“Diagnosing Dementia: See it sooner” is the theme of WORLD ALZHEIMER’S DAY – 21 SEPTEMBER 2009.

This is about focusing on the importance of getting a diagnosis and urging medical professionals to diagnose dementia as a first step to getting help.

According to Alzheimer’s South Africa, Alzheimer’s disease is the most common course of dementia and accounts for 60 – 70% of all cases. Every year, 4.6 million new cases of dementia are reported worldwide: one new case every seven seconds. By 2050, it is projected; there will be 100 million people with dementia in the world. No country is ready to deal with a crisis of this magnitude.

Worldwide, attention to this rapidly growing problem is so small that most of those affected continue to suffer without help, or hope. This must change! The quality of life of people with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias can be transformed. Too often, they, their families and carers lack the support they need.

According to Alzheimer’s Disease International, the following six principles should be adopted to make Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias a global priority:

- Promote awareness and understanding of the disease
- Respect the human rights of people with the disease
- Recognize the key role of families and carers
- Provide access to health and social care
- Stress the importance of optimal treatment after diagnosis
- Take action to prevent the disease, through improvements in public health

The above principles pose a serious challenge for SAVF. Let us all take hands in providing the best possible care to our residents suffering from this debilitating disease.

For more information visit www.alzheimers.org.za or contact the Alzheimer’s South Africa help line on 0860 102 681.

Article submitted by Johan Bosch, Manager, SAVF Herfsakker

1 Oktober / October
Internasionale Dag vir Ouer persone / International Day for Older Persons.

Vir die kinders / For the Children:
Oupa en Ouma Dag / Grand Parents Day
SAVF Mission
To render
social services
as a
national welfare
organisation
to individuals
and families
within
the community
in order
to empower them
to improve
quality of life.

SAVF Missie
Om as
nasionale
welsynsorganisasie
maatskaplike dienste
aan individue en gesinne
binne die gemeenskap
te lever
ten einde
hul te bemagtig
om ’n verskil
in lewenskwaliteit
teweeg te bring.

What difference does the SENIOR SANGALA LUNCHEON CLUB make to JOHANNA MARELETSE and other people?

Johanna Mareletse was born in 1936 at Stillfontein and moved to Rietvallei X 2 & 3 during 1997.

Rietvallei is an informal settlement in the Mogale City (Krugersdorp) area, where SAVF Môreglans conducts outreach programmes. The social worker, Helen Nyembe, and social auxiliary worker, Leslie Masupane, are involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Senior Sangala Club, in conjunction with the input from members. The club currently has approximately 30 members and meets twice a week.

Johanna joined the Senior Sangala Luncheon Club during 2004 and the following are some of the activities that form part of the club:

**Scripture reading:**
Johanna says: “We invite God and this fosters togetherness and spiritual enrichment. We also learn about sharing and being more co-operative”.

**Topic discussions:**
Johanna mentioned that they were empowered with information about the Act on Elderly Abuse. They also had a workshop with their family members, to get more insight into the ageing process and dealing with their elderly family in a respectful manner.

**Exercises and Games:**
“When I started with Senior Sangala, I was sick, but now I feel healthy. I feel rejuvenated. I had chronic high blood pressure, not responding well to treatment, but today I have stabilized blood pressure.

**Outings:**
The Sangalas sometimes go on outings. “I find them exciting and they give us an opportunity to socialize and explore life. We also meet other elders from other places or areas. The most exciting outing was the SABC visit, where we could see how they film programmes and understand the studios”.

**Support Group:**
Johanna says that the group is also a support group for the members and if someone experiences a death in the family, the members try to send monetary condolences. “This is very helpful. It gives a sense of belonging. I have confidence in the Club and am happy to be a member”.

Ken jy ’n ouer persoon in die gemeenskap wat vereensaam?
Reik uit of sien toe dat die persoon ingeskakel word by gemeenskaps-aktiwiteite.
'n Nuwe sweetpak! Dankie Tannies.

Tydens die afgelope VLU Overvaal Kongres was SAVF bevoorreg om ‘n wavrag sweetpakke, splifternuut, as skenking te ontvang. Dit is die Vroue Landbou Unie se OMGEE bydrae, spesifiek vir kinders in SAVF kinderhuise, wat al etlike jare realiseer.

Teen die eerste koue van die volgende winter sal hierdie kinders toegerus wees. Hoekom werk ons nou al vir volgende jaar?

Omdat dit nie maklik is om 495 groeiende kinders aan te trek nie!

‘n Mens kan amper sê: “Almal in Volksrust ken SAVF”.


- Jaarlikse Gholfdag – die afgelope 15 jaar;
- NLDTF (Lotto) ondersteuning vir meer as 8 jaar;
- Verkoop van ’n gesogte resepboek “Uit die SAVF Kombuis” die afgelope 7 jaar;
- Jaarlikse kollekte deur kerke.

Tremendous support is experienced from various sources with the “Winter Warmth” project (collection of clothes and food) and food drives by the Volksrust High and Pioneer Primary Schools.

Fourteen volunteers, involved on a rotation basis, help once a week with the collection, sorting and handing out of second hand clothes to the needy. This year, SAVF Family Day was devoted to foster parents. Certificates were handed out to these parents as a token of acknowledgement of their dedication and contribution to the lives and future of children in distress. (Photo: Mss Rona de Jager - Chairperson, Zenzile Ngwenya - Foster parent, Nadeane Robertson - Social worker).

Furthermore, feeding schemes at two different schools in the local township feed about 989 children daily. This is mostly the only meal they enjoy, and only on school days. During the strikes and unrests in the townships, meals could not be provided which left the children starving. On the day in July 2009 that the service could start again, children were pleading: “We are starving!”

The social work services, in collaboration with volunteers, are clear proof of dedication to improve life at Volksrust.

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN...

children swallow objects, get hurt, need medical attention—as children do from time to time? On Saturday, 12 September, SAVF had a very interesting training event for the Principals of SAVF Day care facilities.

Innocent, a volunteer from The SA Red Cross Society, and Johannes, the “living doll” and employee, illustrated how basic First Aid should be done.
Six years ago, a remarkable woman, Ms Yvonne Mc Heath, had a vision to serve the older persons in her community and the Care Buddies movement was established in White River, Mpumalanga.

During June 2007, under the leadership of Ms Marcel van Doorn, the Nelspruit Care Buddies was established. Two years later the number of care buddies has grown to 35 dedicated members with one vision in mind: to provide love, care, companionship and entertainment to the older persons of Nelspruit.

The care buddies serve the needs of 120 older persons at the SAVF Herfsakker, Macadamia and Mpumalanga frail care facilities. Each resident is assigned with his/her own care buddy who visits them on a weekly basis. They also visit residents when hospitalised. Furthermore, the care buddies are involved in various fundraising activities to assist the facilities under their care. The establishment of the “Garden of Eden” at the SAVF Herfsakker old age home is a good example of what the care buddies achieved within the two years of their existence.

The frail care facilities in Nelspruit are very excited about their latest initiative, the “make a wish” campaign. Each resident was requested to write down their wish, no matter how big or how small and the care buddies are actively in the process of obtaining sponsors to make the dreams a reality.

In a time where volunteers are becoming a scarce commodity, the care buddies fulfil an important task in providing for the needs of our older persons, says Johan Bosch, Manager, SAVF Herfsakker.

For more information on the care buddies, please contact Marcel at carebuddies@savfkzn.co.za

Photo: The Nelspruit Care Buddies during their second birthday in June 2009.