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A bit of international in Lydenburg

They came to experience a new culture in South Africa – and were pleasantly surprised to have an experience full of colours, cultures and a world very different from their own.

May 24, 2019



De Haas and Yael Vervoordeldonk came all the way from Breukelen in the Netherlands on an international traineeship.

They were hosted by Brian and Gerda Whitehorn from Paardeplaats Nature Retreat on the Long Tom Pass outside Lydenburg and had a busy schedule worked out for their two-week stay.

At Lydenburg High School they attended classes with the grade 11s and were impressed by the well-organised schedule and the academic standard which was very similar to theirs at home.

They enjoyed the Colour Run on their second day in the country and chose to keep the T-shirts they wore as mementos.



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They met up with Cotlands employees in Mashishing and learned about the early childhood development programme. This experience was enhanced by the highlight of their trip – spending two days at Enkeldoorn School with principal Jan Neethling and his team.

Their gift of colour crayons to the schoolchildren resulted in them colouring the schoolgrounds in all the colours of the rainbow. Neethling also escorted them to the Kruger National Park and a lifelong friendship was made.

[Steelburger/Lydenburg News \(https://steelburgernews.co.za/\)](https://steelburgernews.co.za/) journalist, Thumelo Mkhabela, introduced the two youngsters to Lydenburg's nooks and crannies and they assisted with a vox pop on the sewer problem in town.

Using public transport was a memorable experience for them and speaking to a variety of people in town was their first introduction to our kaleidoscope of cultures.





At Paardeplaats Nature Retreat they went for daily hikes on the farm, helped Lucas Nkuna cut grass on the tractor and had some fun target shooting.

Helping Marnus Pretorius tame a horse was, however, more serious exposure to farm work. Their final stint was waiting at Hops Hollow Brewery on a busy weekend.

On election day they attended the Vollies' Mini Market church bazaar and were very excited about handling live snakes under Neels Bothma's guidance.

At the age of 16 and 17, pupils in the bilingual stream of the RSG Broklede School (with more than 1 400 students) are sent to an English-speaking country to broaden their horizons. Mats and Yael have chosen Lydenburg in South

Africa to do just this. Friendly people, more white people than they expected and doughnuts that are ridiculously cheap, were some of their first impressions. They both agreed that Lydenburg offers an array of extremes – from people to scenery and life lessons. Two weeks can only be an introduction for them.

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AUTHOR

Gerda Whitehorn and Mariska Sadler

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