

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR IN A SEND-OFF GALA DINNER FOR THE FREE STATE CHOIRS, HALL OF FAME, WELKOM, 10 NOVEMBER 2007

Programme Director

MEC for Sports, Arts & Culture

All MEC's present

All MPLs [Members of the Legislature]

All Mayors

Speakers

Councilors

Guests from FREGMA

Officials from Department of Sport, Arts & Culture

Municipal Managers and other Officials from the district

The Choirs at large

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great pleasure to stand here on behalf of the district to welcome you. Let me also take this opportunity to welcome the initiative of taking this event to the district. It is befitting to host this event as a district because of the best choir this district has produced that has represented the province on numerous occasions. Lets take off our hats to the MEC for recognizing that fact.

Today when we are bidding farewell to the Free State Choirs to represent the Free State in the national choral competition in Durban on the 07-09 December 2007, we say they must go and represent the province with dignity.

Just like any other cultural activity, music is entertaining and therapeutic as well. It can be a definite stress-reliever; melodiously soothing to the mind and a tonic to the soul. It also assists in changing the behavior of the youth and keeps them away from wrong doings. A case in point is this choir "Thabong Serenade" which was formed out of gangsterism and today is champions in choral music.

Music can also be utilized as a development tool. Your mere participation in the provincial and national music competitions, whether with the ultimate aim of winning or

not, contributes significantly towards healthy minds. But equally important is your contribution to the cultural enrichment and development of the human race in general.

Programme Director,

Our society must make a collective effort to engage the youth in other meaningful and constructive activities that are not a mere distraction, but are important in them. Cultural and other forms of healthy recreation belong among these important creative activities.

I would like to extend our congratulations to them and their colleagues on their success. Your participation confirms the level of understanding about the depth and richness of our culture and heritage. We need to continue to nurture and develop more talent to bring further recognition to our province and our country.

To them we need to say that they must approach the on-coming national competition in a manner representative of the determination and zeal of the people of the Free State province.

I thank you and wish you well.