

## PEOPLE

### MENSE ABANTU

#### Ronel Bladen groet na 21 jaar

Ronel Bladen het na 21 jaar in die Biblioteekdiens afgetree. Baie onwillig om af te tree, het sy haarself by voorbaat beskikbaar gestel as kontrakwerker indien die pos tydelik as 'n kontrakpos gevul word.

Sy het vir 'n jaar lank by die Natalse Biblioteekdiens gewerk waarna sy aansoek gedoen het vir 'n pos by die Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Biblioteekdiens.

Ronel het in verskeie afdelings in die Diens gewerk. In 1990 het sy in die Aanwinste-afdeling begin en na 'n jaar is sy as toesighouer aangestel van die Afskrywingsafdeling. Vanaf 1992 tot 1993 was sy werksaam in die Hospitaalstraatbiblioteek, waarna sy in 1995 in Saldanhastreek as biblioteekassistent begin werk het. Sy was hier werksaam vanaf 1995 tot 2000. Die aspek van haar werk in die streke wat sy die meeste geniet het was die besoeke aan die openbare biblioteke, maar sy moes om gesondheidsredes in 2001 verskuif na die Nasporingsafdeling waar sy tot haar aftrede op 31 Mei 2011 gewerk het.

Ronel sal baie deur al haar kollegas in die Keuringsafdeling gemis word. Sy is 'n vriendelike sosiale mens en 'n ware staatmaker. Volgens Ronel is die enigste rede waarom sy bly is om die Biblioteekdiens op dié stadium te verlaat dat sy nie nodig het om met Brocade/SLIMS te werk nie. Ook die feit dat



sy meer tyd met haar kinders en kleinkinders sal kan spandeer en stokperdjies wat sy al die jare afgeskep het terwyl sy gewerk het (soos skilder) weer kan aanpak. Geniet jou aftrede Ronel, en moet nie van ons vergeet nie. Kom kuier so nou en dan!

*Colleen Williams  
Chief Library Assistant*

*Lekker skilder Ronel, ons sal jou fyn humorsin baie mis!  
RED*

#### A stalwart says goodbye

When a staff member retires you traditionally thank them but when somebody like Ve-



ronica Behm Croucher retires, words are not enough to pay tribute to this exceptional lady. How do you adequately thank somebody who, without fanfare or pretense,

devoted her professional career to improve the quality of life in the community by being tenaciously committed in enhancing a buoyant reading culture.

For 26 years Veronica has been an anchor in the Children's Department of the Milnerton Library, dedicating her time to share her passion and appreciation of good books and reading with children and young adults, encouraging them to accomplish their goals and reach their full potential.

Veronica started her library career as children's librarian at the Milnerton Library on 28 January 1985. From the very first day she demonstrated excellence in her service to the community and was always committed in shaping services to help people succeed in all their endeavours. Her objective was to distinguish the library as a hub for learning, exploration and guidance in the community. She always strived to provide the community not only with the information and tools they need to succeed, but also to create expertise, commitment and a passion for learning and reading.

With her characteristic enthusiasm Veronica worked tirelessly on innovative projects for children and young adults, and participated in initiatives to strengthen the community. As an experienced public librarian she demonstrated an extraordinary range and depth in her knowledge of juvenile literature and always had a unique ability to share that knowledge. She made a significant contribution towards the advancement of reading and learning skills at schools, crèches and aftercares in our community. Her exceptional dedication to children's services in the public library environment is constantly acknowledged by our library users, especially teachers, parents and also the younger generation who had been guided and entertained by Veronica from their first years in grade 1 to grade 12, and then in turn had also entrusted their children to her special skills and inspired leadership.

Veronica always treated children and children's books with great respect. She believed that children's literature was about ideas, spirit and the education of the imagination and that the written word can spark creative endeavours by channelling energy into positive activities. Under her guidance and mentorship only the best was good enough for children, and subsequently she established a juvenile library collection which met the highest standards and a children's department at the Milnerton Library which not only promoted a professional and respectful workplace but also a supportive and child-friendly library haven. She accomplished her goal to bring the library to the children by regularly visiting schools and crèches in order to introduce children to the different services rendered by Milnerton Library and to encourage them to visit their local library.

For many years she was a very active member of the South African Children's Book Forum (WC) and served as branch secretary from 1997 until her retirement. She was a board member of the Umthombo we Africa Theatre Group since 2004, and she has always participated in community service activity programmes for the church. With her easy-going, kind and nurturing personality she made a significant impact on the lives of so many people and children, just by being there ... always ready to help.

Veronica officially retired on 31 July 2011 and all of us, library users and staff alike, who had the honour to share the journey with

her over the years should be humbly grateful for her dedicated service. We extend our best wishes for her retirement – her smiling presence will be dearly missed at the Milnerton Library!

**Mariétha Eysen**  
Principal Librarian, Milnerton Library

*You will surely leave a big gap, Veronica, but you can be proud of the legacy you leave behind. ED*

## BIBLIOTEKE

### LIBRARIES AMATHALA EENCWADI



▲ Skrywer Ingrid Vander Veken met die Nederlandse kopie van **Papawers** en die Afrikaanse vertaling van **Papawers** deur Christine Barkhuizen le Roux tydens Barrydale Leeskring se jaarlikse afsluitingsfunksie



▲ Gebruikers geniet die rekenaars wat onlangs in Veldrif Biblioteek in gebruik geneem is



▲ **Somerset West Library** held an interesting library orientation for Grade 1-3 learners from Tereos School. In August the Share Literacy School presented a library evening with 66 adult learners attending

**Talita de Klerk**  
Principal Librarian, Somerset West Library

### Villiersdorp Library is humming

During August **Villiersdorp Library** was a beehive of activity. Staff and users celebrated the importance of Woman's Day with the town manager of Villiersdorp, Patrick Don as guest speaker. One of the projects was a Recycling Pageant during which Mr and Mrs Recycling were chosen.

Learners from Villiersdorp Secondary School became goodwill ambassadors and spokespersons in promoting environmental issues and to fulfill the ideas of 'Beauties for a cause'.

Library staff also made users aware of the importance of traffic safety and held a demonstration in one of the streets of Villiersdorp.

**Lynn de Beer**  
Librarian, Villiersdorp Library

### Esselen Biblioteek vier Mandeladag

Vir die 67 minute op Mandeladag is bejaardes in die **Esselen Biblioteek** op tee en koek getraakteer. Personeel van Maatskaplike

Dienste het bejaardes kom toespreek oor hul regte en die nuwe Wet op Bejaardes. 'n Poppekasvertonning is gebruik om die boodskap oor te dra.



**Mariska Bailey**  
Bibliotekaris, Esselen Biblioteek

### Reading competition in Melton Rose

A successful reading competition held in July in which five schools took part was recently held at Melton Rose Library.

The target group was Grade 7 learners as learners at this level's language and concentration skills are well developed. Afrikaans and English were concentrated on.

Learners were expected to read a part of a book or article to the best of their ability. It was unprepared reading and learners were tested on comprehension, spelling, presentation and speed.

Each school had to enter learners per language and a total of 20 learners took part. Judges were from the various library services: Lalie Le Roux, District Manager of the District 6 libraries; Nicolaas De Bruin, Delft Library; Elize Du Plessis, Strand Library; and Glen Etson from Macassar Library. Several speakers encouraged the learners and educators to read more and Sally Witbooi, a lecturer from the University of

Western Cape spoke about the importance of reading. Eleanore Pietersen did the thank you speech.

Two winners were chosen (one in the Afrikaans and one in the English category). They received prizes such as goody bags, USB memory sticks, books and stationery. Framed certificates were donated by sponsors.

Each of the twenty entrants received a book and a reading certificate. The two winning schools also received a certificate.

The huge success of the reading competition has been the highlight of the year.

**Jenefe Abrahams**  
Librarian, Melton Rose Library

## MISCELLANY

### ALLERLEI IINCWADI EZAHLUKENEYO

#### Eden Drama Festival kicks off

Drama in the Eden Region has been utilised as a vehicle for social upliftment over the past years and through these community programmes fantastic performers such as Christo Davids were produced.

Two years after a drama competition was initiated on the West Coast, it resulted in four groups receiving the opportunity to perform at the Suidoosterfees. This concept became the basis of the Eden Drama Festival. After successful partnering with the Baxter's Zabalaza Festival committee an agreement was reached that the winning group would be afforded an opportunity to perform at next year's Zabalaza Festival.



▲ Happy participants at the Creative Drama workshop

In June 2011 the first phase of the programme was implemented by hosting a script writing workshop with all the groups that registered for the competition. 19 participants between the ages of 15-25 took part in the weekend event at the cultural facility at Schoemanspoort in Oudtshoorn.

The theme of the workshop was *Creative Drama* and participants were skilled in creating works different to what they were accustomed to. The basic elements/skills in scriptwriting were transferred to participants as well as the requirements needed for the Zabalaza Festival.

The workshop concluded with participants presenting a synopsis of their proposed plays in different genres such as horror, science fiction, suspense, action and even adventure. Participants showed great initiative in creating works. The Eden Drama Festival Showcases kicked off on 20 August in George.

**Moenieel Jacobs**  
Principal Cultural Officer, Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport

#### Honouring women!

The month of August saw women being given special recognition by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS) in the Western Cape. DCAS mounted a campaign, *Women of Strength*, that started at the beginning of August 2011 with an open invitation to all employees (male and female) to submit 250 words on the empowerment journey of a woman in their lives. Alternatively they could submit their favorite e-mail or quotation. One of the two winning stories (see page 6) was written by Ethney Waters, a regional librarian from the Provincial Library Service.

The story entries were given to a group of staff members drawn from the various departments: Henry Paulse (Sport); Szerena Knapp (Library Service); Nomonde Mantambo (Language); Elzana Brand (Museums); Lorrell Hutton (Heritage); Simon Williams (Monitoring & Evaluation); and Linda Jacobs (Ministry). No names were attached to the stories and the ten best stories had to be chosen. Of the ten winners the first two chosen received exactly the same mark.

The judging panel consisted of Liezl Jansen (Service Delivery Improvement Unit); Anneri Pruis (Communications); Lizahn Claasen (Arts and Culture); and Carol Situma (Communications).

The ten finalists received prizes sponsored by Protea Hotels and Life Day Spa and were announced by Mr Brent Walters, head of the department, at a function on 26 August 2011.

A lovely touch was that all the women who attended received a handmade *tussie-mussie*, a unique combination of herbs arranged in a certain pattern that was originally used to dispel illnesses from a room - a practice that became very popular during the Victorian era.

During the prize-giving ceremony Dr Ivan Meyer, Minister: Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, congratulated women on their role in the department and was most encouraging in his remarks. 'I happen to know the turbulent times this Department has experienced the last ten years. Throughout these times, I have also seen how women in this department kept the ship in steady waters, under control in most difficult times... women were instrumental in communicating the message of this department - a message of social inclusion, a message of hope or "ithemba" in isiXhosa, or "Hoop" in Afrikaans. ... women are driving the agenda for change in this Department. This Department needs a soft heart - because we work with people and a broken past. We also need people with a sharp brain to think through the complex governmental jungle. Women have both a soft heart and a sharp brain.'

The aim of this initiative is not only to award women for being special but forms part of all the departmental heads' action plans to promote women's empowerment and gender equality in the public service workplace. These plans entail the following eight principles, namely transformation for non-sexism; establishing a policy environment; meeting equity targets; creating an enabling environment; gender mainstreaming; empowerment; providing adequate resources; and accountability, monitoring and evaluation.

**We salute women!**

## ON WRITING

### SKRYFGEDAGTES EZABABHALI

#### Tapping experience to break the mould: use the correct tools

Writers may write for many reasons, but all writers want two things: recognition, and to be read by as many readers as possible.

The question is, and always will be, how to achieve this. There are writing courses which are never useless – even if one only makes friends with like-minded people it is worth the trouble and expense. And there are books (or manuals) on the subject which also have their uses. At some stage however, they all seem to merge into a continuous blah-blah-blah. But, there is always an exception (hopefully more) to prove the rule – like **The breakout novelist** by Donald Maass. Even the physical format is different – it really does look like a manual. And Maass calls it a 'toolbox'.

The main point Maass wants to make is that even established writers need reminding what works and what mannerisms and mindsets should be avoided. He reminds the reader every so often that he knows his stuff; how many years he has been a literary agent (and author) and how many times he has seen certain behavioural traits of writers. This book is in part a comparative study of many authors – their work and their ways, but it is also much more. The reader will recognise herself or himself in these sketches, which is the wake-up call Maass aims for. He deals with basic methods (for both novices and those who have forgotten how they made it into the light, which can be blinding, so to speak) – how to become a true 'breakout novelist', as well as how to manage one's career as a breakout novelist. Many snap under the strain. To become a winner is difficult, but to remain one is even harder.

Maass says that in his experience the really good authors 'don't go it alone'. They have sounding boards, agents, editors and key readers to support them. 'They are students of the craft. They read, review, teach, mentor,

#### HOW TO MAKE A TUSSIE-MUSSIE

A specific flower, for example, a rose is used, which then forms the centrepiece for a variety of herbs that are folded in layers around the rose.

The herbs are specifically selected for their symbolic value: rosemary is associated with luck and sage is associated with loyalty.

Currently fragrances and colours are more important than the symbolic value.

To make a *tussie-mussie* one starts with a rose in the middle and then add the rest, working with uneven numbers, for example three French lavender flowers that symbolise beauty, love and loyalty, shaped around the rose. For the next layer lemon verbena is used. It is followed by basil with cloves that is a symbol of courage, audacity and good health – it is also known as the good luck herb.

For the celebration of Women's Day feverfew was used as the last layer. It alleviates many female ailments and nature's sense of humour also plays a role – it soothes away migraine. In Afrikaans it is known as *moederkruid*.

Any herb can in fact be used for the outer layer: sage has a strong association with antibiotics and mint and is associated with warm feelings.

The *tussie-mussie* is completed with myrrh and any indigenous greenery, such as our South African malva pelargonium that releases a lemon/rose fragrance tied together with an elastic band.

When a *tussie-mussie* is regularly watered, it will remain fresh for at least a month. When it starts to dry out, it should be hung upside down, and will still keep its fragrance for months.

Thanks for above information go to Tania le Roux and Maggie Afrika of the Bien Donné Manor House, one of DCAS' cultural centres.

#### WOMEN OF STRENGTH

I remember the place of my birth - vast and rugged.

... I remember the shades of purple, white, and bright orange hailing the start of spring in the heart of Namaqualand ...

It is a world

so harsh and rugged - but yet filled with so much beauty ...

I remember the sights and sounds of the close-knit mining community ...

I remember the protection and love of family ...

But then I moved away ... seasons gone by ...

and I learned about the complexities of life ...

I then only really saw life for what it was ... beautiful yet painful at times ...

And in the beginning I felt like the Namaqua Daisy ... fragile against the gush of the mighty August wind ...

But as the seasons passed ... and trials and tribulations came over my path ...

I realised my own true strength ...

I realised that we sometimes underestimate our own strength ...

I realized that there lies so much power within us ...

We can overcome ...

We just need to keep on nurturing ourselves ...

We need to stand up for what we believe in ...

Be courageous and bold ...

We need to keep on pushing even if the odds are against us ...

For it is only then that we discover our true power ...

Ethney Waters



volunteer, and stay open.' Writers who do all that will also have seen this advice many times, and do all those things anyway. Or ... they are aware of the advice, but they do not always stay with the programme – that's why some are known as 'one day wonders'. Or they disappear after a few years. It would be these people who should read this book and keep it handy.

Maass names the basics, like 'story is conflict', and 'a good novel is built of scenes'. He highlights well-rounded characters and good planning, and emphasises that a great novel is about creating new worlds for readers to lose themselves in. Harry Potter, **Lord of the Rings**, **The Chronicles of Narnia** ... are examples of complete new worlds, and about what happens with the characters. Maass then discusses key points of such successes and explains that such novels are written 'from an author's passionate need to make you understand'. And this is something many writers forget: there must be a good reason for writing a novel, it is not just about rambling through exotic scenes with the author hoping that the reader will realise what's going on, what the point is, before some climax is reached.

According to Maass the experienced novelist is someone who 'can make all that vivid stuff as vivid to readers as it is in the writer's mind'. Indeed, he goes on to explain what makes a certain novel so popular that it breaks out of the mould (especially genre novels like vampire stories) – 'what makes readers shiver?' – not out of fear, but in anticipation. The basics must always be there – 'plausibility, inherent conflict, originality and gut emotional appeal', but fresh angles make novels stand out from the madding crowd, from the virtual avalanche of new novels constantly on the market. Although human nature may never change, our way of looking at it will, says Maass.

This 'toolbox' of 346 pages contains a mass of information and deserves more attention in this column. Which will happen in due course. In the meantime we need to write a bit. As the politicians say: 'I know I do, how about you?'

(**The breakout novelist** was published by Writer's Digest Books in 2010.)

*Dr Francois Verster*  
Correspondent



## Kaapse Bibliotekaris 40 JAAR GELEDE ...

Stefan Wehmeyer Adjunkdirekteur: Streke

- ▶▶ Die **KB** publiseer 'n onderhoud met die skryfster Audrey Blignault. Sy vertel prosaies: 'Ek is op Bredasdorp gebore. Dit is natuurlik 'n Overbergse dorp – die suidelikste dorp in die land; 15 myl van die see af sodat ek met die see grootgeword het. Van ons huis af kon jy die wit sandkoppe teen die blou sien en dit het altyd vir my 'n groot bekoring ingehou.'
- ▶▶ Apartheid and Cape Town libraries. Noreen Harris wrote: 'From 1952 until 1967 with the introduction of the Group Areas Act and the Separate Amenities Act, Cape Town's Coloured readers were able to patronise any of the city's libraries. In addition, there were services at Bloemhof, Hyman Lieberman (District 6), Kensington, Janet Bourhill (Claremont), Steenberg, Lansdowne, Athlone, Gleemoor, Bridgetown, Kewtown. A mobile service commenced in 1953.' In 1969 a so-called City Park library was opened. Harris further wrote: 'It houses a large fiction and non-fiction collection, an art section, a children's section and a limited reference section. For wider informational needs and also for gramophone records its patrons still use the Central Library.'
- ▶▶ Hoekom so min Afrikaanse boeke? Die **KB** berig: 'Daar is ongeveer twee miljoen Afrikaanse lesers in Suid-Afrika. Uit die twee miljoen sal hoogstens 'n paar duisend 'n bepaalde titel aankoop. Die ander leen die boek by hulle plaaslike biblioteek. Dit beteken dat die oplaag van 'n boek gewoonlik baie klein is in vergelyking met die van Engelse boeke.'
- ▶▶ Iets nuut van Bellville Biblioteek: 'Daardie nuttige resepte, formules en insiggewende illustrasies verdwyn uit die duur boeke. Hulle wil hierdie wanpraktyk graag aan bande lê. Daarom is 'n AB Dick-fotokopieermasjien in gebruik geneem. Leners kan nou gerus 'n foto-afdruk laat maak van daardie interessante bladsy en die boeke vir talle lesers ongeskonde laat bly.'
- ▶▶ Cape Town City Libraries opened two libraries in one week. Camps Bay Library opened on 3 May 1971 and Vredehoek Library followed on 6 May. The libraries were built at a cost of R72,000 and R56,700 respectively.