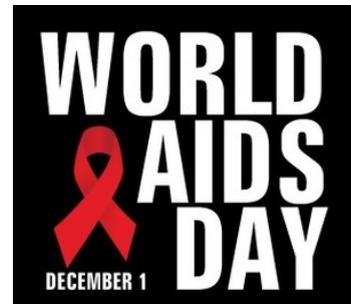




Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust

Dear Friends of Hact

Wow - here we are marking another World AIDS Day! For the team at Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust every day is AIDS day, but we are grateful that on this day, 01 December, the world turns its attention to the pandemic, takes stock of the developments made in research and treatment, and remembers the far too many lives lost and the many children left orphaned in its wake.



Today we are hugely encouraged by the recent developments making news waves around South Africa. Firstly the test and treat approach which means that now everyone who tests positive for HIV can be immediately initiated onto life-saving ARV medication, without having to wait for their CD4 count (immune strength) to drop to a particular level as was in the past. Secondly the HIV vaccine clinical trial the was launched this week at 15 sites around the country. These developments encourage us hugely, and give us renewed hope that we may very well live to realise our vision of an AIDS-free Valley of 1000 Hills.

On behalf of our team, I wish you a beautiful and blessed Christmas and holiday season. May it be filled with light, love, joy and rest. We are grateful for each of you and the contribution you have made to Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust this year - together we are strong and can make a lasting footprint in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

With love this Christmas,

Olivia and the HACT team.

Remembering Those Lost - HACT's
2016 World AIDS Day Candle
Lighting Ceremony

This morning, HACT staff, volunteers and patients

gathered in the centre's Respite Unit for a candle-lighting ceremony to commemorate World AIDS Day and to remember those who have died due to AIDS-related illnesses over the past year.

Eighty two candles were lit at our Respite Unit, representing the eighty two patients that have passed away in the Unit over the past 12 months. Leading the ceremony, HACT's Nursing Services Manager, Sr Julie Hornby spoke of the hope that exists for those living with HIV if they can accept their HIV status and commit to taking their medication. "There is hope for those living with HIV and it is possible to live a long and healthy life so long as you take your ARV treatment every day" stressed Julie.



The moving ceremony was also an opportunity for all those present to remember the lives of loved ones they had personally lost to the pandemic over the past 12 months and for some of HACT's patients to personally share their battle with the disease and thank HACT's Respite Unit staff for the love and care they had received.

As the only facility of its kind in the region, HACT's Respite Unit continues to be a beacon of hope to those living with HIV and who are battling AIDS-related illnesses. The 24-bed facility offers free care and treatment to those in end stage AIDS. Of the over 220 patients that are admitted to the Unit each year, roughly 67% recover to the point they can return home to their families while the other 33% pass away in a dignified environment surrounded by HACT's caring staff.

Fun For The Whole Family at HACT's 2016 World AIDS Day Christmas Market This Saturday!



HACT's annual World AIDS Day Christmas Market will be taking place this **Saturday, the 3rd December 2016** from **8am to 2pm**. The market is an opportunity for HACT's many community-based crafters who are impacted by HIV/AIDS to sell their work to the public and raise some much needed income for themselves and their families this festive season.

It will be a morning packed with activities for the whole family, including craft stalls, an indigenous plant sale, live music, a tea garden, kiddies play area, HIV and wellness testing, a raffle and tours of the Centre.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Meet HACT's 2016 Gogo of the Year - Bongekile Phewa

65 year-old Gogo, Bongekile Phewa (pictured middle) was crowned 2016 Gogo of the Year at HACT's electric Gogo of the Year and Gogo Support Group of the Year event that was held on Friday, the 25th November 2016. Approximately 400 Gogos attended the memorable event which also served to mark the 10th anniversary of HACT's Gogo Support Group programme.



Bongekile won this year's coveted award due to her tireless work in the community supporting and teaching Gogos income generating skills despite her suffering from severe mobility-impairment due to arthritis. There were twenty-four nominees for Gogo of the Year this year, each of whom were interviewed by a panel of judges before Bongekile was selected as the winner.

Bongekile was also selected as this year's winner for her efforts in raising awareness about HIV/AIDS and related health issues and the intricacy of the hand-made costume she was wearing on the day. As the sole breadwinner in her family, Gogo Bongekile Phewa knows only too well what it is like to live on a meagre income. Her son went missing in 1991 during political unrest, so she raised his children on her own.

"Before I joined the support group life was stressful and very sad. It was very hard to make ends meet. But now I am part of the group my life is busy and happy - we help and support each other and we can tell each other our problems. The main stress I have now is being able to fit in all the activities I'm involved in! I am still desperate though to find my son and know if he is still alive," said Gogo Bongekile upon receiving the award.

Introducing The Hope Club - Help HACT Give Hope To Those Impacted by HIV/AIDS



For the past 26 years, HACT has been providing unconditional love and **hope** to thousands of people impacted by HIV/AIDS.

There has been much progress in the fight against the disease during this time, and while we know the battle is far from over, we now have more **hope** than ever that we will one day realise our dream of an HIV-free generation and an AIDS-free Valley of 1000 Hills.

Through our holistic and family-centric approach, HACT is determined to continue

tackling the devastating impact that HIV/AIDS is having on our families, friends, communities and workplaces, one person and one family at a time...

Every day, HACT gives **hope** to thousands of people impacted by HIV/AIDS. **Hope** for a second chance at life through our Respite Unit, **hope** for a better life through our economic empowerment projects and **hope** for an HIV-free generation through our education and prevention programmes.

But all of HACT's work is dependent on the generous support of the public and we need the support of our local communities now more than ever before.

Today, on World AIDS Day 2016, we are therefore calling on all our friends and supporters - be they an individual, church or business, to please join our Hope Club and commit to making a monthly donation of just R100.

Together we can make a difference and give hope to those that need it most...

For more info and to sign up for our Hope Club, please see our [website](#).

HACT's 2015/2016 Annual Report

The HACT team are very pleased to present our 2015/2016 Annual Report which can be downloaded [here](#).



The report features the many highlights and challenges that HACT has experienced over the past year as well as the ever-expanding impact that our projects and programmes are having on those impacted by the HIV/AIDS pandemic in our local communities.

HACT would like to extend its sincere thanks to [TBWA](#), [Fishwicks](#) and [Antalis](#) for sponsoring the design, printing and paper for the Annual Report and to all our friends, donors and partners that contributed to the year's success.



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