

## **Etwatwa Enjoys Literature as Annual Reading Festival Held**

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On 7 and 8 November 2024, Etwatwa welcomed the Gauteng Department of Sports, Arts & Culture (DSAC) as a reading festival was held at the Tshepo Themba Multi Purpose Resource Centre based in Etwatwa.

The festival offered entertainment for participants during the first day where there were information stalls at the venue consisting of different organisations and the DSAC were set up. Some of the stalls held their own activities and prizes.

Attending organisations included the South African Association of Youth Clubs (SAAYC), the City of Ekurhuleni, libraries, Rhoo Hlatshwayo Art Centre, Publishing hub, Funda Mzansi and others.

The Daveyton Book Club which was recently launched in October was also part of the festival and receiving exposure and opportunities.

The Director of Library Services at the Edward Ndlovu Memorial Trust, Mr Jackson Ndlovu, gave statistics of children who do not have access to books and who are functionally illiterate.

Gloria Mnguni reviewed her book for the participants and shared words of wisdom.

On the second day, there were different competitions at the stalls, there was a spelling bee competition, a book review competition and a reading competition. Prizes were given to those who participated well in these competitions.

Tendane Mashaba (21) from Ikusasa lethu mentioned the festival was life-changing and it really showed him so much he didn't know about himself and this generation. Moreover, Tendane was one of the participants who received a medal for the book reviewing competition and he continued to say, "the festival made me realise the talents of our youth and the skills that need to be freshened up like communication skills and interpretation skills so we can move forward as a unit"

The celebrations included some karaoke which united people from different libraries and book clubs.

"I found the annual reading festival hosted at Tshepo Themba Hall last week as a fun and informative event focused on promoting reading. Different stakeholders highlighted the importance of reading for personal growth and education. Over two days, kids enjoyed activities that encouraged a love for reading, as a first-time attendee I gained insights into how reading impacts communities" commented Lungile Dlongolo (26) from SAAYC.

Free ice cream and free popcorn was served for the attendees. There were jumping castles for children so they can enjoy themselves, surely this festival was fun.

"All in all the festival was good but it could have been way better than what it was. The event coordination was poor as the sound wasn't really performing well and the way in which the stalls were positioned was a tad bit disorganized which resulted to

confusion when exhibitors had to speak about their products. Changing the venue and putting more effort into proper planning to create a flow so that the audience cannot only get informed about literacy but instead get a full experience of it” concluded Onthatile Mdawe (21) a performing artist from Mamelodi.

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