

Highway Hospice, Durban North

VOICES FOR HOSPICE

The National event for World Hospice & Palliative Care Day 2011 was held at Highway Hospice in Umgeni Park, Durban North. HPCA and Highway Hospice celebrated World Hospice Palliative Care Day and “Voices for Hospice” at a Musical Concert on the 8th October 2011 at the Hellenic Centre.

The Durban Men’s Choir set the tone for the evening by singing “Make me a Channel of Your Peace”. This powerful Hymn asks that:

“Where there is hatred, let me bring love.....

Where there’s despair in life, let me bring hope,

Where there is darkness, only light,

And where there’s sadness, ever joy.....

To console, understand and

To love with all my soul.....”

Despite having been in hospital for weeks prior to the event, Mhlonishwa Dlamini flew in to Durban from Cape Town especially for the event. Mhlonishwa grew up in KwaMashu just north of Durban and earns his living as an opera singer and entertainer.

Having studied and performed in various parts of the world his performance was outstanding. Mlonishwa chose to sing modern songs and not opera including “My Way” and “O Solemio”

Merwyn Pollitt gave an inspiring account of how, first his friend and then his wife, were cared for by Highway Hospice.

Margie Smith, CEO of TAFTA, spoke about the close partnership between Highway Hospice and TAFTA that has existed for decades. She said that introducing Palliative Care into their frail care home “TAFTA on the Ridge” had certainly improved the care offered to the elderly. Every staff member had been required to attend the Palliative Care training from CEO level down. This has made a big difference to everyone throughout the home.

Musa Njoko runs her own Music and Entertainment Productions Company. As a successful record label they aim to develop music talent within the community.

Musa spoke about her HIV positive status and the ups and downs of the illness. Having been diagnosed over 17 years ago she lives a healthy and very productive life style. She captivated the audience and had us listening intently, laughing and thinking.

It did not take her long to have the audience up and dancing in the aisles! This included the other singers and choirs! Everyone was enjoying the evening!

We were particularly proud when the Durban Serenade Choral Society took their turn to entertain the audience. Mpume Khuluse works at Highway Hospice, so we felt that they are part of “Our” family! This remarkable choir hails from Umlazi the second largest township in South Africa after Soweto. Many of them are unemployed and poor but they are famous! They are called on to sing at state occasions, international summits, weddings, births, funerals etc.

They have toured the UK, sung with Paul McCartney and in Germany and will sing anything from traditional Zulu songs to Mendelssohn and Mozart.

Finally all the choirs sang the “Hallelujah Chorus”. This was a show stopper! The choirs had never ever sung together before but you would never have known this. It was magnificent!

It left us, the audience, speechless - the sheer beauty of it.

We eagerly await the next performance to celebrate “Voices for Hospice”.



DCS-Pietermaritzburg

On the 13 October 2011, the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) celebrated World Hospice & Palliative Care Day at the Pietermaritzburg Medium Correctional Centre. This event was attended by 42 Correctional Centres in the region which included stakeholders from the DCS Head Office, Edendale Technical School, Edendale & Northdale College of Nursing, Hospice Volunteer Citizens, Families of offenders & Ukhozi and Ikhwezi FM.

A total of 43 offenders were trained on Palliative Care for Home Based Care and received certificates which were handed over by the HPCA CEO, Liz Gwyther and the KZN Regional Commissioner. Having trained offenders will add value in providing appropriate health care services under the supervision of a professional nurse.

The KZN Region has formally introduced Palliative Care in three Correctional Centres, i.e. Durban Female, Durban Medium B and Pietermaritzburg Med B. Kokstad, Waterval and Qalakabusha Correctional Centres are next in the line to formally start palliative care.

DCS Head Office has also officially committed itself in signing a Service Level Agreement at a National level after seeing the progress made in the KZN region. Inmates, officials and their next of kin are fully supportive of this programme .



The "happy boys" choir



The DCS choir



The Edendale choir



Offenders who completed Palliative Care training



Dr. Liz Gwyther and KZN commissioner handing out certificates



The "shining stars" choir