

THEMBALAMI & MODA

CARE CENTRE



Place of hope

OCTOBER 2026

Inclusive activities put a spring in residents' step

Blue skies and a programme designed for every ability made for a joyful start to spring at Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA), where residents and staff united for an inclusive day of outdoor fun.

The September 1 celebration brought residents and staff together for activities that encouraged movement, balance, co-ordination, concentration and social interaction, with everyone able to participate at their own level.

The fun included a sack race, balancing a ping-pong ball on a spoon and a challenge that required participants to move marshmallows using straws. Some residents took part in a specially adapted activity in which they balanced a ball on a walker, encouraging co-ordination and safe mobility.

Thembalami occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlomule said the activities were designed to promote participation while ensuring residents could enjoy themselves regardless of their abilities.

"It was wonderful to see everyone joining in, supporting one another and simply having fun," she says.

Refreshing ice lollies provided a welcome cool-down.



Pertunia Makgabo guides Erzebet Bozsik as she balances a ball on a walker in one of the inclusive events.



Nurse Wendy Mbatha with Dorah Mapekula.



ABOVE: Takalani Ndou and Jean Rehbock during the Spring Day event.



LEFT: James Wight, Kevan Harris and Donald Cochrane enjoy their ice lollies.



Nurse Portia Raboane with Lesley Nuyten.



Walking in support of Alzheimer's 4



Colourful Heritage Day celebration 5

OCT BIRTHDAYS

Residents:

02 October – Jossie Jagals	71
03 October – Donald Cochrane	85
03 October – Deirdre Helling	78
08 October – William James Allan	79
11 October – Gail Lester	77
13 October – Pieter Faugust	84
17 October – Brian Crosley	78
23 October – James Wight	83
28 October – Rose vd Westhuizen	66

Staff:

03 October – Tereza Ngulele
03 October – Mpolokeng Khoalibane
09 October – Precious Malema
10 October – Bennie Tshabalala (Ngubane)
10 October – Mmapula Makua
12 October – Precious Mahafha
21 October – Esther Malema
24 October – Memory Ngobeni

REST IN PEACE:

Bill Erb
Alice Jardim
Rachel Lasker
Mohan Singh
Shirley Vorster

WELCOME TO:

Susan Rugg
Mervyn Webb

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

■ Leave a legacy of hope by including us in your will, supporting ongoing care for those in need.

■ 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



Cindy Carolus and resident Gail Lester (MODA).



Donald Cochrane and occupational therapy assistant Peggy Kupa.

Colour and companionship brought by visitor

A fresh coat of colour and plenty of laughter turned a day of volunteering into a memorable occasion for residents of Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA).

On September 18, residents and staff welcomed a team from logistics and shipping company DHL, led by Cindy Carolus.

The day began with Thembalami/MODA and DHL staff forming a listening circle to stand in solidarity with women across South Africa following the recent killings of women and renewed national outcry over gender-based violence and femicide.

"The circle provided a safe and supportive space to acknowledge the grief and fear caused by these events, listen to one another and find strength in community during this difficult time," says Thembalami manager Esme van der Walt.

With Thembalami/MODA preparing for an upcoming open day, the team helped get the facility ready by painting flower pots, adding colour and a cheerful touch to the surroundings. They will also donate paint for future beautification projects.

In addition, they donated beanies they had knitted themselves.

Lunch, prepared by In the Kitchen catering company, was served to residents and staff before everyone spent time playing Bingo and other games.

"The DHL staff ate with residents and enjoyed making new connections with our elderly," says Esme.

Tsakani Shihlomule, the occupational therapist at Thembalami Care Centre, says the games created plenty of opportunities for social interaction and laughter.



Tommy Woest, Theunis de Bruin and Cindy Carolus.



Kgothatso Mampane, Kgalalelo Muputing, Nthabiseng Mthombeni and Phindile Khumalo paint some flower pots.



The DHL visitors with Thembalami Care Centre management.

What older people want us to know about ageing

Growing older comes with lessons that can only be learned with time – and Thembalami Care Centre residents have plenty of advice for those who are still years away from retirement. The 2026 United Nations

International Day of Older Persons, observed on October 1 under the theme, **The age of longevity: Rethinking systems for longer lives, asks how longer lives can be lived in health, security and dignity.**

Thembalami residents say the answers are practical. Save for retirement. Look after your health. Prepare for the changes that come with ageing. And recognise that older people still have hopes and a desire to remain independent and involved.

STAY ACTIVE WHILE YOU CAN

For 88-year-old **Errol Townsend**, physical fitness is another investment that pays dividends later in life.

He has noticed that ‘the common drawback among the elderly is their legs go first’.

His advice is to start walking and exercising while you are still young and able to do so. “Get into the habit when you are young and keep it up,” he says.

Jo-Ann Noble (82) has experienced another side of ageing: The loss of mobility and independence. “I never thought I would become so disabled,” she says.

She points out that many places are not designed with older or disabled people in mind, with stairs and no lifts making everyday activities difficult.

“As you get older, you become slower, and you forget things. It is not easy to get old.”

PREPARE FOR LIFE’S UNEXPECTED CHANGES

Eunice also believes couples should discuss practical matters before one partner dies.

“Discuss financial matters with your spouse and be sufficient so that if your partner passes away, you are not left helpless and clueless.”

She recommends learning basic practical skills, such as changing a tyre or checking a car battery, so that each partner can remain as independent as possible.

For **Violet Ngobeni**, Thembalami’s nursing services manager, ageing well is about much more than simply adding years to a person’s life. “It is about adding life, meaning and quality to those years,” she says.

She identifies dignity, purpose, independence, connection, safety and being heard as important aspects of ageing well. “Being loved and respected, feeling valued, not forgotten or treated as a burden,” is essential, she says, along with having a safe home, appropriate care and the opportunity to remain as active as possible.

Older people should also be included in decisions about their care and their future.

DON’T SPEND YOUR RETIREMENT SAVINGS TOO SOON

For 85-year-old **Jacqui Stringer**, financial planning is one of the most important lessons she can pass on.

Her advice to people approaching retirement is simple: “Never use up your pension. You end up retiring and you don’t have enough money. Keep your pension intact and save as much as you can.”

The reality, she says, is that ageing can be expensive. “You don’t think so when you are young, but it does.”

Thembalami deputy manager **Elize Raath** agrees that retirement planning needs to start well before retirement.

“The single most important thing to do before retirement is to create a realistic retirement plan that answers one question: ‘Will my money and resources reliably support the life I want for the rest of my life?’”

She encourages people to start saving as soon as they are financially stable and able to do so, noting that some older people seeking accommodation and care have only a SASSA pension and cannot afford the care they need.

REMEMBER THAT OLDER PEOPLE ARE STILL PEOPLE WITH PLANS AND DREAMS

For 87-year-old **Eunice de Jager**, one of the hardest things about ageing is knowing there are still things she wants to do but can no longer manage as she once did. “I wish people understood about getting older that you do not realise how much you still want to do and yet you can’t do it.”

She wants families to understand that older people may need more patience, sympathy and practical help as they age. “You don’t become lazy, but you feel you have had enough of doing things for yourself,” she says, particularly after losing a spouse.

She also wishes she could still cook and bake.

The message is echoed by Thembalami manager **Esme van der Walt**, who says society can too easily forget that ageing does not make people ‘invisible, powerless or less valuable’.

“Older people carry decades of stories, sacrifices, lessons, love, resilience and wisdom that cannot be measured by age,” she says.

“They still have dreams, hopes, passions and a desire to be heard, respected, included and loved.”

LISTEN TO WHAT OLDER PEOPLE HAVE LEARNT

Social worker **Lara Swanepoel** believes younger generations have much to learn from older people.

She says residents’ experiences demonstrate the value of resilience, patience, perspective and human connection.

“Many residents will tell you that what matters most to them is not what they owned or achieved, but the people they loved and the relationships they built.”

She also says older people can remind younger generations to appreciate simple things – a cup of tea with someone, a visit from family, music, sitting in the garden or simply taking the time to listen.

For **Eunice**, that willingness to listen and help is important.

And perhaps her advice captures the spirit of International Day of Older Persons: getting older does not mean becoming less of a person. It means adapting to change while still wanting to live, contribute, connect and be valued.

As **Esme** puts it: “Ageing is not something that happens to ‘other people’ – it is a journey we are all on.”

Residents walk for Alzheimer's awareness

For Thembalami Care Centre and Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) residents, Thornhill Manor's annual Alzheimer's awareness walk was about more than raising awareness – it was a chance to get outdoors, socialise and enjoy a memorable day together.

The residents joined Thornhill residents on September 14 for the annual dementia awareness walk, wearing purple in support of World Alzheimer's Month.

'The earlier you know, the more you can do: A dementia diagnosis matters' is this year's World Alzheimer's Month theme, highlighting the value of recognising the signs of dementia and seeking an early diagnosis.

Tsakani Shihlomule, Thembalami's occupational therapist, says residents had been looking forward to the outing and were excited to spend time outside in Thornhill's beautiful surroundings.

"They enjoyed admiring the flowers, plants and peaceful surroundings while taking a leisurely walk," she says.

Some residents were determined to walk as far as they could, helping them maintain their physical strength and mobility. Others used wheelchairs or walking aids, with Thornhill residents and staff providing assistance along the route.

Tsakani says the residents also enjoyed chatting with one another and spending time with the Thornhill residents, who were 'very welcoming, friendly and helpful'.

The morning ended with tea and an opportunity for residents to socialise.

The walk also carried an important message about supporting people living with dementia and their families. Thornhill Manor manager Shaun Victor says an early diagnosis can help people and their loved ones understand what is happening, access support and make plans together.



Wendy Mbatha and Bridget Stienen.



Thornhill Manor resident, Joan England with Thembalami recreational assistant Shirley Sibeko.



Thembalami resident Barry Nortje with his wife Kitty.



ABOVE: Peggy Kupa (recreation assistant) and Elizabeth Andrews (Thembalami resident).

RIGHT: Recreation assistant Nellie Dlamini with Donald Cochrane.



Colourful heritage and birthdays celebration

Music, traditional dancing, laughter, delicious food and togetherness characterised the combined heritage celebration and birthday bash held at Thembalami Care Centre and the Max Ordman Deaf Association (MODA) on September 25.

The visiting Indoni Cultural Group entertained residents and staff with energetic traditional dances.

Then it was time for some friendly competition between dancing groups made up of staff from Thembalami, MODA and Reef Caterers. A panel of residents judged the perfor-

mances, with Reef taking first place and the Ibis wing coming second.

Reef Caterers prepared boerevors, chicken and pap and sous – a South African favourite that transcends all cultures – for lunch.

“The celebrations continued with our birthday bash, where we honoured residents and staff who had birthdays in September. We were entertained by the talented Ilana Jooste, who performed beautiful cross-cultural music,” says Thembalami occupational therapist Tsakani Shihlomule.



Ria van der Westhuizen.



Brigitte Stienen.



Entertainer Ilana Jooste.



Eunice de Jager.



Malcom Jaros.



ABOVE: The Reef Catering dancers who delighted the audience.

ABOVE, RIGHT: Thembalami Care Centre dancers Nellie Dlamini, Tebogo Motheta, Shirley Sibeko and Gloria Rachabedi.

RIGHT: The visiting Indoni Cultural Group.

“It is what we take out of our heritage to build our future that is important about these occasions of heritage celebration.”

– Nelson Mandela

