

# Strong school support for Stand Up campaign

SAMANTHA MOODLEY

AT LEAST 60 schools were among the hundreds in Durban who participated in the Stand Up, Take Action global campaign recently.

The campaign was in support of the Millennium Development Goals, which include eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and creating a sustainable environment.

It called for individuals and organisations to come together in their work, religious or other organisations to read the Stand Up Pledge.

The initiative includes the Mission Green Earth campaign, which aims to get the world's citizens to plant 100 million trees by July 2009.

In support of the campaign, an event was hosted by the Municipality and Art of living

Foundation on the International Day for the eradication of poverty (17 October), at the City Hall.

Deputy Mayor Logie Naidoo said it was up to every individual to help combat global warming and poverty.

"We have to make sure we prevent damage to the environment.

"Climate change has caused damage... but it's not

too late to make a change... one of the ways is to green our earth.

"This programme is not only about planting trees but has a broader reach of eradicating poverty," he said.

It was confirmed that, as part of eThekweni's greening initiatives, every house built through the Council's social housing programmes would be accompanied by

two or three fruit trees.

Vinotha Govender, of the Art of Living foundation, said it was about making the welfare of the planet everyone's business.

Council officials, schools, representatives of business and dignitaries, including Ela Gandhi and the Consul General of China, Zhang Lianyun, attended the event.

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# Tourism careers expo proves a big draw

DERRICK DLAMINI

YOUNG people were given a taste of some career options available to them in the tourism industry at an expo held at the Durban Exhibition Centre recently.

The three-day event, which attracted more than 13 000 pupils from across South Africa, was aimed at bridging the skills gap now facing the country's tourism industry.

Young people, including those who were unemployed, were encouraged to consider a career in the industry.

About 400 teachers participated, and there were at least 63 exhibitors.

The initiative was a joint effort by the national Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts, Culture and Tourism, and the Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education and Training Authority.

## Wealth

KZN MEC for Arts, Culture and Tourism, Weziwe Thusi, said the exhibition was aimed at "providing rare opportunities for learners, students and unemployed graduates".

"Much of our wealth, as a province, lies in the tourism sector, which is a major contributor to our economy.

"Learners will leave this expo with a better understanding of the sector and be able to take advantage of the many opportunities in the industry," she said.

Deputy Director-General of the KZN Education Department, Simon Mbokazi, said the province had the highest number of pupils taking tourism as a subject.

He said tourism in schools was still a new subject so there was a shortage of teachers qualified to teach the subject.

"There is also limited access to information, especially for rural schools. Shortage of a variety of education materials is another challenge," said Mbokazi.

Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism, Rejoice Mabudafhasi, said even though the tourism was one of the largest and most diverse sectors, it remained a largely untapped sector when it came to attracting young individuals.

"A key focus of the expo is to show young people the vast potential, great opportunities and rewarding jobs within the tourism sector," she said.

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# Damage to manholes costs R4m

SIFISO XULU and KEN MCHUNU

BROKEN manhole and inlet covers that fall into drains, causing blockages cost the City a whopping R4-million a year in maintenance.

That's according to the Manager of the City's Stormwater Engineering Unit, Greg Williams.

Williams, who was speaking at a recent business forum hosted by the South Durban Basin Area Based Management (ABM), put the blame on reckless drivers of public and heavy vehicles, who drove over pavements.

The forum meets to look for solutions to problems faced by businesses in the area.

Williams said driver education programmes were needed to curb the problem.

He said: "Sidewalks are not designed for traffic loading, but have, somewhat become parking areas for trucks in many parts of the city.

"Heavy vehicle drivers must be made to understand that their irresponsible use of sidewalks has far-reaching cost implications for the City - more than they realise."

Williams said many stormwater systems in the city were blocked by broken concrete covers that had fallen into manholes. This caused flooding in the system.

He said in the past financial year alone, the City spent R2-million on new manhole and inlet covers after they had

been damaged by heavy vehicles. This cost excluded repair and installation works.

"Most of these problems are caused by businesses that leave trailers and containers on the street overnight, blocking entrances to other business premises and off-loading containers on the street," he said.

SDB ABM Head, Lee D'Eathe, said insufficient law enforcement, illegal dumping by businesses, and litter also blocked the stormwater system.

## Message

He said the ABM was committed to getting the message to businesses in South Durban that they needed to do their bit to prevent damage to manhole covers and the blocking of the system.

Williams said that apart from landing the City with a stiff repair bill, drivers who broke manhole covers risked harming their own vehicles.

He said companies made many insurance claims that "could have been easily avoided, had motorists adhered to the bylaws".

The illegal roadside selling of alcohol was also identified as a problem at the forum.

Businesses were urged to make an effort to ensure a clean, green and safe environment.

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# FACT-FINDING MISSION



DELEGATES from the Lille Metroploe, in France, visit eThekweni's biogas-to-electricity plant at the Bisasar Road landfill site, in Springfield, earlier this month. The Frenchmen, who also paid a visit to a similar scheme at Mariannhill, were on a tour of South Africa. The Lille Metroploe wants to promote the biogas sector internationally

Pictures: JESSIE SINGH



# Ntshanga whiz-kids win quiz

THANDI ZONDI

PUPILS from 10 KwaXimba schools attended a quiz run by eThekweni's Local History Museum, at George Cato Primary in Cato Ridge recently.

The quiz was aimed at encouraging teaching and learning, particularly in rural areas.

Ahead of the quiz, teachers attended a seminar where they learnt about the function of museums and their significance to communities.

They were expected to pass on their knowledge to pupils.

Mlungisi Ngubane, Director of Museums, said he hoped the quiz would encourage pupils to visit museums.

Each school competing in the quiz was represented by two pupils, who answered 30 questions in each round on the history of eThekweni.

Ntshanga Primary came out tops and won a floating trophy, medals for their team, and textbooks for their schools.

Teachers and teams from other schools received certificates and textbooks.

Ward 1 Councillor, S S Ngubane, applauded the schools for participating, and the museum for reaching out to the KwaXimba schools.

Ntshanga Primary's winners, Luyanda Nzimande and Zanele Zungu, said they enjoyed the quiz, even though it was a bit difficult. They were keen to participate again next year.

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# Unhappy with Municipality? Then complain

DERRICK DLAMINI and ZIBUSE NDLOVU

RESIDENTS should report shoddy service from Municipal staff.

That was the message from the Head of the Municipality's Regional Centres, Gerard Strydom.

He was speaking to winners of a Council-backed school essay competition recently.

Strydom's comments echoed KZN MEC for Finance and Economic Development, Dr Zweli Mkhize's

recent comments on the tendency of many to remain tight-lipped about bad service from public servants.

One of the aims of the essay competition was to raise awareness about the Municipality's customer care policy, using school children as "ambassadors of the policy".

"We wanted people to understand our policies and services, especially children, to make it easier to spread the word," Strydom said.

"This included having children start thinking about

customer service as a central element in our Municipality."

He praised the quality of the essays.

"It was difficult to make the final selection. We congratulate those who made it to the final stages, and emerged victors. We'd also like to thank all those who participated in this overall campaign."

Three schools from uMlazi, south of Durban, came out tops, with Nokubonga Mazibuko, of OkuMhlophe High School, taking first place, Nolwazi Gama, of

uMlazi ComTech, coming second, and Qhilika High School's Zanele Mzizi third.

A thrilled Gama described the competition as challenging, but exciting.

"It prompted us to do thorough research into the Municipality's operations and policies, especially on customer service," Gama said.

Prizes included soccer kits for boys and girls and watches for the three winners.

Exco member, Councillor Nomvuzo Shabalala, urged

school children to become strong ambassadors for the City.

"If you feel the Council is not doing things correctly, or according to your expectations, don't be afraid to voice your concerns as young ones.

"You are our future generation. The youth should always endeavour to claim their rightful place in this country, and not sit on their laurels hoping for miracles."

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