

# Public park disturbances cause annoyance

Justin Upton and Laurie Smith

THERE is growing concern among residents about the abuse of public parks facilities in the City.

The consensus is that children have no safe place to play and living next to a public park in the Empangeni area especially is a stressful affair.

'Every weekend we have to watch - and listen to - adults drinking in the park on Empangeni's Durnford Road.'

'This needs to be policed and fines handed out,' said one resident who does not want to be named as she has been victimised in the past.

'When I politely asked one group of partying people to turn down their loud music as I had children sleeping, they became verbally abusive and hurled bottles onto my property.'

She said the next morning there were pieces of broken glass, used condoms and litter strewn along the grass.

Other complaints received regularly at the Zululand Observer offices include loud music playing at all hours of the day and night, vandalism, drinking in public and vehicles driving in the park - which is strictly prohibited according to signposts.

According to a municipal

spokesperson, park facilities are maintained by the Environmental Section on a five- to eight-week cycle subject to availability of resources.

## Bylaws

Municipal bylaws clearly state that no person may bring into a public park a vehicle of any kind, and that the use of alcohol, firearms, airguns, air-pistols, fireworks, slingshots or catapults are forbidden.

The playing of musical instruments, partying, shouting, arguing, singing, or the use of loudspeakers or similar equipment is also not permitted.

People who fail to comply 'shall be



Residents are urged to use the publicised telephone number to report abuse of public parks

guilty of an offence and liable, upon conviction, to a fine or imprisonment, or both,' said the spokesperson.

According to Captain Mdlalose of

the SAP, anyone found breaking the bylaws in public parks 'will be arrested and detained until admission of guilt is paid or the culprit appears in court.'

# Teacher saves pupil's life

Justin Upton

WHILE travelling home in a bus after the first day of school this term, Thuthukani sign language instructor Mphumi Ntuli's day took an unexpected turn.

Seated next to a pupil who was leaning against the bus window, she was called upon to save his life when the window gave way and he fell through.

Before the youngster could hit the road in the path of the deadly turning wheels, she reacted swiftly by grabbing his ankles and keeping him out of harm's way until the bus could be stopped.

In the process Ntuli sustained minor injuries and was treated at Ngwelezana Hospital, while the



Sign language instructor Mphumi Ntuli was honoured by Thuthukani School Principal, Marthie Combrinck for her brave deed

child escaped with no injuries and was happily reunited with his family.

Everyone at Thuthukani Special School applauded Ntuli for her bravery.

# Derailment impacts coal export

Conelia Harry

LAST week's Transnet coal line derailment will have a negative impact on Richards Bay Coal Terminal's (RBCT) shipping programme and January exports.

RBCT spokesperson, Zama Luthuli, says while RBCT started picking up on low stock levels at the beginning of January, the derailment will now result in further stock decline.

The coal line was closed until mid-

week after 40 coal wagons derailed near Ulundi the previous weekend.

The incident occurred between Intshamanzi and Enqolothi.

This resulted in 34 coal delivery loads being postponed. The cause of the derailment is still unknown.

# Hijacking victim hanging on

Conelia Harry

A RICHARDS Bay man is still recovering from serious burn wounds in a Durban hospital after two hijackers doused his vehicle in petrol and set it alight while he was still inside.

Elijah Dlamini is still receiving medical care after he sustained second degree burns to his back, hands, legs and face.

According to his colleague and close friend, Rikesh Maraj, Dlamini's 'act of kindness' two weeks ago turned into a nightmare.

'He was travelling on the old road and stopped to assist two men who were carrying a five litre container of petrol.'

'The 'Good Samaritan' that he is, he offered to give the men a lift as they said their vehicle had broken down a few kilometres away.'

'Once they got into the vehicle, it is believed one of the men pulled out a firearm and they ordered him to jump out of the moving vehicle.'

'When he refused, the hijackers got aggressive and made him drive to a secluded area, doused the car in petrol and set it alight.'

'Dlamini managed to jump out the vehicle which was engulfed in flames and walked to the nearest petrol station in Mandeni where he called me,' said Maraj.

## Efficient

As Maraj was in Johannesburg at the time, he called the Mounties Ambulance who

rushed to the scene within minutes.

'The Mounties team were excellent and attended to Dlamini and transported him to the Durban hospital.'

'They continued to contact me for feedback on his condition.'

According to Maraj, Dlamini is recovering well, but will have to undergo skin grafting and receive counselling to assist him in coming to terms with his traumatic experience.

'He is a well-respected member of the community and it is sad that he had to endure such an ordeal.'

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