



Greetings,



We hope you have enjoyed a peaceful Festive Season and are refreshed and ready for 2017. This month we feature a round up of the flurry of events which filled the final weeks of 2016 and have added an extra page for the 2017 LEFPA calendar. Our opening article is, perhaps, a sad way to begin however it shows yet again the broad range of tasks assigned to LEFPA. None of this would be possible without the loyal support of our members. Thank you for being proudly LEFPA. Until next time.

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LEFPA Community Assistance - Rhino Poaching

During a police sting operation in the Ngodwana Valley on Friday November 18th four suspects and two SAPS members in an SAPS vehicle were found in possession of a rhino horn and a hunting rifle. They were arrested and a search for the poached rhino commenced.

Despite combing the area intensively over the weekend, no trace of the animal was found. On Monday morning LEFPA received a call from the Waterval Boven SAPS station Commander, Captain Louw, requesting LEFPA's help to find the rhino.

LEFPA activated the Waterval Boven firefighting crew for duty with community assistance. Crew Leader Shipo took charge of the team who were joined by Base Manager Jackson Mabuza and Dispatcher Robert Rodgers from Nelspruit.



Captain Louw coordinated the search which moved slowly on foot through difficult terrain and covered an area in excess of seven square kilometres. Late on Monday afternoon the well hidden carcass was discovered in a ravine. SAPS secured the scene while the forensic unit carried out their investigation.

The land owner and SAPS thanked LEFPA's management and crew for their assistance in the search and the crew returned to Base after enjoying some welcome refreshments and a braai sponsored by the land owner.

LEFPA has once again played an important community role outside of fire protection and Manager Andre Scheepers thanks everyone for a job well done.

November Statistics

Lowveld 14:00 Actual FDI						Rain (mm)
Total	7	75	63	8	0	45.4
May	2	23	6	0	0	23.5
Jun	2	15	13	0	0	6
Jul	2	15	13	1	0	8.5
Aug	0	10	18	3	0	2,4
Sep	1	12	13	4	0	5
Oct	2	14	13	2	0	36.3
Nov	6	19	5	0	0	140

Escarpment 14:00 Actual FDI						Rain (mm)
Total	5	83	57	7	0	34.6
May	0	27	4	0	0	23.5
Jun	1	17	10	1	0	6
Jul	3	17	10	1	0	8.5
Aug	0	10	19	2	0	2,4
Sep	1	12	14	3	0	4.7
Oct	0	16	12	3	0	29.3
Nov	4	21	5	0	0	137

Christmas Charity Drop

There are many big hearts associated to LEFPA and Org van Rensburg recently showed us his! Org and a few friends decided to give something back to the community and organised a Christmas Charity Drop. They arranged an outing to Nelspruit Airfield for 40 children from the “platsak area” in Kabokweni, House Amakhaya and House Bethlehem. The children were delighted by a mini ‘airshow’ as well as getting a good look at all the aircraft and helicopters on the ground.



Some youngsters were lucky enough to have a joy ride in a Cessna, after which all the children

were given packed lunches. While they enjoyed a wonderful picnic, a Thrush Bomber flown by Riaan Foley from Orsmond Aviation performed a LEFPA bomber water drop causing tremendous excitement amongst the young spectators.

Well done to Org and his team for organising this heart warming treat, and a vote of thanks to RCL Foods, Kishugu Aviation, the Rooikat Group and LEFPA for your contribution to this wonderful day.



LEFPA Clean Up

We made passing reference in November’s issue of *All Fired Up* to LEFPA burning vleis in Mbombela.

There are many wetlands, vleis and watercourses in Mbombela’s residential suburbs. These wet areas are often overgrown with alien invasive species which block the water flow and restrict the growth of indigenous plant species.

Birds and wildlife are thus pushed out of the area while the dense undergrowth provides an ideal environment for criminals to shelter while they assess the daily routines of local residents. A prime example of this is the wetland behind Bergvlam High School.

LEFPA assists Nelspruit Concerned Citizens (NCC), SAPS Community Forum and POLSEC with their ongoing clearing project and this assistance is much appreciated by Mr Johan Louw from Mbombela’s Parks Division. The Parks Division has contributed herbicide to the project which is sprayed in these areas once the alien invasives have been removed.

Late last year a large clean up took place in Lantana Street West Acres where the LEFPA Nelspruit crew burnt the vlei. LEFPA also assisted Elawini Lifestyle Estate to clear and burn their alien invaders.



Strutting Our Stuff at AGFO

LEFPA had a stand at the AGFO expo 21-23 October to promote fire awareness in the LEFPA area and encourage landowners to join as members. Plenty of fun was to be had when LEFPA management and staff entered the competitive events. Jackson Mabuza and Sidney Fakude (a LEFPA Fire Fighter) participated in the handsaw competition and were placed second overall. Well done guys! Unfortunately, LEFPA Management lost their tug-a-war heat to Silvix.



Drilling Precision

Nice to be able to show off LEFPA crew skills outside of a wildfire situation.

LEFPA's Nelspruit Working on Fire Fire Fighting team performed drilling exercises and a simulated fire suppression demonstration.

Thrilling the crowd, Orsmond Aviation simulated a drop at 1200m overhead, the two Thrush bombers flown by Rob Taylor and Riaan Folley.



Sidney and Jackson giving their all

2017 Thought for the Year

While 2017 is shiny and new, we thought we'd polish up a reminder to our members regarding preparation and training. The annual Fire Season rolls around each year in May without fail.

While weather, environment and some other issues are beyond your control, being prepared and well trained plays a crucial roll in the fast and successful suppression of a fire on your property.

In each issue of All Fired Up, LEFPA publishes a handy list of activities for the month. This section should be the first you turn to on receipt of the news letter, to check that you are on track with your preparedness.



Activities for the Month - January

- Mow airstrips.
- Update firebreak registers.
- Identify all fire-related risks.
- Attend LEFPA meetings regularly.
- Classify and map fuel load status of all areas.
- Prioritise and schedule firebreak preparation plan.
- Inspect the condition of power-lines and servitudes.
- Slash burning allowed if weather permits - get a burning permit from LEFPA.
- Develop a training programme for your drivers, crew leaders and proto teams.



Important Note:

- A skeleton staff is available between 06h30 and 11h00 from the 3rd - 6th January 2017 to issue any permits required.