

Long serving employees recognised



Once again, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality has recognised the dedication and loyalty of its long serving employees.

On 18 September, a glorious award ceremony was held at the Thusong Service Centre in Mhluzi, Ext 7, to reward the men and women at the municipality who have rendered service for ten years and more.

The award ceremony, traditionally known as the Long Service Awards, comprised of ten, fifteen and thirty year service award recipients.

During her keynote address, on behalf of the executive mayor, Cllr Rehana Pilodia, said: "Today we have gathered here to commemorate the journey our dedicated, hardworking, disciplined and committed staff have travelled in the municipality.

"Our municipality is proud to have employees of your calibre. I say this because you started serving in your respective departments for such a long period."

Executive managers, senior managers and heads of departments who were present at the ceremony also encouraged the recipients and other council employees to continue to render loyal service.

Some recipients of the 2009 Long Service Awards said that what made the ceremony so special for them was that they were accompanied by their family and friends, who shared in this proud moment.

New sport council elected

Sport and recreation clubs in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality assembled at the Gerald Setoka Library for the 2009 Sports Council Indaba, which was hosted by the Provincial Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation on 10 September.

The main objective of the Indaba was to establish a Local Sports Council that will serve the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality. All existing and aspirant clubs with contracts to council facilities will now affiliate with the newly elected Sport Council.

After a short election session co-ordinated by the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation and Thoko Mabanola, MMC responsible for sport and recreation in the municipality, Bongani Mabilisa was elected as the new chairperson of the new sport council.

Quinton du Toit was elected deputy Chairperson, Lillian Pretorius, Secretary, Buks Olivier, Deputy Secretary, John Greyling, Treasurer, and Joseph Malebe, Public Relations Officer.

Muzi Mlambo was elected as the Convenor for Disabled Sport, Herman Louw, Convenor of Youth Sport, Henry Banta, Convenor of facilities, and Thandi Ranela, Convenor of Women in Sport.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

"ARRIVE ALIVE"



The world is coming to us and we are ready



The Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu.

As hosts of the World Cup next year, it is unbelievable, yet true, that we are finally bidding farewell to 2009, and in a few days time we will warmly greet the most anticipated year across the entire continent, 2010, when South Africa will roll out the red carpet for the world - for the first time in the history of Africa.

This is a very important barometer of not only how our national team will perform during the 2010 FIFA World Cup Competition, but also, of how hospitable we are as a nation.

Let us, as a leading town in Mpumalanga, see how we can best play our part in this, and also benefit from the potential opportunities that this event offers.

2009 started on a high note with the successful national and provincial elections. And on that point, let me once more extend my profound appreciation to every citizen of South Africa who made it a point that they cast the vote for the African National Congress (ANC) so that it remains in power.

It was a year filled with opportunities for growth, development and fulfilling our duty to making the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality a better place for all our people to live, work and where they can attain their full potential. We realise that as a leading Local Authority in South Africa, we have much to be thankful for.

The country's recession has affected us dra-

matically, however, as Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, we remained committed to retaining the programmes that improve the lives of our people by meeting our goals for service delivery. Delivery that offers quality and affordability, both to our residents and the local business sector.

Evidence of our success is that we have clinched the first position in the coveted 2009 Goven Mbeiki Housing Award in Mpumalanga for the second time, as the local municipality that was best able to meet the targets set by the Provincial Legislature for the construction and servicing of RDP houses which they allocate, finance and monitor.

As we eagerly await the results of the prestigious annual Vuna Awards as well as the Cleanest Town Awards - both of which in past years our municipality has made major achievements in - we are confident that once again our innovative Municipality will prove to be a shining example to not only other local government structures within our province, but to the whole of South Africa.

We can look back with gratitude on the completion and progress of a number of important projects during 2009, not least being milestones reached in the eventual handing over of a project worth R20 million.

One milestone has been the official opening of another Thusong Service Centre in Doornkop which comprises of a clinic, library and a pay-point. Doornkop residents will no longer have to come to town for health, electricity and library services, which are now provided at the centre.

Other milestones to be proud of:

- The electrification of more than 200 RDP houses in Doornkop, Kwazamokuhle and Tokologo.
- Official hand-over of a clinic in Ext 6.
- Official hand-over of Bhimy Damane road and main roads in Kwazamokuhle.
- Another top-of-the-range fire engine truck for emergencies.
- Hand-over of 100 stands at Kwamakalane farm freely.
- Another 80 residential stands that were sold to the community.

We are also thankful for residents who are prepared to loyally pay for the municipal services that they enjoy; entrepreneurs who recognise the benefits of investing in the vibrant local economy and establishing their businesses here - thereby creating much-needed employment and prosperity - and

informal businessmen and women who are at the forefront of innovative ways of making a living that rely on hard, honest work and not on crime in order to survive.

We salute residents who are better off financially, but who are nevertheless prepared to extend a helping hand to those who are struggling to make ends meet and aware that by helping people to help themselves, they provide them with hope for a better future.

We are thankful for youths who study hard, don't abuse drugs and alcohol and live a lifestyle that does not expose them to HIV/AIDS.

I also want to thank the class of 2009 for their dedication and hard work in their studies. As you have just completed your exams, I want to plead with you to accept the outcome of your results as they are. Don't give up and become despondent. If you did not make it this year, try again next year. Do not listen to negative pressure from your friends, relatives, and the community.

We also pay special tribute to our dedicated and loyal Municipal Manager, executive managers, senior managers, heads of departments and managers, office staff members and grassroots level workers whose tireless efforts as a team to deliver effective services, maintain our existing infrastructure, successfully complete new projects and ensure a municipal area that is conducive to future development and economic growth.

However, the violent protestations experienced within our province this year indicates that leaders must improve public participation and consultation. We have heard you. However, I want to urge you to stop vandalising government property. It is your property too. Let us patiently build this nation.

Last but certainly not least, we were dealt a blow with the loss of four councillors this year, namely, Cllr Mahlodi Girly Mathebula, Cllr Michiel Brits, Cllr Alex Xulu and recently Cllr Gloria Mbalane. Our deepest sympathies go to their families and friends. May their souls rest in peace.

During this festive season, I wish you all a happy Christmas and a prosperous new year. Drive safely and arrive alive; don't drink and drive and enjoy basking in the loving embrace of your family and friends.

May the Lord Jesus Christ, whose birthday we now celebrate, bring you all safely back from your holiday destinations, rejuvenated and ready for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead of us in 2010.

Delivery of human settlements steams ahead

The Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, together with the Mpumalanga Department of Human Settlements are steaming ahead on the delivery of accommodation complexes and housing.

On Friday 30 July, the Municipality and the Department joined with the Greater Middelburg Housing Association (GMHA) to launch an 'Integrated Human Settlement Project' at the Chromeville flats in Mhluzi.

Currently there are 120 family units and ten bachelor units completed at the Chromville project.

The Chromville Human Settlement project started as an old hostel, which the municipality donated to the GMHA in 2002 as part of the municipality's role in human settlements delivery.

The project addresses the core approach of the department's integrated service delivery, called Breaking New Grounds (BNG).

The BNG approach aims to emphasise the need to establish human settlements within closely proximity to the economic hub of the town, and to transport and social facilities. The municipality, following recommendations from the department, will now focus on establishing sustainable human settlements - as opposed to just building individual units.

The emphasis will now be on provid-

ing accommodation with an adequate water system, sanitation, electricity and other amenities a family requires.

"At the end of the day, we want to rid our province of slums where everyone is going to live in harmony. The property will therefore contribute towards the housing scheme, form part of an overall integrated township development, play a major role in the housing delivery process and will also cater for all rental needs," said Human Settlement departmental spokesperson in Mpumalanga, Freddy Ngobe, in a press statement.

The GMHA has acquired nearly R10-million from the department and one of the leading banks to augment its budget.

The new part consists of 36 units which form part of the revived flats.

The launch was attended by the Executive Mayor of Steve Tshwete Municipality, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, Mpumalanga MEC for Human Settlements Madala Masuku, members of the mayoral committee and officials from both the municipality and the department.



MEC for Human Settlement, Madala Masuku, and the Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, cut the ribbon at the new block of flats at Chromville flats.

Sod turning heralds a new dawn

On 7 August, Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, performed the sod turning for the anticipated banquet hall, which is currently under construction in Church Street adjacent to Nkangala District Municipal offices.

The sod turning ceremony heralds a new dawn in the lives of many people in Steve Tshwete Municipality, as the banquet hall is expected to improve people's lives.

At the ceremony, The Mayor was joined by Cllr Elphus Mathebula, a member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) responsible for Infrastructure Development and Service Delivery, other MMCs, the council's Chief Whip, Michael Masina, councillors,

Municipal Manager, Willie Fouché, municipal officials and the building contractors for the banquet hall project, Philimon Mapha and Eddy Tomes of Thabang Property Developers.

Mr Mapha assured those present that his company has a good construction record, citing some of their successful projects which included the smooth and timely completion of the Polokwane Airport in Limpopo.

In her keynote address, Mayor Mahlangu, noted that the banquet hall forms part of the human settlements delivery project, and is in line with their philosophy of creating residential areas close to the facilities that makes life possible.

At its completion, the state-of-the-art banquet hall will provide the community with conference facilities as well as indoor sport facilities such as table tennis and basketball. At the time of going to press, Eddy Tomes, speaking on behalf of Thabang Construction, reported that building operations were progressing smoothly at the construction site.

The Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, and Eddy Tomes of Thabang Construction, turn a sod of soil before construction work for the banquet hall commences.



Essential services to the people



Residents enquire about services at the SASSA mobile office - Evergreen farm.

In observation of imbizo (public participation) month, the Steve Tshwete Local Communicators Forum held an Integrated Service Delivery Imbizo at Evergreen Farm on 5 November. The objective of the imbizo was to take services to the people who have little or no access to government

services, such as making affidavits, applications for birth certificates, identity documents etc.

A number of government departments, including the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, South African Police Services, South African Social Se-

curity Agency (SASSA), the departments of Correctional Services, Home Affairs, Health, Social Development, Education and Justice were present to assist the communities of Evergreen farm and surrounding areas.

The imbizo attracted a large turnout: Young and old made use of the opportunity to acquire basic government services.

The facilities included mobile offices from SASSA and Home Affairs, the Department of Health's mobile clinic, while other departments such as Social Development, Justice, Correctional Services and SAPS mounted exhibitions - all with a mission to deliver services to the people.

Councillor Rihana Pilodia, a member of the mayoral committee, Cllr Andries Mabena, managers from government departments and officials also attended the imbizo with a common intention to render service delivery, service delivery and ... service delivery.

Cllr Pilodia also planted a tree as a token of 'giving' to the community and greening Mpumalanga.

The event got underway at 10:00 and exhibitors remained until noon.



Members of the community during the imbizo.

Mayor calls matrices to prayer



On the eve of writing the 2009 matric final examinations, the Executive Mayor of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, invited the class of 2009 to a prayer session dedicated to

Grade 11's and 12's

The much anointed prayer session took place at Eric Jiyane hall where the presence of the local pastors' forum (no doubt) brought the audience closer to the Almighty.

Songs of praise and worship filled the hall as pupils, accompanied by their parents, sang at the tops of their voices.

The prayer session was also attended by the council's Chief whip, Mike Masina, MMC Thoko Mabonola, ward councillors, members of the students' governing bodies, pupils and educators.

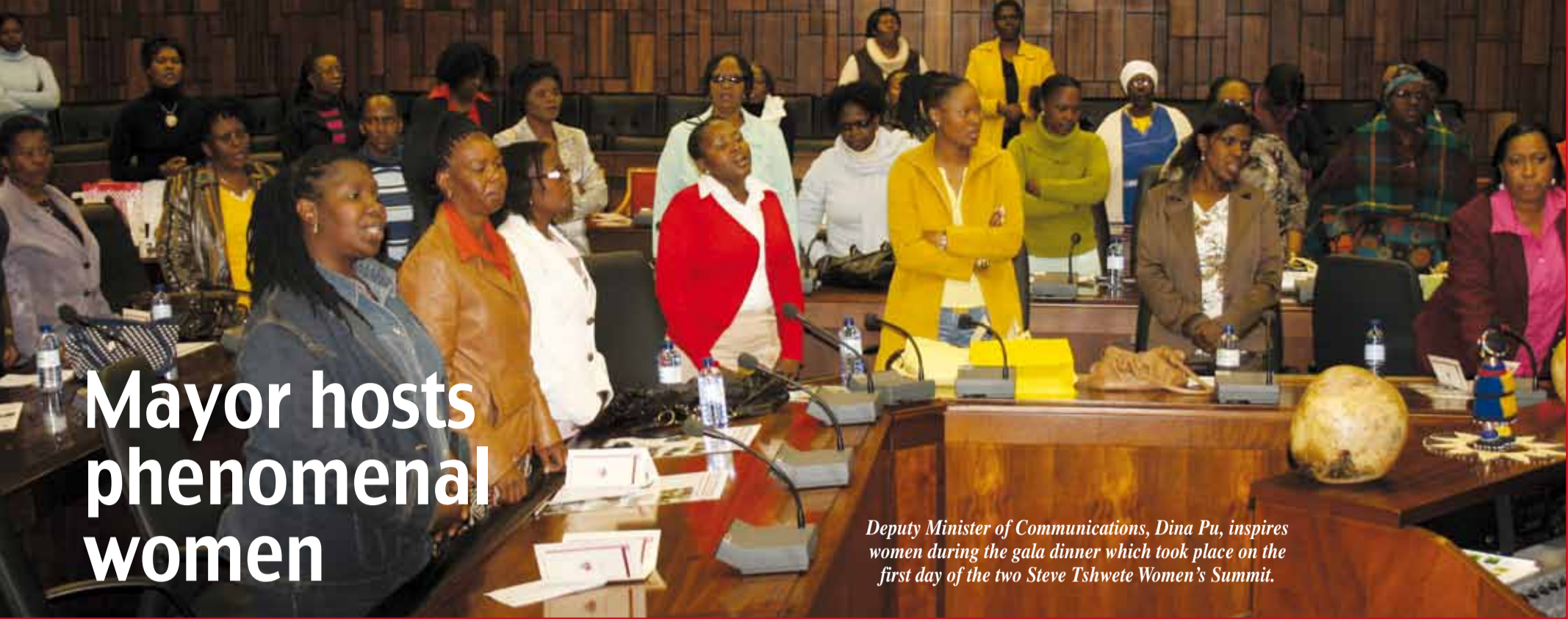
Words of inspiration were the order of the day, as the executive mayor, pastors and other speakers encouraged the pupils, inspiring them to do well in their examinations.

The mayor also reminded the pupils of the many opportunities that exist in the municipality for those who will obtain good marks in the exams. She further challenged pupils to come to her office to apply for a bursary, should they obtain excellent symbols.

Left: The Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, motivates Grades 11 and 12 ahead of their 2009 year-end examinations.

Below: Some of the pupils who responded to an altar call by the Pastors to lay hands on them.





Mayor hosts phenomenal women

Deputy Minister of Communications, Dina Pu, inspires women during the gala dinner which took place on the first day of the two Steve Tshwete Women's Summit.

This time it was about celebrating the 'great woman within' as part of the celebrations during women's month. The Executive Mayor of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, hosted the 2009 Steve Tshwete Women's Summit, where exceptional women came together in a spirit of shared love and life.

Thoko Mabanola, an MMC responsible for Health, Social Services, Culture, Sport and Recreation at the municipality, welcomed the beautifully turned-out women to the summit.

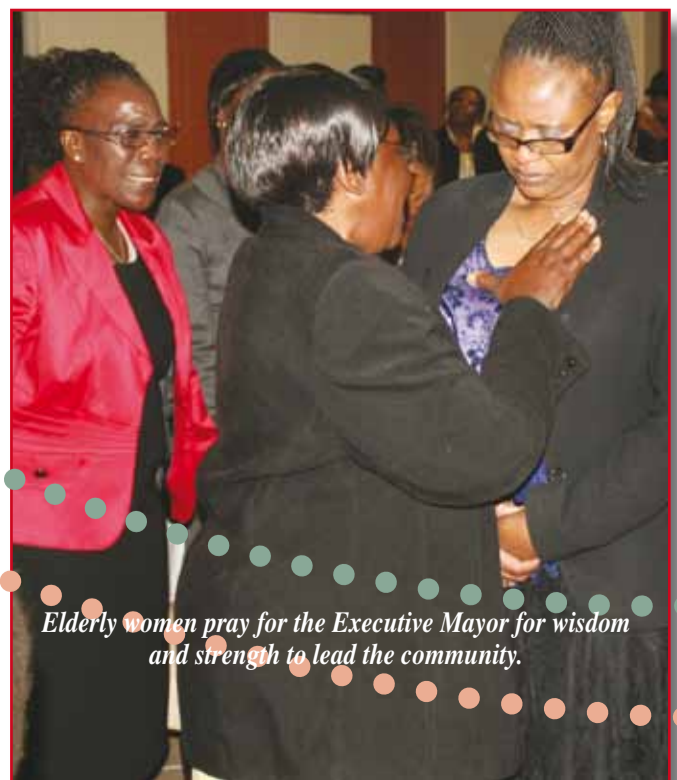
During her keynote address, the Executive Mayor spoke from the heart as she tackled issues that were relevant and familiar. The two day summit also provided a platform for presentations from women in the business and social sectors.

The first round of the summit was complemented with a gala dinner, where the Deputy Minister of Communications, Dina Pule was the keynote speaker, and inspired her audience with her own background, describing how her mother educated her despite the hardships.

The minister also saluted South Africa's Caster Semenya, who had just won the 2009 Women's 800m race at World Athletics Championships in Berlin.

Prayer warriors who also blessed the event with their presence, prayed for the Executive Mayor, asking the Almighty to grant her more wisdom as she leads the community of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality.

The rest of the evening served as a stage to network and refresh for the second day of the summit.



Elderly women pray for the Executive Mayor for wisdom and strength to lead the community.

Mourning continues in the council

The Angel of death has visited the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality. In a short space of time, the council has lost Councillor Girly Mathebula of Ward 4, Mhluzi, Councillor Phillemon Gama, a former mayor of Hendrina and Alderman Michiel Britz.

While members of the council, employees and the community were still trying to come to terms with the losses of their councillors, a long illness robbed the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality of people's man, Alderman Alex Xulu.

And again, on 22 October, the Steve Tshwete municipal jurisdiction was shaken with the passing of Ward 24's councillor, Gloria Mbalane. Mabalane died at Midmed Hospital, after a short illness.

The council now faces the task of filling the gap she leaves behind - not an easy one given that she was such a unique individual. At her memorial service on 5 November, held at Kopanang Community Hall in Ward 24, Mabalane's colleagues, friends and family members, which included the Executive Mayor, described her as a person of a great calibre.

Mabalane was buried on 31 October at Phumolong cemetery in Mhluzi. However, the first part of the funeral took place at Bank Colliery 2, where praises for the late stalwart were on everyone's lips.

ANC struggle songs filled the small community hall, a last tribute to the 'mother' of Ward 24.

The Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, members of the mayoral committee, ward councillors, Chief Whip, Mike Masina, representatives from the ANC, ANC Women's League, ANC Youth League and other ANC affiliated movements were present.

OBITUARY : Cindy Gloria Mbalane

Cindy Gloria Mbalane was born on 14 June 1952 in George, Eastern Cape. She was the third daughter of the late Sister Mamtipa and Mvelo Khwalo. She started and finished school at Ebenville. She worked at the early learning centre at Bank Colliery until her untimely death.

She was an ANC ward councillor elect in the 2006 local government elections and was later elected an ANC ward councillor for Ward 24.

She was an active member of both the ANC and ANCWL.

She is survived by her father, sister, brothers, children and grandchildren.

Councillors Moseley Masango and Thoko Mabanola pay their last respects to the late Cllr Cindy Mbalane.



District outreach comes to municipality

Residents of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality came to attend the Nkangala District Municipal (NDM) Outreach, on 13 September.

The Executive Mayor of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, hosted the Executive Mayor of the district, Speedy Mashilo, for the 2009 NDM Community Outreach which was held at Kwazamokuhle Community Hall, in Kwazamokuhle.

During the Outreach, which was attended by councillors from both the district and local municipalities, Mashilo addressed the community on a number of issues, as well as housing, and encouraged the community to know their rights as stated in the constitution.

Mashilo reported on a number of projects carried out in the financial years 2008/09 and 2009/2010, most of which were completed in record time.

These included the completion of the Bulk Water construction to the New Industrial stands which took only four months to complete at a cost of R2 217 866. Other projects were a new sewer network in Aerorand, completed in just over two months at a cost of R517 810.

Biological toilets in rural settlements had been completed in three months at a cost of R490 203.

During the 'pass the microphone' session, some community members used the platform to ask questions on youth development, unemployment and low cost housing.

Community members expressed their gratitude to the leadership of both Nkangala District Municipality and Steve Tshwete Local Municipality for bringing the much awaited Outreach to their area.

What is a Mayoral Outreach?

The Mayoral Outreach programme is a channel of communication for residents, who make use of the platform presented to them, to give voice to their service delivery needs and council issues.

The campaign, commonly entitled 'Community Participation', takes the form of a series of public meetings in which residents are invited to tell the Mayor what their most important service delivery needs are.

The objective is to meet with as many residents as possible and to communicate with them about issues that are important in relation to service delivery.

In Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, the meetings are traditionally held on Sunday afternoon, at community halls, schools and Thusong Service Centres throughout the municipal jurisdiction.

Mayoral Outreaches have been implemented to reflect council's commitment to engage with residents about what they feel should be done to improve service delivery in the local municipality.

The Executive Mayor, Ward Councillors, Municipal Manager, Municipal Heads of Departments, Senior Managers and Managers, Community Development Workers, Ward Committee Members and other structures of the community attend the Mayoral Out-

reach.

This also gives the community a better understanding of the local political structures.



The Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, and Cllr Bongani Mayaba join the District Mayor, Speedy Mashilo who handed over a new bakkie to the Kwazamokuhle Fire Department after the outreach meeting.

Provincial human settlements interact with municipalities

On 13 August, MEC for Human Settlements, Madala Masuku, visited Steve Tshwete Local Municipality as part of extensive consultations for the development of the Integrated Human Settlements.

Masuku met with mayors and councillors responsible for human settlements delivery at the session held at Steve Tshwete Municipal office - called MUNIMEC.

The engagements come at a time when Steve Tshwete Local Municipality has just re-looked its mandate to focus on sustainable settlements.

During the MUNIMEC session, it was agreed that the new mandate of the department needs to take into consideration issues of affordability, marginalized groups, proper planning and present housing needs, amongst other factors.

"The developments are not just a name change, but it is human settlement in a holistic way that will also include houses, electricity, social amenities like schools and clinics etcetera," said Masuku.

He furthered assured the assembly during the session that the department will, this year, complete all

unfinished houses, whilst building new ones.

In tackling the human settlements issues in the municipality, the Executive Mayor of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, said their mandate included development of sustainable human settlements, ensuring that the municipal

building plans enhance sustainable livelihoods.

The MUNIMEC engagements will take place on a quarterly basis.

The Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, and the MEC for Human Settlements, Madala Masuku, at the MUNIMEC session which was held at the municipal council chamber.



Man of the PEOPLE laid to rest

The Themba Senamela Stadium in Mhluzi will be remembered for staging many events - amongst others, the funeral of the late Alderman Alex 'Bigboy' Xulu, popularly known as 'Oom Bhibi'.

On 22 August, a broad spectrum of people from our local community, as well as many more from farther afield, gathered at the stadium to pay their last respects to this stalwart of the community.

Amongst the mourners was our Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, members of the mayoral Committee, the municipality's former speaker, RT Mpye, the council's Chief Whip Michael Masina, ward councillors, community development workers, ward committee members, members of the South African Communist Party and municipal officials.

At a district, provincial and national level, were the deputy Minister of Defence and former premier of Mpumalanga, Thabang Makwetla, the Executive Mayor of Nkangala District Municipality Speedy Mashilo, the district ANC chairperson and Nkangala District Municipal Manager Charles Makola, Ananias Langa, Emalahleni Local Municipal Manager, the Chief Whip of the Mpumalanga Legislature, Siphosizwe Masango - and many other dignitaries from the Mpumalanga Provincial legislature were also amongst the mourners.

Two days ahead of Xulu's funeral, an emotional memorial service was held at the Eric Jiyane hall, where friends, colleagues and comrades of Xulu celebrated his life, as they related their past experiences with the deceased hero.

'Oom Bhibi' passed away at the Witbank Cosmos Hospital on 15 August 2009, following kidney failure after a long battle with cancer.

He is survived by a large family, including a wife, his mother, siblings, children and grandchildren.

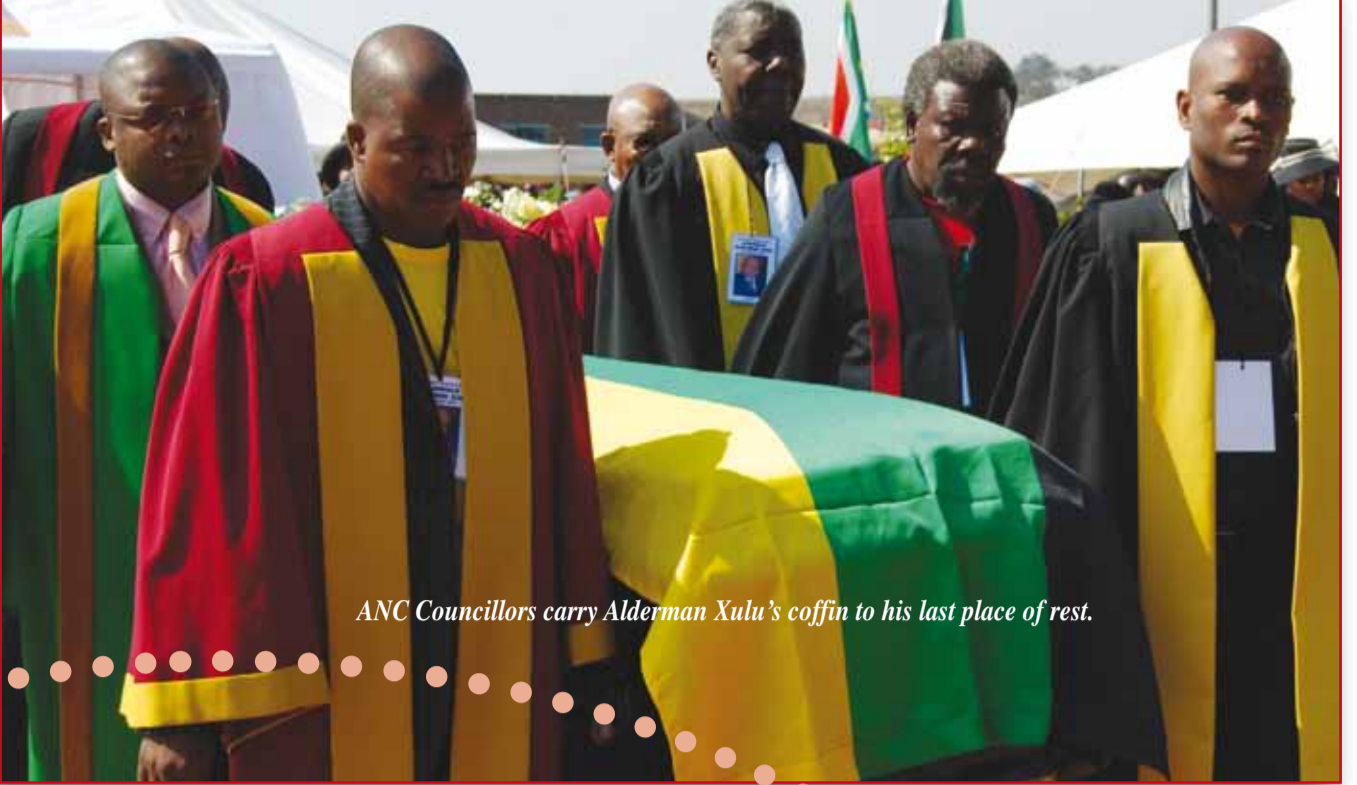
Alexander Mthombeni-Xulu: A life well lived

Alexander 'Bigboy' Mthombeni-Xulu, popularly known as 'Terror' and 'Oom Bhibi', was born on 15 August 1953 in Middelburg, the first-born of six children.

Xulu started his primary school education at Manyono Primary (then known as Wessel), and proceeded to Tshwenyane Higher Primary school, completing his education at Sozama Secondary School.

He began his political activism during his high school days in 1972, when together with like-minded peers, he formed the Middelburg Students Organisation, an affiliate of the South African Students Organisation (SASO).

On the work front, Xulu started at Autohouse



ANC Councillors carry Alderman Xulu's coffin to his last place of rest.

(Volkswagen) and later joined Middelburg Steel & Alloys (now Columbus Stainless). Here, in 1989, he became a member of NUMSA (National Union Of Metal Workers of South Africa), going on to be appointed as the steel producer's first full-time Shop Steward and in the same period, 1992 to 1994, serving as the Regional Deputy Chairperson of NUMSA.

As a Councillor:

In 1994, Xulu was part of a local negotiating forum, representing the SACP, which led to the establishment of the Transitional Local Council in October 1994. Soon after, he was elected as a Ward Councillor in the first council elections of the new Transitional Local Council of Middelburg, and served an uninterrupted term from 1995 to 2000. He was re-elected and served another two terms.

He was also a member of the mayoral committee in the capacity of political head of Administration, Human Resource and Education from August 2001.

He was chairperson of the Ward Committee from 2001. Xulu also served in the Local Labour Forum, on a sub-committee from 2001 to 2008.

Tertiary Academic Achievements:

He obtained a Certificate in Performance Management, Ethical Management in Local Government at the KZN School of Public Administration; in Executive Leadership in the Municipal Development Programme at the University of Pretoria as well as Management and Development of Municipal Finance at Wits Business School.

In early 2009, the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality honoured Xulu with the title of 'Alderman' for his sterling work and his contribution to the upliftment of the lives of people in his community, for 14 dedicated years.

He represented the council in various organisations and bodies: In 2000, he was elected as Chairperson of the Little Elephant Board of Directors and in 2008 was re-elected as Deputy Chairperson of the board.

Until his untimely death, Xulu represented the local municipality at the South African Local Government Association as chairperson of the Bargaining Council at divisional level from 2004 to 2006, and was subsequently elected deputy chairman in the same year (2006), an office which he held at the

time of his passing.

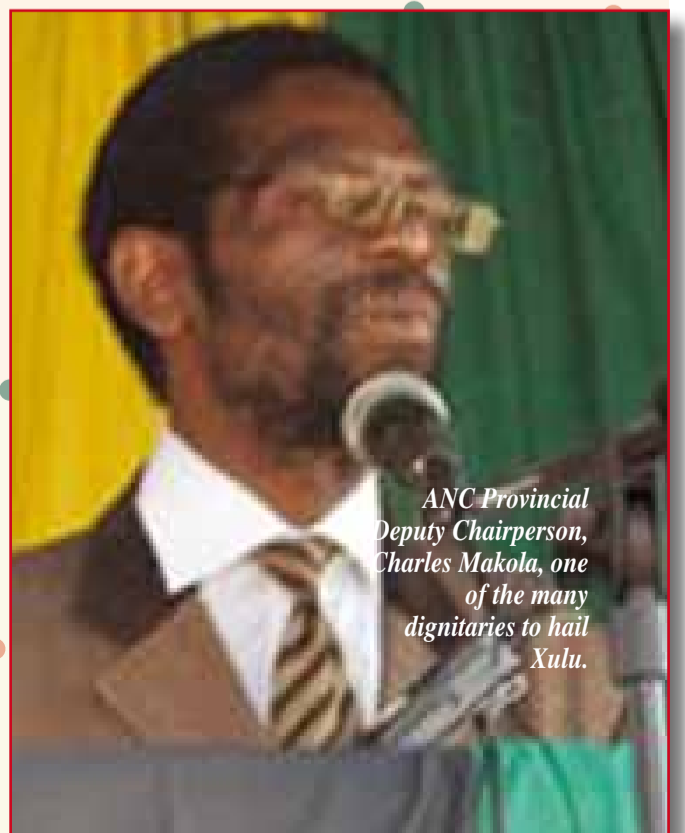
He also represented the council on the Councillor's Pension Fund and the Employees' Retirement Fund.

'Oom Bhibi' was a very vibrant SACP and ANC member: He was an elected chairperson of the SACP, Middelburg branch, from 2000 and a member of the BEC of the ANC from 2001 - this after re-alignment of branches. He was the Chairperson elect of Thandukukhaya ANC Branch (Ward 9) in 2003, 2006 and 2007 respectively. Lala ngoxolo!

The 56-year-old Xulu was laid to rest at the Hero's Acres in Middelburg.



The Executive Mayor of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality addresses the mourners at Xulu's funeral service at Themba Senamela Stadium.



ANC Provincial Deputy Chairperson, Charles Makola, one of the many dignitaries to hail Xulu.

Women's Day celebrated at municipality

It's Friday morning, 31 August, and most of the municipal employees are looking forward to knock-off time and the start of the weekend.

But female employees at Steve Tshwete Local Municipality had beat them to it with a really early start to the weekend - at a breakfast gathering in the mayor's parlour - ahead of the Steve Tshwete Woman's Day celebrations, which took place in the council's parking basement.

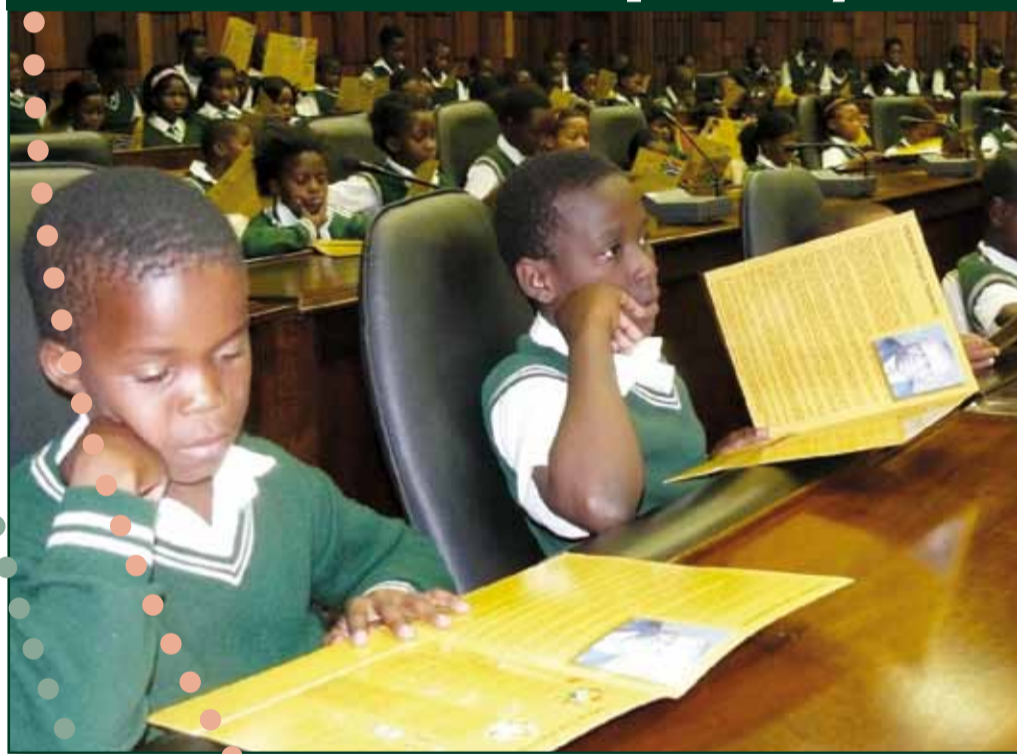
Feel good music filled the basement area, accompanied by some electrifying dance moves.

The Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, joined in the celebrations and shared some thoughts and ideas with them, urging them to further their studies and acquire relevant skills in their field of employment.

Steps in the name of women power: Municipal female employees and the Executive Mayor respond to good music at the Steve Tshwete Women's Day.



Kwanda pupils visit the municipality



Pupils learn about our local, district, provincial and national symbols.

It would seem that many questions cross young pupils' minds as to how the municipal systems function.

Recently, Grade 4's and 5's from Kwanda Primary School in Kwanala visited the municipality. The future leaders from Emalahleni municipal jurisdiction came all the way to our municipality to establish how municipal employees are appointed and where the municipality gets water from and generates electricity ... among other questions.

Speaking on behalf of the pupils, Nomsa Masango, a teacher at the school, said the pupils have always asked questions about municipal services and as a result the school decided to visit Steve Tshwete Municipality for purposes of acquiring information on municipal services.

The Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, the Municipal Manager, Willie Fouché, Municipal Managers and other officials assembled in the municipal council chamber with the pupils to answer their questions. Although the pupils come from a farm school, they appeared to be well-informed and broke many stereotypes. A question that surprised came from a Grade 4 learner who asked the Municipal Manager, "Sir, how did you get your job?"

Mayor encourages home grown veggies

The Steve Tshwete Local Municipality is addressing the provision of food security - as highlighted by President Jacob Zuma in his 2009 election manifesto - with the handing over of a second community food garden to residents in Extention 24, Middelburg.

The Executive Mayor, Mantlhakeng Mahlangu, officially handed over a flourishing food garden to the community of Ext 24 on Friday 7 August.

In her address, Mahlangu encouraged the beneficiaries of the food gardens to plant more food-producing trees in their yards. She said this should be done in an attempt to fight hunger and global warming.

To date, this brings to two the number of food gardens handed over to the communities. The first one was the Ikageng Food Gardens in Mhluzi, Ward 4. Other food gardens are expected to be established in Tokologo, New Town and Kwazamokuhle.

The handing over ceremony of the Ext 24 food gardens was also attended by Cllr Rihana Pilodia, member of the mayoral committee, Cllr Elphus Mathebula (MMC), Cllr Bongani Mayaba (MMC), Municipal Manager, Willie Fouché, Themba Masango, Local Economic Development Manager at Steve Tshwete Municipality, Simangele Skosana from the energy office in Kwamhlanga, Robert Grobler from Black Wattle Colliery, municipal officials and residents of Ext 24.



The Executive Mayor Mantlhakeng Mahlangu cuts the ribbon at the official hand-over of the food garden to the community of Ext. 24. She is photographed with Robert Grobler from Black Wattle Colliery and some of the local beneficiaries.