

Hangklip Community Care Centre

Reg No. 102-000-NPO



Quarterly Newsletter – No. 6, January 2019

Hangklip Community Care Centre (HCCC) is a fully independent, registered NPO. Our vision is to promote a closely-knit Hangklip community (residents of Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay and Rooi Els) in which there is mutual caring for one another, and in which problems of inadequate nutrition, loneliness, infirmity, neglect, etc., are effectively addressed. In pursuit of this vision, we facilitate a range of services to the community, assisted by a large team of community-based volunteers. Such services include:

- *Nutritious and enjoyable meals provided at subsidised, affordable prices*
- *Food parcels disseminated free of charge to residents who struggle to provide for their basic nutritional needs*
- *A clinic for dispensing chronic medication, also offering routine medical tests and access to medical/nursing aids on loan*
- *Opportunities for group activities, recreation and social interaction.*

In addition, we are actively developing an initiative which we call HAIL (Home-based Assisted Independent Living), through which residents with diminished capacity to care for themselves, or inability to function with full independence, can be assisted to continue living in their own homes, within the community and surroundings they love, for as long as possible.

A community working together – a tribute to our volunteer fire fighters and their helpers

It would appear that nothing unites a community and moves them to care for one another more than a time of crisis, especially if capable people step forward to assume leadership during such a time. This is amply illustrated by events surrounding the devastating fire which started in the Betty's Bay/Pringle Bay area on the 1st of January and raged until the afternoon of 11th of January when it was largely contained with the help of welcome rain showers – and with the mopping-up operations which then continued until the 21st of January.

The Hangklip community obviously owes a deep debt of gratitude to the fire fighters deployed to deal with the fire. They were drawn from many fire services, including Overstrand Fire, Cape Nature, Working on Fire, Wild Fire Services, Overberg Fire and Cape Town Fire. Operations were directed by the Joint Operations Centre, managed by Overstrand Fire and Cape Nature.

However, without the support of the community, the fire fighters would have been severely hampered in their efforts to get on top of the rapidly spreading fires. And this is where the Betty's Bay Volunteer Fire Fighters stepped in, under the very able leadership of Jorika Rabie and Liz Cartwright. The decision was taken to set up the Crassula Hall (leased from the Overstrand Municipality by the Betty's Bay Ratepayers Association) as an eating and resting place and first-aid centre for all those active in combating the fire on various fronts. Over the three weeks commencing on January 1st, hot meals and cold drinks were served at this venue, with the meals provided (including accommodation of requests for Halaal and vegan) numbering an incredible 11 540. In response to appeals, local businesses (SPAR and OK), farmers from Bonnievale and Grabouw, as well as many other suppliers – too many to mention – donated ingredients for these meals. Appeals disseminated through various WhatsApp groups (Neighbourhood Watch and others) also resulted in generous donations of ingredients from local residents and even visitors. Meals were prepared and served to fire fighters with the help of many organisations and volunteers, local as well as from Somerset West, Gordons Bay and further afield, who worked shifts during each 24-hour period.

Throughout the 3 weeks in question, Liz and Jorika laboured tirelessly in seeing to the needs of the fire fighters and in fact slept on air mattresses at Crassula Hall during this time. Early in the morning of the 12th January they were seen patrolling newly burnt areas in an effort to assess the well-being of residents affected by the fire. Subsequently they have been sorting donated household items stored at the Crassula Hall and have started distributing these to the needy.

Jorika and Liz, HCCC salutes you and all the volunteers who selflessly supported you, not only for your valiant efforts on behalf of local residents, but also for advancing the spirit of caring within our community. Should any reader wish to show appreciation to the Volunteer Fire Fighters by making a cash donation, funds may be deposited in the following account:

Bettys Bay Ratepayers Association, ABSA Hermanus, Account 4066616439, Ref: Surname & Fire.

Better community safety in potential disaster situations

Despite the best efforts of the Joint Operations Centre and the fire fighters, 41 houses were burnt down and another 28 seriously damaged in the Jock's Bay and Sunny Seas areas of Betty's Bay. WhatsApp group conversations (mainly Neighbourhood Watch and community groups) captured on the 11th January reveal that the speed with which the NW gale-driven fire advanced from Harold Porter Gardens to Sunny Seas took most residents and possibly even the fire authorities by surprise and left many in a state of panic and confusion as to how to respond – whether and when to evacuate, and to what destination. Instructions to evacuate, when disseminated through these groups, were on the late side and possibly went unnoticed by many intended recipients. Some residents had no transport and would in any case not have been able to evacuate without assistance. Residents on the sea side of Clarence Drive in Sunny Seas, especially, had almost no time to evacuate by road and several took refuge on the rocks. Clearly there was insufficient warning of this impending disaster.

For this reason, HCCC would strongly support the development and implementation of a more efficient, effective advance warning capability pertaining to natural disasters (not only fires but also floods) for our area. In the case of fire, the two components would be (a) a model or protocol for predicting the speed, direction and arrival time of the fire based on real-time fire observations, vegetation and terrain conditions and forecasted wind and other weather conditions and (b) a communication system designed to convey timely warnings to all residents. With regard to the latter HCCC has, in any case, a special interest in the development of a communication/information system – of paramount importance for meeting a wide range of care-related needs of Hangklip residents.

Ongoing services

The demand for **meals** prepared and provided three times a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, is showing steady growth, especially among members who are subsidised to the maximum level and pay only R10 per meal, approximately 25% of the cost of producing the meal. The subsidised meal service, together with the food parcel service, helps HCCC to attain one of its objectives, viz to promote access to adequate nutrition for all members of the Hangklip community, regardless of income. The **food parcel service** currently entails the monthly distribution of parcels to households within Betty's Bay and Mooiuitsig. However, members of needy households throughout the whole Hangklip area may apply to become beneficiaries of this service. Approval of applications will depend on the outcome of a means test based on household income. (*Enquiries relating to meals and food parcels should be directed to Patricia Ackerberg – 082 378 1641*).

The **clinic**, held once every eight weeks, continues to serve more than 100 patients per occasion by dispensing (government issued) chronic medication and recording basic medical observations. Patients encounter a congenial atmosphere and are able to enjoy tea or coffee and refreshments while waiting for attention. (*Enquiries: Linette Perold – 084 522 0809*)

We strive to create opportunities for **social interaction and recreation**. On most Wednesdays the HCCC **dining room** is filled to capacity as people share in a lunch and enjoy one another's company. Fridays presents a further opportunity to enjoy sit-down meals in the company of others. Booking (*by contacting Patricia Ackerberg – 082 378 1641*) is essential. The resumption of **Pilates** classes after the Christmas break has been delayed to early February by the fire-related occupation of the Crassula Hall. The **bridge** "club", which is open to experienced players as well as novices, continues to meet on the first and third Tuesday afternoon of every month. Several **social events**, some with fundraising as an additional objective, have been placed on this year's calendar. Examples are a fun run, art exhibition, high tea and a public talk. These will be advertised and more details provided in due course.

Home-Based Care and HAIL

HAIL (the acronym for **Home-based Assisted Independent Living**) encompasses the facilitation of a suite of complementary services designed to help our residents sustain a good quality of life and enable them to age gracefully in their own homes, drawing on appropriate support from a caring community. HAIL was first introduced to the community at a public meeting on 18th October, 2018. Topping the list of services to be facilitated is the provision of affordable home-based care which involves the development of a well co-ordinated team of carers. This would be achieved by working hand-in-hand with those already in the field and providing support in the form of ongoing liaison and education – essential if a standard of excellence is to be maintained. In this we also hope to be able to rely on the support of local nurses trained in palliative care, and others with valuable related skills.

In addition to home-based care, HAIL focuses on meeting other primary requirements for independent living, including safety and security; the retention of autonomy; combating isolation and loneliness; enhancing communication and enabling stimulation and education. In this regard, we aim to foster close co-operation across our three villages in general and with relevant community organisations in particular. Our immediate priorities are to:

- Enlist the support of skilled nurses, palliative-trained carers, ancillary health workers and social workers; inputs of Overstrand Hospice and Cansa are especially important in this regard
- Establish ongoing educational and training needs of carers and take first steps to meet these needs
- Establish an effective administrative and communication centre supported by relevant data bases and information systems
- Develop a co-ordinated network of volunteers to provide or facilitate practical support with regard to transport, home maintenance, security, gardening, communication, shopping, etc
- Start the roll-out of HAIL-related services to the community at first opportunity.

(For enquiries or to offer assistance, please contact Joy Rourke – 060 983 8446).

Conclusion

Please assist in ensuring that this newsletter is brought to the attention of as many Hangklip residents as possible, both to make them aware of the services that HCCC facilitates and to encourage them to become members. For those wishing to make a once-off or regular cash donation to HCCC (tax-deductible), our banking details follow. Please use your last name and initials as reference and e-mail your contact details to our treasurer, Adrian de Kock (*adrian25@telkomsa.net*) to allow us to issue an appropriate receipt for tax purposes.

Account Name: Hangklip Community Care Centre **Bank:** First National Bank **Account No:** 62460003818

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