

RC Johannesburg New Dawn - Woodside Sanctuary

The Rotary Club of Johannesburg New Dawn got a whole range of teatime goodies together to spoil the staff and residents of Woodside Sanctuary in Cottesloe, Johannesburg. Woodside had been going through a torrid time and the club decided to give them some moral and tasty support in the form of scones, muffins, rusks, cakes and biscuits, amongst other things.



New Dawn members Jenine Coetzer (left) and Mike and Linda Vink handed the trolley full of goodies over to Jane Mkhwanazi, supervisor of Woodside during the visit last month. Woodside Sanctuary is home to 81 severely to profoundly intellectually and physically disabled residents, ranging from 4 to 64 years in age. Woodside was established in 1955.

The home has been devastated by the impact of COVID-19. Kirsten Williams, General Manager of Woodside said that since the lockdown there has been a critical decline in donations coming in which is the lifeblood of the home. "We are battling with a R3,5m deficit per annum and although many of the parents pay for the care of their children, many of them are battling financially and have lost their jobs and livelihoods. In addition, we have had no support from the Department of Health for essential items such as protective gear and we have had to fund that ourselves."

Residents and staff have also been badly affected by the pandemic. Williams said that 48 residents and 19 staff members have tested positive but all have been asymptomatic, largely due to the pro-active measures the home took to ensure that they stayed healthy. Woodside has since, however been declared a Green Zone.

The residents of Woodside are 100% dependent on care and Williams said that it is her fervent hope that people won't forget about the dire needs of these residents and support them as part of the community.