

2013 February

Holiday Season

All reports, with the exception of two unfortunate letters in the press, indicate that this past holiday season was highly successful, with no major incidents reported. We wish to express our thanks to all the Municipal officials involved – cleansing, law enforcement, traffic officials, and others. We would encourage you to write positive letters to the George Herald to counteract the negative perceptions that might have been generated.

The Blue Flag status of the beach was very well received. At the handover of WRRRA's cheque for R10 000 in support of the enormous contribution that SANParks made to the enjoyment and safety of all who visited the Wilderness Beach over the holiday season, Neville Ewing thanked all the officials concerned over the holiday season who kept Wilderness safe and looking good. There is no doubt that the Blue Flag status of the beach gave the entire Wilderness area a massive tourism boost. It is never easy to quantify the results as they are dependant on many more factors including the weather – and even that played its part over the holidays.

Thornton Booth

On a sad note, January saw the death of WRRRA past chairperson Thornton Booth. Thornton was an active member of the Wilderness Community and his contribution will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Avril, and their family at this time.

The way forward 2013

At our February meeting Pieter Naude tabled some suggestions that were unanimously accepted regarding the way forward for 2013. Some highlights were:

- The WRRRA will focus on serving the interests of the ratepayers and residents of Wilderness, and will not be used as a vehicle for private issues or agendas.
- We wish to establish and maintain working relationships with local, provincial and national authorities on the basis of joint co-operation, support and mutual benefit.
- We will encourage and promote regular feedback between all interested and affected parties, and communicate information that is relevant and informative, thus adding value for our members.
- We will endeavour to increase our membership so that we can strengthen the voice of the Association.

We will elaborate on further aspects in subsequent Newsletters.

Wilderness Improvement Program

- As part of the Wilderness Improvement Program, members (and the public) will have noticed that the planters on the N2 through the village have been cleared of all weeds and dead plant material and are already looking a whole lot better. This has been through the efforts of Corrine Roff and her staff from The Chelsea Gardener and made possible by a very generous financial contribution from two of her clients. We sincerely thank Corrine and the benefactors for this and look forward to the replanting towards the end of February when the weather has cooled a little.
- We are hoping to have the Village Monitors in place and operating in the next few weeks. These will take the place of the self-appointed "car guards". We wish to express our thanks to Les and Veronica Stephens of 4Front Consultants who are busy with the recruitment process and who will provide the subsequent training at no charge. They will also be handling the assessment of the performance of the Village Monitors, and dealing with any resultant labour issues.

- The Keep Wilderness Clean project will see a number of eco-friendly dustbins installed in the CBD. These are of the same design as the one installed at the Blue Flag Beach, except that these will only have one bin for recyclable waste, and another for general rubbish. These will greatly assist the Village Monitors in keeping the CBD neat and tidy. The bins are being manufactured locally as part of a job creation project; if you would like to sponsor one, please contact Paul Nicholas.
- Constantia Kloof Conservancy garden - In the spirit of the Wilderness Improvement Program, the Constantia Kloof Conservancy took the initiative and planted a very attractive garden at the entrance to Constantia Kloof, all at their own expense. Well done to them! We encourage everyone to help make a difference.

Wilderness Tourism office

We are pleased to announce that after much delay the Wilderness Tourism office now has a telephone in their new premises. Their phone number is unchanged.

Kleinkrantz Creche

This much-needed facility has finally been opened and will provide the residents of the area with a safe environment for their children while they are at work.

Council matters

A meeting with Clr Leon van Wyk highlighted the following items of interest:

- Meetings will be arranged between WRRRA and Municipal officials to discuss the way forward with Wilderness Tourism.
- Leon will report back on progress with convening the Valuations Appeal Board.
- The future of the Wilderness Hotel is still far from resolved, and the Municipality is in the process of recovering money from the Hotel's liquidators and the Home Owners' Association.

Correction

In our January Newsletter we gave the incorrect email address for Pearce Johnston. It should have been: pearce.johnston@vodamail.co.za . Would you please note the change.