

# WHITE MAN WITH 'UBUNTU'



*The Gert Sibande FET College is abuzz with activity as matriculants endure the scorching heat of the sun and scramble to secure places at the Gert Sibande College. It is a place where their thirst for engineering or accounting tertiary qualifications can be quenched. We are met at the gate by strict security personnel who sternly but warmly welcome and search every vehicle as well record every person entering the premises.*

**Story by Khethani Sibanda**

The college that boasts of an 82% pass rate in the last year examinations has put in place a contingency measure to avoid students stampeding each other to death in search of education. Mr. Jansen informs us that all College staff members have been deployed to participate in the mammoth task of processing the early and late registration of applications which amount to about 3000 as calculated from the placement tests applicants took at the College. The college expects to enrol about 1250 of these applicants. The Students' Representative Council has also been roped in to assist. All this, explains Mr. Jansen, helps them to provide an excellent, speedy and supportive service to the applicants. The College is planning on a bridging course to cater for students who, despite passing their matric, are not entirely ready for tertiary education. This is envisaged to lower the rate of drop outs.

As we make our way out of his office, we meet disappointed students who have either failed to secure a desired bursary that covers accommodation and transport or could not raise the required R200 registration fee. As they explain their plight to us, we request to follow them as they seek further clarification and assistance.

We are met by the SRC representative who listens attentively to the applicants and swiftly takes them to a lecturer

The reception is attended by young graduates who are lucky to have been offered employment at the very same institution that qualified them. Upon introducing ourselves and our credentials accredited, we are swiftly ushered into the Student Support Office. Mr Wessel Jansen is a warm hearted man on crutches and a very busy man. As he spares us his time, he constantly attends to the ringing telephone and a long queue of eager students awaits his attention.



Photos by Milton Malatse  
G.S.C. Students queue for registrations

Photos by Milton Malatse  
Students enquiring about registrations

who has been assigned to screen applications for bursaries. The lady issues them application forms for a bursary to cover their accommodation and transport costs. After consultation with senior team members and a couple of phone calls the applicants are told they do qualify for the 100% costs covered bursary and they will be informed in due course of the results of their application. We leave them elated to have been assisted.

Outside the administration block is the longest queue of aspiring students making their late registration applications. They are interviewed first and then sent to write a placement test. After which they are expected to come

back the next day where their results are used in career guidance and counselling session and they are advised of which course they qualify for.

They then proceed to make an application for financial aid. At a distance from this long queue is a grouping of tired and anxious adults who cannot be applicants. These are parents who have decided to play an active role and help bring their children to the College. The eager parents have sacrificed time and resources to make this trip possible for the younger generation.

They advise these applicants to constantly remember the poverty in their homes, the morals and

values they have been raised by in order to stay focussed on their educational goals and stay away from alcohol and substance abuse. The future and success of their families now rests on these youngsters and they are only proud to witness for themselves a journey that will surely change the lives of their children.

Our tour is wrapped up satisfied that the College has done well in going into the communities to advertise and invite matric students to apply. The turnout is massive and the gender of the applicants is balanced. The registration is speedy, efficient and very effective. We wish the students and College staff a successful academic year.

## HIV/AIDS HEALTH TALK



**Grace Phiri**

This article illustrates the stigma surrounding the HIV/AIDS scourge. Grace Phiri is an experienced HIV/AIDS counsellor, educator and researcher tackling any topic regarding this subject. She was diagnosed with HIV 27 year ago and was used for Naverapine tests before it was dispensed to patients. In this edition, Grace speaks to Noma Sithole.

Noma: I am 34 years of age, married and with two children. I married my first and only boyfriend 12 years ago. In 2008

I tested HIV positive but my husband is still negative. I know that I am a faithful wife and a good mother too. But being HIV positive has brought a lot of stress in our marriage. My question to you is: should I leave him and move on with my HIV positive life?

GP: No! Never try to run away from problems. Try to solve half the problems you encounter in life.

Noma: Ever since my HIV positive result, my husband has never had sex with me. He still loves me, cares about us too; but he refuses to have sex with me. Do you think that he has an affair?

GP: Maybe not. Maybe he is just afraid of contracting the virus in the event that the condom bursts during intercourse. Abstinence is the best way to living a healthy life with HIV. If you cannot help it, then you will need to talk to him. You may need a marriage counsellor to mediate between the two of you.

Noma: How come I am positive

and he is negative yet I have never known any another man sexually?

GP: This is very much common amongst partners. However, there are many other ways of contracting the HIV virus. Think about blood transfusion. It is also very much possible that your husband is the one who brought the virus to you. One in hundred people is just a carrier. You may have contracted it whilst he was still on a window period. In the process, his immune system may have completely rejected the virus but after you had already been infected. A person on a window period is highly infectious. It all depends on the immune system at that point to accept the virus or to reject it. This is very complicated but it does happen to a few unfortunate people. And again do not dwell on how you got it, rather move forward. Grace Phiri is one of the first female journalists to go public about her HIV+ status. She is an Aids activist, a counselor, a columnist, a writer and a community builder.

## A DATE WITH GOD

By Khethani Sibanda;

Darkness is of the devil, light is of God. The light overshadows darkness. In your life, darkness manifests in many ways. It could be a generational curse or a curse invoked against you by your enemies. These curses can cause you to lose your job, lose a husband or wife, have a lot of bad luck around your life, make your life unhappy and sometimes even cause you death. This can be different if you realize that Jesus Christ is greater than this darkness.

Jesus is the light of the world. In Him is no darkness and his light overcomes the darkness and the darkness cannot contain His light.

In John 8 verse 12 Jesus said, "...I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." Jesus who knew no sin has already carried all our curses and suffered all the pain and misery on our behalf. That is why Jesus says in Matthew 11 verse 28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." He invites you to open your heart so that He can come into your life bringing His light to remove all the darkness that makes you unhappy. Jesus lifts you up and fights your battles for you. Jesus builds you up and gives you victory.



Therefore, in your day of trouble call upon the name of the Lord, he will save you and you will glorify him as he has promised in Psalm 50 verse 15. Remember in Christ, you are the head not the tail, you are above not below, you are blessed not cursed, you are more than a conqueror not a failure and that greater is He who is in you than the devil who is in the world. Allow Jesus to lift your head up and light your life brightly then all things will be well in your life. Let His Light shine in your life, in your marriage, in your family, at your school or workplace and make Jesus your Lord and Savior.

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