



Children show off face painting sponsored by Kryolan.



The Hillbrow Pathfinders provide a marching display.

Community comes together against drugs

LAURA BYRNE

laurab@caxton.co.za

A NEW initiative to educate the community's children about the dangers of drugs kicked off with a successful and fun-filled first event on 5 October.

"Drugs prevented me from realising my dreams," said Shani Krebs, recovering addict, ex-convict and best-selling author of *Dragons and Butterflies*.

Speaking at a recent Orange Grove

anti-drug drive, Krebs provided a crowd of wide-eyed local children with a no-holds-barred account of his 18 years in a Thai prison, following a 1994 conviction for heroin trafficking.

"The choices you make define who you are... Make a choice today and say no to drugs," Krebs urged.

Krebs joined the Norwood Community Policing Forum, the Sector 4 Crime Forum, and the leaders of church, scout and child care groups at Orange Grove Park, where they entertained and educated local children

about the dangers of drugs.

The sombre testimonies of Krebs and other recovering addicts were offset by a morning of fun activities.

The winners of face-painting, dancing and singing competitions received meal vouchers from Toninos Pizzeria, while Pick n Pay and Friends Bakery sponsored food for those who attended.

A festive atmosphere was created by the sea of yellow T-shirts sponsored by Gauteng Provincial Government, City of Johannesburg

and Soul City, while DJs Icon, Rasta and Masondo kept everyone dancing with their energetic entertainment and popular beats.

Organisers sent a vote of thanks to the Hillbrow Pathfinders Troop, who not only helped publicise the event, but also provided an impressive marching display.

Sydwell Thwala of the City of Joburg Region E social development department attended to remind the community of the different support structures available.

Proceedings ran smoothly thanks to the efforts of master of ceremonies Chad Thomas of sponsoring company, IRS Forensic Investigations.

This event was only the first step in an ongoing anti-drug initiative planned by the Orange Grove and Norwood communities, said Thomas.

"Please support your community and community initiatives that help in the upliftment of residents and the reduction in crime and poverty.

"Never forget the adage 'It takes a village to raise a child'," he added.