SRC mad at him, but Judge Ed is back

PHAKAMISA NDZAMELA AND SELLO SELEBI

JUDGE Edwin Cameron was last week re-elected as Chair of the Wits University Council despite calls from some student structures for him to step down.

Speaking to Vuvuzela on the opposition to him, Judge Cameron said that he welcomed the scrutiny of governance by student structures at Wits.

"I think that on transformation Wits has been a victim and not a perpetrator," said Judge Cameron.

Judge Cameron said that Wits had seen a drastic reduction in subsidies in the last few years.

"I do not think that it is a fair comment to say that I am anti-transformation," he said. "I am deeply committed to transformation at every level not just in terms of race and gender."

Judge Cameron added that he took issue with the student leadership only on their allegation that he was anti-transformation, but he welcomed student structures questioning whether he should continue as Council Chair.

He invited the student leadership to engage in constructive succession planning with other constituencies.

Wits Register Dr Derek Swemmer said he believed that Judge Cameron was a "consummate democrat".

Prof Gerrit Olivier, Head of the Wits School of Arts, told Vuvuzela that Judge Cameron had been a very "eloquent spokesperson of the university. He’s handled Council scupperously."

In a statement by Thembu Masando, chair of the Wits branch of the SA Students Congress (Sasco), Judge Cameron’s re-election was described as "unfortunate."

Masando said the election "conclusively indicates that there is something terribly wrong with most members of Council."

"His re-election further confirms our long-held view that most members of Council remain unprepared, and seem not interested, to begin the necessary process of transformation," Masando said.

He said that Judge Cameron’s re-election suggested that increases in tuition and residence fees would continue, making access and success in the university hard for students from poor backgrounds.

The statement also said that allocations in financial aid would continue to decline.

"Persistence of super-exploitation and unbearable oppression of the externalised work force would continue at Wits," Masando said.

SRC President Mbali Hlophe confirmed that the SRC had voted against Judge Cameron.

According to a statement by the SRC, the re-election of Judge Cameron confirmed the "unwillingness of Council to transform Wits in general and Council in particular."

"Cameron has served four terms as chairperson of Council and his leadership has proven to be detrimental to the transformational agenda of the institution and has further failed to protect the rights of students in general and the disadvantaged in particular," the SRC statement said.

The SRC said it remained committed to transforming Wits and would continue to work with Judge Cameron to ensure the adherence of transformation at Wits.

Witsie follows Witsie at top of the DA

ERICA DREIJER

WHAT started out as an active student life has equipped ex-Wits student Helen Zille to become the new leader of the Democratic Alliance.

Zille told Vuvuzela this week that student life had equipped her with a firm foundation and taught her valuable skills. It opened her eyes and taught her to think, to analyze and question everything that life put in her way.

It also taught her to be independent and self-reliant.

In 1967 she joined the Young Progressives and later at Wits she was also a member of the Academic Freedom Committee, Rag and was one of the first members of the TV Society.

She still managed to achieve a first-class English literature degree.

Zille believes that student life is harder today, with the workload having increased dramatically, but she also says that students have better access to information. In her day, students would race each other to the library to get hold of the limited amount of reading that was available on a subject. The material needed to be returned the next day. This taught her to read fast.

With her involvement in local politics, especially regarding schools, she was appointed MEC for Education in the Western Cape government.

Last year in March she won election as Mayor of Cape Town and on Sunday she was elected leader of South Africa’s official opposition, succeeding Tony Leon, another Witsie.

"Her high profile recently is only the "tip of the iceberg" in terms of her 30 years in politics."

She will focus on bringing together the different leaders of the DA into a team to take the party to the next level over the next 10 years and to attract more black supporters.

She said that the combination of having a baby and running a business helped prepare her for handling her current jobs: Mayor and Leader of the Opposition.

HELEN ZILLE, newly elected leader of the DA says Wits was one of the hardest, but still the best, times of her life.

VISIT US AT WWW.VUVUZELAONLINE.COM
How to start a club or society

KIM HAWKEY AND ERICA HIER

WOULD you like to start a student club or society? In a recent student poll, you told us that you wanted more student support through Vuvuzela. In response, Vuvuzela has compiled a simple step-by-step guide to opening a club or society on campus.

Before you decide to start a club or society, you should be aware of a few things. Clubs and societies, other than those related to sport, fall under the control of the SRC. Currently there are nearly 500 clubs and societies, which are divided into various clusters, such as academic, international, social, and political.

The proliferation of new clubs and societies is a result of clubs and societies being started but becoming inactive after the founding members left Wits. Other problematic issues include financial problems, as highlighted in a previous edition of Vuvuzela, and limited resources such as clubrooms, funding and student development officers that can assist clubs and societies.

As a result of the mushrooming numbers, a moratorium has been place on the opening of new clubs and societies, according to Dean of Students Prem Cooopoo. However, it appears that the word moratorium has been used loosely. Clubs and societies officer Selcito Mediva said that there was no moratorium, but confirmed that the SRC had become more strict in opening clubs and societies in order to limit their numbers.

According to Zakhule Maya, SRC Treasurer, the limited funding received by the SRC for club and society grants was also stretched thinly as a result of the large number of clubs and societies in existence. Limiting the number of clubs and societies will therefore help to ensure that more funding from the SRC will be available. So, if you want to start a new club or society, it will be necessary for you to show a clear vision, differentiation and longevity.

The following is a quick guide to help you create a club or society.

1. Round up at least 40 students who want to join your proposed club or society.
2. Collect the relevant application forms and documents from the SRC reception.
3. Complete and return form 4: Application for a constitution.
4. If the completed form is returned, you will receive a model constitution to fill in.
5. Amend the model constitution by incorporating your club or society's information. You may insert additional clauses provided they do not conflict with the rest of the constitution.
6. Complete model constitution and Form 8: a list of the names, student numbers, undertakings to pay the subscription fee and signatures of a minimum of 40 members. Note that the subscription fee per member is currently R50 per annum.
7. Complete the membership form.
8. Amend the regulations of the proposed club or society at the next SRC general meeting. Maximum time for presentation is 5 minutes.
9. Show the following during the presentation:
   - (a) Sustainability: that your goals and proposed means to attain them are achievable.
   - You should show that your club or society will be for the greater good of Wits and society should be for the greater good of Wits; and
   - (b) Originality: the proposed club or society should not disrupt the function of Wits or tarnish its image.
   - (c) Relevance: the existence of the proposed club or society is something that has the potential to impact on society.

For more information on Vuvuzela's student poll, visit the April 12 edition of Vuvuzela on www.vuvuzelaweb.com.
Prof Ramesh Bharuthram
Prof Tshilidzi Marwala
Prof David Glasser

go free
Wits man
murders:

WITS on August 1 2004. This week the Wits man was acquitted on all charges.

Speaking to Vuvuzela this week, Kekana said that the situation had been difficult for his family, socially and financially. He said that he had gained a lot of respect for the justice system as a result of the trial and was glad that the law had taken its course. Kekana said he had apologised to the families who had lost loved ones in the incident because they might have lost breadwinners.

"It wasn't my intention, it just happened. I did not go out to shoot people," said Kekana.

The facilities manager at the PIMD, Mark Watson, said that he was glad that the whole thing was over and that Kekana could move on with his life.

"We had always supported Edward [Kekana] with time off and stuff like that because he is a valuable employee," said Watson.

The incident in 2004 took place when six men in a bakkie followed Kekana to his sister's house in Unigray, Johannesburg.

The men assaulted him after accusing him of driving his Toyota Conquest with the car's lights on bright.

In an act that Johannesburg High Court Judge George Mahaleke has ruled was self-defence, Kekana drew his firearm and fired several shots at the men in the bakkie. Three men, Jan Verster, 37, Tony Vicenzo, 65, and Frans Chilane, 32, were killed. Verster's son Stephen, 16, was shot but survived the shooting.

In the ruling Judge Mahaleke said that the state had not proven that Kekana had acted outside the boundaries of self-defence.

The judge questioned the credibility of the three state witnesses and ruled that Kekana's version of events was true and credible. He also said that it was evident that the men had assaulted Kekana.

Heinz van der Merwe, who appeared for the state, said that two of the state witnesses, Stephen Verster and Morne Dunbar, had since committed suicide.

Apart from Kekana, the only other person alive from the incident is Andre Woolard, who was also a state witness. Woolard was a passenger on the bakkie.

The wife of Vicenzo, who did not want to give her first name, said that her husband had undergone a triple-heart-bypass and had not been in a position to assault anyone.

Joseph Kruger, a Metro police officer, was a witness for the defence. He said that he had seen Verster's picture in a newspaper and that he and his wife had gone through a similar incident involving the same group of men led by Jan Verster.

SELLO SELEBI
A WITS staff member acquitted on triple murder charges last week over a 2004 road-rage incident has urged drivers to be patient when using the country's roads.

Edward Masesla Kekana, 36, who works as a technical supervisor at Wits University's Property Infrastructure Management Department (PIMD), said that people should not be tempted to get involved in squabbles with other drivers because "the roads belong to everyone".

Kekana was charged with murdering three men after a road-rage incident on August 1 2004. This week the Wits man was acquitted on all charges.

Speaking to Vuvuzela this week, Kekana said that the situation had been difficult for his family, socially and financially. He said that he had gained a lot of respect for the justice system as a result of the trial and was glad that the law had taken its course.

Kekana said he had apologised to the families who had lost loved ones in the incident because they might have lost breadwinners.

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VUVUZELA, MAY 18, 2007

Wits gives author a big break

SEAN RITCHIE
ENVIRONMENTAL journalist Leonie Joubert has been jointly awarded the 2007 Ruth First Fellowship by the Wits Journalism and Media Studies Programme with photographer Santu Mofokeng.

The fellowship honours the memory of Ruth First; renowned in her time as a journalist, activist and intellectual. First was murdered by the apartheid government while in exile in 1977.

The fellowship is intended to give a writer, or researcher, space to perform in-depth research on a topic in keeping with First’s tradition of critical, independent, socially engaged writing.

In the next few months Joubert will conduct research on her several communities across South Africa affected by the changing climate. In her fellowship proposal, Joubert states stresses affecting South Africa, such as illiteracy and HIV/AIDS, make it vulnerable to problems caused by climate change.

Joubert, an environmental journalist, has spent the last few years researching South Africa’s changing climate. She has travelled the country to view many delicately balanced ecosystems, which are in danger of disappearing forever.

Over two years Joubert drew up one essay after another. When she had sufficient material she sorted the essays into a manuscript and looked for a publisher.

"Wits University Press was blown away to think about moving into popular science projects. I sent them a proposal and one or two chapters and they immediately said wanted it," she said.

The book, Scorched, provides a fascinating - and frightening - glimpse of the troubles that will need to be faced by South Africa’s flora and fauna over the next century. Scorched reveals an ongoing battle underway in the non-fiction category in the Sunday Times Alan Paton awards.

What separates Scorched from other climate-change literature is its exploration of how specific ecosystems around South Africa will be affected. There are many climate-change models which accurately predict the broader effects of climate change. However, there is little focus on individual animal and plant species. Scorched gives these species a face for the first time; climate change will only increase the rate at which vulnerable species face extinction.

Earlier this week Joubert was at Wits to present a promotional speech for Scorched. She said the facts and figures which stem from climate-change research were “dry and bland” and did not communicate the reality of the situation. She chose to use a travelogue style to convey the essence of climate change in South Africa.

In an interview with Vuvuzela, Joubert provided some background to her career as an environmental journalist and the path that led to her interest in climate change. Joubert grew up in the shadows of Hogsback, deep in the Eastern Cape. She describes her parents as “in tune” with natural environment but admits that it held little interest for her as a teenager.

A course in science journalism during the final year of her journalism degree at Rhodes University ignited Joubert’s interest in the environment.

“When I started to find my feet as a writer I found myself more interested in the environment,” says Joubert.

After graduating she found it difficult to find employment as an environmental journalist and ended up working for Wine Magazine.

Three and a half years later Joubert realised that the only way she was going “to write about the stuff that interested (her) was to go freelance”.

Two weeks after she had handed in her resignation, a friend sent her a newsletter advertising a postgraduate research opportunity at Stellenbosch University.

The masters programme required the journalist to collaborate with climate-change scientists doing research in Marion Island in the sub-Antarctic region.

Marion’s isolated location, midway between South Africa and the Antarctic, presented an ideal place to monitor the changing climate and its impact on animal and plant species.

The explicit examples of climate change on the island led Joubert to believe “there had to be similar stories on the (South African) mainland”.

When she returned to South Africa, in March 2003, Joubert began researching South Africa’s changing climate.

DON’T LOOK NOW, BUT THERE’S A PENGUIN BEHIND YOU: Scorched author, Leonie Joubert on Marion Island

FULLBACK Mike Rowley is one of the only two Witsies playing on our first rugby team. Sean Ritchie took a trip to Business Campus to find out what makes him tick.

What’s your worst rugby injury?
I broke my shoulder last year. There were two guys coming down the field and I couldn’t decide which one to tackle. I went for both of them and broke my AC joint.

If you were running for president what would your slogan be?
The greater the challenge, the greater the reward.

How do you rate SA’s chances in the World Cup?
Not great, I think it will come down to an All Blacks-French final.

What is your favourite movie?
Boonock Saints.

What is the craziest thing you’ve done or seen on a rugby tour?
On tour to Pretoria in 2002 we were at the awards ceremony. A team from another varsity were grinning while they were sitting at their table and we couldn’t figure out why. Afterwards we discovered that they had smuggled in two hookers who were servicing them all under the table.

Who inspires you?
My dad. He does everything properly. He is driven, motivated and honourable.

What is your ideal holiday destination and who would you take with you?
There’s a little island off the coast of Madagascar. I went there in January. I couldn’t believe it existed this close to home. It looks like that movie, The Beach.

What is your dream job?
Captain of my very own yacht.

De La Rey

ERICA DREJER
KAREN Zoid will never speak to Bok van Blerk.
Afrikaans’s best known female rocker said this about Afrikaans’s most popular balladeer at a forum hosted by the M&G and Absa this week.

Under discussion was Van Blerk’s now famous (or notorious, depending on your view) song De La Rey.

Zoid’s annoyance stems from the reaction that De la Rey supposedly unleashed. She said that he, like all South African artists who perform on the platteland, know that racism is still alive and well and that “one man’s hero is another’s oppressor”.

Zoid said that at the Klein Karoo Kunsteffeles earlier this year she had been told that the night before her appearance 5 000 children had stood, hands on heart, tears flowing, waving old South African flags and singing along to De la Rey.

She said she was shocked to hear that 16-year-olds were merely waving the old flag – a symbol of oppression. It frightened her that they were probably mirroring behaviour from their homes, without understanding its significance in our current situation.

The forum made it clear that De la Rey stirred mixed opinions and strong emotions. As expected, it also opened a debate on Afrikaans and where they saw themselves in the new democracy.

The panel also included Dan Roodt, controversial right-wing author, publisher and editor, John Matshikiza, M&G columnist, Dr Theuns Eloff, Vice-Chancellor for North West University, and Mike van Graan, arts administrator and playwright. The discussion was moderated by John Perlman, ex-AM Live presenter and Witsie.

For Matshikiza, the song was more than a stirring melody and he believed that often “true meanings are hidden behind history” and the true intention of the song bother him.