Municipality celebrates Mandela Day

Municipal Council and staff celebrated former president Nelson Mandela’s 95th birthday by giving 67 minutes of their time to assist charitable organisations across the municipal area on 18 July.

Coordinated by Executive Mayor Georlene Wolmarans’ office, ward councillors nominated charities within their wards which were then contacted to identify specific needs with which staff could help. Participating municipal workers then spent time at the charities to address as many needs as possible.

In Sedgefield, the benefiting non-profit organisations were Sedgefield Mobile Meals and Masithandane. Councillors Irene Grootboom and Louise Hart and local staff helped cook food with Sedgefield Mobile Meals team members Carine Bryant, Pam Regis, Russell Morgan, Gladys Pietersen and Dinah Jantjes. Mobile Meals provides three meals a week to more than a 100 people in Sedgefield. They can be contacted via Carine on 044 382 3415.

Sedgefield staff Esme Baker (far left) and Nelsette (second from right) and Councillor Irene Grootboom joined Sedgefield Mobile Meals team members (from left) Gladys Pietersen and Dinah Jantjes to cook food for the elderly.

Municipal Technical Services staff in Sedgefield assisted Masithandane to even out their driveway, removed garden refuse, installed a water pipe and laid pavers around the buildings. A team of SANParks employees joined in to work in the garden. Masithandane runs a wide range of community projects and can be contacted at 044 343 2110.

In other areas of the municipality, activities included painting of buildings and playgrounds, IT assistance, gardening, general cleaning, recycling projects, spending time with the elderly and even assisting with an emergency evacuation plan.

Speaking to participating staff ahead of their activities, Knysna Executive Deputy Mayor Esmé Edge said the Municipality was proud that its staff was willing to participate in bettering the lives of others and gladly made staff available for the 67 minutes specifically dedicated for this purpose. “We have also been encouraging the citizens of the Greater Knysna Area to take part in this wonderful initiative and will continue to do so in future.”

Ms Edge reminded staff and citizens of the Mandela Day slogan, ‘Make every day a Mandela Day’ and encouraged them to become active in their communities on a daily basis. “Let’s ensure that the outward-looking spirit of Madiba becomes an intrinsic part of the South African lifestyle. And remember, it is not just about giving money. Sometimes, it is just the availability of a vehicle or taking the time to read to an elderly person that makes all the difference. I encourage you to contact your ward councillor or community representative today to find out where you can get involved to help those in need.

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“Of course we have not forgotten the one event that has inspired this initiative - it is Tata Madiba’s birthday today. The Knysna Municipality wishes Nelson Mandela a peaceful and blessed time. May his legacy of hope, caring and reconciliation become the lasting identity of our country.” said Ms Edge.