

HAVE YOU GOT AN EXTRAORDINARY DOG?

She was left to die, then she saved a life. That's the Spirit!

MANTOMBI MAKHUBELE

SPiRiT suffered major concussion, had a dislocated jaw and both her front legs were severely injured after being hit by a car on a Johannesburg highway. And within days of the pooch's life being saved by dog trainer Lindy Coetzee, Spirit became a blood donor during an emergency procedure involving another sick pup at the Pierre van Ryneveld Veterinary Clinic.

Coetzee, a member of the K9 Search and Rescue Association, said she named the mutt—who is about four years old—Spirit because she demonstrated remarkable resilience after the accident. "I was driving from training on a Sunday afternoon and a little voice told me to drive on the R562. I argued with the voice but took the off-ramp anyway," said Coetzee.

The road runs between Themba, east of Johannesburg, and Olifants Road, north of the city.

After passing the scene of a car accident Coetzee said she saw a dog's head peeping through the bushes about 75m away.

The dog-lover made a U-turn and went back where she found Spirit



GOOD GIRLS: Lindy Coetzee and Spirit

Picture: RAYMOND PRESTON

with severe injuries. "She seemed disorientated, far too quiet. She wasn't aggressive, didn't moan and almost seemed grateful at having been found," Coetzee said.

She loaded Spirit into the car and rushed her to the vet where the dog spent five days being nursed back to health—during which time she saved another dog's life when it needed a blood transfusion.

In the four months since, Spirit has made a remarkable recovery. Her left front leg could not be saved and had to be amputated.

She now hops along on

three legs and has "gone from strength to strength".

● The Sunday Times is looking for a dog that embodies the resilience of Spirit as part of its *Jock of the Bushveld: Spirit of a Great Heart* competition.

The competition runs ahead of the release of the animated 3-D film, *Jock of the Bushveld*, which hits movie screens next month and features the voices of Bryan Adams and Donald Sutherland, among others.

Early entries for the competition include one from Glenis Cash of Port Alfred who said her

pooch Chilly is "a scrap of energy".

"Her favourite pastime is ferreting out rodents and lizards and playing with her companion, Reggie, a handsome male. "Loves biltong. Doesn't like a bath or doggie parlour. That's for the upper class," Cash wrote. "Enjoys a tummy rub."

Another entrant, Shereen Taylor from Pretoria, said: "Our dog Thane has the biggest heart and the most beautiful personality." Adopted from the SPCA, Thane is "crazy fun" who likes bringing the outdoors indoors.



GOING FORWARD: After an accident crippled her front legs, below right, Tessie became the first dog in SA to acquire front-wheel support, above

Pictures: ESA ALEXANDER

Life has its trials and tribulations, but...

Robodog is on a roll

BUYEKEZWA MAKWABE

MEET Tessie — a Jack Russell terrier who has started learning to "walk" again, thanks to a set of imported wheels that have replaced her front legs.

The three-and-half-year-old dog from Wellington, outside Cape Town, was accidentally run over by her owner, Madie Otto, in March.

Her front legs were crippled, but that has not stopped her from living as normal a life as possible.

Last week, a vet fitted Tessie with a set of R5 500 custom-made wheels from the US.

What started as a picnic and birthday celebration for the family ended up with Otto's nine-year-old daughter, Nica, sobbing while cradling a critically injured Tessie in her arms on the way to a vet for emergency treatment.

The dog underwent a CAT scan, was hospitalised for 10 days and treated by a specialist vet.

Once the dog's stitches were out, her rehabilitation began



The Sunday Times is looking for the ultimate 'Jock'. Do you have a dog that embodies the spirit of the country's most famous mutt? If so, you could win R10 000 and a year's supply of dog food by entering our competition. Two runners-up will get R5 000 each. The dogs on this page show the kind of spirit we're looking for.

● See Review, Page 14 for full details on the competition

with acupuncture and physical therapy. In total, the vets' bills for Tessie were R25 000.

Otto said: "The muscle on one leg started rotting and they had to amputate it. Both legs have suffered some nerve damage."

Speaking moments after unstrapping Tessie from her new set of wheels, veterinarian Megan Kelly, who specialises in muscular-skeletal problems in animals, said the little dog had to adjust to walking with the wheels.

"She learned a way to compensate and uses her elbow to walk. The problem —

especially for dogs with front-leg injuries — is that 60% of their weight is taken on the front.

"If they are slightly weak, they just fall over, which is what is happening here," Kelly said.

Most of the vet's patients, including squirrels, rabbits and cats, either have arthritis or have had knee or spinal operations.

Her treatment, she said, included acupuncture, an underwater treadmill and herbal medicine.

"What I would do to myself, I

would do to my dogs," Kelly said.

She prescribes wheels for old, arthritic dogs who are unable to walk any more.

"Many of the ones that end up needing permanent wheels are the dachshunds — and they would need hind wheels," she said.

The one part of therapy that Tessie — an enthusiastic swimmer who was given a mini life-vest by Otto to keep her afloat after the accident — enjoyed the most was the water treadmill.

Kelly said: "The underwater treadmill has the benefit of buoyancy. They walk like they would on land if they did not have any problems."

Otto said: "Now Tessie swims with her two-and-a-half legs, but she still beats my bull terrier."

"When she's tired, she gets this fed-up face which says, 'I've had it.'"

While dogs fitted with rear wheels are able to adjust fairly quickly, Tessie will have a longer adjustment period, said Kelly.

"Make it fun," she told Otto.



'What I would do to myself, I would do to my dogs'

Free State University honours Oprah



FREE STATE VISITOR: Oprah Winfrey

Picture: REUTERS

SUBASHNI NAIDOO

THE University of the Free State will be pulling out all the stops when it confers an honorary doctorate on Oprah Winfrey on Friday.

Winfrey, who retired last month after recording more than 5 000 episodes of her show in 25 years, will receive a doctorate in education.

"The atmosphere on the university's campuses has been electric," said university spokesman Lacea Loader.

She said all of the 4 500 or so tickets were snapped up within hours of becoming available on Wednesday.

Entertainment at the function will include singer Sibongile Khumalo, the Botshabelo String Orchestra, the Bloemfontein Children's Choir and the choir of the Bartimeas School for the Deaf and Blind.

Winfrey's office in Chicago declined to discuss her schedule for

the day or say what the topic of her speech would be. Her spokesman, Angela de Paul, said: "Unfortunately (she) is not available for advance press queries."

Winfrey is due to address guests in the Callie Human Centre at the university's Bloemfontein campus on Friday, then hold a question-and-answer session. The ceremony was planned after Winfrey approached the university last month to organise a visit.

Jonathan Jansen, the vice-chancellor and rector, broke the news of her visit on Twitter.

"You heard it here first," he said. "A woman fainted before my very eyes today when she heard Ms Winfrey was coming to campus. From what I've heard she is so impressed with transformation at the university that she wanted to come see it for herself."

Winfrey already holds honorary doctorates from several institutions in the US.

SA Greenpeace leader held

THE family of a South African human rights activist and head of Greenpeace has asked the government to intervene following his arrest in the Arctic Sea.

Kumi Naidoo, executive director of the global environmental organisation, was arrested for protesting against Arctic oil drilling.

Durban-born Naidoo was arrested on Friday after climbing the ladder of an oil rig from an inflatable about 120km off the coast of Greenland. He delivered a petition containing 50 000 names from people across the world and demanded that oil

drilling operations in the Arctic be halted immediately. He was arrested and flown to Greenland by helicopter.

Naidoo's brother, Kovin, said last night: "We have had contact with the deputy minister of foreign affairs who has promised to follow up on this matter."

In a transmission to his colleagues before his arrest, Naidoo said: "It looks like I'm being arrested now... I did this because Arctic oil drilling is one of the defining environmental battles of our age. I'm an African but I care deeply about what's happening up here." — Isaac Mahlangu




The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Hamdan Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Award for Distinguished Academic Performance

Announces the call for nominations for the

UNESCO-Hamdan Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Prize
for Outstanding Practice and Performance in Enhancing the Effectiveness of Teachers

\$ 270,000

The UNESCO-Hamdan bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Prize for Outstanding Practice and Performance in Enhancing the Effectiveness of Teachers aims to promote initiatives that contribute to improving educational practices around the world, with priority given to developing country contexts, as well as to marginalized and disadvantaged communities from the wider global context.

The value of the Prize, US \$270.000, shall be divided between three winners.

Candidates should be Organizations, international or national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), institutions or local, national and regional communities who are working to enhance the performance and effectiveness of teachers.

Letters of Nomination must be sent during the period of 15th June to 15th September 2011 to the following address;

UNESCO
Section for Teacher Policy & Development
Education for Planning and Development of Education Systems
ATTN: UNESCO-Hamdan Prize
7 place de Fontenoy
F-75352 Paris 07 SP
France

www.hamdanunesco.ae