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15 MAY 2023



City of accidents?

The past weekend saw more than 12 fairly serious accidents in and around Rustenburg. That excludes 'fender benders' - the extent of these 'minor' accidents can be seen by the dozens of vehicles waiting to be repaired at panel beaters daily. Like reported on many occasions, one of the major contributors to accidents in Rustenburg is the absence of working/visible traffic lights and signs, as well as the absolute disregard for traffic lights and signs still in working order. Rustenburg Herald and Rustenburg Herald Bonus have requested comment from the Rustenburg Local Municipality on numerous occasions as to why it takes so long to replace out of order traffic lights or damaged/stolen traffic signs. Many enquiries have been sent as well as to why municipal traffic officers are not visible and not enforcing traffic laws. In a number of accidents the past two weeks, lives have been lost and commuters have been injured due to traffic accidents. One of the major headaches more motorists experience is the out-of-order traffic light on the bridge near the Waterfall Mall. It's been months since it worked. Accidents there have become a daily occurrence - and yet, no traffic officer has been seen here regulating traffic, or fining motorists not following the law to treat the non-working traffic light as a four way stop. (Photo: ER24 Rustenburg)



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BONUS - RUSTENBURG - There is no better time to show appreciation to all the hard-working father figures in our lives during fathers' day this June.

Your father can enjoy a break-away filled with fun as well as exciting things to do this Fathers' Day at Sun City and a stay at its Cascades hotel.

Known for its waterfalls and calming pools that trickle throughout the property, the 5-star Cascades hotel is an oasis of calm in the midst of the Sun City Resort and in close proximity to all the activities Sun City has to offer, making it the suitable destination for a Fathers' Day get away.

The Cascades is home to the Peninsula restaurant and Maltos with its beautiful vistas over the pool, you can also enjoy sundowners and cocktails ordered from the Luma Bar and Lounge.

All rooms overlook the gardens and wonderful scenery of the resort. During the winter months, explore the pathways that criss-cross the scenic gardens, and enjoy the cheerful sounds from the bird aviary while taking a stroll or on a Segway tour.

Sun City resort is one of the most recognised golfing destinations in South Africa, for those who are golf enthusiasts, The Gary Player Country

Club Golf Course and the Lost City Golf Course offer an exciting and challenging golfing experience.

Sun City & Rustenburg Herald Competition

Share what makes you proud of your dad, and you could stand a chance to win a two-night stay at the Cascades hotel for two with Sun City and Rustenburg Herald. Write to waldie@rustenburgherald.co.za and share why you are proud of your dad.

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Unrest at Orbit College's Rustenburg, Mankwe and Brits campuses

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - For the past four weeks, students at ORBIT College Mankwe Campus have been refusing to attend class and denied staff access to their work stations.

Two weeks ago students from the Rustenburg Campus joined the unrest and on Monday, 08 May 2023, Brits Campus students also declared their support for the protest action by denying staff and students access to the campus. The main concern raised by students relate to the payment of NSFAS accommodation allowances, according to a media statement issued by Orbit College.

The statement continues with "the 2023 NSFAS guidelines provide a clear breakdown of student allowance allocation for onsite and private student accommodation. NSFAS allocates a maximum of R45 000 per annum for private accommodation, provided that students who qualify to claim the maximum amount, stay at NSFAS accredited private accommodation. Only 30% of the ORBIT College student population is currently accommodated at the onsite student residences at the Mankwe Campus, with the majority of ORBIT College students residing at private accommodation in surrounding areas. Brits and Rustenburg Campuses neither provide onsite student accommodation nor lease student accommodation outside the campus premises. This means that an estimated 70% of ORBIT College students make use of private accommodation, with some staying with relatives or parents while others reside at accommodation in a lessor/lessee relationship.

None of the private accommodation used by

ORBIT College students has been accredited by NSFAS yet. As a result, none of the students making use of private accommodation qualified to claim the maximum amount of R 45 000.00. The accommodation allowance received by these students was based on lease agreements which is less than the maximum amount. The difference between the claimed and allocated amount is what essentially triggered the current student unrest at the college. Other related concerns that were raised by students include the late payment of NSFAS allowances, other than accommodation and differences between the money received and claims submitted. Some students are also still awaiting the payment of 2022 claims. Students also raised concerns about College infrastructure across the campuses.

College Management and the Student Representative Council have agreed to approach NSFAS with regards to paying a fix rate allocation for urban and rural campuses respectively, while the NSFAS accreditation of private accommodation is still pending. In this regard a request was forwarded to NSFAS seeking permission for the College SRC to visit their offices in an attempt to address the concerns raised by students. An affirmative response to this request was received from NSFAS. Concerns related to college infrastructure are addressed through the DHET infrastructure grant allocated to the college, the statement concluded.

NW NGOs at risk of closing doors due to fight over budget

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - NGOs in the province are at risk of having to close their doors as the MEC for Social Development and the Head of Department of Social Development fight over the departmental budget and performance plans.

This is according to the North West Democratic Alliance (DA). The party's Freddy Sonakile expressed concern for the ongoing tussle between the MEC of Social Development, Boitumelo Moiloa and the Head of Department (HOD), Itumeleng Mafokane. The discord between the two was emphasized when the department had to present its Annual Performance Plan (APP) and 2023 Budget to the Portfolio Committee but failed to do so. "In a very heated meeting, the HOD indicated to the Committee that he will not present an APP that he did not sign nor authorize as he had been stripped of his powers. This left Committee members fuming and the meeting had to be adjourned without the APP being processed. It is not the first time that this department has had to be turned away by the Committee due to its internal waggles. The DA takes this in a very serious light and believes action must be taken against either the MEC or the HOD who has failed in their fiduciary duties," Sonakile said.

He added that, while their squabbles continue, the DA has been in contact with a number of Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) whose survival depends on funding from the department. "Morestêr Children's Home in

Rustenburg is on the brink of closing its doors as they are unable to continue taking bank loans to cover the costs of running the centre, due to the department's failure to sign the service level agreement (SLA). This failure has led to the subsidy that they are supposed to get not being paid," he said.

According to him, a number of the NPOs in Potchefstroom are also struggling to make ends meet. "The staff at the Abraham Kriel Children's Home continue the operations on reserve funds, as the department has not signed its SLA thus affecting the subsidy they are supposed to get. What the DA finds peculiar about this entire situation, is that the HOD who claims to be stripped of his powers, is alleged to be committing the department financially to various long-term contracts. Just last week it surfaced in the Finance Committee that he had appointed security companies for 18 months to the tune of R130 million despite the Provincial audit warning that it is irregular," said Sonakile.

"The DA will write to the Chairperson of the Committee, Gavin Edwards, to act with speed and summon Premier, Bushy Maape, over the recent failure of the department to table their budget and APP and the impact this has on vulnerable communities," he concluded.

Recycle for wheelchairs

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - The Sweethearts Foundation, a national 100% non-profit, community-driven, volunteer-based organization dedicated to providing bespoke wheelchairs to individuals in need.

They believe that a wheelchair should be recognized as a basic human right and that everyone who requires one should have access to it.

Since their establishment on Valentine's Day in 2013, they have provided 498 bespoke wheelchairs to individuals across the country. Their volunteers, sweetly named "Sweethearts," range from everyday volunteers to high-ranking individuals who juggle work, family, and helping others.

They collect significant amounts of bread tags and plastic bottle tops from various individuals, schools, and organizations from around the country. These collections are then recycled by local recycling companies, who in return pay The Sweethearts Foundation.

They pool all collections from around the country together and allocate the funding to manufacture a wheelchair for the beneficiary currently at the top of their waiting list.

For more information please visit <https://www.facebook.com/sweetheartsfoundation/> or https://www.instagram.com/the_sweethearts_foundation/.

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MUNICIPAL PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2019/20, 2020/21 AND 2021/22 ANNUAL REPORTS

The Chairperson of Bojanala Platinum District Municipal Public Accounts Committee (MPAC), **Cllr Thabo Mashomo**, cordially invites members of the public in terms of Section 17 (2)(c) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 to a **Public Hearing on the 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 Annual Reports**.

The details of the public hearing are as follows

DATE : TUESDAY, 23RD MAY 2023
TIME : 10:00
VENUE : RUSTENBURG OLD TOWN HALL

All Stakeholders are invited to attend the Municipal Public Accounts Committee Public Hearing and should be seated by 09:45.

Copies of these documents are available on the municipal website: www.bojanala.gov.za

For more information please contact MPAC Coordinator, Ms Malebo Ramakobya on 014 523 5035 OR 082 855 3262

MultiChoice's Studio Reach is looking for young talented TikTok content creators

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - Now in its second year - Studio Reach is calling all budding video content creators native to the TikTok platform, to be part of the highly successful incubator programme once again.



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If you are a content creator native to the TikTok platform and are between the ages of 18 and 35, you could be one of 10 content creators chosen to become part of the Studio Reach incubator – an online content creation program in which you will learn digital storytelling skills, business skills, connect with other creators, and get offered a one-year subsidized internship with MultiChoice brands.

MultiChoice is continuously looking to enrich the communities in which it operates, and Studio Reach aims to increase skills sharing through content creation, technology and storytelling by connecting creators to producers, marketing and programming teams to give young talented content creators an understanding of the broadcast industry.

“We are really excited to be calling TikTok creators to be part of Studio Reach once again this year. This programme has been fundamentally designed to help our business develop a pipeline of talented content creators for both long and short formats on TikTok. More than that, we want to develop local influencers and content creators on the platform to service the MultiChoice brands and their core marketing targets,” says Charis Coleman, Head of Content for Group Digital at MultiChoice.

The second iteration of this successful talent incubator will not only celebrate the local creator community but the power of short-form storytelling

and the culture it informs but also help generate long-term revenue opportunities and commercial sponsorships.

“Studio Reach is about unlocking the next generation of digital video content creators. The programme will engage young creative digital thinkers to produce digital first content in line with future thinking and social trends,” adds Coleman.

“There is an abundance of untapped creatives amongst our nation’s youth, who only need a springboard to showcase their skills. MultiChoice wants to offer a hand up to help kick-start the careers for 10 young creatives, giving them the opportunity to improve their abilities as digital content creators,” says Tumi Masekela, Executive Head, Corporate Affairs South Africa at MultiChoice.

How to enter: Think you have what it takes? Simply create a one-minute video on TikTok that shares a day in your life and why you are a hot storyteller. Don’t forget to use the hashtag #MCGStoryTime. Submissions cannot be longer than 60 seconds in length and must remain on your personal account on the TikTok app for at least 60 calendar days after the expiration of the application period. Applications close on 28 May 2023. The video must be original, exclusively created and owned by you, and you must have all the rights necessary to submit the video, including written permission from anyone featured in your video (or if

the person featured is under 18, a written permission from their parent or legal guardian). Extra points will be given to the smart use of popular trends, sounds, filters, and trending topics. The video must have been produced in a safe and responsible manner, having due regard for the physical, mental, and moral effects on all individuals involved; you should have between 20 000 to 50 000 followers and your TikTok account must have been active for at least three months. All applicants need to meet the application requirements for MultiChoice’s Yes4Youth programme.

Get creating, share your entry now and you could be one of only 10 content creators selected for this exclusive programme!

Sign language now official

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - The National Assembly (NA) has approved South African Sign Language (SASL) as the 12th official language during a hybrid plenary sitting recently.

Until now, the South African Constitution provided for 11 official languages, which include Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.

“Primarily, the amendment seeks to advance the cultural acceptance of SASL, the deaf culture; ensure the realisation of the rights of persons who are deaf and hard of hearing to equal protection and benefit of the law and human dignity; and to promote inclusive and substantive equality and prevent or eliminate unfair discrimination on the ground of disability, as guaranteed by section 9 of the Constitution,” Parliament Spokesperson, Moloto Mothapo, said.

The Bill was introduced and referred to the committee on 12 January. In response to the call for public comment, the committee received 58 written submissions from individuals and organisations, with the majority of the submissions in support of the Bill. The committee noted the opposing views expressed by a few commentators, but submitted that the recognition of SASL as a 12th official language “is an important step towards the realisation of the rights of persons who are deaf and hard of hearing”.

“Further, the committee acknowledged that SASL is not a universal language - different countries have their own sign language and regions have dialects - but submits that, in South Africa, it is in the promotion and development of SASL that the various dialects are also recognised.

Mothapo emphasised that the adoption of the Bill could impact the scope and purpose of the reference to sign language in such legislation. “Relevant departments administering those and related legislation should take note of this constitutional amendment recognising SASL as an official language in terms of section 6 of the Constitution and consider whether the adoption of the Bill may require consequential amendment to associated legislation for purposes of clarifying the status of SASL as expressed in the Constitution,” he said. The amendment was adopted without opposition in the NA. “The adoption of this constitutional amendment will bring to 12 the number of official languages in South Africa, once the President signs the Bill into law”.



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Pelican Watch Programme - Birdlife Rustenburg

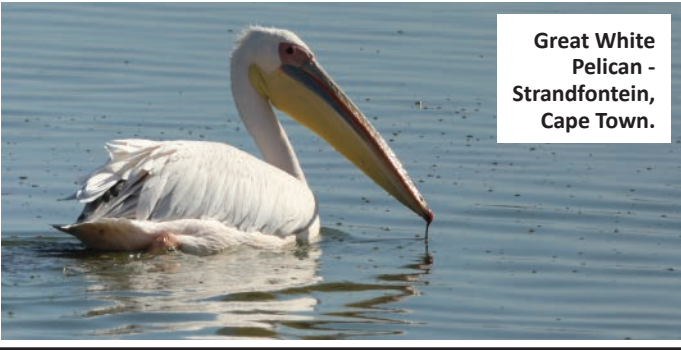
BONUS - RUSTENBURG - Estie van der Merwe, a member of BirdLife Rustenburg, recently had the opportunity to be part of the Pelican Watch Programme.

This programme is a SANParks management strategy in the West Coast National Park aimed at controlling the catastrophic impact of predation by Great White Pelicans on the chicks and eggs of the Cape Gannet and Cape Cormorant breeding colonies on Malgas and Jutten Islands in Saldanha Bay.

Estie will share her experience at the BirdLife Rustenburg meeting that will take place on Monday, 15 May, at the Methodist Church on the corner of Brink and Schuurman Streets at 18:30. All members and non-members are welcome - non-members pay R30 per person.

On Saturday, 20 May, BirdLife Rustenburg will visit the Aloe farm and the Nyoka Ridge Vulture Restaurant in the Hekpoort area. It is situated at the foot of the Magaliesberg Mountain. It is a private feeding station for the endangered Cape Vulture, managed by Birdlife Harties. This outing is a rare opportunity to see and photograph these interesting birds feeding and flying up close. Other birds that can be expected to view in the area are raptors such as the African Harrier Hawk, Little Sparrow Hawk, White-backed, and Lappet-faced Vultures. Bushveld and grass-veld birds such as the Rufous-naped Lark, Cape Longclaw and much more. Details of the outing will be finalized later.

Feel free to contact Charles Foot (073 452 3874) should you wish to learn more about BirdLife Rustenburg and would like to attend the events.



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Ramaphosa lied to the country on Russian war - John Steenhuisen

Ramaphosa lied to SA and the world over involvement in Russia-Ukraine war

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - The declaration by United States Ambassador to South Africa, Reuben Brigety, that war materials and ammunition were loaded onto sanctioned Russian ship, Lady R, which departed South Africa’s naval base in Simon’s Town in December 2022, is a chilling and deeply troubling confirmation that President Cyril Ramaphosa and his government are actively involved in the Russian Federation’s war on Ukraine, says John Steenhuisen - MP and leader of the Democratic Alliance.

“When I confronted President Ramaphosa everything that we fought to achieve in 1994 in the sitting of the National Assembly, requesting that he confirms, once and for all, for the whims of President Vladimir Putin, Steenhuisen concluded.

to South Africa and the world, whether war materials from South Africa were indeed loaded onto the Lady R, a sanctioned ship that should never have been permitted to enter South African waters, the President refused to answer me. I will be writing to the Speaker of the National Assembly, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, to table an urgent debate of national importance on South Africa’s involvement in Russia’s war on Ukraine, and the dire economic consequences South Africa faces as a result of this violation of international law, and South Africa’s own Constitutional-based foreign policy.

This development proves not only that South Africa is not non-aligned in Russia’s war on Ukraine, but that President Ramaphosa and his government have already lied to South Africa and the world as to our country’s involvement in this devastating conflict. In two replies to DA parliamentary questions, on the 23rd of October and the 18th of November 2022 respectively, both then Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Thandi Modise, and Minister in the Presidency, Mondli Gungubele, denied that South African arms manufacturers had supplied weapons to the Russian Federation and that Armaments Corporation of South Africa had sold arms and ammunition, propellant powder and/or explosives to the Russian Federation.

Confirmation by US intelligence in South Africa that the Lady R vessel departed Simon’s Town after having been loaded with war materials now brings into question the transparency of the ANC national government with the South African people and our international partners.

To put the gravity of this development into perspective, the South African government has jeopardised close to 77% of foreign direct investment stock in South Africa in recent years from the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States, including hundreds of billions of rands in trade, for a country with whom our trade is only around 0,3%.

This also jeopardises South Africa’s preferential access to the US market under the auspices of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

With our economy on its knees and rampant unemployment, the ANC is now forsaking South Africa’s last chance at economic renewal based solely on greed and personal interest. The ANC is siding with Russia for one reason alone: because the Russian Federation is funding the ANC, and thus infiltrating and destabilising South African democracy. The Russian war on Ukraine has ravaged the Ukrainian nation and led to mass migration, human displacement, and widespread human rights abuses. South Africa’s support and involvement of this war indicates that the ANC-led national government has trampled on the values and principles espoused in our human rights-based Constitution, in favour of a global war-monger and despot. More worryingly, it signals that under the ANC, South Africa has regressed into a nation that has abandoned the principles of freedom, fairness, and equality. The ANC has sacrificed



10 YEARS OF SHARED VALUE

Sibanye-Stillwater partners with faith-based leaders to address gender-based violence and poverty in communities.



Sibanye-Stillwater is collaborating with faith-based leaders around its Marikana and Rustenburg operations, focusing on community safety, particularly in the fight against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and substance abuse.



As part of its social renewal programmes, the Company also initiated a programme on food security in May 2021.



SAFE HOMES - SAFE COMMUNITIES

In 2022, the Company initiated training and education programmes to address GBV and substance abuse, which have debilitating effects on local communities, especially girls, women, and the youth. The programmes aim to train and provide local faith-based leaders with knowledge to empower them sufficiently to play an active role in dealing with these critical issues. Over 58 churches around Marikana and Rustenburg are participating in the programme, with 27 faith-based leaders having already completed the course, and 13 already implementing the programmes in their local churches, clinics and schools around Marikana operations.

For more information on our contribution to social upliftment, visit <https://www.sibanyestillwater.com/sustainability/economic-impact/>



FOOD SECURITY

In recognition of the need for local economic revitalisation and the creation of livelihood opportunities which will extend beyond mining for households in local communities, Sibanye-Stillwater has since May 2021, been implementing a community agriculture programme, the Broad-based Livelihoods (BBL) programme. The BBL is facilitated by Umsizi Sustainable Solutions and SocioTech and aims to empower households and communities to develop their own livelihoods based on sustainable food production, business, and income generation activities. Over 1,000 households in nine communities have benefitted from the programme, which is aimed at reducing poverty and ensuring food security, so far.



Name:

Age:.....

Tel no:.....

Date:...../...../2023

Closing date around the corner - get those entries in

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - We have recently announced an important change to the rules of the Rustenburg Herald Art competition. From this year artists are no longer required to attach their entries (art works) onto the blank space regularly printed in Rustenburg Herald and/or Bonus as it is believed to somewhat restrict artists in as far as size is concerned.

At the same time Rustenburg Herald would not necessarily have to sacrifice the, in fact, very much needed space of an empty/blank page to accommodate these entries. From now on artists are required to attach their works of art to ANY PAGE or use the page as your canvas to paint or sketch on. Make sure that the date and page number of THIS edition are still visible. Also see the art works already being displayed at our two participating Pick n Pay stores for an example of what you should do.

To complete your entry, simply complete the entry form at the top of this page, attach it to your artwork and "post" your entry into the entry boxes at both participating Pick n Pay Stores - Pick n Pay Azalea Park, Greystone Crossing or Pick n Pay Lifestyle

Square, Beyers Naudé Avenue in Midtown Rustenburg or at reception of Rustenburg Herald's offices in 13 Coetzer Street, Eastern Industrial Area, Rustenburg. Artists should please note that entries must be new or rather recent work.

Remember - two cash prizes of R1 000 each sponsored by Rustenburg Herald are up for grabs to the two quarterly winners while two extremely valuable Pick n Pay Shopping Vouchers to the value of R10 000 each are waiting for the two overall winners of the Rustenburg Herald Art competition. These prizes are sponsored courtesy Pick n Pay Beyers Naudé and Pick n Pay Greystone Crossing. The closing date of the competition is 31 May 2023 - come on - get those entries rolling...





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Run for #PinkDrive at the 2023 Totalsports Women's Race



Pink will be the colour of the day on National Women's Day (Wednesday 9 August) when thousands of runners and walkers take to the streets of Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban at the much-anticipated Totalsports Women's Race in support of PinkDrive. (Photo: Mark Sampson)

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - Pink will be the colour of the day on National Women's Day (Wednesday 9 August) when thousands of runners and walkers take to the streets of Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban at the much-anticipated Totalsports Women's Race in support of PinkDrive.

Durban: Start at Masabalala Yengwa Ave and finish at Kings Park Athletics Track; Johannesburg: Start and finish at Marks Park, Emmerentia; Cape Town: Start and finish at Grand Parade, Cape Town, starting at 08:00. For more information on PinkDrive visit www.pinkdrive.co.za. For further information or to enter the Totalsports Women's Race visit www.totalsportswomensrace.co.za



The Totalsports Women's Race in support of PinkDrive will take place on Wednesday 9 August. (Photo: Mark Sampson)



Runners and walkers enjoying the action of the Totalsports Women's Race in 2022. (Photo: Mark Sampson)

Zinniaville Secondary School Golden Jubilee - Celebrating 50 years of excellence

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - Zinniaville Secondary School will be hosting a 50 Year Gala Banquet on Saturday 5 August at Hedgehog Nest in honour of all its ex-students, Principal's, Teachers, SGB, parents and entire community.

Zinniaville Secondary School known as Rustenburg Indian School, relocated from the centre of Rustenburg City in September 1972 and was officially opened in August of 1973. This year they are celebrating 50 years of Zinniaville Secondary School's existence. However, the formal education of the Indians in Rustenburg, started way-back in 1924 almost 99 years ago.

Due to the forceful removal of the Indians from Rustenburg via the Apartheid Regime they were relocated to Zinniaville. The school boasts a very proud record of providing excellent quality education over a 50 year period.

Influential men and women have gained their Basic Education from this institution to become prominent personalities making their mark on society and the country.

They appeal to all ex-scholars and stakeholders to contact the school and provide them with information of your experience at ZSS and how it has shaped

you into the person you are today. This information is extremely vital as they will be publishing a one of a kind year book which will be showcasing all Zinniaville Secondary School's achievement for the past 50 years.

They would like their Gala Dinner to be a memorable one – one that will take them down memory lane and allow them to reflect on the importance of Zinniaville Secondary School. There are limited seats available (only 720). Price per seat is R950 which includes a meet and greet session, cocktails, entertainment, a five course meal and a walk down memory lane. For any additional donations please contact the Principal, Ms Suliman personally or telephonically. They urge all stakeholders to donate generously towards your Alma Mater. Kindly contact the school urgently, via phone (014) 538 0152 or (014) 538 1077, cell number 079 468 8831 or email 50th@zss.co.za.



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Tight battles at rough, tough, tricky and dusty Sugarbelt as Lategan and Cummings claim second victory



Henk Lategan and Brett Cummings. (Photo: Plan C Productions)

Mayoral Youth Tournament: Invitation to all soccer and netball teams

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - The Rustenburg Local Municipality is embarking on a Mayoral Youth Tournament for the Youth Month 2023.

They are inviting all soccer and netball teams to register for participation in the impending event. Apart from promoting the sporting codes, the tournament also has at aim to benefit less fortunate school children. Therefore, in order to register for the tournament, teams have to donate the following:

- Pair of black school shoes (Size: 2-7)
- 1x 100ml black shoe polish

- 1x toothbrush
- 1x 250ml tube toothpaste
- 1x 175g bath soap

Registration closes on 26 May 2023 and can be done at:

Office No.8 (Ground Floor), Rustenburg Local Municipality, Mpheni House, c/o Nelson Mandela and Bayers Naude Drive.

Date for the event will be communicated in due course.



Gareth Woolridge and Boyd Dreyer. (Photo: Plan C Productions)

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - The Sugarbelt 400, the second round of the 2023 South African Rally-Raid Championship that took place on 12 and 13 May in the Eston/Mid Illovo area in KwaZulu-Natal, will probably be remembered as one of the toughest events in recent years.

This iconic race had not been on the calendar for six years, and after its return in 2021 the 2022 event cancelled due to the flooding, making it a relatively new event for many current competitors.

One thing is sure, it was not an easy 350 kilometres between the sugarcane fields and plantations with competitors describing the route as tough, tricky and challenging with no room for error, while dust was also a huge factor. These conditions added to the test, as did the consequences of a shortened Pirelli Qualifying Race the previous day due to a fire on the route.

In the end it was Henk Lategan and Brett Cummings (Toyota Gazoo Racing DKR Hilux T1+) who claimed their second overall victory of the season and their first Sugarbelt 400 win. The team posted the fourth fastest time after the shortened qualifying and selected to start the race from third place on Saturday. Their time of just over five hours included time lost when they landed up in a ditch while they also suffered two punctures,

and experienced a few mechanical issues. It was the team's second attempt at the Sugarbelt 400, and they walked away as the winners of the Production Vehicle Category and FIA T1+.

It was, however, the local Pietermaritzburg team of Gareth Woolridge/Boyd Dreyer (NWM Ford Castrol T1+ Ranger) who led the way at the halfway mark while they were also fastest after the 20km qualifying race. After a clean first loop, a puncture 40 kilometres before the finish as well as brake problems forced them to settle for third place in FIA T1+ as well as in the Production Vehicle Category with a mere 19 seconds separating them from De Villiers/Murphy.

With two extremely tough events on the 2023 SA Rally-Raid Championship now ticked off, it is time for competitors to focus on the Toyota Gazoo Racing Kalahari Botswana 1000 Desert Race, the third round of the series that will see them returning to Jwaneng in Botswana for this three-day event that will take place from 23 to 25 June.

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