

Newsletter 2010 March

We begin this month's communiqué with feed-back on the George Ratepayer Group's meeting with Minister Bredell in Cape Town – the group was well received with the five Chairmen being given a very sympathetic hearing. It was apparent that many of the issues raised were an eye-opener for the Minister, who assured the group that our concerns would be taken into serious consideration. However, the current political situation could well hamper Province's good intentions, so whether any quick solutions will be put into effect is another issue.

Members are warned that property rates and electricity and water tariffs are likely to be ramped up in the new July municipal budget, to cover shortfalls due to over-borrowing. You are also urged to scrutinize your municipal accounts, and to question any journal entries that do not provide details of the basis used for charging. In the meantime, WRRRA will push for the cancellation of councillors' and officials' bonuses and salary increases for this financial year.

On a lighter note, we're very pleased to advise that our wonderful "Welcome to Wilderness" brochure can now be visited on our website. Thanks to the team, our sponsors and to Imel Rautenbach of Office Reliance for making this possible. Check it out on www.wrra.co.za. We have already received many compliments about our website, including some from other Ratepayer groups who either want to copy our example or see us as a threat to their tourism industry! Please note there is a change to the emergency number published in the brochure which is now **044-801-6300**.

We have received clarification relating to the removal of residents' garden refuse, which is, in fact, removed by the regular garbage truck if within the 7 bag system. The Council only sends a special truck around our area to collect "green refuse" when their own workmen have been cleaning the verges or residents have requested the removal of trees that have blown over onto the road during a storm.

Also received is an amended schedule from Sanparks for opening times at Freesia Rock. The gates will be opened from 07h30 to 18h00 daily. Should you experience problems in accessing the area during these times, you can contact Donovan McKeith on 078-804-4669 or Ursula Burrows on 083 479 1710.

To end with further good news, the aloes which were taken out along the railway tracks parallel to Sands Road are to be replanted, although Transnet will not remove the weeds as the station is no longer a Transnet Heritage property.