

Early Christmas Cheer for Kids with Disabilities

On the Saturday the 10th of December 2011, which is also International Human Rights Day, Santa Wheels visited the province of Gauteng and took twenty (20) children with disabilities from two Special Schools on a once-in-a-lifetime train ride on the Gautrain where toys were handed over as their Christmas gifts. The train ride was proudly sponsored by Bombela Group who owns the Gautrain.

The children are from Muriel Brand School in Johannesburg and Adelaide Tambo School for the Physically Handicapped in Soweto. Straight after the Gautrain joyride their early Christmas cheer culminated when they received their toys and goodies from Santa Wheels at the Protea Midrand Hotel. The Protea Hotel Management organized a lunch buffet that was served to the children and other sponsors from government, the private sector and civil society organizations that were in attendance.

Santa Wheels is an initiative started by Valhalla Arts and Indimezulu Trust in 2007 to reach out to children with disabilities, particularly those in hospitals during the Christmas period. The objectives of this initiative include; distributing toys to child patients; raising disability awareness in communities and entrenching “Santa Wheels” in popular disability-celebration culture. This initiative has in the past reached numerous hospitals, disability organisations and special schools. It was the first time to take place in the province of Gauteng.

“This year Santa Wheels aimed to raise the bar by going national in a quest to spread the goodwill and encourage corporates and government to take a leaf out of this initiative and support disability initiatives in their various forms” echoed MUSA E. ZULU, founder of the Santa Wheels initiative and Creative Director of Valhalla Arts. Zulu is also co-founder of the THISABILITY Newspaper, a disability awareness tabloid that comes out once a month and is distributed nationally. The paper speaks on issues relating to disability empowerment in society.

The National Department of Transport’s Road Safety Unit Head, Reverend T. Vundla attended this event where stakeholders from Transnet, Damelin/Intec College and media organisations spent the day celebrating with the children.



25 images, December 2011

