

# THEMBALAMI & MODA CARE CENTRE

RAND AID  
*assist. alleviate. accompany.*

*Place of hope*

JUNE 2026



Staff members join Ruan Tennant on the dance floor.

## Let's dance!

Nora McIlroy turned 94 on May 31.



Residents and staff at Thembalami Care Centre and Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) marked May birthdays with music and dancing during a party held on May 20.

The event celebrated the birthdays of eight residents and eight staff members, with birthday hats, balloons, gifts and snacks adding to the festive atmosphere. Among those honoured was resident Nora McIlroy, who celebrated her 94th birthday on May 31, making her the oldest resident celebrating a birthday this month. Other residents with birthdays in May included Jennifer Raath (72), Patrick Mahlelehlele (75), Johanna Waldeck (78), Mavis Knight (87), Audrey Sandwell (82) and Willem Skinner (83).

Sadly, Robynn Patmore, who celebrated her birthday earlier in the month, passed away on May 21.

Entertainer Ruan Tennant provided music for the occasion and encouraged residents and staff to join in the celebrations on the dance floor. Deputy manager Elize Raath says Ruan has become a well-loved visitor at the centre. "He has a soft spot for our residents," says Elize.

■ MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 5

VITAL ROLE  
NURSES PLAY

2



SPOTLIGHT ON  
ELDER ABUSE

4

## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

### Residents:

June 05	Thiugavelli Pillay	73
June 10	Aisla Lee	80
June 15	Pieter vd Westhuizen	86
June 24	Lukas van der Merwe	81
June 29	Janet Green	85

### Staff:

June 05	Bongi Luthuli
June 05	Sandile Mkhwebane
June 11	Sannah Moore
June 11	Constance Nematoka
June 12	Sarah Moya
June 23	Fortunate Mphahlele
June 24	Mashudu Nembaye
June 29	Patricia Masala

### REST IN PEACE:

Pierre Badenhorst  
Minnie Son  
Robyn Patmore

### RELOCATED:

Roslyn Cronin

### WELCOME TO:

Germana Sandiforth

## DONATIONS

We welcome donations and fundraising ideas. To discuss your ideas with Thembalami manager Esme van der Walt, call her at 010 534 8771 or send her an email at [evanderwalt@randaid.co.za](mailto:evanderwalt@randaid.co.za)

■ Should you wish to make a once-off or regular donation, see details below:

### 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

# Mother's Day celebration brings women together

Laughter, music and heartfelt memories filled the occupational therapy room at Thembalami Care Centre during a special Mother's Day celebration.

Deputy manager Elize Raath says the celebration created a meaningful opportunity for the women to connect and reflect on their lives. "It was lovely to see the women united and being given a platform to share stories about their children and the people they have mentored over the years."

"The joy and warmth in the room showed just how important these moments are."

The event, organised by occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlomule for 65 ladies from Thembalami and the Max Ordman Deaf Association, was held on May 8. The venue was transformed into a festive space decorated with colourful balloons, pink and white tablecloths and floral cushions on the chairs.

Adding a personal touch to the celebration were glass bottles filled with bright craft flowers carrying the message: 'You are loved'.

Residents also each received a care package as part of the festivities.

Soft and soothing music played in the background as entertainer Ian Nel helped create a relaxed atmosphere for the women, many of who spent the morning sharing stories and enjoying one another's company.

Tsakani kept the residents entertained with Mother's Day-themed riddles and poems before guests enjoyed cake, sandwiches and tea together.

"The women we honoured helped shape many lives as mothers, aunts, grandmothers and mentors," says Tsakani. "The day was about celebrating them, making them feel appreciated and reminding them that they are loved and valued."



Alice Jardim.



Dorah Mapekula.

## Young leaders bridge inter-generational gap

Residents at Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association enjoyed an afternoon of games and treats when the Johannesburg Junior Council (JJC) outreach committee visited them on May 24.

Led by committee chairperson Temujin Houvet, the group spent time playing bingo with residents before handing out cake and Easter eggs.

"The dining hall was full, and both the residents and learners enjoyed the afternoon," says Thembalami occupational therapy assistant Shirley Sibeko.

According to Thembalami deputy manager Elize Raath, the treats were also taken to residents who remained in their rooms during the event.

She says the visit formed part of the JJC's outreach work and noted that the organisation had hosted a similar event at the centre last year.

The JJC is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation comprising Grade 11 learners.



**LEFT:** MODA residents Pieter van der Westhuizen, Barry Waldeck, Hansie Griessel, Rose Marie van der Westhuizen, Lesley Nuyten and Cecilia Röttcher.



**ABOVE:** Violet Ngobeni, Thembalami and MODA's nursing services manager, with Fikile Mbatha.

**LEFT:** Thembalami Care Centre and MODA's nursing team with manager Esme van der Walt.

## Nurses honoured in heartfelt celebration

Though celebrated belatedly, appreciation for the nursing staff at Thembalami Care Centre and Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) was heartfelt as nurses were honoured for their dedication, compassion and unwavering commitment to residents.

International Nurses Day, marked annually on May 12, recognises the critical role nurses play in healthcare systems worldwide. At Thembalami, the occasion became a meaningful celebration of the people who provide daily care, comfort and dignity to older persons.

Thembalami and MODA held three events to accommodate both the day- and night-shift staff, on May 19, 20 and 25.

Speaking during the celebrations, Thembalami centre manager Esme van der Walt described nursing as far more than a profession.

"Nurses Day is more than a date on the calendar. It is a reminder of the heart of healthcare," she said.

"It honours the commitment to care for others, often during their most vulnerable moments. It recognises the long hours, the emotional strength, the patience and the quiet acts of kindness that may never appear in reports or statistics, but mean everything to the patients and families we serve."

Esme said nursing required not only knowledge and clinical skill, but also humanity, empathy and courage.

"Every patient you help, every life you touch and every moment of care you provide contribute to healing in ways

that often go beyond medicine," she added.

The celebration also highlighted the professional values that guide nurses every day. Nursing services manager Violet Ngobeni explained the significance of the nursing pledge, a formal oath rooted in the historic Nightingale Pledge and taken by nurses around the world.

At Thembalami and MODA, the pledge serves as a commitment to patient dignity, confidentiality and professional integrity.

Ngobeni also reflected on the 5Cs that form the foundation of holistic nursing care – compassion, competence, confidence, conscience and commitment.

She explained that compassion ensures care is delivered with empathy and respect, while competence reflects the knowledge and clinical skills required in nursing. Confidence enables nurses to act decisively in high-pressure situations, conscience guides ethical decision-making and patient advocacy, and commitment reflects the long-term responsibility nurses carry in meeting patients' healthcare needs.

The nurses were also treated to gifts sponsored by Netcare and Avbob. Creatively decorated cupcakes and chocolates were served by the care centre. The cupcakes featured detailed edible fondant decorations inspired by symbols of the nursing profession, including miniature stethoscopes, nurse caps, bandages, blister packs of pills, thermometers and heart-rate monitor pulses – a thoughtful tribute to the healthcare workers being celebrated.



**Rumbi Chatikobo and Parmela Langa join fellow nurses in reciting the nurse's pledge. In the centre is Violet Ngobeni, Thembalami and MODA's nursing services manager.**



For more photos, visit Rand Aid's Facebook page.

# Beyond awareness: Making elder abuse prevention work

Elder abuse is often hidden, underreported and deeply damaging – affecting older persons in their homes, care facilities and communities. But according to social worker Lara Swanepoel, some of the most harmful treatments are not always obvious.

“Older persons are often treated as though they are somehow ‘less than’,” says Lara, who works at Thembalami Care Centre in the east of Johannesburg. “It is not always physical abuse. Sometimes it is the subtle ways they are undermined, ignored or disrespected.”

As World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is marked on June 15, advocates are urging communities to move beyond awareness campaigns and focus on practical action that protects vulnerable seniors and upholds their dignity and rights.

This year’s theme, ‘Beyond Awareness: Making Elder Abuse Prevention Work’, highlights the need for stronger care systems, better support services and more effective responses when abuse occurs.

## Hidden forms of abuse

Elder abuse refers to any act – or failure to act – that causes harm or distress to an older person. It can include physical, emotional, financial and sexual abuse, as well as neglect.

Many older persons suffer in silence due to fear, shame, dependence on caregivers or limited access to support services. As a result, abuse often remains hidden.

Lara says abuse can also take quieter forms that gradually strip older people of their independence and dignity.

“They are often not consulted in decision-making even when they are still capable of making decisions for themselves,” she says. “It is assumed they no longer know what is best for them.”

She says older persons living with dementia or physical disabilities are particularly vulnerable to being dismissed or overlooked.

“Just because someone has dementia does not mean everything they say is imagined. Sometimes older persons really have to fight to be heard.”

Lara says caregiving can also become impersonal and task-driven.

“With ageing often comes physical disability or illness, but caregivers must separate the condition from the person,” she says. “Care can become robotic, without consideration for dignity or individuality.”

She says many older persons eventually become resigned to being ‘moved around in whatever way is most convenient for the caregiver’, rather than being treated as individuals with preferences, opinions and autonomy.

## Moving from awareness to action

Lara says awareness campaigns alone are not enough to prevent abuse.

“Communities must build systems that actively prevent abuse and respond quickly when it occurs. Prevention requires co-operation between families, healthcare workers, social workers, law enforcement, government departments and community organisations,” she says.

Practical prevention strategies include strengthening reporting systems for abuse and neglect, training caregivers to recognise warning signs, improving support services for families and older persons and reducing isolation among the elderly.

“Simple actions such as checking on elderly neighbours, helping them access services and maintaining supportive social connections can significantly reduce the risk of abuse and neglect,” she says.

This year’s campaign also highlights the increased risks faced by older persons living with disabilities. Physical limitations, cognitive decline and chronic illness can increase dependence on caregivers and heighten vulnerability to mistreatment.

Lara says care environments should promote independence and inclusion wherever possible.

“They really are a forgotten generation with so much more to give, but we do not always give them the opportunity,” she says.

Her passion for working with older people stems partly from the close relationship she had with her own grandparents.

“They played such an important role in our lives, and we kept them active and involved well into their 90s.”

## South African context

In South Africa, elder abuse remains a serious concern, particularly in communities affected by poverty, unemployment and limited access to services.

Older persons are often targeted for financial exploitation, especially where pensions are the primary source of household income.

South Africa’s Older Persons Act provides a legal framework for protecting the well-being and rights of older persons, but Lara says legislation alone is not enough.

“Preventing elder abuse requires ongoing commitment, compassion, accountability and action,” she says.

“By strengthening support networks, improving care systems and promoting respect for older persons, communities can help ensure that every older person is treated with the dignity and care they deserve.”

“Simple actions such as checking on elderly neighbours, helping them access services and maintaining supportive social connections can significantly reduce the risk of abuse and neglect.” – social worker Lara Swanepoel

## Rand Aid launches guest accommodation at Tarentaal village

Rand Aid residents can now host visiting family and friends in comfort thanks to a new self-catering studio apartment at Tarentaal village.

The fully furnished unit offers visitors a private and affordable place to stay within the secure Rand Aid estate. The village’s waterfront walking paths are just a short stroll away.

Designed for one or two guests, it features two single beds, an en-suite bathroom, a seating area, workspace, fully equipped

kitchen and private patio. Additional amenities include a TV with OpenView, air conditioning, a fan, heater and an SOS panic button linked to the Rand Aid Care Centre. WiFi is currently being installed.

The accommodation costs R700 per night and can be booked by Rand Aid Association residents or their guests with resident approval.

To check availability or make a booking, contact Emily Lebopa on 011 882 2510 or email [elebopa@randaid.co.za](mailto:elebopa@randaid.co.za).



## Birthday bash

Entertainer Ruan Tennant gets the party started.



MORE PHOTOS

## Bingo and wide smiles brighten day

Residents of Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association enjoyed an afternoon of friendly competition when the Edenvale Lions Club hosted a lively game of card bingo on May 24.

Residents gathered to take part in the games, socialise and enjoy refreshments brought by the Lions Club, including cake and sandwiches.

According to Thembalami Care Centre deputy manager Elize Raath, the visit was a memorable one for everyone involved.

"According to the leader of the group, Evelyn Herzfeld, the afternoon with our residents went fabulously. She was thrilled with how everybody enjoyed themselves," says Elize.

Peggy Kupa from the occupational therapy department was on duty during the event to help ensure everything ran smoothly.

She describes the afternoon as 'fun and engaging'.

Bingo winners were rewarded with special treats, adding excitement to the games and encouraging residents to participate enthusiastically.

"It was wonderful to see the residents smiling and socialising," says Peggy.

Elize adds that the visit had a positive impact on the residents' moods and engagement levels.



Mavis Knight and Willem Skinner.



Brigitte Stienen in a celebratory mood.



Patrick Mahlelehlele and Audrey Sandwell.



ABOVE: Ethle Cohen and Mary Erdis during the visit by the Lions Club.



LEFT: Pieter Faugust hopes for the right cards.

# Sign language and shared meal mark family day

Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) brought residents, families and members of the deaf community together for a heartwarming Family Day on May 9, creating what organisers described as a powerful moment of connection.

The main dining hall was filled with laughter, conversation and the expressive movement of sign language.

Alongside the usual favourites of tea and cake, hamburgers and chips were on sale, adding to the relaxed atmosphere that encouraged people to linger.

What made the day particularly significant was the strong turnout from deaf visitors in the surrounding community, who came specifically to spend time with deaf

residents at MODA.

According to deputy manager Elize Raath, this marked a first for the event and left a lasting impression on everyone involved.

“Our care centre felt more connected than ever. The visit from the deaf community brought a beautiful vitality to the home, offering our deaf residents a cultural link and giving our hearing residents a front-row seat to the richness of sign language and community spirit,” she says.

The event was supported by the Maboea family, who donated R700.

Organisers say the success of the gathering lay not only in the turnout, but in the sense of belonging it fostered.



Jo Bayliss with her sons, David and Paul.



Janet Green with son Craig Delaney and Jose Maia.



Lizzie Maboea (in blue) and her husband, Dr Sello Maboea, with Male-sela Lelaka and his wife, Sizakele. The two women share a double ensuite room, while their husbands met for the first time at the event. Also pictured are the Maboeas' daughters.

## Cuddly teddies and warm blankets gifted to residents

Handmade teddy bears and blankets crafted by community groups and Thornhill Manor residents have brought comfort and connection to residents at Thembalami Care Centre, the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) and the Ron Smith Care Centre.

A member of the Thornhill Manor knitting group, Carol Foulis has donated handmade teddy bears to the care centres as part of her ongoing charity work over the past few years – and this year was no exception.

Carol began knitting the toys about five years ago after her grandson's school encouraged grandparents to make teddies for children facing challenges. She has since continued to knit for various charities.

“It gives me purpose and a wonderful feeling to know that I have, in some small way, brought joy to other,” she says.

In a separate initiative, knitted blankets were also delivered to MODA through a collaboration between the Country Club Johannesburg's Yak & Yarn group, St Saviour's Presbyterian Church and Thornhill Manor resident Shirley Lord.

“A warm blanket and a cute teddy bear are always welcome,” says Thembalami deputy manager Elize Raath.



**ABOVE:** Elize Raath (Thembalami Care Centre deputy manager), Karen Griessel (Thornhill Manor social worker), Val Corin (Thornhill Manor resident), Shirley Lord (Thornhill Manor resident) and, in the front, Cecilia Röttcher (MODA resident).



**RIGHT:** Thembalami resident Getrude Xabanisa with Thornhill Manor social worker Karen Griessel.