

BY JACQUI THOMPSON

**SPREADING feel-good news.**

**W**ANT to say thank you? Got something positive to say about someone? Has a stranger done a good deed for you? Have you received outstanding service from a place or a person? We want to know about it. No kind deed should go unacknowledged. E-mail [mmandinews@gmail.com](mailto:mmandinews@gmail.com) or sms the word 'Mnandi' to 48408. Keep your message to about 50 words and include your name or pseudonym and area.

THANK YOU to the Uber driver Timeon who, when he found my phone on the floor, called the company he'd just dropped me off at to let me know he had it and would drop it off as soon as he finished his next trip. When I came out of the meeting there was my phone at Reception. It had been returned before I even knew it was missing. There are good people in this world and Timeon is one of them.

*Shane Doyle, Durban North*

WE go into Tzaneen for a weekly shop every Friday afternoon. This time my daughter was with me as there was no sport at school. As we were shopping she saw a man who was very shabbily dressed and obviously didn't have a lot of money. He was picking up everything and looking at the prices and the money in his hand and then putting things back. His shoes were very broken. She went off and came back with a loaf of bread, a litre of milk, some cold cuts and asked for her pocket money in advance as she wanted to buy these things for him. She bought everything and went and gave it to him. He was so surprised. I was so touched and am grateful God gave me this special little angel.

*Zodwa, Tzaneen*

THANDEKA was an air cabin crew member on Kulula for the Cape Town to Johannesburg flight recently and was just so proficient and friendly and had something nice to say to every passenger she dealt with as she completed her work. It was nice to be treated like we mattered because some staff treat us like we are cattle in cattle class. I travel with this airline frequently and I hope I meet her again.

*Fouad F, Observatory*

Want to say thank you? WhatsApp us on 060 858 1086 and we will feature your kind gesture.



BY VANESSA PAPAS

PICS: SOCIAL MEDIA

**HIS GOOD DENTAL DEEDS**

*Help Kids*

**UNDERPRIVILEGED kids from Ponolopele Drop In Centre are getting free dental care.**

**I**N the maze of streets of Alexandra township you will find Ponolopele ('Looking Forward') Drop In Centre, a tiny house where Mama Sally and her small staff take care of up to 300 kids, 19 of whom are orphans, on a daily basis.

The dedicated and humble Sally founded the centre in 2011 after seeing how many children were in need of care after school, as parents were at work and unable to help with homework or provide meals for their children. After appealing for help on John Robbie's show on 702, the Dis-Chem



The practice is using Ponolopele as a pilot project for the Dental Wellness Trust

Foundation began, and continues to this day, to donate food; as did Streetlight Schools, which came on board and 'adopted' the centre. But a third benefactor was to join in helping them: dentist and prosthodontist Dr Norman Cahi, who has been quietly assisting underprivileged children with free dental care for many years.

Until last year he had helped Thuthuzela Aid Community Centre, also situated in Alex.

Then the link up to Ponolopele happened through Streetlight School's Tracey Kalish. Tracey had reached out to Dr Cahi's daughter, Chelsea, who in turn asked him to help by providing the children of



The Ponolopele staff



# THOSE WHO HELP THEMSELVES

ONE reader recounts how her cousin left too much up to fate – and paid dearly for it.

**“RACHEL was enjoying a higher life. The life that degraded her was gone. Peace, joy and a chance to plan positive followed in a year of great change.**

**But after months of progress a new wave of destruction flooded her body with sickness.**

At first Rachel couldn't walk properly – even getting out of bed was impossible. Her mom decided to consult a local doctor, who did a complete check-up. He told Rachel's mom to see that she was admitted to a hospital immediately. After an examination she was given antibiotics for a lung infection. Rachel recovered and pursued her dream, focusing on the passion of her future: youth ministry. When she thought she was recovered she abandoned the medicine, believing that God had healed a life-threatening emergency. Whenever she met with a friend she told them about the miracle. Rachel's life soared for a while. But then the symptoms returned. For two weeks she stayed at home, turning only to prayer for help, but things only got worse and eventually she was sent back to hospital. Tests were redone and a waiting period followed. After being put on a drip she was taken home, but her life ebbed away until, hours later, she was no more.

With Rachel died, I decided to continued her journey. Her request to me was to tell her story. Rachel never foresaw the impending crisis. Her previous life had crept back and taken over her system slowly.

While miracles exist, and are accessible to every person of faith, it is important to realise that some sicknesses must fall into the hands of medical practitioners. It is foolish, for example, if you have diabetes, to neglect to take any action.

Stories like these are told to those left behind.

Guard your heart spiritually, but watch over all the other organs practically. Life needs to be lived to the full; do not yield to poor choices or temptation. Be acutely aware and live your life full of confidence. Rachel had a chance to find what was wrong with her, but she acted too late. Don't leave your family with questions and guilt, especially when you are as young as 40.”

**Tell us your story.**  
E-mail  
[robertc@caxton.co.za](mailto:robertc@caxton.co.za)  
**we print, we pay!**  
(Please keep all submissions to no more than 500 words.)

PLEASE NOTE: These stories are sent in by readers and each is the opinion of the reader only. **people** magazine is not responsible for what is sent in or how actions/procedures have been followed.  
\*Names have been changed.



and handing out hugs, while they have their teeth looked at.

And so it has continued as a wonderful tradition, with all parties coming together to give the children much-needed dental care and a bit of fun in their lives.

Back at the centre, the difficult conditions under which it operates are starkly obvious. It is basically one room with a small amount of space outside expanding onto the actual street. It is on that street that some of the children have to do their homework as the one room is used to cook the food and has a few desks for schoolwork. The children are not even able to sit down and eat as there is not enough space.

The older children attend after school while the younger ones attend Mante crèche down the street and then move to Ponolopele after crèche is finished. The centre also looks after the children during the school holidays from 08h00 to 14h30 everyday.

Parents meetings are held every three months so that if particular issues arise they can be discussed.

Sally's staff consists of five volunteers, two of whom do the cooking and three others who help children with homework or oversee activities. Sally oversees the centre and has to constantly try to drum up badly needed funds and donations to help the centre continue functioning.

Currently they do not receive any assistance from the government. Much like the taxi industry, which responded to the desperate need for transport, people took it upon themselves to meet the demand informally for crèches and daycare centres. Standards

at these care centres vary hugely, depending on where they are situated, how much funding they've managed to garner and how many staff there are for the number of children they serve.

The fact is that

informal crèches and daycare centres simply cannot meet the requirements for receiving government assistance, such as approved building plans, a separate kitchen that meets health regulations, exit signs for formal fire escape routes, half a square metre per child to play in, and a toilet for every 20 children.



The Miss SA pageant entrants visit the practice

Ponolopele with free dental care. Cahi Dental Practice has now launched the Gauteng branch of the Dental Wellness Trust, founded by ex-South African dentist Dr Linda Greenwall. The practice is using Mama Sally and Ponolopele as their pilot project for the Dental Wellness Trust, which aims to educate and teach both moms and carers of vulnerable kids in the poorer areas two basic hygiene skills – washing hands and brushing teeth. As well as this his provision of free dental care, five years

ago, as a sponsor to the Miss SA pageant, he suggested that as part of their charity work the pageant entrants visit the practice when some of the centre's children were having their check-ups.

Every year, children are treated to snacks and lunch, party games and presents, with the Miss SA entrants holding their hands

## Pay It Forward

IDEALLY Sally needs a much larger house to operate from. She is also always in need of school uniforms (white shirts, black or grey jerseys, and pants) and school shoes. Also books, stationery, toys, food and clothes.

Please contact Sally on 072 125 3113 if you are able to help, or Dr Cahi on [styleyoursmile@netactive.co.za](mailto:styleyoursmile@netactive.co.za). To find out more about the Dental Wellness Trust go to [www.dentalwellnesstrust.org](http://www.dentalwellnesstrust.org)



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