

Rustenburg Ratepayers alive and well

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barely the second week of the new year following the reopening of country's schools last week.

Undoubtedly the surprising attendance is indicative of widespread concern of Rustenburg ratepayers with regard to service delivery of the Rustenburg Municipality during recent years.

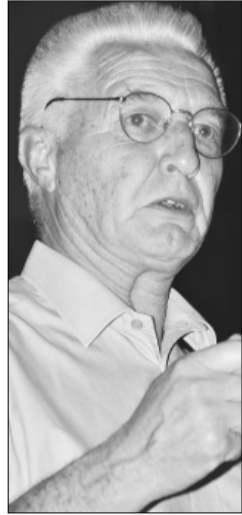
"But what is the immediate and primary task that lies ahead?", Rustenburg Herald wanted to know. "Well, I think from the outset we must strive to establish and maintain an open door policy between the Ratepayers Association and the Rustenburg Municipality - but please note, though we'd prefer to get along without unnecessary confrontation, the association will not hesitate to revert to the Court of Law in efforts to force the Rustenburg Municipality to acceptable levels of service delivery.

Surely, as a Class 2 or 3 municipality we are entitled to a high level of municipal service delivery - something that unfortunately seldom materialised during recent years. We furthermore want representation at Council level and also wish to have input in the Rustenburg Chamber of Commerce, the Rustenburg Association of Business or a similar organisation," Mr Schoeman said.

While the association's first meeting witnessed the formation of an interim management committee at Monday's meeting, not everyone was convinced by the quality and profile of leadership that the meeting came up with. "Rustenburg has many thoroughly experienced and skilled citizens in many respective fields which we would have liked

to see represented in the interim committee," more than one attendee admitted. But be that as it may, the remobilisation of the association is regarded as a good thing from which great challenges and achievements could result. Mr Jaap Kelder, Chairman of the Nasionale Belastingbetalersvereniging/National Taxpayers Union (Nabuntu) and Ms Carin Visser, Chairperson of the Sannieshof Ratepayers Association, were invited as guest speakers. Both have thrilled the audience with their respective battles, victories and needless to say, defeats.

"What about membership fees - are we



Mr Jaap Kelder, Chairman of the National Taxpayers Union.



Ms Carin Visser - Chairperson of the Sannieshof Ratepayers Association who featured in the news recently following the Sannieshof sewerage scandal.

guaranteed that the people's money will be safe?" Of course - that is primarily why the formation of an interim committee was imperative. The management obviously needs the support of knowledgeable people in the various departments. "Why is money an issue?" "Monday's meeting was not for free you know - the rent of the hall for the night cost us R1 500, a fellow member had to cover the travelling fees and accommodation of our two guest speakers. We are going to need money for administration, for audio-visual equipment, for notebooks and stationery for example. It is going to cost money to drive an organisation such as this.

Though some attendees were in a fighting spirit, "that is perhaps not the best way to go", another member of the interim committee told Rustenburg Herald. No, I think former President Nelson Mandela was an excellent example and role model. He has proved that

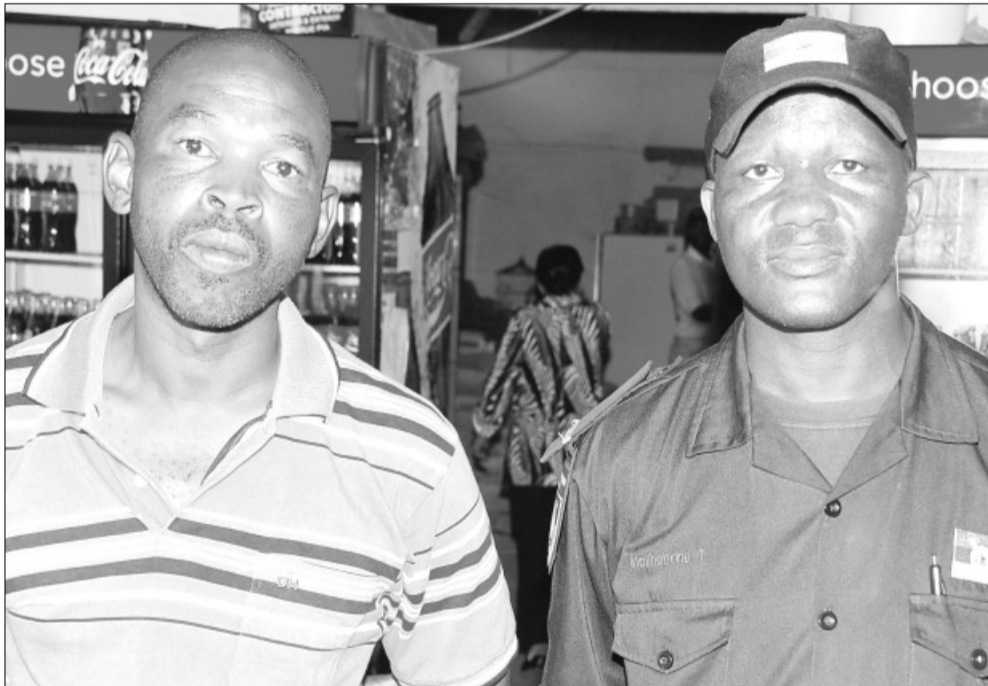
thorough consideration and a calm spirit was the best way to get things done, Mr Charlie Graham said.

"Why did you volunteer and what would you like to campaign for," we asked. "Well, I'd like to see a big difference in our streets and roads, in general driving conditions, in road markings, in once again ensuring visible street signs and clean, well-maintained and a neat appearance of our suburbs and our parks. We have such a beautiful city," Mr Graham concluded.

The first meeting of the interim committee was scheduled for next Thursday evening at 18:00. This meeting will see the shuffling of the respective portfolios and management positions. This will be followed by the second general meeting of the Rustenburg Ratepayers Association in February, Mr Schoeman concluded. Members or prospective members will once again be notified in Rustenburg Herald, he said.



Mr Johan Schoeman, Chairman of the Rustenburg Ratepayers Association, Ms Carin Visser - Chairperson of the Sannieshof Ratepayers Association, Mr Jaap Kelder - Chairman of the National Taxpayers Union and Mr Johan de Klerk - facilitator of the Rustenburg Ratepayers Association and designer of the association's two websites at Monday's meeting.



Members of the Royal Bafokeng Reaction Unit, Petrus Seabe (left) and Andries Motlhabane, who were instrumental in bringing two alleged burglary suspects to book recently.

Caught in the act

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do so and they were subsequently arrested on suspicion of possession of stolen property. They were taken to the Phokeng Police Station, where they were detained. Its rightful owner, who explained that all the stock items bear a secret marking, later positively identified the stolen items found at the house.

It was later discovered that two of the suspects, the one detained in the street and the one that managed to flee, were employed at the Bakharia Supermarket and Hardware store near the Bafokeng Plaza Shopping Centre.

The leader of the gang, who was at the house and the other one who was detained, are apparently brothers.

It is suspected that the three men, who are all Malawian citizens, gain entry to the business premises during the night and stole several thousands of rands worth of goods and building materials, which they were planning to sell.

The two men have appeared in court on Monday, January 4 and were not asked to plead. They were released on bail and will appear in court again soon.

According to the business owner, Mr Mahmood Bakharia, the suspect who is still at large, was in his employment for the past nine years and had become a trusted member of his staff over the years, where he was treated as a member of the family.

However, Mahmood told the Herald on Monday that the suspect recently started to show suspicious behaviour and he was already warned on a previous occasion when it became clear that he was trying to defraud the business.

Mahmood was full of praise for the members of the Royal Bafokeng Reaction Unit for their outstanding work in apprehending the suspects and preventing even further losses.

Abandoned baby found

CETANE - A three-day-old baby was found abandoned under a tree in a maize field in Centane, North West police said on Saturday.

Police spokesman captain Lingisile Magama said the baby was found early on Friday morning by a man who had gone to the field to collect his livestock.

'The baby was wrapped in a blanket and abandoned during the night,' he said.

The baby was taken in by social workers as the mother had not been traced yet.

Police were investigating a case of abandonment of a child. - Sapa.

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