

Giving the gift of education



The official opening of Pheasant Folly Primary School

It was the abject poverty and hopelessness with which the Pheasant Folly Primary School was in, that prompted the Motor Finance Corporation (MFC) to adopt the school at the beginning of 2006.

“Out of 30 short-listed schools, this school seemed hopeless, with no hope for future funding and solid assistance,” says Millicent Lechaba, MFC’s General Manager of Operations.

Desperately isolated and set on a dry piece of land, without electricity and water nor adequate classrooms to house the children in the community, Pheasant Folly seemed at odds with everything the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) stood for – the improvement of quality education so as to secure the necessary educational foundations to become a global city region with a growing, job creating economy and a decent quality of life for all who live in it.

“There were major problems when we got there. These included overcrowding of classrooms, no fencing and general low esteem amongst both teachers and learners as a result of the lack of infrastructure. The image of a proper learning facility was not there at all,” Lechaba explains.

In line with the GDE’s poverty eradication strategy to provide key needs for poor learners, such as free uniforms, transport, meals, exemption of school fees and free learning

and teaching material, MFC set out to address this dire situation.

Armed with more than R1m as part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme Pheasant Folly is a far cry from yester year. To date, the motor finance organisation has built eight classrooms, erected a borehole and a fence around the school, introduced a feeding scheme, established a food garden and donated volleyball equipment.

“Our CSR programme is not only about giving money and walking away. Our employees get involved. In October last year, the CSR committee arranged a fun day at the school where our volunteer employees participated in various activities for the betterment of the school,” a clearly proud Lechaba says. The activities include planting trees, painting, demarcating a netball field and providing entertainment and food for the children.

Such is MFC’s commitment to enrich the community of Kliprivier through education that the company has begun assisting Thabo Tona, a school across the road from Pheasant Folly. A classroom was donated to this school, but more importantly, future plans look bright for the learners at both schools. Feasibility studies are underway to build principal’s offices at both school, a shared library and computer room, which the GDE will supply with computers.