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Although all possible care is taken with articles, the editorial staff cannot accept any responsibility for lost articles and photographs.

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COPYRIGHT: No article or picture in this magazine may be reproduced without the written consent of the Editor.
This month’s edition of SA Soldier is packed with a variety of articles. One such that stands out for me is the article on a remarkable legal eagle: “Disability is never an inability – meet Lt Col Gysie van der Niet”. Do yourself a favour and read this inspiring article written by our News Editor on pages 23 to 25.

It reminded me of the millionaire’s saying: “Start every day with an attitude of gratitude”.

Each one of us is blessed with at least one special talent. Let us embrace it and make the most of it.

Let us focus on our strengths and appreciate what we have received instead of concentrating on our weaknesses or imperfections or on what we do not have.

Let each of us accept our crosses (burdens) in life and bear them with dignity while we endeavour to transform our challenges into opportunities.

And in so doing we could reach out to the needy and try to lighten their burdens. Lending a helping hand will enrich our lives.

Members of 10 Anti-air Regiment are testimony to this. During their deployment in the Pongola area of KwaZulu-Natal they made meaningful contributions towards the lives of several people overwhelmed by poverty (see the article on pages 14 and 15).

Let us strive to instil a culture of giving in the military.

UBUNTU - I am because we are!

Be optimistic and seize every day and opportunity and make the most of it – without fearing the future! Grab the day and live life!

Nelda Pienaar
Editor SA Soldier

Translation into Tsonga by Ms Risuna Nwandzule, an Intern at Defence Corporate Communication.
The celebration of Light over Darkness!

By Maj Gen Ansuyah Fakir, Chief Director Human Resources Development

Vanakkum and Namaste (Tamil/Sanskrit greeting of respect)

Hindus around the world will celebrate the auspicious festival of lights, Deepavali from 18 to 19 October. Deepavali is the noble life story of Lord Rama and mother Sita, and their dutiful relationship to each other and their service to their kinsmen, as told in the holy book, the Ramayana. The life path of right-living – of righteous duty (dharma), action (karma), knowledge (jnana), devotion (upasana), towards enlightenment to achieve liberation (nirvana) self-realisation and salvation (moksha). This life path is given to us in the eternal and sacred scriptures, namely the Vedas and the Tirukkural, practiced by Hindus. The Ramayana addresses many spiritual values – at the heart is the simple value of: selfless duty! The life story of Lord Rama and aMa Sita is an example to us on how to lead a noble life: A life without ego, without seeking reward and without harm to others. This often is expressed as:

• Good over Evil
• Knowledge over Ignorance
• Enlightenment over Tyranny
• Consciousness over Ego
• Humility over Pride
• Detachment over Attachment and Materialism

Deepavali is observed by all Hindu officials in the Department of Defence (DOD) as a time of sharing, and uplifting the wellbeing of others. Particular note is made of the selfless actions by our KwaZulu-Natal, eThekweni Unit members, in serving the charities for the aged and children. In Pretoria, Gauteng, on 13 November 2015 saw the Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile, supported by chaplains, Col Tobias Masuku and Vipra (Chaplain) Kirun Satgoor, inaugurated the first Deepavali service, now a yearly event. The small group of officials from all denominations were inspired by the Chaplain General’s message of our common humanity whereby service to our country is service to God. And again the next year when the Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang, paid his respects at the Deepavali service on 4 November 2016.

The once in a year DOD Deepavali gathering is a day of joyful smiles and greetings. More significantly it has grown into a time for self-reflection, consciousness raising and spiritual renewal. The Hindu Chaplain, Vipra Kirun Satgoor, has continued to lead the Hindu spiritual service for the DOD officials. Clarifying the many distortions about Hinduism, he has guided us to find the inward path to peace and enlightenment. The simple message – that spirituality and God consciousness can be reached in many ways, through prayer (puja), song-hymn (arati), lighting lamps (luxmi), mantras, meditation (sadhana) or through vows made at the temple or the sacred fire (havan), in selfless motive (yajna). There are no prescriptions! It is for each of us to commence our journey, our life-path. It is how we perform our moral duty to our family and our community – which reflects our actions, thoughts and self-discipline – that will help us to reach a higher state of consciousness and liberate us from attachment. It is our personal communion with our God.

The Deepavali service will once again be marked by officials across the DOD. The open service will be held at the SA Air Force College in Pretoria between 11:00 and 14:00 on 20 October 2017.

The DOD wishes all its officials a Happy Deepavali! Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!

The call to God: Peace within Me! Peace in our World! Peace in Creation of our Universe! 🕉
BUILDING CHARACTER

Over the years some of us fell in a certain cycle of trying to fit in. Whether it is social clubs, church groups, friend zones or organisations. All we ever want to accomplish is to fit in somewhere. In the process we were trying to fit in where we never thought of standing out but instead we always wanted to be counted in!

What we don’t usually realise is that we are uniquely made in the image of God. In Christ Jesus we are wonderfully and fearfully made (Psalm 139:14). Why do you want to fit in when you can be the best of ONLY YOU!

You have a special plan that’s set out by God, our Heavenly Father. To be different is the start of building your character. You will be amazed of what you are capable of doing if you would only start concentrating on becoming the best version of yourself. In order to leave a great legacy behind after you are long gone, ensure that you will be remembered for the character that you have built. This can begin by being your own special unique self. The next time you want to be someone else, you must first stop and take a look in the mirror and know that there is only one YOU so start being a better YOU than yesterday or the day before.

After all there is only one of YOU!

Capt Chrisandy Wilmarie Sieglaar, School of Artillery, Potchefstroom

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SA SOLDIER welcomes letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters may be edited for reasons of style, accuracy or space limitations. Letters should preferably be typewritten. All letters must include the writer’s full name, address and home telephone number. The opinions expressed in letters are not necessarily the views of the Department of Defence/ SA National Defence Force. The volume of letters we receive make individual acknowledgement impossible. Please send your letters to: The Editor, SA SOLDIER Letters, Private Bag X158, Pretoria, 0001. Letters may also be faxed to (012) 355-6399 or sent via email to sasoldier@mil.za. We would like to hear your comments or ideas, particularly about matters concerning the Department of Defence. Regrettably, anonymous letters cannot be published - Editor.

COL JANUARY BADE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE HEADQUARTERS UNIT FAREWELL

Col Neville January recently bade the Department of Defence Headquarters Unit (DOD HQ Unit) farewell at his farewell celebration at the Armscor Sports Ground in Pretoria. Col January has since been appointed as Director Facilities at Logistics Division and promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. The event was held to acknowledge the contribution made by Col January and also to welcome the newly appointed Officer Commanding, Capt (SAN) Takalani Magonono. The farewell was in the form of a church parade where Chaplain Mantsha Ndukula gave a sermon befitting the occasion. During the event, the different sections under DOD HQ Unit handed over a token of appreciation to Col January for his leadership and guidance during his tenure as the Officer Commanding of DOD HQ Unit. Under his guidance two years ago, some of his highlights include obtaining Reserve Force members to re-arrange the Unit’s disposal stores with the effect that they manage to execute three disposal auctions and generating millions of rands as well as vastly minimising their unserviceable equipment. Other achievements include re-organising the Unit structure to improve on service delivery; the presenting of a couple of medal parades officiated by the Chief of the SA National Defence Force, Gen Solly Shoke, and acknowledging their diversity and transforming the Unit into a cohesive workforce. Various speakers gave accounts on Col January’s character. He was thanked for his contribution to their personal and professional development. Col January was described as someone who was helpful, patient, a mentor, and more than a soldier with an inviting character. He has been an inspiration to others, particularly his subordinates with many looking up to him. Addressing the members, Col January said that when he received the news of his appointment two years ago as the Officer Commanding of the Unit, he was disappointed but when he eventually started working his attitude immediately changed and he told himself that if this was God’s plan then he must be positive and ready for the challenge. Col January said: “Two years to command a unit with this responsibility and challenges are not an easy task but there is a saying that this period is long enough for a good leader but too short for a bad one. I leave your rating of my performance to you.” Col January gave credit to all members of the unit for what they achieved as a team and certainly to the Chief of Staff of the SANDF, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo for his guidance, support and advice. He also thanked the Base Sergeant Major, Chief Warrant Officer Moleko Modise, and Capt Chrisandy Wilmarie Sieglaar, School of Artillery, Potchefstroom for their support and advice. He also thanked the Base Sergeant Major, Chief Warrant Officer Moleko Modise, and Warrant Officer Moleko Modise, and said: “Through you, I fully understand and realise the saying that dynamite comes in small packages. You are indeed dynamite, my rock with who I could easily share confidential information; I really appreciate your support.”
CELEBRATING ARBOUR DAY

The Military Academy recently celebrated Arbour Day. Members of the unit gathered at the parade ground where Master Warrant Officer Cedric Abrahams enlightened them with regard to the aim and purpose of Arbour Day and emphasised the importance of planting trees and protecting endangered species. Several members assisted in planting four Schotia Brachypetala (Weeping Boer-Bean) trees, since they are more suited to the environment. After the ceremony, the members went for a brisk walk in the nature reserve and ended the day with a Potjiekos competition.

Maj Engela Meintjes, email

TOP: Col Nelson Dlamini, Acting Commandant Military Academy (right) and Lt Col Jacques Geldenhuys, organiser of the day (left) planting a tree. (Photo by Maj Engela Meintjes)

RIGHT: Members enjoying a brisk walk in the nature reserve.

2 SAI BN RAISED THE NATIONAL AND SANDF FLAGS HIGH AT EXERCISE SHARED ACCORD

2 SA Infantry Battalion (2 SAI Bn) have been very active: doing well during the Fittest Soldier Competition, followed by the Operation CORONA deployment in Musina (Beit Bridge border line) and Macadamia (Libombo border line) in Mpumalanga, and Operation FIELD in 2014, and they are known to be the best unit in Africa after opening the very first and successful peacekeeping mission under the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Congo (MONUSCO) in 2003.

2 SAI Bn has added another major accomplishment in their bag for having conducted a successful joint exercise with the United States Army recently at the SA Army Combat Training Centre in Lohatlha - Exercise SHARED ACCORD.

It was a major learning curve for both members of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and the American Defence Force who were part of the exercise and they surely learned a lot from the first day of the exercise to the last. Both defence force members showcased their knowledge and ability during the exercise when given the opportunity to do so.

Both made presentations of their weapons to their counterparts to understand how those weapons operate and also for how effective they can be. It was a good interaction of Defence Forces. The safety displayed during the operation was very impressive, considering the fact that live firing of different weapons took place, important to mention that no life was lost nor anyone got injured.

Remember, SA Army Combat Training Centre is the biggest training centre in Africa, and third biggest in the world which makes it an extraordinary training centre for different countries from all over the world having to fly to South Africa to conduct major firing exercises at this training centre.

Our soldiers in whom we have invested so much trust to protect our country have surely learned a lot and will apply this experience and knowledge as we move forward. 2 SAI Bn, a battalion which is known to excel in every task handed to them, continued to inspire by executing Exercise SHARED ACCORD successfully and managed to make safety one of its priorities.

Something that all South Africans have to be grateful for because it is another example of how well protected we are by the responsible National Defence Force which has the best interests of all citizens of South Africa at heart. Pte Sihlambayiso Maswanganyi, Zeerust
GOING BACK IN TIME

Have you ever had the experience of returning to the house you grew up in? If so, you might have experienced the house, its rooms and backyard being smaller than they seemed when you were a child. You might then be overcome with a feeling of longing for the “good old days” and how those were the best of times compared to the world now.

It was thus with a feeling of anticipation that a party of four recently departed from Erasmuskloof for 21 Battalion. Leading the excursion was Col Johan Hefer with Mr Tom Laas (80), Mr Tienie Laas (84) and Ms Dalena Laas (75). The aim of the expedition was to revisit Uncle Tom and Tienie’s old stomping grounds at the current Joint Tactical Headquarters Gauteng (J Tac HQ GP).

Arriving at J Tac HQ GP the group was warmly welcomed by the Acting Officer Commanding, Lt Col Nehuleni. She asked Uncle Tom to enlighten the members in attendance as to the reason for the visit. Taking the audience back in time almost 75 years, Uncle Tom, with his brother’s support explained that the current J Tac HQ GP was once the location of the Diepkloof Reformatory for African and Indian youths.

Grouped around the sundial, a bony finger pointed towards the current parade ground lined with Mamba patrol vehicles where once a huge corrugated iron hostel for students stood. This was also where, according to Uncle Tienie, Mohandas Ghandi was interned for the first time in South Africa as a result of his civil disobedience protests.

The attention then shifted back to the sundial in front of the J Tac HQ GP offices and Uncle Tom had to explain its working to the members and how they used to play around it as children.

Uncle Tom and Uncle Tienie’s father, at that stage, was the Vice Principal of the reformatory and they had the opportunity to visit their father’s erstwhile office to relive some vivid memories. One of these was of a young man, prior to being released from the reformatory, standing in front of their father being told that he received a good education and skills to empower him to become a contributing member of society and that the Vice Principal never ever wanted to see him back at the reformatory again. The almost 800 African and 100 Indian students at the reformatory received training in blacksmithing, tailoring and farming, among other things. On weekends they were free to swim in one of the many dams in the area and Uncle Tienie remembered the upsetting site of once having to help retrieve the body of one of the boys who drowned after a midnight swim. Before sharing refreshments with the J Tac HQ GP members, Uncle Tom and Uncle Tienie posed in front of the cornerstone unveiled by their father in 1954.

Sipping their tea, the visitors regaled memories engulfing the three veterans in agreement that everything indeed had a profound effect on them. Several photographs later the group once more thanked MWO Ras and Lt Kekana for this unforgettable experience.

Another vivid memory was of a young man, prior to being released from the reformatory, standing in front of their father being told that he received a good education and skills to empower him to become a contributing member of society and that the Vice Principal never ever wanted to see him back at the reformatory again. The almost 800 African and 100 Indian students at the reformatory received training in blacksmithing, tailoring and farming, among other things. On weekends they were free to swim in one of the many dams in the area and Uncle Tienie remembered the upsetting site of once having to help retrieve the body of one of the boys who drowned after a midnight swim. Before sharing refreshments with the J Tac HQ GP members, Uncle Tom and Uncle Tienie posed in front of the cornerstone unveiled by their father in 1954.

Sipping their tea, the visitors regaled those in attendance with tales of World War II pilots crashing their aircraft in either the cattle pens or the nearby plantations, soldiers returning from the War on their way to the Baragwanath Hospital, hiking in the nearby hills, pillaging the local fruit trees and cycling tens of miles to visit various girlfriends. Another vivid memory was of the most basic diets provided to the students, with the Indians receiving anything containing a strong curry mix while the African students had to be satisfied with heavy bean based meals.

Before saying goodbye to their hosts, Uncle Tom pointed out that the reformatory’s motto of “Silungisa Intsha” which translates into “We help the youth” is just as crucial today as it was eighty years ago. The members agreed that local history is indeed important as they did not know the stories behind the buildings and areas they currently occupied. Leaving J Tac HQ GP behind with Uncle Tom navigating, the group went to the house they grew up in a lifetime ago. The three were in agreement that everything indeed seemed much smaller than how they remembered it. As a neutral observer it was apparent that the flood of childhood memories engulfing the three veterans had a profound effect on them. Several photographs later the group once more thanked MWO Ras and Lt Kekana for accompanying them on this memorable occasion and journeyed back to Pretoria.

Heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Col Nobadula, MWO Lettie Ras and to all relevant role-players involved in bringing this endeavour to fruition.

Maj Gustav Bentz, email

A FEMALE SOLDIER WHO SERVES HER COUNTRY WITH PRIDE

When passion drives you to your destiny in life, it is not by virtue of strength or colour that one shines, but by courage and determination. Lt Col Lisa Sipriano is such a woman who serves her country with pride.

She was inspired by the environment that she was raised in as a child for her to be a soldier. She said: “Growing up in a military base and looking up to my father was what motivated me as a child.” The military life was formed in her through her surroundings as she spent the early years of her life being raised by a strong and disciplined soldier, her father, who spent most of his life as a soldier serving this country. She was inspired to follow in her father’s footsteps. She had a passion for the military as a result of her background, and joining the military was never a job opportunity but a calling.

Lt Col Sipriano says: “Women in uniform can lead and serve this organisation as women are empowered to make a difference.” When she joined the military, she did not feel any need to prove herself, compete or to be better than any other person she worked with. She never compared herself to men in her field; instead she focused on competing
The Military Academy celebrated Women’s Day in full flair this year with women taking the lead in various events. The unit held a battalion parade and for the first time only women were placed in all the key role positions. CO Mpho Ketsekile acted as the Parade Sergeant Major and Lt Col Beauty Monnanyana was the Parade Commander. Maj Engela Meintjes was the Parade Second-in-Command, Maj Loraine Dichabe acted as the Adjutant, and Chaplain Nicolene Herbst led the Scripture reading and prayer.

The Acting Commandant of the Military Academy, Col Nelson Dlamini, addressed the parade and presented a truly inspiring message to the women. Although the parade ground was shrouded in mist, the parade was performed in military precision and the women did themselves proud.

A few days later the women continued the celebrations with a “Hat and heels” event at the Military Academy Combined Club. The women put aside their uniform and dressed in their best dresses to also celebrate their feminine side.

A variety of speakers addressed the women on various topics: Ms Relebohile Nomsa Faith Mokete, the Corporate Affairs Manager for ArcelorMittal SA, addressed the issue of soldiers and finances. Lt Col Nonhlرانla Jane Nthombela (Ret) gave a motivational speech on the importance of knowing “who is a soldier”, by referring to her own military career. Capt Lorna Black, a social worker at the Saldanha Health Centre, addressed women on sexual harassment. Lastly, Ms Chantal van Zyl, a Makeup Artist and Beauty Therapist of Placecol Skin Care Clinic Weskus Mall, did a make-up demonstration and gave beauty and make-up tips with the assistance of the owner, Ms Ciska Greeff.

Between the activities and music, a superb lunch was served. Several prizes were presented to the women such as the best dress, best hat, best shoes and overall best outfit.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Lt Col Lisa Sipriano, SO1 Corporate Communication SA Army Engineer Formation. (Photo by S Sgt Elias Mahuma)

She worked hard and was patient through all the ranks. She worked her way up during the stipulated years and completed all of her military courses and passed them. She was patient in waiting for her promotions as they do not always come at a time when one expects them. She said that it was because of discipline, commitment, hard work and determination that she had reached her present level, not forgetting that the grace of God has made it possible while going through difficult trials in her life.

To be appointed in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel is a great honour, especially for her family and the small community she was raised in. Even though she does not have any deployment experience, she is proud to have been part of the SANDF team that rendered humanitarian assistance in the time of distress in Mozambique during the floods in 2013. Her role in the military changed from time to time, depending on the post assigned to her. This started back in 1999 when she joined the Junior Learners Programme at the SA Army Gymnasium. It was a great feeling when she was appointed as a young 2Lt, after which she went on to serve as Troop Second-in-Command at 1 Tactical Intelligence Regiment, then SO3 Message Analysis at Defence Intelligence where she spent most of her time in the junior ranks, after which she became SO2 Preparedness Planning at Army Force Structure. She enjoyed her role as SO1 Combat Readiness at SA Army Intelligence Formation and when she rendered liaison support to the Military Attaché’s deployed abroad at Defence Foreign Relations as SO1 Europe Desk. She added that her current position as SO1 Corporate Communication at SA Army Engineer Formation is exciting and she kept learning each day.

Her military career has been a rollercoaster ride and pointed her in the direction where her career managers required her to serve. She therefore believes that every post and every environment that she has operated in is in fact a piece of a puzzle that is building up to where her career destiny lies. Finally, she embraces every opportunity and learns to empower herself in every aspect. Spr Thandi Given Gama, email

Cpl Pamela Vena (in maroon) was chosen as the best overall dressed woman. (Photo by Lt Yolika Kleynhans)

NomSfa faith Mokete, the Corporate Affairs Manager for ArcelorMittal SA, addressed the issue of soldiers and finances. Lt Col Nonhlرانla Jane Nthombela (Ret) gave a motivational speech on the importance of knowing “who is a soldier”, by referring to her own military career. Capt Lorna Black, a social worker at the Saldanha Health Centre, addressed women on sexual harassment. Lastly, Ms Chantal van Zyl, a Makeup Artist and Beauty Therapist of Placecol Skin Care Clinic Weskus Mall, did a make-up demonstration and gave beauty and make-up tips with the assistance of the owner, Ms Ciska Greeff.

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Maj Engela Meintjes, email
The SANDF Goodwill Parcel Project garners R2.4 Million worth of pledges from corporate sponsors

By 2Lt Sandile Mtshali, SO3 Policy at Defence Corporate Communication

Photos by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano

Over R2.4 Million worth of pledges were made to the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Goodwill Parcel Project during a Goodwill Project Gala Dinner held in Pretoria on 1 September 2017.

The South African Corporate Sector’s generosity towards the SANDF’s Goodwill Project was evident despite the tremendous challenges the local economy is facing and is a welcome acknowledgement and appreciation by the business community of the thankless work of the soldiers - men and women in uniform - deployed far away from their beloved families over the festive season.

The continuing support from the South African business and other generous sponsors show that they understand the country’s national agenda and the constitutionally enshrined mandate the SANDF was established to fulfil.

Addressing the guests at the Gala Dinner, the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, commended the good deeds of the business community who continue supporting the noble SANDF Goodwill Parcel Project. Gen Shoke said: “Your contributions help us to reach out and say thank you to our soldiers who continue making a supreme sacrifice for the country, and to their families who play a pivotal support role in our soldiers’ quest to safeguard our borders and promote peace and stability across the African continent in all the SANDF’s missions. Without you, the SANDF Goodwill Parcel Project would be difficult to sustain.”

The Chief of the SANDF extended his heartfelt message and appreciation to
the business sector for their generous and dearly needed support.

This year – the 16th anniversary of the SANDF Goodwill Parcel Project - the sponsors not only pledged a generous R2.4 Million towards the project, but also extended an amount of R150 000 towards the SANDF Spouses Forum.

The support to our men and women in uniform doing selfless service away from their beloved families over the festive season is a gesture that has come a long way. The underlying reason for the SANDF Goodwill Parcel Project is to honour our soldiers for their service to Jacobs, who asked all the SANDF Warrant Officers to contribute R1 towards a project that would go into reaching out to deployed soldiers and their loved ones left behind to run families. They surpassed their target on the first year and their generosity raised a whopping amount of R25 000 which went into buying food parcels for each soldier deployed in Burundi at the time.

This small investment was a personal show of goodwill by the Warrant Officers to the troops on the ground - an investment that no one at the time thought would grow to touch so many lives as it does today and generate, not just the amassed funds over the years but also the interest of so many large corporates in the country.

Since its inception, the SANDF Goodwill Parcel Project has grown from strength to strength with over 14 corporate sponsors alongside four Service Fund sponsors and has since raised R65.4 million channelled to a good cause.

Mr Ramphele said: “The contribution of the sponsors shows an unwavering support and empathy to the men and women in uniform, of which some of them pay the supreme sacrifice in honour of the country. We cannot forget the families of the soldiers that are left behind while they are deployed. As such we appreciate the intervention of the SANDF Spouses Forum which has far reaching impact on the families of the deployed members.”

The Civilian Chairperson of the SANDF Goodwill Parcel Project, Mr Angel Ramphele who is also the General Manager of the SA Army Foundation, said the project has had a successful year and would like to express gratitude to all the sponsors who continue to show commitment.

He lauded the Chief of the SANDF for inviting them on an annual basis to visit operational areas and witness first-hand experience of the situation and be the ones to handover the gifts as an indication of how South Africa recognises their work and cares about them.
Long Service Medals conferred on SANDF members

The Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), Gen Solly Shoke, bestowed various Long Service Medals to deserving SANDF members during a medal parade recently held in Pretoria. The medals are a token of appreciation awarded to deserving SANDF members for their hard work, loyalty, dedication, selfless, steadfastness and continuous military service.

Equally important, the medal parade gave us all an opportunity to celebrate as we reflect on the contributions made by our fellow soldiers to the security of our country. It is also a reflection of the diligent and professional behaviour of the soldiers.

Addressing the members attending the parade, Gen Shoke said that the event tallied well with the SANDF’s attempts to recognise and reward members for giving their all and for having distinguished themselves by long and efficient service to the SANDF with loyalty, pride, gallantry, devotion to duty, integrity, dignity and honour. He said that the SANDF members must be worthy of the trust of the people they served and should rise above themselves. He emphasised that there was no equivalent to being a soldier and that we should not equate soldiering with any other job. Gen Shoke said: “These soldiers were prepared to pay the ultimate price by sacrificing their own lives for the sake of their comrades and fellow South Africans.”

The Chief of the SA National Defence Force, Gen Solly Shoke, addressing the members on parade.

The Chief of the SA National Defence Force, Gen Solly Shoke, conferring the Long Service Medal 30 Years on the Chief of Logistics, Lt Gen Jabulani Mbulli.

The Chief of the SA National Defence Force, Gen Solly Shoke, conferring the Long Service Medal 30 Years on Sgt Batho-Batho Sam Rapulana.

The Chief of the SA National Defence Force, Gen Solly Shoke, conferring the Long Service Medal 30 Years on Ms Batho-Batho Sam Rapulana.

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The Chief of the SA National Defence Force, Gen Solly Shoke, conferring the Long Service Medal 30 Years on Ms Batho-Batho Sam Rapulana.
Chief SA Army calls for a sufficient budget for an efficient and effective military

By Mr Lufuno Netshirembe and Ms Beauty Pinga

For the military to charge its constitutional mandate as expected, if the citizens of this country are to continue feeling safe and secure the Government should prioritise the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) budget. The dwindling budget allocation to the SANDF is not only crippling the execution of operations, but essentially rendering the SA Army as a landward force not combat ready. These were the sentiments unambiguously and explicitly expressed by the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, during his media briefing held at the SA Army College in Thaba Tshwane on 20 September 2017.

According to Lt Gen Yam his misgivings on the SA Army budgetary constraints are supported by the 2015 Defence Review which defines clearly the requirement for the development of new roles and functions for the SANDF. An all new approach that epitomises the concept of “defence in democracy” – clearly identifying “what defence is for” and not merely focusing on “what defence is against”. This all new approach gives insight on how effective the SANDF will in future participate in exercises, its role in diplomacy related matters and its defence cooperation with other African countries. The 2015 Defence Review envisages that the SANDF will need more governmental financial assistance in order to execute its constitutional mandate in future.

These budget concerns were further compounded by the current realities experienced by the landward force. Recently the SA Army was restricted by the National Treasury with an allocated Human Resource Budget ceiling for the Financial Years 2017 to 2020 for the SA Army to remain within. It must be noted that the SA Army will experience tremendous Human Resource losses over the next Short to Medium Term cycles and therefore will have no other option, but to adjust its Personnel Recruitment Plan and translations to the Core Service System to address the predicted personnel shortage.

The SA Army takes a large proportion of the SANDF in terms of Human Resources with a total of 38 884 members (34 862 uniformed members and 4 022 Public Service Act Personnel). The Chief of the SA Army said: “In ensuring that our members are able to match the international standards and to deal with the current developments in the universe, we are committed to capacitate our members by ensuring that they acquire various skills and education. Since 2012 we enrolled 361 members in various institutions of higher learning of which 132 completed their studies and currently 229 are still busy with their studies.” Since 2014 to date 69 members were sent to Cuba for various study programmes while some SA Army members were sent on various military courses to different countries.

Notwithstanding the current financial challenges, the SA Army has enjoyed successes in Exercise SHARED ACCORD and Exercise NDLOVU this year. Operation CORONA has registered various successes in the recovering of stolen livestock, illegal weapons and vehicles, apprehending undocumented persons, and the curbing of smuggling dagga.

In order to properly adjust to budget cuts, the SA Army has decided that from the approximately 1 500 members of the Military Skills Development System (MSDS) January 2017 Intake, approximately 750 MSDS members would be translated to the Core Service System (CSS) in December 2018. The MSDS January 2018 Intake will be changed from 1 500 to 1 200 members and to adjust translations to the CSS from 750 to 1 200 members in order to address the SA Army Personnel loss ratio in the future for the Financial Year (FY) 2019/20 to the FY 2021/22 cycle. The SA Army’s loss ratio is predicted at 1 184 members per financial year, this includes Divisional/Service Transfers, Natural Attrition Losses, Retirements and Contract Expiries.

The Chief of the SA Army said that despite South African’s little appreciation of what the SANDF does in this democratic era and severe budget cuts, the SANDF continues to be the source of admiration that receives immeasurable praises from other countries’ defence forces for the sterling job it does in various operations and some perilous missions.
Although the primary objective of 10 Anti-Air Regiment (10 AAR) was to conduct border safeguarding operations and quelling the cross borders crimes in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), social responsibility has been one of the objectives that 10 AAR had to accomplish during their deployment as part of their giving back to the community programme.

Members of Joint Tactical Headquarters (J Tact HQ) KZN and 10 AAR under the leadership of Col Lucky Sangweni, Officer Commanding J Tact HQ KZN, and Lt Col Mmathapelo Maine recently conducted social responsibility projects during their deployment period in the Pongola area.

Even though the members of 10 AAR have been extremely busy with border protection, they have gone beyond their call of duty by taking the initiative to identify six projects in the area: namely two at the Ndumo area (Ndumo drop-in centre and Zisize Home for the Orphaned), two schools (Sinothile Primary School and Laconco Primary School) and a destitute family as the projects to be accomplished in the Pongola area in KZN.

Through their collaborative work and one spirit, the members of 10 AAR have managed to buy each of the 14 children clothes to the amount of R500.00 and crockery for the Zisize Home for the Orphaned, a cheque to the amount of R5 000 for Ndumo Drop-in Centre, football and netball kits for Siphesethu Special School.

The main projects were recently completed when furniture was handed over to Laconco Primary School and Sinothile Primary School as well as a fully furnished house to the amount of R35 000 to Ms Fikile Dlamini at KwaLubisi Village in KwaZulu-Natal.

These members made huge and meaningful efforts to better the lives of the needy in their area of responsibility. The members voluntarily contributed portions of their allowances as well.
as their idle moments towards social responsibility projects in their area of operation. Members of 10 AAR said that this community outreach project was meant to make a meaningful contribution to the lives of the people and communities with specific focus on the disadvantaged rural areas beset by poverty.

Asked how they feel about what they have done for the needy, their answer was that a message needs to be spread across the Department of Defence with the objective to instil a culture of giving. Furthermore they said these projects put our organisation in good standing in the bigger public domain and promote our image as an “organisation for the people by the people”.

Brig Gen Sandile Hlongwa, General Officer Commanding Air Defence Artillery Formation, said he appreciate what his unit has done. He thanked them for having seen a need and addressing it.

He added: “I have come to realise that giving is a matter of heart, deep within me I have a mammoth respect for you for the work done. Thank you for having accomplished these huge projects from your pockets.”

LEFT: Officer Commanding Joint Tactical Headquarters KwaZulu-Natal, Col Lucky Sangweni, congratulating the Principal of Sinothile Primary School, Ms Goodness Buthelezi, on her new office furniture.

The Principal of Laconco Primary School, Mr Sipho Simelane, sitting down to show his appreciation for the new office furniture he received from 10 Anti-Air Regiment members.
Inspiring the youth of Eldorado Park to pursue aviation careers

By AB Samuel Ramonyai
Photos by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano

The Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang, recently hosted a Youth Career Exhibition and Aviation Awareness Programme at Eldorado Park Extension 6 Sport Grounds where over 10 000 learners pitched to attend the event.

This youth outreach programme was aimed at promoting aviation awareness and encouraging the youth to excel academically in order to enter the aviation industry. All secondary schools in Eldorado Park were invited to attend the event through the Eldorado Park Principals Forum.

This spectacular event featured an exhibition on aviation and air displays by the SA Air Force.

The static display included Ratel infantry combat vehicles from the SA Army, a Namacurra patrol boat from the SA Navy, and the SA Police Service Squirrel helicopter. Various tents showcased career opportunities within the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

The SA Air Force performed a mini-air show with fast roping from an Oryx helicopter while a variety of aircraft performed overhead. The first display was a four-ship flypast by Gripen fighter jets, followed by a formation of three Hawks and a spirited display from the Silver Falcons.

One of the speakers who hails from Eldorado Park was Maj Geoffrey Cooper, a Gripen fighter pilot. As the son of the soil who knows the community of Eldorado Park where he is coming from. He began his speech by saying that the trick in life is to choose right from wrong. He stressed that if the youth of Eldorado Park could master how to choose right from wrong, then their greener pastures are assured. He encouraged them to put more focus on their studies, particularly on Maths and Science if they want to become pilots.

As they normally say actions speak louder than words. After finishing his speech he flew the
The Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang, listening attentively to one of the more than 10 000 learners at Eldorado Park.

motivated the learners to stay disciplined as the SANDF requires disciplined soldiers.

Lt Gen Msimang highlighted that the SA Air Force still needs more women. He called on more women to serve in the military as part of on-going transformation.

Speaking about women, the Chief of the SA Air Force recognised the presence of the first female Major General in the SA Air Force, Maj Gen Portia More. His appreciation of the status of Maj Gen More was done to motivate female learners that it is possible for them to also achieve greatness.

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SANDF female soldier excels in Exercise TOUGHMEN in Botswana

By Maj Eric Baloyi, A/SO1 Physical Training, Sport and Recreation SA Army Infantry Formation
Photos by Rfn Ipfi Harrold Ravele

This year for the first time Exercise TOUGHMEN included four women, namely LCpl Obakeng Morifi from 10 SA Infantry Battalion, Rfn Thato Legodi from 9 SA Infantry Battalion, Rfn Khanyisile Mncwabe from Infantry School and Rfn Amanda Mahlare from 2 SA Infantry Battalion. Although these four women were selected - Rfn Legodi made the final team to participate in Exercise TOUGHMEN in Botswana.

The Exercise comprised an obstacle course of 500m with a variety of obstacles, including excavations, a brick wall and 5m high rope suspended 8m above ground. There were also high balance beams, a water pool and a dark tunnel to crawl through.

Rfn Legodi demonstrated a great deal of bravery when most participants were acrophobic and claustrophobic; she navigated through all the obstacles. Next was the 32km march, as it is termed in the Botswana Defence Force, with a backpack of 15kg and an FN Rifle.

During the 32km march fatigue crept in with a lot of people falling by the wayside unable to complete the march as a complete team, thereby risking losing a lot of marks and subsequently missing out on the opportunity to win the competition. This is where the success

Rfn Thato Legodi at the 32km march finishing point.

RIGHT: Rfn Thato Legodi coming out of the dark tunnel.
of the team was in the strength of its women. There were checkpoints at intervals of between 5km and 6km where their kits was weighed and inspected. There the team members had time to catch their breath and drink some fluids. The maximum time allowed at a checkpoint is 15 minutes and then the team must be on its way again. With Team SA it was even more taxing since the team leader never allowed more than 10 minutes rest at a checkpoint, hence Team SA broke various records. Eventually Team SA finished in a record time to win the first ever gold medal for the march.

Rfn Legodi surprised many in the competition, not only was she the first ever woman to participate in the competition since its inception, but she also broke the record in the 32km march, which sent a very strong message about the calibre of female soldiers in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

This milestone was the greatest achievement ever since the inclusion of the SANDF in Exercise TOUGHMEN in Botswana. I salute Rfn Legodi, on behalf of all the people of South Africa, specifically women in the SANDF. MALIBONGWE I GAMA LAMA KHOSIKAZI - Praise be to God.
SA Army Fittest Soldier Competition tests endurance

By S Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano

Approximately 300 SA Army members went through a rough bout that lasted a week when their physical strength and endurance were put to the test during the 2017 SA Army Fittest Soldier Competition at 3 SA Infantry Battalion in Kimberley.

The design aspects of the competition with different obstacle courses directly contributes to combat readiness and is a measurement tool for members’ physical fitness. The competition also presents an opportunity to the soldiers to utilise their

The SA Army Support Formation “surprise” exercise gave the members some difficult time as they made their way through different obstacles.

Members batting it out during the swim gala at the SA Army Fittest Soldier Competition at the Karen Muir Swimming Pool in Kimberley.

The venue is suitable for the endurance-run as it has got uneven terrain that tests the endurance of the members.

The competition included various age group

categories between 30 to 50 years for both men and women. Members completed various trials, such as swimming, a bleep test, the SA Army Support Formation “surprise” exercise and the dreaded endurance-walk.

Participants of the competition had to endure the blistering heat as they made their way to the finish line of the SA Army Support Formation “surprise” exercise and the 2,4km run as they also aimed to preserve energy for the last day’s course.

Lt Col Janeke said that he was impressed by the 76 senior soldiers who
The endurance-run at the OMV Crusher proved to be a gruelling test that left the members with blisters. 

battled throughout the competition, showing resilience even though they ran alongside much younger and fitter soldiers. He said the SA Army won about 80% of the trials during the SANDF Fittest Soldier Championships last year.

The Chief Director SA Army Force Preparation, Maj Gen Nontobeko Mpaxa, passed a message of encouragement to all the participants of the competition during the closing function. She said: “Let me start by congratulating all the participants, those who gave their all and finished the course, those who gave their all but fell on the road ahead of the finish line; you have done us proud. To all the winners and the team that will represent us at the SANDF Fittest Soldier Championship, I congratulate you! When you go back to your formations and units, do not relax just keep on going. We do not stop exercising because we grow old; we grow old because we stopped exercising.”

She explained that fitness is an integral part of a soldier’s life and that soldiers cannot be optimally utilised if they are not fit. She commended the commanders for leading by example as they have put in long hours that have paid off as can be seen in the excellent standard and level of the competition.

Maj Gen Mpaxa said: “The strength and endurance you portrayed during the “surprise” exercise showed that you heeded the call of the Chief of the SA Army when he said that you should look after your well-being and remain physically fit. The endurance-run which challenges your spirit, mind, body and soul could not overwhelm you as you all crossed the finish line. It shows that nothing will bring you down and make you quit.”

The Chief Director Force Preparation, Maj Gen Nontobeko Mpaxa, presented the trophy to the Best Overall Woman for the 2017 SA Army Fittest Soldier Competition, Rfn Tebatso Legodi from 9 SA Infantry Battalion. 

The Chief Director Force Preparation, Maj Gen Nontobeko Mpaxa, presented the trophy to the Best Overall Man for the 2017 SA Army Fittest Soldier Competition, Rfn Katlego Modise from 2 SA Infantry Battalion.
Capt (SAN) Abri Kampfer has been appointed as the first Director of the International Hydrography Organization from 1 September 2017 among eight nominations from Turkey, France, Brazil, Italy, Germany, Mexico, Bangladesh and Russia.

Capt (SAN) Kampfer was elected as the first South African to be the second in charge of the World body overseeing Hydrography. This solidified the fact that the South African Naval Hydrographic Office, despite its size, is producing expertise in the field of Hydrographic survey.

Capt (SAN) Kampfer was also elected as the SA Navy Hydrographer in 2003 and shortly after the awards as the Chair of the SA and Island Hydrographic Commission. He chaired the major International Hydrography Organization task group relating to the Worldwide Electronic Navigational Database that is central to the delivery of Electronic Navigational Charts. He also worked tirelessly to promote hydrography in Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Namibia and Uganda.

The SA Navy under the guidance of Capt (SAN) Kampfer has also become a leader on the production of electronic navigational charts in their area of responsibility. Capt (SAN) Kampfer remarked that they are responsible for 102 paper charts which are mostly for SA and Namibia as well as for maintaining nine Charting publications.

Like any other job has challenges, Capt (SAN) Kampfer highlighted that their hydrographic office is small, while the hydrographic survey requires a lot of navigational updates every time there is new information. He said any information that ensures safety must be on a chart, resulting in it being an ongoing update programme. “One thing I have learned is that being a hydrographic surveyor is not every day the same. Every day you will find another challenge that might make navigation difficult,” said Capt (SAN) Kampfer.

Despite all the challenges, Capt (SAN) Kampfer said that he was always curious to know what was under the water and that’s what kept him going. Furthermore he said hydrography gave him an idea of the way the sea flows leading him to discover new things and as technology improves the more details he can gather from the sea currents.

Capt (SAN) Kampfer continued that not only did he find the sea currents interesting, but he also has a passion for providing SA and neighboring countries with safe navigation. He remarked that the importance of hydrography is in ensuring safety when navigating at sea. It gives him great joy when mariners navigate safely at sea because of hydrography.

He said he feels very happy about his new appointment due to the fact that it will allow him the opportunity to make a difference and to contribute to the improvement of hydrography in Africa. He added that he feels very proud, firstly because he as a South African has been appointed as the first International Hydrography Organization Director. Furthermore he remarked that it is a huge achievement not only to him but to the people of South Africa and the SA Navy.

Capt (SAN) Kampfer said for the past 10 years he was the regional hydrographer and therefore he is happy that this is an opportunity for him to spread his wings internationally. The message he gave was that people should learn to give their best in every department they are working at, and he urged that people should find a place where they can make a difference in whatever they do.
Disability is never an inability – meet Lt Col Gysie van der Niet

By Mr Lufuno Netshirembe

In my journalistic training it was emphasised that as a professional journalist one must never become part of the story that one is covering. This is basically to avoid any emotional connection to the subject one is covering and that might therefore result in a biased report. Well, that has been the case in many stories that I have covered. I must confess, in all my years as a journalist in only extremely rare cases did I find myself unwittingly getting personally involved in the subject I was covering. One such rare case was a story I had to cover of Lt Col Gysie van der Niet. So pardon me if my article seems personal. Though emotionally biased this story is not by any means a promotion of Lt Col Van der Niet, but it’s about taking a look at the world from his perspective.

Lt Col Van der Niet is a man who in many ways is amazing and unique. He was born on 1 May 1970 at Rustenburg and matriculated in 1988 at Evander High School. He obtained a B Comm (Law) degree in 1991 and an LLB degree in 1993 from the University of Pretoria. He is a professional soldier and an astute military law practitioner in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) where he works in the Defence Legal Service Division as the Officer-in-Charge of the School of Military Justice in Thaba Tshwane. Currently Lt Col Van der Niet is part of the Military Discipline Bill task team.

What makes “Gysie” (as he is affectionately known) unique is that he is the only active paraplegic cyclist I know in the SANDF that “professionally” participates in various world paraplegic competitions. He recently participated in the 2017 Para-cycling World Championship in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. Though Gysie did not win owing to the fact that during the championships he had severe influenza and had no technical and medical support team. However, the flu and other factors did not deter him from participating. Being a tremendously positive person, he saw this event as another opportunity to interact with fellow paralympic athletes.

When I was assigned to cover Lt Col Van der Niet’s participation I was careful not to refer to him in some way that would be unacceptable and derogatory. I had to dig deep into my vocabulary to find an acceptable term and words. I found the phrase “living with disability” more acceptable than others. During my interview with him I told him about my fear of offending him. This was the first time I had covered such a unique story and naturally I was nervous. I was out of my comfort zone. The interview led to interaction and I came out a completely different person. Gysie opened up a whole new world that I had been oblivious to. It gave me added knowledge and made me a better and more positive person with a different outlook on life.

In 2002 Col Van der Niet was a Northern Gauteng badminton player. In that year while he was participating in the Jock of the Bushveld Cycle Race, he was involved in a cycling accident on 27 July. This was literally a life changing event. He broke his back and two ribs that had pierced his lungs. His spinal cord was severed thus rendering him a paraplegic.

In excruciating pain Lt Col Van der Niet had to be placed in an induced coma. An induced coma, also known as a barbiturate-induced coma or barb coma, is a temporary coma which is a deep state of unconsciousness brought on by a controlled dose of a barbiturate drug, usually pentobarbital or thiopental. The purpose of a medically induced coma is to ensure the protection and control of the pressure dynamics of the brain. It was at this time when recovering in 1 Military Hospital that Gysie realised that through the recurring nightmares he kept having that God was psychologically preparing him for life as a paraplegic. This gave him a rather profound new meaning to the regular phrase “everything happens for a reason”.

Lt Col Gysie van der Niet participating in the 2016 Para-cycling World Cup in Pietermaritzburg. (Photo courtesy Cycho Media)
In 1 Military Hospital while people were agonising about the extent of his injuries and the loss of the use of his legs, unknown to the rest of his loved ones, he had inwardly made peace with the fact that God has taken away his ability to walk, but had given him a second chance in life.

During the accident and the subsequent hospitalisation Gysie had an intimate encounter with his Creator. Lt Col Van der Niet said: “When I came round out of the coma, everything was normal to me. Life was clearer and I was frustrated with everybody making a fuss about something which was okay to me. When I hit that tree at high speed I knew I might never naturally walk on my legs again. In pain I felt it was okay, I can die now. With ribs that pierced my lungs, unable to breathe, I felt I was dying. It was at that very moment that I asked God that I would like to live if it was okay with Him. I did not want to die before my parents, it would not have been fair to them. God said it was up to me, I could choose to live but it would either be a life in a wheelchair or death. I chose life and that liberated me. When I woke up the wheelchair was not an issue at all.” Those words brought tears to my eyes and I felt bad that at that moment I had broken the essential rule of my profession. I had crossed the line of objective reporting. His story became too personal for me, too touching, and all I could do was force my teary eyes to hold back tears from dropping on my notepad.

It was while in the hospital that he made a conscious decision that he was going to live his life as normally as possible in his wheelchair. After the accident and in his wheelchair Lt Col Van der Niet had to make a minimal psychological adjustment to life’s little lessons. One of those lessons he had to learn was to be patient, patient with himself as well as teaching other people around him to be patient with him. In spite of his new circumstances Gysie did not see any change in his life. Lt Col Van der Niet said: “I had a girlfriend before the accident, I had her after the accident and she became my wife because she saw nothing had changed in me. I had lost my legs but that did not define me, so there was no reason to be unhappy.”

Life seemed to have only begun for zealous Gysie. In pursuit of life, coming from the hospital, he went back to his job and his old residence, discarding the advice that there was a building in the CBD with all the amenities he would need as a paraplegic. Gysie married Anna-marie de Clerk on 17 December 2004 and was blessed with a son on 10 February 2009. Out of hospital in May 2005, he was ready to take up cycling again. He returned to cycling, this time as a paraplegic riding a hand cycle (a custom-made cycle based on one’s disability). Riding his hand cycle on his back gave Lt Col Van der Niet relief from the wheelchair. This was a much needed relief from a wheelchair needing a prolonged sitting posture. Riding increases his blood flow and prevents pressure sores, avoids deep vein thrombosis (the formation of a blood clot [thrombus] within a deep vein, most commonly in the legs. Non-specific signs may include pain, swelling, redness, warmth and engorged superficial veins). Riding improves cardiovascular fitness, increased muscle strength and flexibility, improved joint mobility, decreased stress levels, improved posture and coordination, strengthened bones and a decrease in body fat levels. A decrease in body fat is important because spending most of one’s life in a wheelchair without regular exercise can bring on all sorts of illness.

He started participating in as many races as possible as it once again gave him intense enjoyment.
His training was also intensified despite the unpleasant and dangerous road and traffic conditions in the city. Training often has to be done on an indoor resistance trainer. The training and regular participation started to bear fruit and his times kept on improving.

Since the accident Lt Col Van der Niet has participated in more than 200 competitions, most of which he won. He only took a break in cycling events to devote time to his family for a year and a half. He resumed competing again in August 2010 and completed the 94.7 Cycle Challenge in November 2010. He participated in the Cape Argus Cycle race and has won numerous provincial titles and six national hand cycle titles.

Lt Col Van der Niet epitomises living a dream and is living proof that “if you can dream it, you can achieve it”, thus showing that his disability is by no means an inability.

HELPFUL HINTS

Disability vs Handicap

While the terms disability and handicap may seem to have the same meaning, an individual with one or both may be offended by improper use. Just to clarify:

- A disability is a condition caused by an accident, trauma, genetics or disease which may limit a person’s mobility, hearing, vision, speech or mental function. Some people have more than one disability.
- A handicap is a physical or attitudinal constraint that is imposed upon a person, regardless of whether that person has a disability. Stairs would be a handicap for a person with a disability who uses a wheelchair. One becomes paraplegic when paralysed from the waist down.

General rules of etiquette on how to avoid being anxious when interacting with a person with a disability:

- One of the most important things to remember when conversing with a person with a disability is talk to that person directly, not to their companion as if they are not there, even when talking about something that concerns him/herself. Although you may need some practice in doing this, remember to make eye contact can make the difference.
- If it looks as if someone with a disability may need assistance, just ask them. The worst they can do is saying “No, thank you”. Do not feel offended or interpret it as arrogance: remember disability is not an inability.
- When offering assistance, do it in a dignified manner with sensitivity and respect. If your offer is declined, do not proceed to give assistance. If the offer is accepted, listen carefully and follow the instructions carefully.
- Be patient when an individual is using a communication device.

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Lt Col Gysie van der Niet busy with hand cycle pre-assessment for compliance to UCI (world cycling body) standards prior to competing in the 2017 Para-cycling World Championships.
SA, Botswana and Zambia conducted Combined Joint African Exercise

By S Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos by S Sgt Leonard Xaba

The final phase of the Combined Joint African Exercise (CJAX) - Exercise UHURU - took place via video conferencing between the three participating countries. The exercise was conducted concurrently at the SA National War College, the Botswana Defence Force Senior Command and Staff College and the Zambian Defence Forces Command and Staff College.

The aim of CJAX is to train at the operational level in a joint, multinational and interagency environment in order to promote synergy between the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Command and Staff Colleges and other agencies to achieve a thorough understanding of the challenges involved in planning and coordinating complex, multinational peace support operations.

Members of the various Defence Staff Colleges and senior SA National Defence Force officials attending the closing of the 2017 Combined Joint African Exercise at the Peace Mission Training Centre at the SA Army College.
The exercise was conducted in the fictitious state of Carana, part of an island off the east coast of Africa. Carana is a failing state and the UN is contemplating sending a mission. In the interim the African Union (AU) is asked to provide assistance. Learners then role-play an AU Integrated Mission Planning Team that writes a mission plan for the speedy deployment of an African Mission utilising a joint international and multinational planning process based on regional African Standby Force and the Southern African Development Community doctrine.

The Commandant of the SA National War College, Brig Gen Sisseko Nombewu, explained that the college had satisfied the objectives of the exercise to the best of its ability. He indicated that the Zambian Defence Force Command and Staff College was next in line to host the exercise.

In its attempt to equip senior military officers with the knowledge and ability to plan and command a peace support operation in a multinational environment CJAX also seeks to enhance the students’ knowledge of the full range of combined and joint operations planning and practice at the operational level which overlaps the military strategic level based on SADC AU doctrine.

Brig Gen Nombewu said he foresee that other regions would also participate in CJAX with the SADC countries and that the exercise would benefit the Staff College’s learning programme for years to come.

Brig Gen Nombewu said: “Presentations of African campaigns will be facilitated at the annual African Conference of Commandants in Pretoria from 1 to 3 November 2017 and be chaired by the SA National War College. This should be seen as addressing training gaps in the curricula of the colleges by introducing campaigns fought on the African soil. Scenario and case study writing teams from the participating colleges in cooperation with the SA Military Academy and tertiary institutions in the respective countries will assist in the research to get this training initiative off the ground.”

The General Officer Commanding of the Training Command, Maj Gen Lawrence Mbatha, said CJAX was a tool to test ways of resolving conflicts in hotspots by means of developing student officers, future commanders and staff officers through lessons identified, learnt and applied. He explained: “Home based scenarios should be at the core of our staff college’s curriculum. To this end the Commandant of the SA National War College has embarked on an exploratory exercise to focus on home-based military history scenarios and case studies in sub-Saharan Africa as the primary focus and on the African battle space in general.”

He added: “Preparations are in an advanced stage to investigate the Gorongoza campaign in Mozambique, the Angolan conflict and the Tanzanian campaign against the forces of Idi Amin in 1979. Going forward we need to build sufficient capacity to allow for a situation in which all scenarios, case studies and narratives are generated by regional organs, for example the Regional Peace Training Centre and the SADC Brigade Planning Element.” He said the civilian mentors, the mission support component, and the inputs of the South African Police Service, the Department of Correctional Services and 43 and 46 SA Brigades were crucial.

Maj Gen Mbatha believes the SADC region and beyond should find commonalities within the curricula without compromising own doctrine and security to ensure interoperability in education, training and development processes. He said: “The cooperation and relationship between regional power blocks on the continent, especially East and West Africa, is manifested in the cooperation we see during CJAX with the attendance of senior officials from these regions. Some of the staff colleges in these regions are well established and we need to learn from one another, especially with regard to best practices and traditions.”

Video conferencing was the biggest feature of this Southern African Development Community training exercise which allowed remote interaction between the Defence Staff Colleges.
Lt Cdr Andries Mothoa became one of the few SA National Defence Force (SANDF) members to receive the Tshumelo Ikatelaho Medal recognising individual contribution towards direct participation in an SANDF operation.

He was among more than 80 SANDF members who received medals in various categories during the Chief of Human Resources Medal Parade held recently at the Personnel Services School in Thaba Tshwane.

The citation for the Tshumelo Ikatelaho Medal reads: It was instituted on 27 April 2003 by a warrant dated 16 April 2003. It is awarded to members of the SANDF who have distinguished themselves by rendering a military service directly or by supporting a military operation.

An enthusiastic Lt Cdr Mothoa said: “I served as a Personnel Officer when I was on board the SAS MENDI during Operation COPPER in Mozambique in 2011. My tasks were mostly Human Resources (HR) related when I was deployed. I also work as a Flight-Deck Officer which involves making preparations of the helicopter platform for landing and taking off.”

He explained that for any member of the SANDF to be awarded the Medal, he or she must have been involved in an operation, which made him proud to have received the medal. He felt that it distinguished him from the rest of the recipients as he was the only one awarded with the Tshumelo Ikatelaho Medal.

Lt Cdr Mothoa started his military career in 2005 when he joined the SA Navy. He completed his Officer Formative course at the SA Naval College in Gordon’s Bay. He began a new journey at the Military Academy
where he would later complete a degree. He completed his HR courses at the Personnel Services School and, on completion, was commissioned on board the SAS MENDI where he worked for four years.

He said: “I went back to the Military Academy to complete my degree then graduated in 2014 and was awarded the best SA Navy student. Then in January 2015 I went to the SA Naval Staff College to do the Junior Staff and Warfare course. Thereafter I was staffed at the Personnel Services School.” He is currently finalising his honours degree in Industrial Psychology at the Military Academy.

Lt Cdr Mothoa feels that being awarded the medal was in recognition of his contribution to the SA Navy and the SANDF as a whole. He said: “One of the highlights is that I got a chance to participate in Exercise GOLFINHO in Namibia in September 2009 then also in Operation KGWELE, when I was part of the SAS MENDI crew who were patrolling the west coast.”

He said being on parade and receiving the Tshumelo Ikatelaho Medal made him feel privileged as not all SANDF members deployed so much and would therefore not be able to receive the medal. He believes that discipline is second nature in the military and members should show commitment in whatever they do.

Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, the Chief of Human Resources, said the medal parade recognises and celebrates members who have rendered a distinguished service in the HR Division and the SANDF. He said that it represents one of the greatest achievements in a soldier’s career and duty to the Republic of South Africa.

“This medal parade provides us with an opportunity to recognise and acknowledge members of the HR Division who perform their duties on behalf of the SANDF, the Government and the general citizenry of the Republic of South Africa. These citizens may not be aware of your service and record of good conduct and discipline,” said Lt Gen Yengeni as he explained that their records speak of their military professionalism.

He described discipline as one of the elements that has a direct bearing on the reputation of the SANDF as a military force. He said that a member’s background and career in the SANDF should have records that exemplify good military discipline and professionalism.

Lt Gen Yengeni said: “There are three elements which I wish to reflect on when speaking of our military professionalism and the members who deserve to be awarded medals. The first is discipline, the second is commitment and the third is the skill to complete tasks that are given to you to accomplish.”

He commended the members for their commitment in serving the SANDF, saying that although they may have been deployed or been on courses for long periods of time, they were able to perform their tasks and improved the morale of others.

“The training that we have undergone has made us excel in the areas of our work. Your acts of bravery and long service speak to the many successes which have been achieved in the HR Division and the SANDF in general,” Lt Gen Yengeni said.
After serving the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and the country with commitment, determination and diligence, Lt Gen Morris Moadira, Maj Gen Thandi Nodola and Maj Gen Raymond Moroane recently retired. The Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, hosted a befitting send-off function to wish them well on their future endeavours in Pretoria.

The aim of this send-off function was to honour and acknowledge the remarkable contributions these three Generals made towards the SANDF, who stood as pillars of strength over the years.

The programme director, Brig Gen Thembelani Xundu, said that Lt Gen Moadira, Maj Gen Nodola and Maj Gen Raymond Moroane will be remembered for their productiveness, industriousness and hard work. He described them as members who were extremely dynamic in the way they looked at life.

Brig Gen Xundu added that when he evaluates people of such high quality, he compares them to different types of metal and those he values the most he tends to compare them with gold. He then metaphorically equated the value of these retired Generals with that of gold.

The Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile, encouraged the three retired members to look at the clouds by day and the fire by night just like the Israelites did in the Book of Exodus. He added they must allow the cloud of God to lead their direction.

The Chief of Logistics, Lt Gen Jabulani Mbuli, the Chief of Human Resources, Lt Gen Norman Yengeni and the Chief Defence Intelligence, Lt Gen Jeremiah Nyembe, when giving tributes to the retired Generals, stated that goodbyes are never easy, at the same time they are fulfilling when one knows and realise that those that they bade farewell have left solid foundations.

They all remarked that the outgoing Generals have been pillars, rocks, shades under which when the road gets long and the temperature gets too hot they can rely on.

The Chief of the SANDF said he is grateful and honoured to stand before the pillars who served diligently and professionally in the SANDF. Gen Shoke said: “It is a truly emotional moment for me.” He added: “We just want to thank and honour you while you are still alive, if we honour you when you are dead, it won’t be worthy.”

Furthermore Gen Shoke said that they have played a mammoth role in the SANDF and their contributions have been noticed enormously. He remarked that the SANDF is still going to require their services. He whole-heartedly pleaded with them to be ready to help whenever their services are needed in the SANDF particularly in their last careers before they retired.

Gen Shoke said: “I wish you well and many more days as you exit the SANDF with peace after long years of dedicated service. May the Lord God keep you by his Mighty hand even as you are going to rest and spend proper time with your families.”

When saying their goodbyes, the guests of honour of the event: Lt Gen Moadira, Maj Gen Nodola and Maj Gen Moroane, all touched on a common point of saying they thank the SANDF for entrusting them with opportunities when appointing them as senior officers. All three Generals also mentioned their willingness to help whenever their services are required in the SANDF.

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It was very pleasing to hear them acknowledging their families for supporting their careers even though it was not easy for them owing to the fact that 95 per cent of their time was spent at work.
The SANDF Education Trust


The main objective of the SANDF Education Trust is to support the education needs of the dependants of the following persons:

- SANDF members killed or severely injured subsequent to April 1994, while on official duty.

- Civilian members of the Department of Defence (DOD) killed or severely injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, while deployed during official SANDF operation.

- Citizens of the Republic of South Africa killed or injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, during official SANDF operations provided that such citizens are not engaged in activities opposing the SANDF.

The SANDF Education Trust is funded through donations and contributions received from the private sector and international business enterprises. Ongoing fund raising initiatives are in place, and the SANDF welcomes all contributions.

For more information on the SANDF Education Trust, visit www.dod.mil.za

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"We believe in heroes, we hope you do too.
Together we move South Africa Forward"
Developing excellent leaders

By Sgt Ally Rakoma
Photos by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano

The National Development Plan 2030 of South Africa seeks as its APEX priority to build a skilled state and deepen service delivery by focusing on skills development. The Defence Review 2015 emphasises the need to deepen training and education for excellence in leadership and enhancing the military trends pipeline to address the modern battle space.

Over 100 delegates recently gathered to participate in the Department of Defence (DOD) Human Resources Development (HRD) Conference on the HRD Strategy and Implementation Plan 2025 at the Peace Mission Training Centre in Thaba Tshwane.

The theme of the DOD HRD Strategy 2025:

The Deputy Chief of Human Resources, Maj Gen Ntsiki Memela-Motumi, highlighting the imperatives for the Department of Defence Human Resources Development.

Paths for professionalisation and leader development, the modernisation of the internal training providers, building systems for quality and credit-bearing learning with active governance and compliance and building of partnerships with other public education institutions and the provision of collateral support capacity. Through the HRD Renewal and Modernisation Strategy 2025, the DOD seeks to deepen military professionalism, leadership and reposition its status as a modern, professional and disciplined force.

The conference constituted the largest annual DOD HRD gathering attended by DOD senior officials (military and civilian functionaries), HR managers, practitioners, skills development facilitators, associates and key stakeholders ranging from government, academics and strategic partners of Training and Development within the Public Sector to engage in collective dialogue to drive the strategic HRD Strategy 2025 and its goals towards

Renewal and Modernisation of training and education in the DOD and the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), is timely to build the new generation of smart soldiers and excellent leaders. The winning formula being to apply contextualised workplace-integrated military training and education. To this end the focus is on the more than 50 DOD training units, their courses and their

Competency Authority – to get the right members on the right courses with the right curriculum.

The HRD Strategy for Renewal and Modernisation has a ten-year planning horizon from 2016 to 2025 and is based broadly on a five-point plan. The five-point plan addresses the renewal of Skills Planning for accurate plans for capacity building, the Professional and Functional
Department of Defence senior officials (front, row) with esteemed guests and delegates attending the Human Resources Development Conference at the Peace Mission Training Centre in Thaba Tshwane.
The primary purpose of the night shooting training exercise is to qualify the crews, especially the gunners and commanders, on different levels with their night fighting capability skills. The exercise is regarded as the final phase of training before the Regiment embarked on its participation in Exercise SEBOKA, which is an integrated force preparation exercise at the SA Army Combat Training Centre.

The secondary objective of the night shooting exercise is to allow the general public of the Mangaung Metropolitan area to witness and experience the conventional capabilities of the main battle tanks. According to tradition ex-tankers are normally grouped during the night shooting training exercise with the purpose to renew or confirm their relationship with 1 SA Tank Regiment.

The Officer Commanding of 1 SA Tank Regiment, Lt Col Phumzile Shingange, said that the operational activities of the Regiment were derived from the short and medium-term guidelines received from the SA Army Armour Formation. She said that these operational activities are linked and directed by their mission, which is to provide combat-ready tank capabilities to the SA Army.

Judging by the number of people that attended the event, it was eminent that this event was still very popular among the public. In addition the day left the public with the unique experience of having witnessed the coming together of the SANDF and the very people it served.

A highlight for the public was undoubtedly the spectacular fire power demonstrations that involved the main battle tank and Rooivalk helicopter in operation in the SANDF. The SA Air Force was afforded the opportunity to be an active participant as an integral part of the SANDF.
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Military Veterinary Institute
Change of Command Parade

By Sgt Ally Rakoma
Photos by L Cpl Paul Mpangala and Mr Katiso Mabuza

Military Veterinary Institute in Potchefstroom officially bade farewell to Col Paul van der Merwe, the outgoing Officer Commanding, and welcomed Col Ruan Harris, the incoming Officer Commanding during a Change of Command Parade recently held at Army Support Base Potchefstroom.

Change of Command signifies the end of one era and the beginning of the next. The SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) community witnessed this special occasion with feelings of pride and excitement.

The Military Veterinary Institute (MVI) is a professional specialist unit within the SAMHS Force Structure Element responsible for the maintenance of the health of all animals on military property as well as inputs of an animal health nature that might impact on human health. It is also responsible for canine breeding, canine socialisation and veterinary services. The motto of the MVI: “Nakekela Isilwane”, meaning “Care for Animals”.

Addressing the members, Col Van der Merwe commenced by quoting the US Navy Adm William H. McCraven who once said: “If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed. If you make your bed every morning, you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride, and it will encourage you to do another task, and another. And by the end of the day that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed. Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that the little things in life matter. If you can’t do the little things right, you’ll never be able to do the big things right. And if by chance you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made – that you made. And a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better”.

Col Van der Merwe said that change
is never easy; it impacts on the lives of each and every member. He said: “I want to urge every member to identify and embrace the changes. These changes may be your promotion and your future post.”

The incoming Officer Commanding said that the success of a unit is contributed to the attributes of its Commanding Officer. Col Harris said: “This unit will not be the MVI of today if it was not for the people cleaning kennels, guarding the unit during the night, taking care of dogs and horses, rendering support services, spending hours in the sun working with puppies and dogs, spending hours at shows and exhibitions promoting the image of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF). I salute and respect every person in the MVI and I am proud of you beyond measure.”

During an interview with SA Soldier Col Harris said the journey continues. He praised the outgoing Officer Commanding for not allow the lowering of standards and maintenance of discipline among members. Col Harris said: “I am proud to say Col Van der Merwe has been a pioneer and a builder.”

Asking what his goal is for the unit, Col Harris replied: “As a leader, leadership is the capacity to transform vision into reality. I have to be the first one to embrace change. Communication is critical. I would find common ground, establish teamwork, cooperation, cohesion and always ensure that my actions match my words so that every member is on board to perform their best and strive to achieve goals and the strategic vision of the organisation”.

Col Harris has strong views on uplifting the members’ morale and strengthening unity as a key unifying factor for the success of the MVI. He says that both uniformed members and Public Service Act Personnel together make the MVI. Col Harris says: “I want the inner pride of each individual to manifest. Unity, morale, accountability and discipline bear a strong basis for ethos.”

The incoming Officer Commanding said that it is a privilege and tremendous honour for him to serve as the Officer Commanding. Col Harris said: “Firstly I am going to use all the resources available to me to find the best course of action. I am always open to personal and professional growth. Everyone is equally important; each person contributes something different. My expectations from members are to perform our duties with zeal, diligence despite the challenges and different circumstances and to be disciplined. We will make a difference as a collective.”

The equestrian team of the Military Veterinary Institute celebrating the pride of the Institute during the change of command parade.

LEFT: Dog handlers of the SA Military Health Service march past.

Pte Hildah Theka reading the Code of Conduct for uniformed members.
1 October is International Day for Older Persons and the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) believes this to be the ideal opportunity to share a special message with our senior medical scheme members about the importance of safe medicine usage.

As people grow older, the need for medicine becomes almost as inevitable as grey hair and needing reading glasses. Two-thirds of all senior citizens over the age of 65 take at least one form of medicine per day while one third takes three or more. Four out of five people aged over 75 years take at least one medicine while 36 percent of this age group takes as much as four medicines or more. Although many owe their lives and, often, lifestyles, to these medicines, they do sometimes carry with them serious risks.

Senior citizens take more medicine than any other age group and are therefore especially vulnerable to the effects of prescription drugs. More than nine million Americans suffer from complications caused by side effects of medicine each year and, what is often not realised is that medicines which work well on their own may become dangerous when combined with other medicines.

According to netdoctor.co.za, elderly people can be at increased risk from medicines for various reasons:

• The ageing body can be more susceptible to the side effects of medicines.
• Older individuals with multiple illnesses can often end up taking multiple medicines at the same time, which increases the chances of side effects, interactions between different medicines and problems with taking them correctly.
• The physical effects of ageing, such as arthritis and failing eyesight and memory, can also cause difficulties when it comes to taking medicines the way your doctor intended for you to take them.

Although your healthcare team will at all times do their best to minimise such problems, there are a number of things you and those who care for you can do to ensure the medication you take provides the desired effect with minimal problems.

The first step in ensuring that medicine is being taken correctly, and safely, is to read the warning labels on over-the-counter medicines and ask your doctor or pharmacist about the side effects of all prescription medicine. There are certain medicines, particularly sedatives and painkillers that are nowadays considered to be inappropriate for persons over sixty-five years of age.

Asking your doctor about whether or not any of the medicines you are using may not be taken with other medicines is the second step. Drug interactions are a serious concern for seniors as over 40% of all medicine reactions reported each year involve persons over sixty years of age. Make sure your doctor knows about all prescription and non-prescription medicine you use.

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Tips for seniors on medicine use

By Martina Nicholson Associates (MNA) on behalf of the Government Employees Medical Scheme

Photo by Mr Katiso Mabuza

Photo posed.
are taking, including herbal remedies, nutritional supplements and daily vitamins.

Mixing medicines is usually the result of incorrect information given or because of lack of knowledge on the part of the consumer. Research undertaken in Britain revealed that 62% of people taking prescription medicines were also taking some form of complementary medicine. As most people do not view these medicines as possibly being harmful, they often neglected to tell their pharmacist about them when filling prescriptions.

It is important for doctors and pharmacists to know what medicine patients are using and this becomes even more important when dispensing medicine to senior citizens. As your medical scheme of choice, GEMS is concerned about the wellbeing of all its members, particularly that of its long-standing older members who have always been loyal to the Scheme. Additional tips on the safe use of medicines include:

• Ask for a larger print type on medication bottle labels if you have trouble reading them (a magnifying glass and reading in a brighter light also help).
• Develop a system for keeping track of what medicines you have taken (pill sorting trays, separate containers for morning and evening pills, turning a bottle upside down once you have taken the medicine contained in it, etc).
• Only stop taking the medicine when your doctor tells you to or if you experience adverse side-effects – do not stop just because you “feel better”.
• Check expiry dates and take medicine which has passed this expiry date to your pharmacist for safe disposal.

• Always follow you doctor’s directions exactly. Although it sounds basic, 40% to 70% of older adults take their medicine at the wrong time of day, sometimes using incorrect dosages, often with serious consequences.

Sources

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You reap what you sow

By Ms Soffie Lidker, an attendee of the Compulsory Induction Programme

When one becomes part of the Department of Defence Public Service Administration Personnel (PSAP), all one seems to think about is coming to work in the morning, doing one’s work, leaving in the afternoon, and looking forward to the day of reward (pay day) on the 15th.

Appreciation was expressed by PSAP learners who attended the Compulsory Induction Programme (CIP) that was facilitated by Ms Jane Nkoana at the DOD Centre for Competency, Development and Training (CCDT) at the Poyntons Building in Pretoria.

The CIP is important for new and current employees in the Public Service. It helps employees to understand the Constitutional values and principles that inform the Public Service in South Africa. They also understand citizenship rights and the importance of the Batho Pele principles.

A group of learners from various units within the DOD recently attended the CIP. As learners, we initially found the course to be time-wasting. We had a negative approach to the programme, but the facilitator proved us wrong in a way that completely changed our focus and perspectives of the core administrative part of this governmental Institution.

I have decided to write about this course because it has changed me and my fellow students’ approach towards our careers, commitment, vision and contribution to the Government as a whole, especially in our daily duties as Public Servants. This course got me thinking deeply. I analysed the cultural and traditional structure within the whole governmental structure. One gets to understand the democratic governance system, democratic accountability in the workplace and the key governmental policies regarding operational procedures in one’s workplace in this course, and this can only groom knowledgeable, well informed and ethical Public Service employees.

A high standard of professionalism, efficiency, the economic and effective use of resources is also learned in the CIP. Most employees find it difficult to achieve performance productivity due to a lack of empowerment, development orientated skills, knowledge and access to information. I believe the CIP, if introduced to new and current members of the Public Service, will help the organisation achieve most of its goals, including future strategic planning programmes.

I have learned that it is important that transparency be fostered by providing public servants with timely, accessible and accurate information. My conclusion is that it is important that employees at all levels within government departments are encouraged to attend this course. This will not only motivate, empower and maintain a high standard of professionalism in the Public Service, but will create more focused employees who understand what the Constitution of the country requires of its Public Servants and what they can expect from the Constitution.

My group would like to applaud Ms Nkoana for being so committed, passionate, flexible, unbiased, sensitive to the feelings of individuals/group, for her ability to listen, her tactical skills, her sense of humor and creativity.
Defence Foreign Relations Prestige Golf Day

By Sgt Ally Rakoma
Photos by LCpl Paul Mpangala and Mr Katiso Mabuza

The Director Defence Foreign Relations, Brig Gen Talita Mxakato, hosted the 12th Defence Foreign Relations Prestige Golf Day recently at Irene Country Club in Pretoria.

The aim of the golf day was to facilitate and enhance interaction among senior Department of Defence (DOD) officials, Captains of Industry, stakeholders and members of the Military Attachés and Advisory Corps.

After a great day of golf, Brig Gen Mxakato, on behalf of the Chief of Defence Intelligence, Lt Gen Jeremiah Nyembe, hosted a combined gala dinner and prize-giving ceremony to thank everyone who participated in making the day a success.

Brig Gen Mxakato said that Defence Foreign Relations is a nodal point between the Military Attachés and Advisory Corps, the DOD and the Defence Industries. She thanked all the participants and expressed her gratitude to all the golf players.

ENHANCING GOOD RELATIONS: Members of the Military Attachés and Advisory Corps who participated in the 12th Defence Foreign Relations Prestige Golf Day.

The Deputy Chief of Staff of the SA National Defence Force, Maj Gen Wiseman Mbambo, taking aim.

SA Air Force Squash Championship

By WO1 Patrick Vermaak, Chairperson Air Force Base Ysterplaat Squash Club

Sixty players from 13 different units competed in the 53rd SA Air Force Squash Championship recently at the Club Mykonos Resort Langebaan Squash Courts to determine the individual champions in seven different categories.

Originally squash was considered a training aid for pilots and eventually it would become the oldest officially registered sport in the SA Air Force.

Maj Sakkie de Beer (10 Air Depot) added the 2017 Men’s Open title to his 2010 success when he beat F Sgt Attie Booysen (Air Force Base Waterkloof) in the final while F Sgt Hannes van den Berg (AFB Waterkloof) claimed the bronze award from Sgt Callie Joubert (AFB Langebaanweg). WO2 Marijke Kostelijk (SA Air Force HQ) proved a popular victory in the Ladies Open when she claimed victory in five sets against Lt Col Hesma Oelofse (Human Resources Division). The final set result of 15/13 was adequate proof of what a match this was! WO2 Catryn le Roux (AFB Hoedspruit) secured bronze by beating the 2016 Ladies Champion, WO1 Karin Steyn (SA Air Force HQ) in the toughest match of the tournament. The Ladies Open considered the highlight of the 2017 SA Air Force Squash Championship.

The Team Spirit Trophy was awarded to F Sgt Brendan Stewart and Cpl Lorné van der Merwe as the sole representatives of 68 Air School while Col Adolf van den Berg (Defence Intelligence) once again claimed the Stirrer of the Tournament Trophy.

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F Sgt Daphné Cremon (AFB Ysterplaat) won the inaugural Ladies Open Plate Award. WO2 Catryn le Roux (AFB Hoedspruit) won Bronze against F Sgt Hannes van den Berg and F Sgt Attie Booysen (AFB Waterkloof).

The Team Spirit Trophy was awarded to F Sgt Brendan Stewart and Cpl Lorné van der Merwe as the sole representatives of 68 Air School while Col Adolf van den Berg (Defence Intelligence) once again claimed the Stirrer of the Tournament Trophy.
Lt Col Bevan Chippett (Human Resources Division) received his SA Air Force Squash Colours in the presence of Col Dirk Blom, Officer Commanding Central Flying School, during the awards evening at the AFB Langebaanweg Officers’ Mess. Former Squash Patron, Brig Gen Schalk van Heerden (Ret), and the Commanding Officer AFB Ysterplaat, Col Cassie de Castro, attended the final matches.

Team J&P Hydraulics AFB Ysterplaat also continued their drive to develop squash in the local community by once again hosting four young learners from the Jurie Hayes Primary School: Davano Fallet (Grade 4), Brendoline Scheepers (Grade 5), Davino Bambiso (Grade 6) and Levergne Bester (Grade 7). They received a Squash starter kit and an hour of coaching from Sgt Randall Alard, multiple SANDF and SA Air Force Champion.

In addition, there was a tribute to one of the staunchest SA Air Force squash supporters when WO1 Eric Helfer (SA Air Force HQ) played his final Masters’ match before retiring on 30 September 2017.

WO1 Helfer never missed a SA Air Force Squash Championship since 1985. He started before some of the current players were born! 🏸

BELOW: In the Ladies Open WO2 Marijke Kosteljik from SA Air Force HQ (right) claimed victory in five sets against Lt Col Hesma Oelofse from Human Resources Division.

RIGHT: The Officer Commanding Air Force Base Ysterplaat, Col Cassie de Castro (middle) flanked on his right by the Doubles Gold winners: Sgt Randall Alard and Sgt Wayne Wood from Air Force Base Ysterplaat who beat Maj Gerhard van den Berg and Sgt Callie Joubert from Air Force Base Langebaanweg (left-hand side) in the final.
The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) is known for its different sporting codes, although bodybuilding might be considered as a lifestyle rather than a sport. The SANDF was well represented at the IBFF Welkom Classics, an event in which bodybuilders from different walks of life showcased their well-trimmed bodies and muscles.

Four soldiers from Bloemfontein Military Base, who happened to exercise at the same gym, recently competed in this event. They were: Lt Kayalabo Ngodu (29) who works at 3 Military Hospital as a Paediatric Specialist Nurse, Sgt Patrick Madiba (41) from Works Regiment, Pte Anga Ndum-Ndum (27) from 1 SA Infantry Battalion and Rfn George Molisapoli (31) from 44 Parachute Regiment.

Sgt Madiba was the runner-up in the Masters 0/40 Years category and came fourth in the Senior Men 0/75kg category. This qualified him to participate in the National Bodybuilding Championships in Mpumalanga on 9 September 2017 where he achieved third place in the 0/40 Years category.

The 41-year-old veteran has a number of trophies under his belt, e.g. he stole the show earlier this year at the Bloemfontein Show where he was the winner in the Men’s Novice category, runner-up in the Men’s Athletic Bodybuilding category and overall winner in the Masters category. With almost 10 trophies under his belt the...
veteran is determined to achieve more.

Pte Ndum-Ndum took third place in the Mr Athletic under 1.72m category and fourth in the Mr Bodybuilding (Small) under 75kg which also qualified him for the National Bodybuilding Championships where he took third place in his category.

The IBFF Welkom Classics saw Lt Kayalabo Ngodu achieved sixth place in the Men's Athletic Bodybuilding category. Lt Ngodu started his professional bodybuilding career in 2016 and has never looked back. So far he has more than four trophies to prove his dedication and has continued to improve his physique with the aim of achieving National colours in bodybuilding and promoting a healthy lifestyle among his peers. Although Rfn Molisapoli finished with no trophy, his spirit was high as he was at least under the Top 10 – promising to win in the next competitions as it was not his last.

Thereafter the four SANDF members competed in the NABBA/WFF Free State/Northern Cape Provincials Bodybuilding Championships which were held at the School of Armour at Tempe, Bloemfontein, participate in the NABBA National Championships at Unisa, Pretoria, in October 2017 which will provide them with an opportunity to also qualify for the NABBA World Championships.

on 16 September 2017. Their results were as follow:

- Lt Ngodu (1st place Men's Sports Model)
- Sgt Madiba (1st place Masters 0/40 Years)
- Pte Ndum-Ndum (1st place Fitness Bodybuilding)
- Rfn Molisapoli (2nd place under 75kg Performance Bodybuilding)

All four SANDF members will
Our heritage forms our roots

By Rev Juvein J.F. Rosant, Chaplain at the School of Air Defence

Since the inception of Heritage Day in 1996, South Africans have been celebrating over two decades of shared heritage which have its fair share of challenges on just what this newly shared heritage of a diverse nation is.

According to the Cambridge dictionary the word heritage means “features belonging to the culture of a particular society, such as traditions, language or buildings that were created in the past and still have historical importance”. The global world has come to share and witness the relevance of important features that forms an integral part of different nations around the globe. We all know the significance of the Statue of Liberty, Liberty Island, a symbol of freedom and democracy for the American people.

As South Africans we experience on a daily basis the thousands of people that flock to Robben Island, previously a symbol of banishment, imprisonment and isolation, now a symbol of perseverance and dedication to the fight against political and ideological oppression.

The Statue of Christ the Redeemer, Rio de Janeiro, a symbol of Christianity, a majestic statue that towers over the city, the open arms of Christ, a reminder that He is all welcoming for the whole of humanity.

These statues/features have become part of the heritage of the global village that we find ourselves in: Each serving as a reminder of significant moments in history that rooted us as a global nation.

In verse 21 and 22 the responsibility of passing on the information of what happened on that day, the twelve stone tree without roots.

A reminder that God is good and that He is a deliverer; This reminder will also help them to develop a stronger foundation and belief in their God. This will help them to understand their heritage and in turn it will form the roots of our faith. As a people we have significant moments in our country’s history, moments that need to be celebrated, moments that need to be honoured and respected, moments that need to be shared with the next generation. The responsibility is on us to not only keep our heritage alive but also to strengthen our foundation, the roots of our faith, but also our unity.
SA Air Force cares for persons with disabilities

By Capt Cecilia Tseuoa, Corporate Communication SA Air Force Headquarters Unit

Casual Day is one of the biggest fund-raising events and awareness campaigns for people with disabilities in South Africa. The SA Air Force Headquarters hosted Casual Day on 1 September 2017 at the Headquarters Sports Field.

The theme for the 2017 Casual Day was to “Celebrate Diversity”. It is centred on inclusion and equity for persons with disabilities by building a society that not only embraces diversity, but actively celebrates it.

Directorates, units and sections of the SA Air Force Headquarters complex gathered at the sports field to celebrate Casual Day. Activities included a Potjiekos Competition, sporting activities, a best dressed parade, a lip sync battle and an exercise to build the SA National Flag. The theme “Celebrate Diversity” was demonstrated by members of the Headquarters wearing the different colours of the SA National Flag. The members thereafter convened to build the flag puzzle to demonstrate strength and unity in diversity. It was evident that whenever people came together for a common goal, they were able to achieve more in unity.

The day was particularly special because it was also the birthday of the Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang. The members also sang for Gen Msimang and wished him well. He enjoyed the birthday cake that was specially baked for him. The Officer Commanding SA Air Force Headquarters Unit, Col Jacobus Janse van Rensburg, challenged the members of the SA Air Force HQ to raise an amount of R22 000. Various fundraising activities were held on the day, resulting in the target goal being exceeded and an estimated R25 000 collected.

The aim of the fundraising was to raise funds for the Curamus Association for Security Force Disabled.

The Curamus Association provides physical, financial, social and development support to military veterans and their dependants. Proceeds generated contribute towards wheelchair maintenance, special mattresses, cushions and other equipment need by disabled persons where such equipment is not supplied by medical institutions. Curamus also supports many rehabilitation projects at 1 Military Hospital’s Department of Occupational Therapy. Members of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) also attended the event.

The Officer Commanding thanked all the members and reminded them that they were part of a group of thousands of South Africans who were demonstrating that small actions can make a huge difference. He concluded by quoting the late President Nelson Mandela: “It is not a question of patronising philanthropy towards people with disabilities. They do not need the patronage of the non-disabled. It is not for them to adapt to the dominating and dominating world of the so-called non-disabled. It is not for us to adapt our understanding of a common humanity; to learn of the richness of how human life is diverse; to recognise the presence of disability in our midst as an enrichment of our Diversity”.

The event was also graced by professionals from various fields, including team players from the Proteas Women National Cricket team, Ms Odine Kristen and Ms Nadine de Klerk, including members of the Gauteng Provincial Women: Ms Delmi Tucker and Ms Ingrid Smit. The women were invited as team members and guests of 33 year-old Cpl Marcia Letsoalo. Cpl Letsoalo serves in the Reserve Force as a Sport Clerk at the SA Air Force Headquarters Unit. She has served in the Proteas Cricket Team for ten years and made her first debut in 2007 against Pakistan.

Another highlight of the day was the presence of the Honorary Colonel of SA Air Force Headquarters Unit, Col Yvonne Chaka Chaka. She serenaded members by giving a spectacular performance from her latest single “Keep looking at me” which was released on the very same day. Also performing on the day was Jay du Plessis, the well-known Afrikaans singer and former lead singer of Eden, a famous Afrikaans band. Jay was a former SA Air Force member who was a member of the Canaries, a former musical competent in the SA Air Force. He was also a judge on Casual Day.
The South African National Defence Force is a pillar in the reactive physical campaign being fought against poaching on the ground and in the skies. We also engage in proactive educational campaigns to spread awareness about the intrinsic value of this magnificent animal.

Medicinal myths and a lack of care for our natural environment will be the forces behind the extinction of this magnificent animal.