



# Women's Day fundraiser success

**GAIL CORNHILL**

INGRID Roberts's Insights and Inspirations event held at Liberty Midlands Mall at the end of July, partnered with *Maritzburg Fever*, brought in over R40 000 for three deserving charities on the evening.

The event, which was attended by over 200 women from as far afield as Durban and Johannesburg, starred former *Isidingo* star Judy Ditchfield, well known for her stage and television performances, but perhaps not as widely recognised as being an ex Pietermaritzburg Girls' High School old girl. Ditchfield shared some of her secrets of success, happy memories of Pietermaritzburg and wowed the audience when she sang for her supper.

Roberts then shared the remainder of the evening with three local sheroes — women who have achieved locally — and encouraged the audience to support their worthwhile causes. One of the causes was Ethembeni (Place of Hope) in Mpophomeni, which was represented by Mandiso, a young woman who is completing her Grade 11 while caring for her five-year-old son on a mere R250 per month with no family to support her.

Julie Hay, who sold her business to start an NGO called Singakwenza (together we can), was next on the stage. Hay has just



Photos: ERIC CORNHILL

Zohra Sooliman (left) with Edgars manager Kurshida Shaik. The staff of Edgars Liberty Midlands Mall raised more than R17 000 for the Gift of the Givers which was then matched by Edgars, taking the total donated to the charity to R34 000.

won the Vodacom Change the World award. The audience raised over R3 000 for Ethembeni and Singakwenza, with a further R3 500 in donations to young Mandiso to help with her monthly living costs.

Zohra Sooliman from the international Gift of the Givers, based in Pietermaritzburg, shared her story with the audience and some of the experiences that she and her husband have gone through. The Gift of the Givers has donated more than R130 million in aid to disaster-struck countries



Zohra Sooliman from Gift of the Givers with Ingrid Roberts, Judy Ditchfield and Sandy Naicker from NWJ.

throughout the world and Edgars adopted the cause and raised just over R17 000 through staff raffles, dances and various fundraising efforts. This was matched by the Edgars Corporate Social Initiative, taking the donation given to the charity to over R34 000 on the night.

The Gift of the Givers is currently working in Somalia and Zohra shared the heart-rending story of parents hiding their children in forests to avoid them having to share the pain of watching each other die of starvation. She also stressed that because of their relationships

with companies, every rand that is donated is worth R3, meaning that the R34 000 given to them was worth R100 000 in real buying terms.

Guests enjoyed a three-course dinner, gifts from Elizabeth Arden and Liberty Midlands Mall and lucky draw prizes, including a pearl set valued at over R2 000 from NWJ, an education module from Business Development and vouchers from Sense Day Spa.

The charity draw prize winner, Ulrica Naidoo, won a trip for two to Johannesburg from Airlink, chauffeur-driven pick up and return transfers from Hertz, two nights at one casino from Southern Sun and tickets to a show.

• *Inquiries:* e-mail [gail@spottedowl.co.za](mailto:gail@spottedowl.co.za)



**SPONSORS FOR THE EVENT**

- Liberty Midlands Mall • Barloworld • Leather Gallery • NWJ • Senses Day Spa
- Business Development Unit • Spec-Savers • 'Maritzburg Fever' • Mayuri's • Fragrance Boutique • Galaxy Jewellers • Piatto • Nuprint • Southern Sun • Airlink • Hertz • StayEasy
- Elizabeth Arden • Edgars