ORIELLE BERRY

From humble beginnings, local actor, Ms Neethling, 32, who grew up in Bouson Brook, Kraaifontein, is now a respected manager at one of America’s top-rated restaurants.

“I wanted a career in the hospitality industry,” says Johannes, and this led him to apply to international recruitment company Workaway, which places South Africans in five-star country clubs in America.

He got a lucky break and was recruited, and with his keen interest and personality, he worked his way up to become the food and beverage manager. It took me many years. I had many downs, but I always tell people to do what you love and you will do it with a smile. Smiling goes a long way.”

While he hankers after home and his mother, Argo, who lives in Kuils River, is to star in a film about his hero, the young man long-distance in America and asked what inspires him to do what he does.

“I felt good about my job when I got my first tip. People can see that it is what I want to do for the rest of my life, and it is good knowing that people always have to eat no matter what and people will pay good money to get good food. It is not a job but a person who provides that.”

Having achieved so much at such a young age, he says he will stop dreaming big and would love to become food and beverage manager or general manager of a company, he says, adding that he could not have done what he did without the strong support of his close-knit family.

Johannes says he always believed in me. I know that they also are making sacrifices for me living here. Although they think with their hearts, they always stand 100% behind my decision trying to make a living here in America.

His mother says he was initially surprised by his sudden passion for the restaurant industry, although she conceded “he was always a sucker for organising things since a young age”.

“He would always be busy organising things. When I saw him carrying a tray and serving people I was very astounded. I thought to myself, 'what is my son doing?' but I saw how happy it made him and tried to support him as much as possible.”

Elsa says she is so proud of her son and what he has become. “He lives for his work and I wouldn’t have it any other way. He is so happy where he is,” she says.

He has such a 'jammer gesiggie' (a sorry-looking face) and that is why people love him so much.”

In response to a question about what makes a restaurant stand out in America, given the immense variety and competition, Johannes says, “There is a saying, 'the answer is yes, what is your question?' Being able to satisfy guests' needs no matter what. Happy staff that always smile, make your restaurant number 1.”

“Johannes is the number 1 in America.”

When he’s not pacing the floor and attending to staff and customers, Johannes says he loves playing golf as “Florida has some of the best golf courses in the world”.

“And then of course the beach. I take my bicycle to the beach and I soak up some tropical Florida sun where the water is never cold. I also like to treat my American friends to a lekker braai. They love it and it makes me feel good.”

His final words could be used as a guide for wannabe restaurateurs – “it isn’t about what you want to do, but making sure you are passionate.”

“It means your hygiene is the best of the best of quality. It means when your friends play, you work, and you might even serve your friends.”

“I got the best opportunity in life to work in America and I grabbed it with both hands. I was grateful for the boost Workaway gave me and I made the best of it.”

“The question is, will you be able to do that every day with a smile on your face? If the answer is yes, then the business is for you. If the answer is no, don’t even try, stay far away.”

More than just a canine

ORIELLE BERRY

No ordinary dog. These were the words used by the late Lord Louis Mountbatten, one of whose lives was touched by the gentle giant Great Dane, Just Nuisance, whose look-alike, Argo, who lives in Kuils River, is now a local hero in America.

As Ms Rowe informs, Just Nuisance “also liked his tipple” and many of the sailors stood the large dog a pint or two and he often ended his night at the Royal Naval Hospital where he had seen indelibly, where he was lovingly watched over by the nurses and doctors until he recovered.

Just Nuisance lived until he was seven years old. Tragically, in typical military fashion he jumped off a truck, got seriously injured and when paralysed set in on his hindquarters, he was put down on April 1 1944.

While Just Nuisance is remem- bered by the hundreds, a special Just Nuisance Day and more, the movie will doubly commemorate the “able seaman” in another way and give an insight into how he was so highly regarded.

Part of the proceeds of the film will go to the Great Dane Rescue, Cape Town which is in serious need of support.

On a visit to South Africa in 2006, after he had completed filming Flight of the Phoenix, (starring among others Dennis Quaid), they flew down to South Africa from Namibia, and on a visit to Simon’s Town, saw the statue at Jubilee Square of Just Nuisance looking out over the sea.

“I paid my respects as there was the statue but the plaque didn’t say much. "When we went to the museum to find out more." It led to a fascination with this colourful character which in turn led to putting pen to paper for the book, Argo’s mother Gosia Ornatowska, who immigrated to South Africa from her native Poland 15 years ago in a vet, works closely with Anna Youds of the Great Dane Rescue.

When Mr Bisbey and Ms Rowe set sail, for Simon’s Town after they had lost themselves in a somewhat inebriated deep sleep on the journey home.

As Ms Rowe informs, Just Nuisance “also liked his tipple” and many of the sailors stood the large dog a pint or two and he often ended his night at the Royal Naval Hospital when he had seen indelibly, where he was lovingly watched over by the nurses and doctors until he recovered.

Just Nuisance lived until he was seven years old. Tragically, in typical military fashion he jumped off a truck, got seriously injured and when paralysed set in on his hindquarters, he was put down on April 1 1944.

While Just Nuisance is remem- bered by the hundreds, a special Just Nuisance Day and more, the movie will doubly commemorate the “able seaman” in another way and give an insight into how he was so highly regarded.

Part of the proceeds of the film will go to the Great Dane Rescue, Cape Town which is in serious need of support.

F

isted in Just Nuisance and how it led to his eventual death. Rowe explained how she got interested in Just Nuisance and how it led to so much more.

On a visit to South Africa in 2006, after he had completed filming Flight of the Phoenix, (starring among others Dennis Quaid), they flew down to South Africa from Namibia, and on a visit to Simon’s Town, saw the statue at Jubilee Square of Just Nuisance looking out over the sea.

“I paid my respects as there was the statue but the plaque didn’t say much. "When we went to the museum to find out more." It led to a fascination with this colourful character which in turn led to putting pen to paper for the book, Argo’s mother Gosia Ornatowska, who immigrated to South Africa from her native Poland 15 years ago in a vet, works closely with Anna Youds of the Great Dane Rescue.

When Mr Bisbey and Ms Rowe set sail, for Simon’s Town after they had lost themselves in a somewhat inebriated deep sleep on the journey home.

As Ms Rowe informs, Just Nuisance “also liked his tipple” and many of the sailors stood the large dog a pint or two and he often ended his night at the Royal Naval Hospital when he had seen indelibly, where he was lovingly watched over by the nurses and doctors until he recovered.

Just Nuisance lived until he was seven years old. Tragically, in typical military fashion he jumped off a truck, got seriously injured and when paralysed set in on his hindquarters, he was put down on April 1 1944.

While Just Nuisance is remem- bered by the hundreds, a special Just Nuisance Day and more, the movie will doubly commemorate the “able seaman” in another way and give an insight into how he was so highly regarded.

Part of the proceeds of the film will go to the Great Dane Rescue, Cape Town which is in serious need of support.