

# EXECUTIVE ANNUAL REPORT: 2006

## Introduction:

2006 was a remarkable and unforgettable year in more than one respect. From the normal day to day running and everyday events at an organisation such as Orion, to extremely exciting and challenging times, left us many a time gasping for breath. Some of these times were so intense, that one cannot but wonder how we survived it all.

Orion managed to grow from strength to strength: from disappointments to major breakthroughs.

It rings loud and clear: Orion has elevated to a different level with partners, stakeholders and donors. At a recent function hosted by the Hamlet Foundation during which Orion received special recognition for extraordinary, outstanding services rendered to people with disabilities, the organisation was acknowledged for its phenomenal growth and setting an example for other similar organisations in this field of expertise. The organisation is viewed as an establishment that mirrors commitment, caring for and sharing with vulnerable groups in society.

Orion shows a willingness to transform in order to stay in line with the external environment, government policies, quality standards and stakeholder expectations. The organisation is committed to the new South Africa, where everybody has the right to live to their fullest capabilities. We recognize our differences and want to give positive input to bring it all together. Orion wants to improve the quality of life of all citizens while creating and proclaiming unity. It rejects any form of discrimination, and is free from any form of segregation, including the stigma of being associated with "being disabled". As Deputy Chief Justice Moseneke stated, life is not just for the elite, life is also for the less fortunate.

High goals were set in order to elevate the disabled from rejection and discrimination in order to be accepted as normal human beings.

## Some highlights:

- It was an unforgettable day when two of our trainees, Anthea and Patrick Hosking, walked down the aisle after deciding to continue their personal growth through marriage. After a few years at Orion, training and teaching essential life skills, installing and enhancing personal values, true commitment, and an understanding for taking responsibility for their own lives, they are now well-equipped to take on one of the biggest challenges in life - married life.
- Two of our staff members, Suzelle Goliath and Mary-Ann Cedras, were blessed with new babies - congratulations to them and their families.
- New staff members joined Team Orion at Wilge Special Day Care and Group Homes. The social worker was replaced by a new full time employee, Caroline Jacobs, from the Department of Social Development.



- The founder and former director of Orion, Melville Segal, launched his book “Turn right at Magnolia Street” - a book dedicated to the touching story of the inception of the organisation, as well as how it developed to its present state.
- 20 Staff members, including the group home parents and workshop supervisors, received training in HIV/AIDS awareness, as well as ongoing training through the Western Cape Mental Health Society in various aspects regarding the care of persons with disabilities preventing and/or living with HIV/AIDS.
- “Do-It-Day” is a real winner! As our state president, Mr Thabo Mbeki, once mentioned - “the spirit of volunteerism should be rekindled in our country”. This initiative by Greater Good SA is hailed by all who are involved with Orion. Many volunteers all over the country get involved to assist organisations with various projects. Orion was privileged to have all six of the group homes painted and more recently, started with herb gardens at two of the homes.
- Orion featured in 15 press releases during the year. This kind of exposure and recognition play a major role in creating awareness amongst the general public and the business world about the existence and activities of the organisation.
- During September 2006, staff of the Santé Wellness Centre visited Orion, together with Natalie Du Toit, champion South African disabled swimmer. On this special day Natalie shared her encouraging experience of being a true winner and champion, whilst the therapists of Santé treated staff and trainees with hand massages and a scrumptious lunch.
- The annual fund raising gala event which is held during November, has become a real show stopper on the year calendar. Most of our donors and friends of Orion use this event as the year-end function for their staff and clientele, and at the same time assist the organisation to raise funds for much-needed running costs.

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### A few achievements:

- As an extension to the existing group home project, one home was adapted specially to serve as a semi-frail care unit. With the assistance of donors the objective was achieved and this special home was officially opened during May 2006. Unfortunately two of our residents recently passed away after long illnesses. It was an honour to be able to provide them with the full care which they deserved until the end.
- A professional DVD was produced to use as an important instrument and aid for fund raising and marketing. This DVD is literally traveling the world in order to tell the Orion story, resulting in many a stranger becoming a friend of Orion after being introduced to the organisation in such a visible manner.
- With the assistance of our German friends and donors, Orion’s own website was established - [www.orionfriendship.org](http://www.orionfriendship.org) - giving donors immediate access to the activities of the organisation. The website is regularly updated, keeping all abreast of what happens at Orion.



- During September/October 2006 a successful fund raising trip was undertaken to Germany, when under the initiative of our patrons, Dr Gert and Marion Maichel, together with the South African patrons, Lou Coetzer and Alida Raubenheimer-Coetzer, Orion had the opportunity to present the organisation and its needs to a number of German industrialists and foundations.
- More trainees were successfully placed into the open labour market, and they are doing exceptionally well, e.g. at Atlantis Forge, Atlantis Foundries, Bokomo Foods and Pick 'n Pay, to name a few.
- After joining forces with Rattan Gallery, the wood work factory opened its first Orion Bed & Mattress Factory Shop in Table View during September 2006. Plans are in progress to open more of these outlets.
- Securing not only local donors, but also establishing international relationships with the UK, Netherlands and Germany to assist with Wilge's growing needs for transport and therapy, resulted in the special day care growing to almost full capacity. The complement includes ten new children from Darling area.
- The Activity Centre is operating with renewed enthusiasm which is evident from its growth and the general attitude displayed by all those involved.
- A new partnership was formed with TRW Automotive, Atlantis, where various car parts are assembled, resulting in creating additional jobs for 6 people with disabilities, as well as 2 full time able-bodied employees.

Unfortunately September did not just bring spring into our lives. Our deepest condolences are expressed to our administrative clerk, Shiejam Blanckenberg, and her family, who lost their baby daughter at birth. We wish them God's peace and comfort in order to deal with their tragic loss.

Our sincere gratitude to the Departments of Social Development and Health, partners, donors and all taking hands with our newly funded Orion-Friendship-Circle across the world, showing their support and trust in a tangible way. Incidentally, the organisation's new slogan, "Orion, where winners never quit!", also includes our current donors, partners and stakeholders - we cannot do it without you!

In closing, a quote from Dr Gert Maichel, who made the following remark during our recent visit to Germany: "The contagious passion and commitment by which every trainee, resident, child, family member, staff and Board member takes part in activities at Orion, and serves the organisation to reach its goals and objectives, are truly inspirational to all!"

This kind of encouragement motivates us to do and give our best at all times to the special people in our care.

*L Van Wyk*

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**LIZELLE VAN WYK**  
 CEO: ORION ORGANISATION

**Annexure:**

A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS TO ALL OUR DONORS, PARTNERS AND FRIENDS-OF-ORION WHO MAKE LIFE A BETTER PLACE. *We salute you!*

Income generating projects	Grants/Donations (01 April 2005 - 31 March 2006)
AirChefs Cape Union Mart Crazy Coasters Desta Power Matla Geyser Duvets GUD-Hummelman Filters Hangerman Kaytech Linpac Materials Handling Nouvele Mushrooms Pioneer Foods t/a Bokomo Foods Rattan Gallery Simonsig Wine Estate TRW Automotive Ysterplaat Medical Supplies	Adams & Adams Allen & Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust Anonymous Atlantis United Congregational Church Bass Gordon Willis Blaauwberg Sub-Council Camphill UK (William Morris Village) City of Cape Town Lou & Alida Coetzer Tiekie & Hannl Cronje C2M Chartered Accountants Department of Health Department of Social Development Desta Power Matla DG Murray Trust Dollies Exponential Brokers FCI Brokers Funding SA Fibermill Greater Good SA Give as you Earn (CAFSA) Hangerman Heinz Foods H Hart HJL Medical Services J&A Jones Jonkers Taxis Kaytech Linpac Materials Handling Dr Gert & Marion Maichel Marius & Maryke Nel Paint Warehouse Pioneer Foods t/a Bokomo Foods Promeal Rand Merchant Bank Rattan Gallery Red Dot RFS Catering Supplies S Crompton Sealed Air Africa Skills Dynamic Africa Solstice Foundation Syringa Trust Tedex Trading Wiehahn Foundation

