

## 2012 June Newsletter

The Wilderness Improvement Program (WIP) is an ambitious plan, with the key to the success being the co-operation of all stakeholders, including residents, ratepayers, business community, George Municipality, SANRAL and Transnet. The successful establishment of a Business Forum for Wilderness soon after the launch of the WIP, is a first step in addressing areas of common concern to the business community of Wilderness such as Safety & Security, Parking and Traffic Flow, Pedestrian Walkways and the General Cleanliness of the village. Each of these areas will be scoped, prioritised and turned into working projects in the weeks and months to come. The next major issue to address and overcome will be the funding of each individual project to its successful conclusion. We will keep all interested parties up to date with the program and the progress of each project in the months that lie ahead.

Hats off to Vernon Gibbs-Halls from Eden Municipality's Planning and Environmental Unit, for pioneering the Blue Flag application for a stretch of beach next to the NSRI station. Kudos to local businessmen Massimo Mariotti and Claudio Nespola of Salinas for assisting with this project, which is critical in bringing much needed tourism to our village. Coastal Care have also painted and refurbished the ablution facilities, and cleared the parking area surrounds of weeds and alien grasses. Indigenous plants are now needed to beautify these open spaces around the parking area, so if you have indigenous plants to spare, your donation of such to this important project will be much appreciated. Donated plants can be dropped off at Salinas who are acting as a receiving point for Coastal Care. The 22<sup>nd</sup> June will be the final inspection by WESSA, whereafter the formal application for Blue Flag status will be made.

While on the topic of plants, a residents' project is on the go to clean-up and restore the previously magnificent aloe beds westward from Wilderness Station parallel to the N2. Volunteers are needed next week, at 09h00 on Thursday 21st June, so take along a rake and assist the Hoekwil Conservancy and Ratepayers Association members with this clean-up, or alternatively drop off a gardener. Come on, locals! Let's show some pride in our village and help to save our wild aloes and restore this area back to its former glory.

The Association has sponsored a rubbish bin that has been located at the Serpentine River fishing spot under the Hoekwil Road Bridge. Sanparks have agreed to service the regular clearing of the bin.

One of our members has warned us of the following scam attempted on him. You may receive a telephone call from someone purporting to be from "Win Solutions", a MSWindows maintenance company who they say is based in Cape Town. They inform you that you may have been sent an email and downloads or attachments which could affect your P.C., and ask you to

switch it on and provide pass code details etc. This is a scam targeted at the George area at the moment to obtain access to your P.C. with predictable results. Our thanks to Rob for this tip-off.

WRRRA has been advised by Cllr. Van Wyk that two teams of six street cleaners will rotate in the Wilderness area from August when the new municipal budget kicks in. It is unfortunate that there seems to be no budget available to replace our aging water pipes, after several serious bursts were recently experienced. On the subject of water, while there are serious concerns over the quality of the lagoon water and the origins of its contamination, test results show that our drinking water is unaffected, and still safe for use.

On the revaluation saga, it seems that the municipality will re-assess any properties recently valued at 25% over or under the 2007 figure. Supplementary valuations will then take place on a regular basis, and these will also be subject to the objection process.

Please take note that Eskom have announced that yet another power shutdown is scheduled for Wilderness for 8<sup>th</sup> July. In addition, as electricity charges are going up by over 11% on 1<sup>st</sup> July, a reminder for residents with prepaid meters to consider investing in additional electricity before the end of June, particularly as it seems that George Municipality are also discontinuing the current 20 free units of power from that date. Residents also need to enter any unused electricity recharge pin codes before midnight on 30 June, or prepaid purchases may be forfeited. A reminder that Prepaid24.com website is a useful online service for the purchase of electricity, where your recharge pin code is sent almost immediately by SMS to your cellphone.