

Newsletter 2010 September

WRRRA is pleased to advise that Colleen Simons of the Wilderness Community Forum, who represents the interests of Kleinkrantz residents and residents of the informal settlement at erf 329 in Wilderness Heights, has agreed to join our committee on secondment. Colleen will bring another dimension to our efforts to support all the residents of Wilderness.

We would like to advise our Estate Agency members that Building Controllers are planning a crack-down on Estate Agents' "For Sale" signs that remain on display outside the times prescribed by municipal bylaws. We, in any event, encourage you to abide by the regulations, as a proliferation of such signs permanently displayed, is considered by many people to detract from our sense of place that Estate Agents should rather wish to encourage. It also leaves an impression that the area is in decline.

It has been brought to our attention by the Southern Cape Fire Protection Association that owners of small holdings who do not maintain proper firebreaks on their properties can be sued for damages by their neighbours in the event of a fire jumping boundaries. Another word of caution comes from insurance companies who can refuse to pay out claims if residents fail to check their house alarm systems regularly with their security company. In both above-mentioned cases, it is up to you to take responsibility.

The Association is tackling the municipality on their continued charging of emergency water tariffs, permission for which was given to them by National Treasury, with the proviso that they were only valid until 30th June 2010. We are in communication with National Treasury officials regarding the unworkable and possibly illegal budget adopted by the municipality for 2010/11. A recent communication from National Treasury advises that they are taking our point very seriously, and have called a meeting with Provincial and Municipal officials to ensure that our concerns are "dealt with appropriately". We are also looking into the somewhat bizarre proposal for George Municipality to sell water to Mossel Bay while George residents may still be subject to higher tariffs and water restrictions.

Just a brief word on recycling – it has been pointed out to us that some milk cartons are recyclable, so it would be best if you look for any recycling instructions before discarding such cartons.

The umbrella body of Ratepayer Associations recently formed in the greater George area has been strengthened with Herolds Bay joining as the sixth member. The mandate of this forum is to bring areas of common concern to council for meaningful discussion and resolution. A meeting took place on 13th September 2010 between this Ratepayers Forum, the Mayoral Executive Committee and various senior officials, who listened carefully, and are taking notice of this strong body representing the ratepayer's interests. WRRRA will continue to independently take matters of local concern to council. Our Chairman, Graham Sell, has also been elected Chairman of the Ratepayers Forum.

The overhead electrical cable across the wetland has been replaced by an underground cable along the Hoekwil Road to Kingfisher Close for aesthetic and maintenance reasons. Furthermore, members can now purchase electricity on line at no additional cost, via www.prepaid24.co.za. As with any online transaction, normal caution is advised for ensuring correct data entry. In reaching agreement to work more closely with Kleinkrantz residents, it has been brought to our attention that they have no reliable means of purchasing electricity in their area. The Association is attempting to have a facility made available for them.

Capt. Davids, of our local police station, has expressed his thanks to the Wilderness community for reporting incidents, as this helps the police. Housebreaking of empty or holiday homes is an

increasing problem as these types of property are not being adequately secured. Drug abuse and drunken driving is an increasing problem but is under control at the moment. There are a number of drug peddlers in the area of which the police are aware. A number of vehicle checkpoints were held during the month. Many drivers do not carry their driving licences and many vehicles are not licensed, while some people do not even stop at the road blocks. The sector cell phone in the police bakkie is out of order at the moment and is about to be replaced.

When our out-of-town members next come for a visit, you will notice many changes in the village. Our local businesses are gearing up to take advantage of the approaching high season, in the hope of recuperating the loss of business suffered during the World Cup.

Our grateful thanks to Imel Rautenbach of Office Reliance for updating our website for us.

We end with the comforting news that all reports we have received from a variety of interested and affected parties and officials regarding the proposed new N2 routing, assure us that with the establishment of the Greater Garden Route National Park, the highway will not be permitted to pass through the wetlands. Nonetheless, we will continue to press for the removal of the proclaimed route from the statute books.