



PHOTO: SHARLENE PACKREE

Leading Comrades runner Fawa Mentoor and Wildlands Conservation Trust CEO Andrew Venter plant the first tree as part of the Comrades Releaf Campaign, in which 13 000 trees, one for each runner, will be planted in the next three days.

## CONSERVATION: 13 000 TREES FOR 13 000 RUNNERS IN THREE DAYS

SHARLENE PACKREE

"THIRTEEN thousand trees in three days? No sweat."

These are the words of "tree-preneur" Siphon Ndlela, who is helping to plant a tree for every runner in this year's Comrades Marathon as part of the Comrades Releaf campaign.

The campaign, the brainchild of the Wildlands Conservation Trust, has begun in the buffer area around the Buffelsdraai Landfill Site near Verulam.

The first trees were planted by Comrades officials and a top woman Comrades runner, Fawa Mentoor, yesterday.

Local runners were also challenged to plant a seed at the Releaf stand at the Comrades Expo, which starts today at the Durban Exhibition Centre.

Besides helping to reforest the area as part of Ethekwini's 2010 World Cup programme to help offset carbon

emissions, the project also aims to uplift the local community. The campaign allows locals to grow the trees from seeds, care for the plants and then trade them for food and other essentials.

Ndlela and 20 other people from the Buffelsdraai and Oshindweni communities have been employed to dig holes and another 40 will help plant the 13 000 trees over the next three days.

He said he is excited about being part of the project as it creates employment for the poor in the area.

"I was unemployed when they offered me a job. It was really exciting for me to help with the reforestation project," he said.

Greening 2010 Durban coordinator Nicci Diederichs said the 13 000 trees will take the reforestation project from 62 500 trees to 75 500 — increasing the carbon sink they hope to create by more than 20%.

## ROAD CLOSURES: TIMES TO KEEP IN MIND ON SUNDAY



THE Comrades Marathon Association has warned motorists to take note of the following road closures on Sunday for the race.

- Pietermaritzburg City Central — 4.30 am to 7am
- CB Downes, Washington, Oribi, Jesmond Roads — 4.30 am to 7 am
- Polly Shortts — 5 am to 7.30 am
- Lion Park — 5.15 am to 8 am
- Umlaas Road — 5.45 am to 9.10 pm
- Camperdown — 6 am to 9.45 pm
- Cato Ridge — 6.15 am to 10.40 pm
- Drummond — 7 am to 12.30 pm
- Botha's Hill — 7.35 am to 1.30 pm
- Hillcrest — 7.45 am to 1.45 pm
- Winston Park — 7.55 am to 2.15 pm
- Kloof — 8.15 am to 2.40 pm
- Top Fields Hills — 8.20 am to 2.50 pm
- Pinetown — 8.35 am to 3.45 pm
- Cowies Hill — 8.50 am to 4 pm
- Westville — 9 am to 4.10 pm
- 45th Cutting — 9.20 am to 5.30 pm
- All Durban Central Streets between Monty Naicker Road (ex Pine Street) and Anton Lembede Street (ex Smith Street) from N3 — 9.30 am to 6.30 pm
- Samora Machel Road (ex Aliwal Street) between Monty Naicker (ex Pine Street) and Anton Lembede Street (ex Smith Street) — 9.30 am to 6.30 pm
- Dr Pixley Kaseme Street (ex West Street) between Dorothy Nyembe Street (ex Gardiner Street) and Samora Machel Street (ex Aliwal Street) — 9.30 am to 6.30 pm.