



# WOFIRE NEWS

RESTORING DIGNITY • SAVING LIVES • PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

**BE SAFE WHEN DOING FIRE PREVENTION**



▶▶ PAGE 3

**NORTH WEST FIRE FIGHTERS FIT & READY**



▶▶ PAGE 4

**PRE-SCHOOLERS LEARN ABOUT FIRE SAFETY**



▶▶ PAGE 8

## We are ready for Winter Fire Season



Fire fighters going through a fire wall at a recent Yellow Card Training Camp in Limpopo



Fire fighters on parade at Passing Out Parade at recently concluded National Bootcamp in Gauteng

Working on Fire has been hard at work during the last few months as its fire fighters were busy preparing for the 2016 Winter Fire Season.

The Yellow Card Training Camps have been completed in the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Free State, North West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga and these camps were aimed to ensure that all fire fighters are fit and ready to be able to be on

active duty during this upcoming fire season.

Working on Fire has also established a National Deployment team which can be dispatched to anywhere in the country to assist farmers and land owners with fire suppression efforts.

The programme is also launching its Community Fire Awareness Campaigns

throughout the country in April 2016. These campaigns are aimed to teach communities how to be FireSafe and to prevent unwanted veld and forest fires and to raise awareness of the risk of veld and forest fires and empower those at risk to take responsibility to reduce the risk and impact of fires in their communities. Working on Fire urge landowners in particular to get

into contact with them so that they can assist with the development of clear integrated fire management services which includes amongst others, prescribed burning, fuel load reduction, community fire awareness, early detection and fire suppression plans.

*Editorial Team*

### Discipline of participants on show at Presidential event



On Friday, 8 April, 170 Working on Fire participants and management attended President Zuma's public report back meeting in Port Elizabeth on Operation Phakisa.

President Zuma gave an update on the implementation of Operation Phakisa, also known as the Oceans Economy and meaning "hurrying up" which focusses on marine transport, coastal and marine tourism, small harbour developments and aquaculture amongst others. It seeks to fast track the country's economic growth by unlocking the so called "Oceans Economy".

The Working on Fire participants from the Eastern Cape were the marshals at the event and they played a key role, together with the South African Police Services, in



ensuring that the event which was attended by thousands of people, was a success.

Working on Fire was also part of the exhibitors at the event and hundreds of people went to the WOF exhibition to learn more about the programme.

Minister of Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa, whose department was one of the hosts of the event extended her gratitude and thanks to the Working on Fire participants for supporting the event. She said that she was impressed by the discipline and humbleness of our teams which was on display for everyone to see.

Well done to the Eastern Cape participants and management for raising the Working on Fire flag!!! *Editorial Team*

### Fire breaks protect homes

As part of ensuring that communities in KwaZulu-Natal prepare themselves for the upcoming winter fire season, the Utrecht Team recently visited Groenvlei and Pokweni where they demonstrated to community members how to construct proper fire breaks that can protect their homes against runaway veldfires.

In previous years these communities had fire breaks but they were not wide enough

and their properties were still at risk of being destroyed by veldfires.

The construction of fire breaks is an integral part of ensuring that communities are able to avert the risks of veldfires.

**Nompilo Zondi**, Provincial Communication Officer, KwaZulu-Natal



# Editorial

## Dear Readers

### Editorial

Once again a heartfelt thanks to all our loyal readers and for taking time to read our monthly WoFire Newsletter.

We have this month focussed more on the core work of Working on Fire in implementing integrated fire management products and services. We have done this to ensure that we cater for a much wider audience of stakeholders that we want to engage with in terms of our services and products.

However, we will continue to tell the stories about how the Working on Fire programme is changing the lives of our participants and what impact they are making in their communities.

Happy reading!

## MD Message

### Llewellyn Pillay



The Western Cape Summer Fire Season is busy winding up and on behalf of the entire management in Working on Fire I want to extend our gratitude and thanks to all our participants for having worked tirelessly throughout the summer period to ensure that we provide an uninterrupted fire fighting resource to our stakeholders throughout the Western Cape.

Early indications are that despite the drought the Western Cape is experiencing, the Summer Fire Season went much better than previous years largely as a result of better preparedness and coordination amongst all provincial stakeholders.

The Yellow Card Training Camps have been completed in most of the provinces and these camps were aimed at ensuring that all fire fighters are fit and ready to be able to be on active duty during this upcoming fire season.

I received positive feedback from all the provinces who recently completed their Yellow Card Training camps.

We also held a successful National Training Camp in Gauteng recently which has prepared us to have available a National Deployment Team of fire fighters who have been specifically trained to be deployed to hotspots.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> April (Freedom Day) the country celebrated 22 years since our first free election and the birth of democracy in South Africa. South Africans joined in celebrating National Freedom Day across the country in reflecting on the achievements we have made as a nation.

The Working on Fire programme has over the past 12 years also contributed significantly to the attainment of government's commitment to broaden democracy by providing access to work opportunities. This has been achieved through the work opportunities which have been created through the Working on Fire programme.

### Introduction of Editorial Team:

#### Editors

Linton Rensburg - Editor in Chief  
Cell: 082 508 0990  
Email: linton.rensburg@wofire.co.za  
National Communications Manager

#### Deputy - Editor

Olwethu Mpeshe  
Cell: 073 847 3291  
Email: olwethu.mpeshe@wofire.co.za  
Communications Coordinator

Parapara Makgahlela  
Cell: 073 871 9350  
Email: parapara.makgahlela@wofire.co.za  
Province: Gauteng

Limakatso Khalianyane  
Cell: 079 014 2530  
Email: Limakatso.khalianyane@wofire.co.za  
Province: Free State / Northern Cape

Matema Gwangwa  
Cell: 073 732 1344 • Fax: 086 569 7419  
Email: matema.gwangwa@wofire.co.za  
Province: Limpopo

Nthabiseng Mokone  
Cell: 073 831 5936  
Email: nthabiseng.mokone@wofire.co.za  
Province: Eastern Cape

Nompilo Zondi  
Cell: 073 775 6465 / 082 570 1572  
Email: nompilo.zondi@wofire.co.za  
Province: KwaZulu-Natal

Patricia Maanelo  
Cell: 079 035 5732 • Tel: +27 18 290 8512  
Email: patricia.maanelo@wofire.co.za  
Province: North West

Lauren Howard  
Cell: 071 115 5843 • Tel: 021 761 1992  
Email: lauren.howard@wofire.co.za  
Province: Western Cape

#### WoF TV Unit:

Noel Molokoane  
Video Journalist  
Cell: 073 087 6957 • Fax: 051 451 2349  
Email: noel.molokoane@wofire.co.za

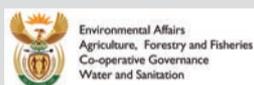
Christalene De Kella  
Lead Video Journalist  
Cell: 082 767 7489 • Fax: 086 519 7554  
Email: christalene.dekella@wofire.co.za

#### Contacts for WOFIRE NEWS -

Tel: +27 21 797 5356  
Cell: +27 82 508 0990  
Email: news@wofire.co.za

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Working on Fire is an Expanded Public Works Programme which resides within the Department of Environmental Affairs.



## Failure

A poem by Siphokazi Johanna Mqakelana from Stutterheim Base

Failure is when you stop trying,  
Failure is when you decide to throw in the towel.  
Failure is when you give up on your goal,  
When you stop trying, you fail.

Why are you giving up?  
Are you afraid to be laughed at?  
Don't you want to defeat your weakness?  
What is failure exactly?

When you fail, people laugh at you.  
When you fail, people call you names.  
When you fail, people tease you.  
Don't entertain them just ignore them.

Without failure, there is no learning.  
Without failure, there are no challenges.  
Without failure, there are no regrets.  
Without failure, there is no life.  
But with Failure, learning is in progress.

I strive to achieve but failure wouldn't let me.  
I want to face the challenges of life, but failure blocked my view.  
I was given the opportunity to learn, but failure wouldn't let me pursue my dreams.  
I had confidence in myself but failure took that away from me.

Should I let failure control my life?  
Should I let failure rule my life?  
Or should I let failure fail my life?

We should not count how many times we fail.  
We should rather count how many times we conquered failure!

## HAT Team assists orphanage with recovering water supply from borehole



The Gosso Orphanage Home in Lusikisiki is very proud of the work done by the High Altitude Team (HAT) in Lusikisiki at their facility after they managed to get the borehole water supply up and running again.

Philip Vorster, the Regional Manager of HAT Lusikisiki said that the orphanage home requested the team to do frilling and gelling of 27 huge Eucalyptus Grandis trees on their property early this year.

"This was because the borehole of the orphanage had dried up and we thought it might be because of those gum trees," explained Philip.

**Our premium news products, WoFire News and WoF TV have the single objective of being informative!**

It is there to keep our participants informed about what's happening in WoF across the country.

WoF TV News and WoFire News is a dedication to the hard work of our participants and it aims to focus on their stories, which not only relates to their work in WoF but also features on how they have grown and developed in the Programme.

Once again a reminder to you all that you are more than welcome to send us your own stories and we will be able to assist you in writing it.

Furthermore we feature many stories of participants who took responsibility for their own lives and also extended their compassion to others.

**Send us your stories.**

Email it to, [news@wofire.co.za](mailto:news@wofire.co.za) or chat to your local - Provincial Communication Officers, Regional Managers, Base Managers or Crew Leaders.



Nthabiseng Mokone, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape

# Fire Prevention in the Western Cape

The Working on Fire teams in the Western Cape were hard at work over the past few months to ensure that disastrous fires are prevented in high risk areas within the province. Prevention included the construction of fire breaks and fire belts to prevent the spread of fires in case of an unwanted fire.

Fire Prevention forms an important part of the Integrated Fire Management Services offered by Working on Fire.

Landowners are encouraged to contact Working on Fire for more advice and help with the construction of fire breaks and fuel load reduction.



The Riversdale Team constructs a fire break within the Hottentots Holland Nature Reserve mountainous slopes

**Lauren Howard**, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape



The Newlands Team together with the NCC Environ Services constructed a fire break along the Glen Cairn mountainous area, following the devastating Glen Cairn/Fish Hoek fire that took place in January 2016

## HAT at work to help sustain water supplies



Western Cape HAT Team Production - The Stellenbosch and Franschoek Team in Franschoek

The High Altitude Team (HAT) programme aims to reduce invasive species to sustain the water supply within our dams and catchment areas.

The Stellenbosch and Franschoek HAT Teams were in the Franschoek mountain slopes recently to do the clearing of alien invasive species close to the Berg River Dam. The dam has been severely depleted of water over the past few months due to drought the region has been experiencing.

According to the HAT Regional Manager, Wesley Leukes, HAT Teams have been

tasked with clearing Invasive Alien Plant Species (IAPS) from mountain ranges and mountainous slopes to protect the water supply within dams and in turn protect the environment.

"These IAPS' are water consumers and they impact on water supplies and we were focussed on ensuring that we clear the Berg River Dam area which is an important water supplier to the province", Leukes told WoFire News.

**Lauren Howard**, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape

# Harrismith Team identifies fire risks ahead of fire season



The Harrismith Team in the Free State visited the nearest mountain to check fire hazards that need to be dealt with before the fire season.

The team checked and identified dry trees and vegetation that could be a massive fuel should a fire spark in the area. The team did the activity as part of their Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) training which included theory and practical work.

One of the instructors, Vincent Masete, said the aim of going to the mountain was to go check fire related risks. "We identified a few dry trees that we are going to cut as part of fuel reduction prior to the upcoming fire

season. This also served as practical training for the Chainsaw Operators," he told WoFire News.

He said part of what they do included inspection of the team's equipment to ensure they have enough and that the equipment meets the safety standards.

In 2014, the Harrismith area experienced a fire disaster where farmers lost vegetation and some crops and it was thus important to assess and address fire risks in the area.

**Limakatso Khaliyane**, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State



# Limpopo Teams prepare landowners for the upcoming fire season



Working on Fire in Limpopo have been working around the clock preparing landowners for the upcoming winter fire season.

Fire fighters across the province have started very early preparing farmers and landowners for the winter fire season by creating fire breaks and also reducing the fuel load on their properties. One of the teams that has been the busiest is the Leseding Team which has been working on projects around Groblersdal where they were doing grass slashing and creating fire breaks.

The WOF fire fighters have been trained professionally to work very closely with the landowners to advise them on the requirement

of the National Veld and Forestry Act and how to comply with it. Most of these teams are very busy during this month ensuring that they offer their services to the landowners in time to prepare for the 2016 fire season.

"We are the leading programme in integrated fire management and our services are needed across the province. If all the landowners can prepare for the fire season we will surely have less fires in the province", said Maria Mokoena, the Assistant Project Leader for the Leseding Team in the Waterberg Area.

**Matema Gwangwa**, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo

# Follow safety precautions when doing fuel load reduction

On the 29<sup>th</sup> March the Utrecht Team received a call-out to assist in a fire that took place at the Balele Country Club. The club's workers were doing a fuel load reduction without properly securing a safe barrier around the area they were burning and as result of this oversight the fire went out of control.

The Utrecht Crew Leader Type 1, Sbonele Mkhwanazi said, "The fire moved underground via roots and reappeared burning stacked

logs on the property before becoming an uncontrollable fire and that is when we were called to come help."

Sbonele urged landowners to follow safety measures in order to conduct a safe and effective fire break on their properties and when doing fuel load reduction.

**Nompilo Zondi**, Provincial Communication Officer, KwaZulu-Natal



# North West ready for fire season after Yellow Card Training Camp

Over 300 participants in the North West Province have undergone an intensive Yellow Card Training Camp in the first half of April in preparation for the winter fire season.

At the Training Camps it was determined whether the fire fighters have the right Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment and they also had to undergo fitness training (2,4 Kilometre run, push-ups, pull-ups and sit-

ups) and advanced fire fighting training. Upon finishing the training fire fighters were issued with Yellow Cards which indicate they are ready to fight fires.

According to Manase Mpholoane, the WOF Ground Operation Manager in the North West Province, the fire fighters are more than ready for the upcoming winter fire season. "The training camp went well as each and every fire

fighter who participated in this Yellow Card Training Camp met the requirements needed to obtain their Yellow Cards.

I can proudly say the North West is ready for the upcoming winter fire season," said Mpholoane.

During the pass out parade, North West General Manager, Nolvuyvo Mashologu said, "I am happy and the participants should be

proud of themselves and the importance of their job and the value they add to communities out there. I am proud that we achieved a 100% pass rate. We are glad that all our participants are now fit and ready for fire season."

 **Patricia Maanelo**, Provincial Communication Officer, North West



## Participant uses fire fighting skills on his farm

At the age of 47, Rust De Winter Team's Type 1 Crew Leader, Jimmy Phatlane, has for the fourth consecutive time managed to obtain his Yellow Card recently during the Yellow Card Training Camp held at the Kadash Lodge in the tiny town of Brits.

He has passed the 2,4 kilometer run in a record time of 11 minutes and 44 seconds.

Jimmy who also owns a farm, said that he prepared well for the camp and does not understand why some of the younger fire fighters couldn't pass the physical fitness.

He said passing the fitness test is all about having a winning attitude and knowing you can do it.

"I am using the fire management skills acquired from the programme on my farm. My livestock is safe because every year I do fire breaks around the farm. The skills from this training camp are valuable and vital to me as a farmer," he said.

"The physical test helps me to be in good health. Every week I pass my fitness tests and I'm in good shape," said a jubilant Jimmy.



 **Parapara Makgahlela**, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng

## Our Two-Oceans Marathon Runners fly the WoF FLAG - #WOFHEROES

### WOF made it possible

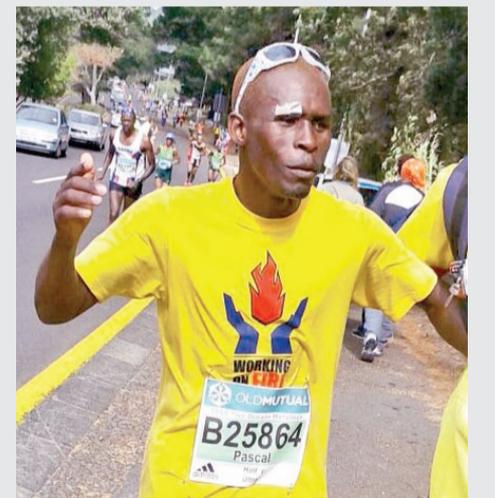
Working on Fire recently made it possible for Sifundo Sithole, the KZN Provincial Training Officer, to participate at the Two Oceans Marathon in Cape Town.

Sithole was recruited by WOF as a fire fighter in 2007 and has since moved up the ranks. Because of the strict fitness requirements for fire fighters he developed a passion for running and has explored many marathons. He started his professionally running career in 2014, with the Nedbank Comrades Marathon and later the Two Oceans Marathon.

"After entering for the race, I tried looking for accommodation and transport but I found out that the Runners Village which usually accommodates underprivileged runners was fully booked," said Sithole.

He then turned to WOF for assistance and a week before the race the Managing Director approved his request for sponsorship.

"I'm very grateful to WOF for giving me this opportunity to take part in this race, not forgetting my General Manager, Carl van Loggerenberg and the KZN Provincial Office for their support."



Masibulele Pascal Joseph

### Runner motivates community

New recruit, Masibulele Pascal Joseph, from the Vredenburg base in the Western Cape, successfully completed the 56 kilometer Two Oceans Marathon held in Cape Town.

The 30-year-old Masibulele, a husband and father of two children who previously resided in the Eastern Cape, became a professional runner at the age of 18 and has already completed the Two Oceans Marathon twice.

"At the Two Oceans in 2015 there were companies such as Sanlam who motivated us to start small businesses within our community. I went home and decided to start my own gym to help men and women who want to stay fit and lose weight. Today I am a facilitator of my own gym in the location of George Carriage and have 42 members, 30 of which are females."

In conclusion he said that he enjoys being at Working on Fire as it is a very disciplined organisation. His passion is running and fitness and the WoF programme motivates him to stay on top of his game and "to carry forth the many lessons I am taught at WOF to keep the community of George Carriage healthy and motivated."



Sifundo Sithole

 **Nompilo Zondi**, Provincial Communication Officer, KwaZulu-Natal

 **Lauren Howard**, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape

## Driver feels empowered by training

One of the oldest drivers at Working on Fire, Saulos Ngobeni, 54, from the Rust De Winter base had praises for WOF after finishing yet another Driver Training Camp recently.

"I really appreciate the opportunity to drive fire fighters in the programme. I have also taught a couple of current young drivers to drive. At my age I never thought that their

is anything more to learn in driving but I am still learning and it is good. I wouldn't have learnt or improved my driving skills anywhere." he said.

 **Parapara Makgahlela**, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng



# Single Mom aims to be Type I Crew Leader

Hildegard Primo, a 24 year old single mother from the Craggs Base in the Southern Cape, is thankful for the work opportunity provided to her by Working on Fire.

Primo joined Working on Fire in October 2012 as a fire fighter and was promoted to Type 2 Crew Leader in August 2015. She says, "Thinking back to the recruitment day in 2012, I was eager to get a position as a fire fighter as I wanted a change in my career, and even though the recruitment process was difficult, I made it through. My life changed the day I started at Working on Fire."

Primo lives in Kurland Village in Plettenberg Bay, growing up with one sister and eight brothers. Primo matriculated in 2008 at Plettenberg Bay Secondary School and thereafter worked at the Bramon Wine Estate Restaurant as a waiter.

"Today I am a Type 2 Crew Leader at the Craggs Base. I am very happy within the WOF programme as it has helped me support my two sons and my family. The programme is full of opportunities and you just have to grab them with both hands and enjoy the journey. I would like to thank WOF for developing my skills and for motivating me to accomplish my goal of becoming a Type 1 Crew Leader in 2016."



Hildegard Primo



Lauren Howard, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape



The Craggs Crew Leader showing Hildegard the ropes to become a Type One Crew Leader

## KZN Scoops top awards for Fire Awareness Initiatives for 2015/2016

The Working on Fire KwaZulu-Natal Fire Awareness Team received top awards nationally for their excellent performance in the year 2015/2016. Last year the Fire Awareness Department tasked the Provincial Teams to host a fire awareness launch coupled with a series of campaigns to prepare communities and schools for the fire season.

The KZN Team received multiple awards, with Khulani Zulu, the Fire Awareness Training Officer receiving top performance for the Best Quality and Quantity Workshops. Makhosi Dladla, the Community Fire Awareness Officer, obtained Best Community FireSafe Workshops. KZN was the best province in Fire Awareness Campaign scoring 92% while the Utrecht and Winterton Teams made the top three teams in the country for conducting the most fire awareness activities.

"We really appreciate the support we received from our senior management and the Grounds Operations Department for always lending a helping hand when we need it, also to the Utrecht and Winterton Teams for the hard work and dedication they have shown," said Khulani.

Assistant General Manager, Winnie Ndlovu added, "We are very proud of our Fire Awareness Department and the dedication they put in doing their job reflex through the awards they received



and we will continue supporting them for better results this year."



Nompilo Zondi, Provincial Communication Officer, KwaZulu-Natal

## Leoni climbs up the ranks in the programme

Working on Fire has hundreds of management positions that were filled with those who started in the programme as fire fighters. Among them is Leoni Rooi who is currently the Free State Training Officer.

She joined WOF as a fire fighter at the Clanwilliam Base in the Western Cape in 2004, a year after the programme was

established. Within a year she was a Type 1 Crew Leader and in six months she was promoted to be an Instructor.

"After a year and half as an instructor I became a Regional Manager for five years in the Western Cape," she told WoFire News.

Upon leaving her post as a Regional Manager she rejoined the Training Academy as a Senior Instructor in 2013. Three years later she became a Training Officer in the Free State.

"I love everything about this programme because if it was not for it, I don't know where I would be today. The first day I started I made a promise to myself that I will not leave this job unless the job leaves me," she said.

She also got a chance to travel and her highlight is when she went to America where she attended a Fire Intensive Course for three weeks.

In her current post, she coordinates and plans trainings for fire fighters, organize Yellow Cards and Driver's Training Camps.



Limakatso Khalianyane, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State

## Young participant helping the elderly

Linda Zulu who hails from Cofimvaba in the Eastern Cape joined WOF as a Store Person at the Mogalakwena base. Linda completed his grade 12 at the Cofimvaba High School and went to study for a motor mechanic at Athlone Technical College in Cape Town where he completed his N2. Due to financial constraints he couldn't study further.

Linda was not about to let financial struggles determine his future and he enrolled with the World Focus Body Massage Centre where he learned the art of massaging people. He was motivated by the need of the massage services at the Old Age Centres around his area and he volunteers at these Centres where he massages the elderly and also teach them about the importance of exercising in order for

them to keep their bodies healthy and fit. WOF through its Skill Development leg empowers its participants with courses which contribute positively to their daily lives. After joining WOF Linda was taken through a Store Controller course to enhance his skills.

"Since I joined WOF I learned how to manage and control stock. And the good thing is that at WOF there's great room for improvement through the workshops that we are being taken to," said Linda Zulu during his interview.

Linda's future goal is to work as a Store Controller for a bigger company or even a Store Manager.



Matema Gwangwa, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo



Linda Zulu massaging the elderly at an Old Age Centre in Mogalakwena

# Giving hope to those who have lost hope

"When my parents passed away in 2003, I felt like my life was over as I had lost the only people who supported and gave me hope," said Bongwiwe Novoyi, formerly from the Bavianskloof Team in the Eastern Cape.

Novoyi said that in those days life was difficult as she didn't have a job.

"I passed my matric in 2000 and I struggled to get a proper job and was unemployed for more than 6 years when Working on Fire provided me with a work opportunity as a fire fighter in the Bavianskloof Team."

"Tears of joy could not stop rolling down my face when I was given the opportunity," Novoyi said with a smile.

She said that her life changed for the better, she became a better person and could afford

to assist her sisters financially. "In 2011 I was recruited to join the High Altitude Team at Van Stadens and that was a blessing in my life," she told WoFire News.

Because of the skills she acquired at WOF, Novoyi said that she is doing well where she is now and she would like to further her studies so that she can be in management one day.

"The programme has skilled me in catering and first aider training. I would like to advise all fire fighters to always work hard and never lose hope and utilise the opportunities afforded to them by the programme," she said.



**Nthabiseng Mokone**, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape



## Former fire fighter goes for gold



Matshedi Sello at her new employer's Savuka gold mine

31 year old Matshediselo Sello, a former fire fighter at the Wedela Team has joined Anglo Ashanti's Savuka Gold Mine in Carletonville as a Reef Checker.

"I did the course relating to mining at the training Centre in Carletonville years back. I always wished to get a better opportunity," explained Sello.

When asked what her new job entails, she said to check the belt that helps ship soil out of the mine.

She thanked Working on Fire for training her especially in the area of safety in the workplace. "Safety is very important in mines. I am able to

articulate and share occupational health and safety tips with my colleagues. When I was working as a fire fighter I thought it was futile to have safety talk meetings but now it matters most," she told WoFire News.

She was employed in the programme in 2013.

Matshediselo said that she was scared of going underground on her first day on duty. "But I had to overcome my fears and explore to enjoy my job," she said.



**Parapara Makgahlela**, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng

## God's mercy brought me where I am today

These are the words of Lydia Sereo the newly appointed Training Officer in the North West Province. Lydia joined Working on Fire in March 2011 as a fire fighter at the Christiana base. Within months in the programme, Lydia was promoted as a Crew Leader Type 2 and later in 2012 she became a Crew Leader Type 1 and later on she became a Type 3 Dispatch Coordinator.

In August 2014 Sereo was appointed as an Instructor at the WOF Academy in Nelspruit where she was responsible for training newly appointed fire fighters to become qualified veld and forest fire fighters.

Sereo has now been appointed as the Provincial Training Officer for the North West Province.

"Because the job is almost similar to what I was doing at the Training Academy, I was overwhelmed when I received the call informing me that I got the job as a Training Officer because I love developing people and making a difference in their lives," said Sereo who couldn't contain her excitement.

Sereo is currently enrolled at the SA College for Supply Chain and Logistic and also aims to have a degree in Psychology.



**Patricia Maanelo**, Provincial Communication Officer, North West

## Driven with passion to join emergency services

Bontle Molefe a former fire fighter and beauty queen at the Roodeplaat Team has recently exited Working on Fire to volunteer at the Maponya Ambulance Services in Hammanskraal to gain working experience in the medical emergency services field.

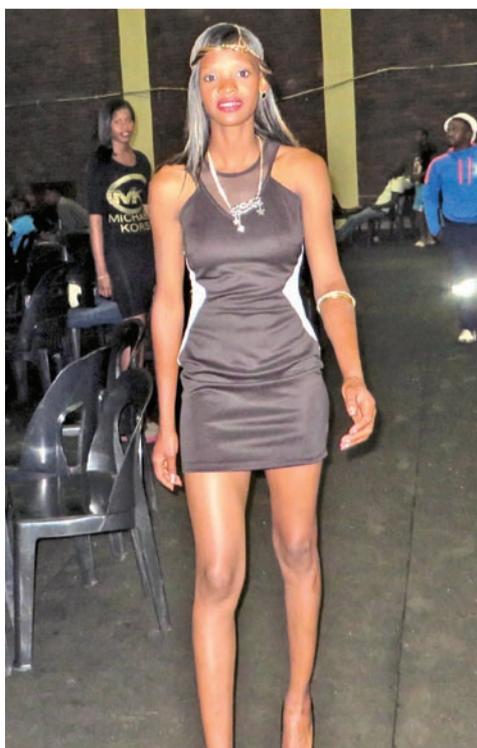
"I was driven by passion and love into the rescue and emergency industry. I have always wanted to see myself as a successful individual in the future," said Bontle.

She said she was able to utilise the stipend she got from WOF to feed, clothe and educate herself and her child. She also prepared herself for the job market.

"I have done my drivers' license code 10 and Basic Ambulance Assistant course while working as a fire fighter," she said.

Bontle hails from Hammanskraal but was based at the Roodeplaat Team.

"I have learnt quite a lot from the programme. The most difficult part of my job as fire fighter was the fitness tests done weekly," explained Bontle. When asked why she was exiting before getting a job offer, Bontle explained that she needed to make way for other youth so they can get skills in the programme.



Bontle Molefe participating in the Miss Azishe Games in 2014



**Parapara Makgahlela**, Provincial Communication Officer, Gauteng

## I am happy to have this opportunity – even far away from home



Leaving my home and my 2 kids and going to a place that is far has been a difficult decision but because I want to provide for my children I had to make that decision. These are the words of Thomas Qezu, a fire fighter in the Krom Rivier Team.

"I joined the Working on Fire programme as a fire fighter in 2014 at the Ntywenka Team as I am originally from Tsolo near Ntywenka but unfortunately in 2015 the team was closed down and all of us had choices to make after that," explained Qezu.

The 23-year-old young man said that when other participants decided to resign he chose to go to another team where there was a vacancy.

"The Krom Rivier Team which is on the other side of the province is very far but I told myself that if I do not go there I will not have money to support my kids or save money to further my studies," said Qezu.

He said it was a difficult choice to take but a good one. "I do not have qualifications and I have never worked before but WOF has given me skills and hope to be a better person," emphasised Qezu.

I know I am far from my home and it's not easy but on the other hand I am happy that I can still put food on the table for my kids and family.



**Nthabiseng Mokone**, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape

# Mogalakwena Team leads the Province in Fire Awareness

Working on Fire's Mogalakwena Team demonstrated their dedication, passion and commitment by being in the national top 10 performing teams in fire awareness activities.

Fire awareness education is the best tool used by Working on Fire's fire fighters to educate school learners, landowners and communities about fires. After the 2015 winter fire season, the Mogalakwena Team hosted fire awareness presentations and educational talks in various areas within the Waterberg District Municipality, an area that recorded more fires the previous year.

The Mogalakwena Team with the assistance of their Fire Awareness Training Officer conducted 53 fire awareness activities in various schools within the Waterberg District Municipality. Most of these fire awareness were aligned with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) method which enabled learners to adapt easily.



Mogalakwena Team were selected as the best team in Limpopo in fire awareness

"The teams were selected based on the quality of the fire awareness activities they have conducted," said Doreen Makoni, the National Fire Awareness Coordinator.

The Mogalakwena Team was awarded R1000 by the Fire Awareness National Officer for their hard work and for achieving position 3 in the whole country. The province also awarded the team with R500 for putting the province on the map. "I am so proud of the achievement of my team, it shows that the workshops I was conducting while training them were implemented in schools and communities," said Phenny Phukubye, the Fire Awareness Training Officer in Limpopo.

Other teams that performed well included the Blouberg Team who got position 7 and Nebo Team which got position 9.



Matema Gwangwa, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo

## Community members prepared on dealing with disasters

Working on Fire in the North West Province in collaboration with the Kagisano-Molopo Local Municipality hosted a Disaster Awareness Campaign at the Ganyesa Tribal Hall. The main aim of the awareness was to make community members aware of disasters they may come across and prepare them to deal with the disasters in the event of one.

The Naledi Team presented an educational play in the form of drama about the dangers of fires. The team showed the community how to be fire safe and alert in case of any emergency. Type 1 Crew Leader, Pogiso Mabiletsa said



their objective was to prepare the community for the upcoming winter fire season.

"We are pleased to be part of this disaster awareness campaign as the knowledge obtained here will assist community members to take charge of emergencies while awaiting specialised assistance," Mabiletsa concluded.

The campaign brought together many stakeholders including the Department of Social Development, Fire and Disaster, Health, Agriculture and Department of Water.



Patricia Maanelo, Provincial Communication Officer, North West



## Winburg Team encourages youngsters to participate in sport



The Winburg Team in the Free State hosted a soccer tournament in the area to encourage youngsters to keep themselves busy with sports.

About eight teams from in and around Winburg participated. They were from Virginia, Theunissen and Verkeerdevelei.

Samuel Molelengoane, a Crew Leader Type 2 said, "We organised the tournament because we noticed a lot of young people in the area have nothing to do and they end up

using drugs. We wanted to show them the fun of sport."

He said they were very grateful for the positive turnout of the community members. Molelengoane said he came up with the idea and presented it to the team which accepted it. The winning team of the tournament walked away with the R5000 prize money, a trophy and medals.



Limakatso Khalianyane, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State

## A fun filled day for WOF kids

The Eastern Cape Social Development Department recently celebrated Family Day by organising fun and games for the children of management and staff.

One of the Eastern Cape Social Development Practitioner, Siphokazi Jack, said that the kids played games that included the jumping castle, tug of war, egg run as well as soccer.

All the kids had fun and enjoyed the fun filled day. Jack said that the department plans to celebrate the day every year to unite kids of provincial staff as one family. "We are a family in WOF so our kids should know each other and be one family," she said.



Nthabiseng Mokone, Provincial Communication Officer, Eastern Cape



## Working on Fire thanks Moore Stephens Company for donations made to two Western Cape teams

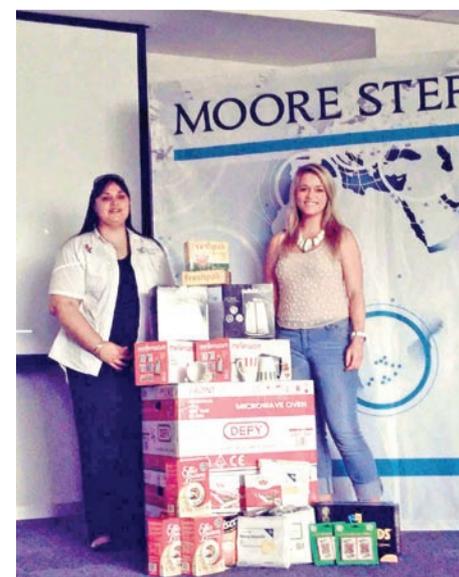
During the December 2015 Fire Awareness campaign hosted in the Overberg Region, Community Awareness Training Officer, Rayganah Rhoda, conducted a door-to-door campaign involving the community and The Association for People with Disability (APD). One of the directors at Moore Stephens saw this on his way home and made contact with Rhoda.

Upon contact, Rayganah Rhoda as well as WC General Manager, Shane Christian, held a presentation at Moore Stephens and thereafter they contributed goods to WOF as part of their Corporate Social Investment initiative.

The Kleinmond and Ladismith Team were selected for the donation because they had the least amount of absenteeism.



Lauren Howard, Provincial Communication Officer, Western Cape



# Learners become more vigilant about fires

In light of unfortunate incidents where children get burned or get trapped inside burning houses and don't know how to get out safely, the Wolmaransstad Team conducted a fire awareness at the Katlehong Pre-School focusing on the topic of Personal Safety which includes crawl low under smoke and stop drop and roll demonstrations. These techniques can be lifesaving in the event of a fire as they limit smoke inhalation and injuries during a fire.



"It is very important to educate children at a young age as fires affect everyone and children are the most vulnerable."

"The awareness was very important to us as a team as we are approaching the winter fire season and most of the fires we experience are usually caused by human negligence. We hope this awareness will minimise unwanted fires during this winter fire season."

Speaking to WoFire News, a teacher at the Pre-School, Rebecca Lekoko, said "I am very happy Working on Fire taught our children the importance and dangers of fire which will help them. I also learned many things about fires which I was not aware of in the past."



**Patricia Maanelo**, Provincial Communication Officer, North West



## KZN FireSafe Workshops at Utrecht

Following the Fire Awareness conducted by the Utrecht Team in the beginning of March, Community Fire Awareness Officer, Makhosi Dladla, and Fire Awareness Assistant, Bongumusa Nyathi, returned to the same communities, Blue Mountain, Groenvlei and Phokweni to carry out a FireSafe Workshop.

Utrecht Crew Leader Type 1, Sbonelo Mkhwanazi, said "We had a great response from community members and they said they'll invite us again when they start with their fire breaks."

The community leader had requested that WoF come and train community members in order to reduce the number of wildfires in the area.

The team taught the community about the importance of doing a risk assessment in the community, how to calculate defensible space for fire breaks around their homes and the construction of a fire management plan.

"These are some topics we spoke about with these communities. Bongumusa conducted a successful workshop, it was a real eye opener for the community and they promised to do their part in preventing fire this year," said Makhosi.



**Nompilo Zondi**, Provincial Communication Officer, KwaZulu-Natal

## Communities in Limpopo learn more about veld fires

Limpopo's Community Fire Awareness Officer has embarked on a fire awareness journey where he is educating communities about the impacts of veld fires.

Since the beginning of the year, hundreds of community members had the opportunity to learn more about the fire behaviours and about precautions they should take in order to make their homes fire safe. Through the fire awareness workshops and campaigns many communities are fire safe and ready for the fire season that lies ahead. "Through the workshops I hope to make a difference and plant

a seed of knowledge about fires in community members and hope they will take what they have learned and implement it into their homes and societies", said Sello Matlhare, the Community Fire Awareness Officer in Limpopo.

WoF is playing a leading role in spreading fire awareness messages across the country with the intention to reduce veld fires caused by negligence in the communities.



**Matema Gwangwa**, Provincial Communication Officer, Limpopo

## Elderly Frankfort residents equipped with fire safety tips



Elderly people who are members of the Iketsetseng Lunch Club in Frankfort in the Northern Free State were equipped with fire safe knowledge. This was done in preparation for the winter fire season which looks like it will be coming earlier than expected.

The Community Fire Awareness Officer, Glodinah Mofokeng, shared some fire safety tips during a workshop with senior citizens ahead of the fire season. The elderly people and children are the most vulnerable to fires. They learned about hazardous objects and

materials that could expose them to fire danger.

During the workshop they went outside and discussed how they can do risk reduction. The lunch club is located near a mini illegal dumping site and they agreed to take the necessary precautions to ensure they were safe from fires during the fire season.



**Limakatso Khaliyane**, Provincial Communication Officer, Free State



Community Fire Awareness Officer conducting a fire awareness presentation to one of the communities in Limpopo