

Ekurhuleni Pride Organisation Committee Hosts Pride Week in KwaThema

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The Ekurhuleni Pride Organising Committee (EPOC) hosted Pride Week for the community in KwaThema (on the Eastrand of Gauteng), and it was the 13th annual Pride Week hosted by EPOC for the queer community from 9 September 2021. This year was quite different to previous years as the week started with a screening of a documentary on 9 September 2021.

The documentary documents the stories of different queer people from Ekurhuleni as a whole and the allies, both living and dead, that have been a part of the organisation since the first Pride in 2009. The documentary featured the late Eudy Simelane (the late former Banyana Banyana player), Mally Simelane (Eudy's Mom), Ntsupe Mohapi and Xolile Dzanibe (founders of EPOC), Pastor Teboho Moema (from Abafundisi show), and Phumi Mthethwa (a LGBTI activist and feminist) to mention a few.

The week also had a Pre-Pride Party the next day with members of the community coming together for a meet and greet. The main event started on 11 September 2021 with a soccer tournament in memory of Eudy Simelane and other fallen queer members and allies of the organisation.

Eudy Simelane was a lesbian woman who was brutally killed and raped in 2009 after coming from a local tavern with "friends" and her lifeless body was found at a nearby park under a bridge. The park was later named Eudy Simelane Park and this is where the activities were held. Local coach and former Banyana Banyana coach Skheshe Mkhonza was also there as a speaker with his girls' football team.

Councillor Thulane Simelane of Ward 74 and Sergeant Mabasa were also speakers on the day. The day ended with a social gathering where queer people from all around Ekurhuleni, Delmas, Soweto and the Vaal gathered together to celebrate their diversity. There was also a performance from a group of young girls called Womandla, who sang and sent out a message about the effects of Gender Based Violence (GBV).

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