a beautiful, fully functional lamp. It became a successful home-grown product that brought light and joy to households across South Africa.

Chess has been part of Ray's life since he was 14. Now, decades later, the game has rekindled his enthusiasm.

Ray's chess sets are handcrafted with painstaking attention to detail. Wooden frames, legs and pieces are complemented by wooden-beaded surrounds – his signature touch. The squares are made from marble, ceramic, sandstone or glass, with glass offering the easiest maintenance. Each piece is painted by hand with up to 11 coats of water-soluble acrylic paint, finished with felt pads and clear or matte varnish. “Painting is actually therapeutic,” Ray notes, “and it helps relieve stress.”

Six days a week, he dedicates himself to building each set with care and joy, amazed that even at 80, he can create something to be enjoyed by people of all ages. “I was very chuffed when I finished my first set,” he recalls. “It made me realise that something made with love can truly become a cherished item.”

His chess sets are a testament to creativity and the joy of doing what you love, no matter your age.

For further information or to view Ray's work, contact him on 082 450 6119 or wainmann17@gmail.com.



**Chess set maker Ray Wainman.**

## Café Manor adds flavour and friendly faces to Thornhill Manor

Residents of Thornhill Manor retirement village have a welcoming spot to gather over good food and conversation at Café Manor – a cosy café that has become a popular meeting place for residents and their guests. Café Manor has been run by Gareth de Groot since August 2025, and he says the past seven months have been both rewarding and memorable.

“Working with people has always been a passion of mine, and that, combined with my love for creating unique and exciting dishes, has been the most enjoyable part of running the café,” he says.

Gareth says previous experience managing cafés in retirement villages has helped him and his team create a warm and welcoming environment.

“Having run cafés in retirement villages before has taught us how to create a welcoming atmosphere,” he explains. “By getting to know our residents and their guests, we make sure everyone feels comfortable, safe and part of the community.”

### What’s on the menu?

Keeping the menu fresh and interesting is also a priority. “I believe that feedback and input from our customers is the most important way of gauging how interesting and inviting our menu is,” says Gareth. “We try to keep an open mind and take suggestions from every patron to ensure we are catering to every taste.”

To add variety, the café offers daily specials from Tuesday to Sunday.

“By running daily specials, we try to expand our offerings and ensure variety, so we keep people interested and never allow ourselves to stagnate.”

When it comes to his favourite item on the menu, Gareth does not hesitate.

“My personal favourite menu item is our cheeseburger,” he says. “We use

fresh beef to make a homemade patty, with melted cheddar cheese and crispy chips – not much can beat that for me.”

### It’s in his genes

Gareth says his mother, Wanda de Groot, who runs Elphino’s coffee shop at Elphin Lodge, has been a valuable source of advice.

“My mom’s experience in a very similar environment has been invaluable,” he says. “She has provided plenty of insight to help us build a solid foundation to establish a successful coffee shop.”

Reflecting on the journey so far, Gareth says the café’s success is thanks to both his team and the community it serves.

“We have very dedicated and loyal individuals working behind the scenes, and amazing residents and customers who have been with us every step of the way.”

### Opening hours

Café Manor is open from Tuesday to Sunday from 9am to 4pm, with both sit-down meals and takeaway options available throughout the day. The café also offers deliveries in and around the area.



Wendy Moyo with a Burt Reynolds.

## ELPHINO’S COFFEE SHOP... EXCITING NEW MENU COMING

Always-popular Elphino’s, based at Elphin Lodge and adjacent to the Ron Smith Care Centre, will soon be unveiling a fun new cartoon-themed menu – so watch this space!

### Relaxing indulgence

With a good choice of light and more substantial meals, hot and cold drinks, sweet treats and indoor and outdoor seating, the coffee shop provides a wonderful place for Rand Aid residents and their loved ones to meet and relax.

When you feel like something decadent, try the Burt Reynolds – a chicken schnitzel stack layered with creamed spinach, halloumi and caramelised onions, topped with cheese sauce and served with chips or a side salad.



Gareth de Groot and his partner, Jade Bentley.

## Discover comfortable, caring living at Thembalami

Thembalami Care Centre, meaning ‘My Hope’, offers a warm environment where residents can find comfort, care and new purpose. The centre currently has beds available for elders seeking full-time, 24-hour nursing care in a homely and supportive setting.

Its accommodation includes north-facing single and double rooms, with ensuite facilities for couples and ground-floor units opening directly onto our beautiful, landscaped gardens.

Life at Thembalami is vibrant and engaging. Residents enjoy a wide range of recreational activities, including crafts, hobbies, entertainment, and regular outings. The centre also fea-

tures a multi-sensory Snoezelen room to support relaxation and cognitive stimulation, particularly for those living with dementia.

Safety and well-being are paramount, with 24-hour nursing care, a visiting doctor on business days, a full-time social worker, daily laundry service, and secure grounds with access control and CCTV monitoring. Meals, podiatry and transport to hospitals and local shops are included.

For more information or to arrange a visit, email [thembalami@randaid.co.za](mailto:thembalami@randaid.co.za).

Come and see why Thembalami Care Centre is a place of hope, comfort and community for your loved ones.



Thembalami offers a welcoming environment.

## Reef Caterers – residents enjoy fresh, nutritious meals

SANCA Wedge Gardens, Thembalami Care Centre and Ron Smith Care Centre residents are thoroughly enjoying their daily meals, which are now freshly prepared on site.

This comes after Reef Caterers Health Care Division took over the catering services when Rand Aid's in-house Cookchill division closed late last year. Cookchill previously prepared meals at a central location and quick-chilled them for distribution at meal times.

Thirty-one former Cookchill employees were incorporated into Reef, with operations manager Corli Milne overseeing the Rand Aid service.

Residents at Thembalami Care Centre, the Max Ordman Deaf Association and SANCA Wedge Gardens continue to receive three balanced meals a day, along with mid-meal and evening snacks.

At SANCA Wedge Gardens, manager Adel Grobbelaar says residents are raving about the meals. "They love that the food is prepared on site, it's full of flavour and there's no wastage. Plates are wiped clean, which says it all," she adds. Wedge Gardens catering manager Janine Marais is equally committed to providing fresh, nutritious meals for all residents.

Thembalami Care Centre manager Esme van der Walt notes that the aroma of food cooking in the kitchen builds anticipation for meal-times.



**Busi Binda and Aletta Mnisi help prepare a vast pot of soup for dinner at Thembalami Care Centre.**

"Residents cannot wait to taste what smells so good," she says.

"At RSCC, residents who are able are encouraged to eat in the main dining hall," says manager Ulricka Beukman. "The interaction, change of scenery and social aspect are an important part of daily life for our residents."

Each kitchen operates with a supervisor and two teams working in shifts to ensure consistent service.



**Isobel Kohll enjoys a meal in the new-look dining room.**

## RSCC RESIDENTS EMBRACE NEWLY RENOVATED DINING HALL

After months of eagerly peeking through windows during renovations, more residents than ever are choosing to eat in the newly upgraded Ron Smith Care Centre (RSCC) dining hall – a sign that the long-awaited space has truly come to life.

The RSCC dining room reopened on March 17 with a festive St Patrick's Day celebration. Residents and staff dressed in green, enjoyed Irish tunes and a lively quiz, and were treated to a meal by Reef Caterers, including roast beef, parsley rice, pumpkin fritters and green jelly and custard.

"The new dining hall isn't just a place to eat – it's become the hub of our community," says RSCC manager Ulricka Beukman. "We've seen more residents choosing to dine here than ever before, and that shows the space really works for them."

### Design themed to be rolled out

The renovation began in late 2025 after the closure of Rand Aid's in-house catering division, Cookchill. Structural issues with the RSCC kitchen and dining room roof provided an opportunity not just for repairs but also for a full redesign. The result is a welcoming, homely space with a central colour palette, fresh curtains and modern tables and chairs.

This new design theme, which emphasises calmness and warmth, will gradually be extended to the recreation centre and all wings.

Meals are now served buffet-style from bain-maries, giving residents flexibility and autonomy over how their food is plated. For those who prefer to eat in their wings, hot trolleys deliver freshly plated meals. Special dietary needs are accommodated.

The upgraded kitchen was redesigned alongside the dining room to improve work-flow and efficiency, ensuring meals are served promptly and with care. Beyond daily dining, the space will host functions, movie screenings, sports events and family visits, creating opportunities for connection across the care centre.

"Residents followed the renovations with great anticipation," Ulricka says. "Seeing them enjoy meals here, laughing, sharing stories, and connecting, makes all the work worthwhile."

Starting in April, RSCC will invite village residents to join for Sunday meals and encourage families to dine together, further fostering community and meaningful connections.



**With comfortable seating and a calm atmosphere, the new-look RSCC is a welcoming space.**

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