It has been reported that Breast Cancer is one of the most common cancers among South African women – and its incidence is rising. Like with many other cancers, early detection is absolutely crucial in ensuring effective treatment and a positive outcome. Thankfully, approximately 90 per cent of all breast cancer patients who are diagnosed early and treated appropriately survive for many years. Therefore, I would like to encourage all Greater Knysna residents, male and female, to take themselves to be checked soonest.

Thinking of those afflicted by this disease often brings Eleanor Roosevelt’s words to mind: “You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience during which you really stop to look fear in the face.” These words ring so true - not only to cancer survivors, but all those who were affected by the horrendous June 2017 fires that swept across Greater Knysna.

All of us looked fear in the face and, over the past five odd months, have gained strength, courage and confidence. We have learnt to ask for help, and to accept it, no matter where it comes from. We have learnt to listen to one another and to offer compassion to others. We have learnt to count our blessings and to show gratitude.

There is still a great deal of obstacles that we must overcome while rebuilding Greater Knysna, but fortunately several steps have already been taken to assist those who have lost their homes.

On 24 August, during a Special Council meeting, Council approved the waiving of property rates for one year for the 564 households completely destroyed by the fires. This contribution is valued at R16.5 million. In addition, the Municipality has spent over R7.5 million to date for the restoration of electricity and water services, provided waivers for demolition of damaged properties and planning applications, as well as supporting numerous relief efforts.

Western Cape Premier, Helen Zille’s initiative, Garden Route Rebuild, continues to respond to the damage of the devastating fires. Chaired by Dr Hildegarde Fast, this initiative aims to develop a long-term renewal strategy and shared vision for rebuilding not only Greater Knysna’s economy, but that of the whole Garden Route. It further coordinates all resources and efforts to achieve maximum impact, whilst monitoring progress made by the seven work streams (Humanitarian Support; Reconstruction Environmental Management; Business Support; Infrastructure Rehabilitation Funding and Resourcing and Skills Development), their Work Groups and the projects they roll out. Please visit their website www.gardenrouterebuild.co.za to keep abreast of all the great work they do.

As part of their Social Development Awareness programmes, our Social Development Department paid special attention to Older Person Week which kicked off on 26 September. Our older residents were treated to motivational lectures, live music, braais and scrumptious lunches in celebration of their full lives.
Just before I say goodbye, let me remind you that the celebration of Guy Fawkes by setting off fireworks and/or burning tyres and building bonfires is illegal. Just don’t do it.

Stay safe.

BLUE FLAGS FOR GREATER KNYSNA

Knysna Municipal Manager, Kam Chetty is delighted that Greater Knysna has once again secured several Blue Flags. Buffalo Bay and Brenton-on-Sea beaches both received Blue Flag Status for the 2017/2018 season. During the prestigious national Blue Flag launch held on Wednesday, October 4, Blue Flags were also awarded to two Knysna Marinas, Thesen Harbour Town and Thesen Island and one Sustainable Tourism boat operator, Ocean Odyssey’s boats, Sousa, Dolphin and Oyster Catcher.

“Now that our town is in a rebuild phase, Knysna Municipality recognises the value of our Blue Flags as not only important for environmental management and education, but also for tourism, economic development and job creation. We are still in the early phases of rebuilding Greater Knysna, and this award demonstrates our commitment to the rebuild programme, ensuring that Knysna will rise out of the ashes, better and stronger than before,” said Chetty.

US CONSULATE GENERAL IN SEARCH OF YOUNG LEADERS

The US Consulate team visited Knysna on Tuesday, 26 September; with the aim of providing information on their recruitment for the Young African Leader Initiative, also known as YALI /Mandela Washington Fellowship 2018.

Greater Knysna youngsters listened attentively during the information session in the Council Chambers. The criteria for this initiative are as follows: Potential recruits should be

- between 25 and 35 years-of-age
- Involved in innovative work in the areas of public management, civic leadership, and business/entrepreneurship.

Selected finalists will get to experience the following opportunities:

- Spending six weeks in the U.S. in July/August 2018
- Exploring issues of leadership
- Networking with various peers from sub-Saharan Africa
- Grant funding for Knysna special projects

The team will go through all the applications and an interview and selection process will take place January 2018.

BOOK DRIVE PROJECT LAUNCHED

In collaboration with Friends of the Libraries, and the Newlands Rotarians, Knysna Municipal Library Services have established a Book Drive Outreach Project aimed at providing books to schools in Greater Knysna.
Thank you to Australia’s Books for the World, the donors of this Book Drive Project.

Mayoral Committee member and Community Services Chairperson, Cllr Weideman said, “This Book Drive Project could not have come at a better time, particularly as the town is slowly picking up the pieces after the 7 June devastating fires. Thank you to Friends of the Libraries, Newlands Rotarians and Books of the World for your generosity.”

This Book Drive Project team has received a substantial number of books that will be sorted and distributed by the Town Library Staff to Greater Knysna schools in need of reading material.

NEW FIRE TRUCK FOR KNYSNA

Jacaranda FM breakfast team broadcasted from the Knysna Fire Station on 27 September with one purpose, and that was for Marce Fire Fighting Technology and Jacaranda FM to officially handover a brand new fire truck to Knysna Municipality.

Marcé Fire Fighting Technology, a company which builds and manufactures all manner of fire fighting vehicles for all needs within South Africa and Africa, re-built the UNIMOG All-Terrain vehicle, with fire hoses, water pump and storage, as well as communication capabilities. Their generous donation is worth in excess of R1-million.

Paul Saayman supplied a low-bed truck and driver and transported Knysna’s new Fire Truck from Centurion, where it was built, to Knysna’s Fire Station.

The Jacaranda FM listeners and the Good Morning Angels Fund contributed R225 000,00 towards special fittings and equipment on this new fire truck, as well as proper protective clothing for Knysna’s fire fighters.

Mayoral Committee member, Community Services chair-person, Cllr Cathy Weideman said: “The generosity of these sponsors is overwhelming, and we as Council are so grateful for this much-needed machine. The assistance and support after the recent fires have been tremendous. South Africans have been so giving and caring during this difficult time and for this we thank them.”

BUSINESS AS USUAL

During a Special Council meeting held this morning (25 October) a Motion of No Confidence against the Deputy Mayor, Peter Myers succeeded.

“I would like to assure residents of Greater Knysna that the removal of the Deputy Mayor will in no way impact on the functionality of the Municipality,” said Knysna Municipal Manager, Kam Chetty.

He added: “When I took office on 1 July 2017, the first thing I said was that I am not interested in politics and that
my job was to ensure that the administration of the municipality is run well and according to legislation, and that is exactly what we are doing.”

The Municipal Manager explained that a municipal council has various responsibilities. “These include making the laws and policies, providing financial oversight, planning the budget, and hiring the municipal manager. It is further responsible for ensuring that the municipal administration fulfills its duties to the community.

Council has not yet decided on the position of Deputy Mayor.

“It is important to note that Council is not the only oversight body of local government. The Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) is the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) of South Africa. It is the only institution that, by law, has to audit and report on how the government is spending the South African taxpayers’ money.

“All local government administrators need to answer to both the Council and the AGSA, so rest assured there is competent oversight in place. Residents must not lose sight of the fact that the Knysna Municipality received a clean audit by the AGSA during the last financial year,” concluded Chetty.

**KNYSNA ROADS MAINTENANCE APPROACH APPROVED**

The road maintenance budget 2017/2018 was approved by Council at a Special Mayoral Committee meeting on Monday, 2 October.

In consultation with all Ward Councillors, the R38.4 million budget was divided the 11 Greater Knysna Wards. Repairs are expected to commence early December, starting in Ward 10 moving systematically around Greater Knysna.

The budget per ward is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Length of very poor roads m</th>
<th>Length of v. poor roads as a %</th>
<th>Reseal portion R</th>
<th>Road upgrades R</th>
<th>Total expenditure R</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1254</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>654 460</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>1 854 460</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1207</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>629 931</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>1 829 931</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>155 004</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>1 355 004</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2813</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>1 468 099</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>2 668 099</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10455</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>5 456 443</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 456 443</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>23585</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>12 308 964</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12 308 964</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1369</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>714 478</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>6 714 478</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>5006</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>2 612 621</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 612 621</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>45986</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>24 000 000</td>
<td>14 400 000</td>
<td>38 400 000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**MUNICIPAL MEETINGS**

- **30 November**
  - Council Meeting

**COMMEMORATIVE DAYS & EVENTS**

- **4 - 5 November**
  - Leisure Isle Festival