Appreciate your democratic right

On the 27th of April South Africa will celebrate 20 years of democracy and as part of the celebrations a national initiative of 20 hours of volunteerism was launched. Executive Mayor Cllr Georlene Wolmarans said that it is a fitting gesture to celebrate an era of hope.

“I want to call on all our residents to think about ways that they can take part, small or big. Every contribution can and will make a difference in someone else’s life, continuing the spirit of creating an improved life for all South Africa’s residents”.

“It is an extremely tough environment out there with many inhibiting factors including difficult financial and socio-economic circumstances, but I believe that Knysna Municipality has made considerable progress. We are committed to build on our successes and work with our challenges to create a town where people and nature prosper,” said Wolmarans.

She said the municipality is counting on its residents to share the responsibility to build a strong and caring town. “We will deliver on our mandate, but to be successful in our vision for the town, where all can prosper, we need the input and commitment of all our residents. We have launched the Integrated Strategic Development Framework (ISDF) late last year - this is a crucial part of determining where the town will be in 20 to 30 years*. The outcome will be Knysna’s blueprint for the future, a business plan to motivate funding, stimulate investment and highlight opportunities. If you want to live and prosper here, it is imperative that you play your part in drawing up the plan for our futures. Make sure your voice is heard, in true democratic style.”

Wolmarans said that the 27th of April should be a reminder to all of us not to take opportunities to give input in government planning processes for granted. “We have developed multiple forums for you to have your say. Democracy did not come cheaply to our country - let’s honour it by taking part.

ISDF: Changing the face of Knysna.

Knysna is taking the lead with South Africa’s first Integrated Strategic Development Framework (ISDF) that was initiated September 2013.

The ISDF’s purpose is to ensure better coordination between the municipality’s different strategic plans including the Human Settlement Plan, Spatial Development Framework, Environmental Plan and the Economic Development Strategy.

For more information visit the municipality’s website:
www.knysna.gov.za
Knysna’s “Soekie” receives Excellence in Record Keeping Award

Ms Liana Magson, Records Clerk at the Knysna Municipality, was awarded by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport for Excellence in Local Government Records Management. She received the award for the “Most Active Records Manager” during the annual Awards for Excellence in Ceremony in Cape Town on the 10th of February.

Ms Liana Magson proudly receives her award at the event in Cape Town from the Western Cape Deputy Director (Libraries/Archives), Mr. Stefan Wehmeyer.

Municipal Manager Lauren Waring said the municipality is extremely proud of her. “Ms Magson shared the stage with amongst others Prof Adam Small that received a Lifetime Achievement in Cultural Affairs award, and we are delighted that Lianda’s 30 years of experience and outstanding service has been recognised.”

She said recognition of public records and government accountability is of utmost importance. “Sound records management leads to efficiency, lower costs, accountability and ensures future generations are able to access history. We are fortunate to have her - the real winner is rarely local government. It is the people we serve that benefits most.”

Ms Magson started working at the municipality in January 1984. She said her manager at the time directed her to the Record and Archives Department. “I enjoy what I do - order makes sense and saves time. I work like Google. I search and find and file in a way that anyone can find whatever they are looking for in the shortest time possible. People around here call me ‘Soekie’.”

She said one of the most challenging times experienced at work were the ordering and filing of everything connected to the amalgamation of municipalities in 2000. She also remembers the pre-digital era where all systems had to be created manually. “One had to grow with the times, I learnt to adjust and quickly realised the importance of information and the ability to share it. For me there is no greater satisfaction than to know my house is in order, and yes, that sense of order also applies at home!”

Magson said that she was honoured to receive the award. “It is wonderful to know you make a difference and to be recognised for it.”

Awards were handed out to individuals and organisations who achieved in the fields of language, arts and culture, heritage, museums, geographical names, libraries and archives. German sculptor Tom Rucker, the South African Navy Band, and artist Roger Titley also won ministerial awards for their national and international contributions to cultural affairs. Other notable winners on the night included the Central Library in Cape Town (Best Big Public Library), Drostdy Museum in Swellendam (Best Museum); Dr Hennie Nortjé (Contribution to Literature); and Sikelela Zaku (Contribution to Culture).

Check in at your library 15 – 22 March 2014

Llisa (Library and Information Association of South Africa) launched Library Week 14 years ago as a celebration of our country’s intellectual and literary heritage.

Municipal Manager Lauren Waring said that this year’s theme links to the 20th anniversary of democracy in South Africa. Celebrating libraries in 20 years of democracy: check-in at your library. “Library workers across South Africa have been requested to highlight the top twenty South African books published during these 20 years that reflect South African life, written by South Africans. Your librarian’s choice should be available on 15 March when you “check-in” at your libraries!”

All 11 Knysna libraries will also run a fine free week to encourage people to visit libraries during this week, and to return overdue books.

Library Week will always include the 20th of March. The South African Public Library, now known as the National Library of South Africa (Cape Town Campus), was the first library to be established in South Africa. This was done by a government proclamation on 20 March 1818.

Human Rights Day is also celebrated on the 21st of March and our Bill of Rights recognizes the freedom of access to information as a basic human right, the week then links an important historical event with a crucial date in our new democracy.

Waring said residents can also look forward to the Knysna Town library moving back to the newly renovated premises the first week in April and more details about the long awaited opening will be announced during Library Week.

Read more about the services at our libraries at www.knysna.gov.za

Lights, camera, action!

The Ubnumandi Bethu Drama Group of Knysna was named Best Group for their script “Life After Hurt” at the Eden/ Cape Winelands Drama Festival finale held at the Artscape Arena Hall in Cape Town.

The festival, hosted by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS) and others on the 31st of January, is an annual showcase at the Suduhoofiers for emerging talent to present their work on stage.

Executive Mayor Geoinene Wolmarans congratulated the group. “Our Libraries, Heritage and Culture Department supported this group by partly sponsoring their participation and we have watched their progress with interest. We are proud of them, and excited about the opportunities this opened up for them.”

Two winners from drama festivals in the Eden District and Cape Winelands were chosen to represent the areas at the finale during the Suduhoofiers. Thabo Newman of Ubnumandi Bethu and Samantha Plenaar of Riversdale’s Little Legends Drama Group were crowned as Best Actor and Best Actress respectively. They are set to audition in Johannesburg this year for a role in the television series ‘Joe 12a’.

The winning groups will perform at the Zabalaza Festival presented by the Baxter Theatre in March and Ubnumandi Bethu will also perform its stage production “Life After Hurt” at the 2014 Absa Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunsteweek (KKK) in Oudtshoorn.

Housing hand-over, Oubad

Members of the Ubnumandi Bethu Drama Group receiving their awards

The Knysna Municipality handed over fourteen of a planned 134 houses recently in Oubad. Ms Mary Lindi (70) was the first to receive the keys to her new home from Executive Mayor Geoinene Wolmarans.

Wolmarans congratulated every new home owner and said for most people this is a once in a lifetime opportunity. “In the modern world, freedom has at its root the idea of ownership. That sense of ownership motivates people not only with a new sense of personal place in the world, but also with some basis to begin taking ownership of a better place in their community.”

She said by extending personal ownership the Knysna Municipality is creating a sense of personal investment. “The municipality is dependent on Provincial Government for funding and even with the additional contribution made by the Knysna Council, it remains a slow process and residents have to be patient, sometimes for far too long.

In conclusion she said the municipality is constantly on the lookout for alternatives to accelerate this process. “The Department of Integrated Human Settlements aims to accelerate and intensify their programmes to ensure that transfers of the outstanding title deeds take place as quickly as possible. We are also constantly looking at more innovative housing options that will provide a more cost-effective solution that is quicker to build.”

www.knysna.gov.za
Preparations for Sedgefield’s 5th Slow Festival are well on its way and locals and visitors can again look forward to some “good old-fashioned fun” the Festival is known for.

Taking place over Easter weekend from the 18th to 20th of April the programme will include old favourites with some exciting new additions. Some of the items on the programme include the Spar Goukamma Traverse presented by Vivobarefoot; Sotheby’s Slow Biking Competition; a Family 5km Trail Run; the Adcock Ingram “Anything That Floats”; and new on the programme, the Slow Players Welcome Tennis Day and the Windpomp Dinner Dance Social. There are loads of activities for kids, but the Easter Bunny Beach Fling and the Sand Sculpting Challenge are not to be missed.

Visit www.slowfestival.co.za for more information.

Contact us:

ALL SECTIONS OFFICE HOURS:
Telephone: +27 (0)44 302 6300 | Facsimile: +27 (0)44 302 6333

Emergency all hours telephone: +27 (0)44 302 8911
Email: knysna@knysna.gov.za
Website: www.knysna.gov.za

CUSTOMER SERVICES:
SMS: 44453 | Email: customer@knysna.gov.za