



Lowveld & Escarpment Fire Protection Association Newsletter Issue 10 November 2016

## Greetings,



October's cooler, moist weather brought some welcome relief to the LEFPA teams, who were kept busy during August and September fighting some rather large fires. Everyone here is gratified to receive the many letters of thanks and commendation, proof that membership of LEFPA is one of the smartest decisions a landowner can make. Community support and involvement is also important to LEFPA and you can read about that this month too. Until next time.

### Contact Us LEFPA Nelspruit

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## LEFPA Assists Letaba Fire Protection Association

A ferocious fire near Tzaneen on Thursday 6th October proved to be more than Letaba FPA could manage. Letaba FPA Chairman Trevor Phillips contacted LEFPA to assist them with additional air support. One of LEFPA's contracted helicopters based at Graskop and piloted by Neil Mostert was despatched at noon, returning just before sunset the next day.

Approximately 1000ha of timber, grazing and avocado orchards were destroyed by the fire in the Mojaje and Deerpark area before the fire was suppressed.

LEFPA has received a wonderful letter from Trevor Phillips, emphasizing the importance of good neighbourly cooperation.

Dear Andre,

### Merensky Fire - 7th October 2016

*Just a short note to say thank you to you and your membership for being able to release the Huey to assist in our firefighting operations on Friday the 7th October 2016. It was indeed very beneficial to the containment of the fire as pilot Neil Mostert is a very capable pilot.*

*It is reassuring to know that we are able to knock on each other's doors in time of need.*

Regards

Trevor Phillips

Chairperson

Letaba Fire Protection Association

We've included the link to a news article about the inferno below. Fortunately, no residential property was damaged by the fire, which blazed intensely hot, making it particularly difficult for both the aerial and ground firefighting crews.



<http://maroelamedia.co.za/nuus/sa-nuus/video-en-fotos-verwoestende-brand-woed-steeds-buite-tzaneen/>

## Forest Fire in the Rooihoogte Area

The first week of October was a busy one for firefighters. A large fire broke out in the Rooihoogte area near Carolina on Thursday afternoon 6th October. Umpuluzi (Warburton) Fire Protection Association requested additional help from LEFPA, who responded by sending two AT802 Air Tractor bombers from the Nelspruit Air Base. Almost 1,000ha of forestry plantations were lost to the fire.

## White River and Densa Sawmill Fires



White River and Densa Sawmills are very thankful for their LEFPA membership. Recent strike action at the two mills locked management into the mills, preventing the management teams from fighting the fires in their plantations.



LEFPA sent aircraft and helicopters to the burning plantations and extinguished the fire. Carel Jacobsz from White River Sawmill wrote:

*Hi Corné*

*Please convey my utmost thanks (at the meeting) for LEFPA responding rapidly to the gum plantation fire on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2016. There were serious worries about it jumping to an adjacent very well established macadamia farm.*

*We, as management were “stuck” inside the sawmill. Striking workers at the fire even blockading the SAFIND manager for a while. Kobus eventually managed to sneak in and manage the operation from the ground on our behalf.*

*Nice to have you guys “up there”.*

*Regards, Carel Jacobsz.*

## September Statistics

Lowveld 14:00 Actual FDI						Rain (mm)
<b>Total</b>	7	75	63	8	0	45.4
<b>May</b>	2	23	6	0	0	23.5
<b>Jun</b>	2	15	13	0	0	6
<b>Jul</b>	2	15	13	1	0	8.5
<b>Aug</b>	0	10	18	3	0	2,4
<b>Sep</b>	1	12	13	4	0	5
<b>Oct</b>						
<b>Nov</b>						

Escarpment 14:00 Actual FDI						Rain (mm)
<b>Total</b>	5	83	57	7	0	34.6
<b>May</b>	0	27	4	0	0	23.5
<b>Jun</b>	1	17	10	1	0	6
<b>Jul</b>	3	17	10	1	0	8.5
<b>Aug</b>	0	10	19	2	0	2,4
<b>Sep</b>	1	12	14	3	0	4.7
<b>Oct</b>						
<b>Nov</b>						

## Above and Beyond



Stacey Hookins ► NELSPRUITERS

6 hrs · 📍

We would like to say a huge thank you to **Bianca Griesel** and Nelspruit Lodge for putting us up in a beautiful suite for the night and free of charge! It is so good to know there are such kind people in Nelspruit.

Although I can't say the same for the fire department who never came even after several phone calls and them assuring me they were on their way.

Thanks to the LEFPA who were burning near by, the house was saved, as were many other houses nearby. Thank you so much for Jackson and the team at the LEFPA!!!

LEFPA were very proud to read Stacey Hookins' post on the Nelspruiters Facebook page. Jackson Mabuza and his team were busy with vleiburns in town when Stacey approached them for help. She lived nearby and feared that backyard burning operations in the vicinity of her home were out of control.

Concerned about her house catching alight while waiting for the Fire Department to respond, Stacey asked Jackson for help. The LEFPA team responded immediately and extinguished the fire. Well done Jackson and team!

LEFPA would like to remind readers of the article in our August 2016 issue regarding safety and backyard burning.

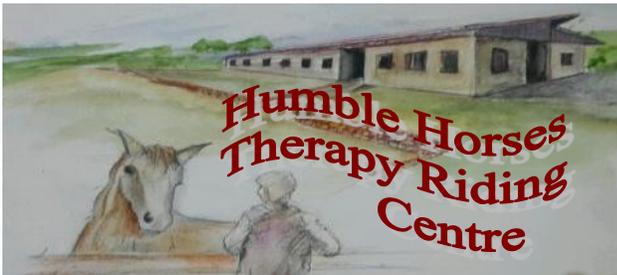
## LEFPA Don Bandanas in Support of the Sunflower Foundation

(L—R) Jackson Mabuza, Nomcebo Mlotywa, Corné Martin, Zanele Chiloane



## Dasha 3 in 1 Sponsorship and Support

Dasha, a Nelspruit school for disabled children, celebrated their 21st birthday recently and LEFPA was one of the sponsors of the Dasha 3 in 1 Day, hosted by Humble Horses Therapy Riding Centre. The day was a success and LEFPA is warmed by the letter received from Jane Merber.



Dear Andre & LEFPA,

On behalf of myself and Humble Horses Therapy Riding Centre and all at Dasha, I would really like to "Thank You" for your support for Dasha's 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Celebration and making our Dasha 3 in 1 Day the success it was. We could not have done it without your wonderful sponsorship and support.

Thank you for being part of the Team!

Best wishes and thank you again

Jane

## Activities for the Month - November

- Attend LEFPA meetings regularly.
- Check airstrips on a weekly basis.
- Distribute your standby rosters to all neighbours.
- Obtain FDI forecast on a daily basis from LEFPA
- Study weather systems and check forecasts on the internet.
- Perform daily and weekly checks of all equipment, using checklists.
- Perform checks to ensure readiness and quick reaction at all times.



### General Info:

- Basic Firefighting Training is available to LEFPA members. Interested parties can contact the LEFPA office.
- All membership fees have been invoiced. If you have not yet received your invoice please contact Corné at the LEFPA office.
- FDI weather emails and SMSs are available to LEFPA members, contact Corné for more information.