

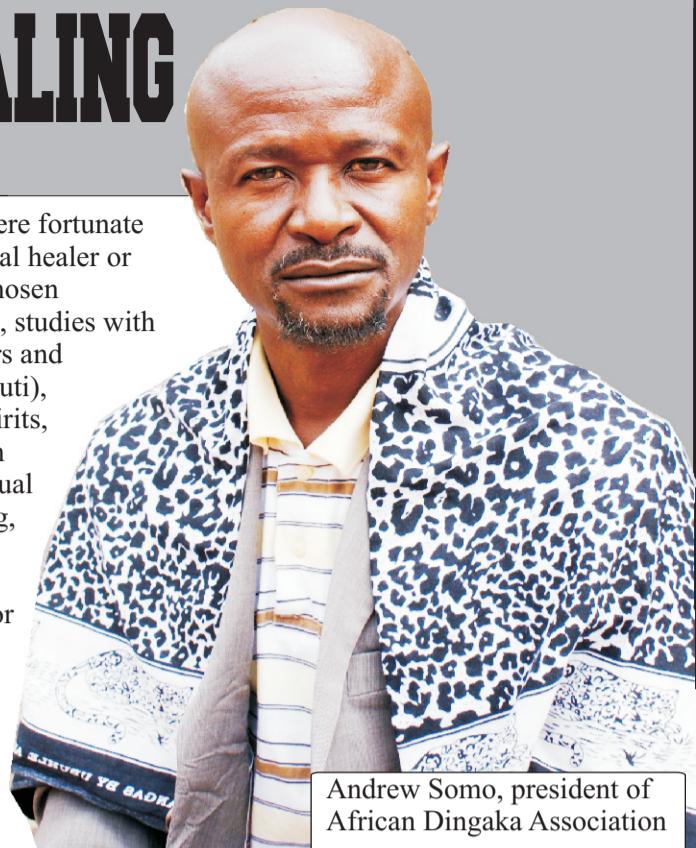
# SOUTH AFRICAN TRADITIONAL HEALING

WITH ANDREW SOMO

TRADITIONAL healers are practitioners of traditional African medicine in Southern Africa. They fulfill different social and political roles in the community, including divination, healing physical, emotional and spiritual illnesses, directing birth or death rituals, finding lost cattle, protecting homes and businesses. So in Mzansi, most people prefer to consult with sangoma and nyanga's to get the ancestral help. But not all of the sangomas and nyanga's are real; there are those who are Bogus, their intention is just to rob the desperate and troubled people. In this edition we introduce you (reader) to the ancestral world and to know some of the effects of traditional South African healing and twasa training with the aim of protecting the practice of traditional healing. A sangoma is an African traditional healer who merges with her ancestors for the purpose of healing. Not just anyone within a community can take the role of traditional healers. This unique gift or the art of becoming a traditional healer is passed on from generation to generation. The role of traditional healers

is taken extremely seriously, by those whom were fortunate enough to have inherited the power of traditional healer or spiritual healer. It is a spiritual calling, not a chosen profession. A trainee sangoma, called a thwasa, studies with a mentor for approximately a year or two years and must learn how to prepare herbal medicines (muti), how to interpret dreams, how to incorporate spirits, how to diagnose illness through divination with bones, and how to heal both physical and spiritual illness. Through the ritual use of muti, steaming, purification, dreaming, and dancing in a trance-like state to drumming, the initiate becomes bound to her ancestors who have chosen her for this work. It is the mentor's responsibility to work with the thwasa's ancestors, alleviating any problems that are encountered.

*In the next edition we will be discussing the does and don't of a twasa student during the twasa period.*



Andrew Somo, president of African Dingaka Association



One of the Elegant fuel trucks

## ELEGANT FUELS OPENS FORECORT IN PRETORIA WEST

By SIPHO KEKANA

ELEGANT Fuels, part of the Elegant Group, has opened its first forecourt in Gauteng Province. The fuel station, in Pretoria West, forms part of the group's expansion plan aimed at increasing its market share countrywide. The new Elegant station has opened on the corner of Staal and Quagga Roads in Pretoria West. According to Apaphia Lefatle, Account Executive of Flow Communications, when larger groups moved away from rural areas and smaller towns, Elegant Fuels identified an opportunity to expand and fill these supply gaps. Although their main focus has been on Limpopo Province, there are plans to branch out in other provinces. "Elegant's own branded service stations form part of their supply network, and they also supply fuel to independent filling stations. The company's fuel throughput has grown year on year. Their current annual volume is around 240-million litres of fuel, which is supplied by major oil companies. Although Elegant has become one of the largest independent fuel providers in the country, their growth has not detracted from their dedication to reliable, personal service. The Elegant brand offers a fresh alternative to those currently existing in the market," he said. He concluded by saying that the brand is proudly South African and displays a genuine commitment to making the country a better place for all. Further expansion plans for the Western Cape and North West Province are also on the cards.

## LEARNERS CELEBRATE GIFTS AS HOSPITAL TURNS 53

By SIPHO KEKANA

THE arrival of Brits Hospital's nursing component at Mogale High School in Bapong Village, outside Brits was a breath of fresh air for both the school specifically the 53 identified learners from disadvantaged family backgrounds. The visit was part of the hospital celebrating its 53 years birthday and moreover cementing its goal to plough back to its communities. The 53 identified needy learners were given toiletries which were donated by the hospital's nurses across the board. A toiletry package comprised of sanitary towels, tooth paste, tooth brush, roll on, bath soap and washing rag. Explaining the

reason behind this creative initiative, the Nursing Services Manager, Dineo Moromane said "As the nursing component, we collectively resolved to partner with our sister department of Education by identifying learners from poor background across Madibeng and give them toiletry packages. We want to show that there are those who care for them." Moromane further said that: "The Nursing Component's initiative of donating toiletries will not be the once off project but will take place over a period of 12 months and every month an identified school will benefit from this social responsibility project."

To add a cherry on top, Brits Hospital's nurses and clinical psychologist gave health education on topics such as personal hygiene, prevention of teenage pregnancy, overcoming peer pressure and bullying as well as information on career choices in the health sector. Mogale High School's Principal, Betty Makofane was moved by the giving gesture displayed by the hospital. She said: "This is a classic example of humanity and surely this is the beginning of a good partnership between our school and Brits Hospital."

The Brits Hospital's CEO Babe Mosuwe was adamant that this initiative is primarily important.

## MAKING SURE BABIES LIVE LONG!

By Xibanda Mavala

BEING pregnant is a very special time in any woman's life. They can't wait for their bouncing happy babies to be born. This is why MediClinic Legae Hospital organised a special pregnancy awareness day to make sure mums and their babies stay healthy and happy! Dr Sibusiso Kuzwayo, pediatrician from Legae hospital advised all pregnant women on how to take care of themselves as well as making sure that the foetus grows healthy in the womb of the mother. "50% of the women who falls pregnant happens under the influence of liquor," said Dr Kuzwayo. "If pregnant woman continues consuming alcohol during pregnancy the child will be exposed to high risk of fetal alcohol syndrome which leads to behavioural challenges caused by mental problems." predicted the Pediatrician. He encouraged pregnant women not to smoke as it can also affect the unborn child because it decreases required amount of oxygen to the placenta. "Stress during pregnancy is likely to cause miscarriage or stillborn baby. The first three months of pregnancy is



Some of the pregnant women who attended the pregnancy awareness week. (Inset) Dr Sibusiso Kuzwayo. Pics Xibanda Mavala

the most crucial development phase of the foetus where the expecting mother must control her diet for the wellbeing of the toddler." When explaining about the best diet for pregnant women, Dr Kuzwayo said: "Tolerable recommended menu for the best intensification of pregnant woman and developing babe amongst other meal is fresh food, vegetables, fruits, iron, and supplements. Complication during pregnancy can lead to the baby not to survive or unnatural delivery. A healthy mother must breast feed her child for minimum of six months to as long as you can, but she must never breast feed when she is ill. Before the child can be

feed with food, parents must at least allow the child to exist five months. "When the child is delivered parents must always be careful with what they say and do in the presence of their kids because they learn by seeing, hearing and usually copy habits from adults, everything parent does is always actively or passively teaching the child. Best lessons kids can learn from parents is to be their child's hero by working hard to provide, build kid's self esteem and support the babe's ego." He also said that parents must play a major role in educating their kids to abstain from relationships and sexual activities.