

**2013 August**

**Wilderness Improvement Program (WIP)**

It has been most encouraging to see how this program is being embraced by Wilderness residents and the officials of the Municipality. The prevailing sentiment on the part of residents and Municipal officials is definitely “can do”.

In this regard you might have seen that the Wild News carried the announcement of a “competition” to acknowledge those individuals and organizations that have gone the extra mile to improve the infrastructure and appearance of the Village and its surrounds. We won’t repeat what was said there, but congratulations to the gardening team at L’azur and the residents of Constantia Kloof. If you know of any similar projects, please contact Trevor White or the editor of the Wild News.

As part of the WIP the relevant municipal authorities were approached to work on small projects which could serve to have a significant impact on the WIP in general.

One such project which has been undertaken without delay is **the continuation of the side walk on both sides of the road leading to the stone bridge to Milkwood Village**. The bridge itself is going to be raised by two layers of the same stone in order to place small yet attractive flower-boxes with perennial flowers on the walls in order to liven up the entrance to the post-boxes, Spar and the Milkwood Village. As arguably a good 75% of Wilderness residents and many visitors use the bridge regularly to gain access to the areas in question, this was identified as a small project with a potentially ‘big’ impact on the WIP.

Another project is the **building of a side-walk (pavement) from behind The Blue Olive restaurant along Leila’s Lane up to Sanctuary Lane**. As pedestrians currently have to walk in the road, a side-walk was deemed essential to prevent a pedestrian accident on that stretch of road.

The relevant authorities from the George Municipality appointed approved service-providers to undertake these projects. At the request of the WRRRA, the contractors have been encouraged to make use of Wilderness labour. WRRRA would like to extend their appreciation to those officials from the George Municipality who have acted decisively to support the WIP.

**The final phase in the upgrading of the Alleyway** next to the N2 has just been completed. The project was managed by Bertie Basson of Bertcon Construction together with Paul Nicholas of WRRRA. We had intended to pave the area from The Girls to Wilderness Hardware, but thanks to the generosity of a number of sponsors we were able to pave the entire roadway with only a small proportion coming from WRRRA project funds. We will report more on this in a special newsletter.

**The Village Monitors** will be taken over by GWBI as from the end of August, providing they can raise the necessary finance. So far the program has been a resounding success, although not without its teething problems. It must be appreciated that this was the pilot phase of an entirely new initiative, and it should run much more smoothly in future.

**GIPTN**

The issue of the positioning of the bus terminus (alternatively described as a “transfer station or step-over facility”) opposite the Hotel remains a bone of contention, with the WRRRA Committee again confirming its unanimous opposition to this location and supporting an alternative site, utilizing the SANParks parking area adjacent to the N2. We will continue to engage the Municipality and our local Councilor, Leon van Wyk, on this issue in order to get a satisfactory resolution.

**Oktober Beerfest**

An article in the George Herald of 18 July seems to indicate that the proposed Beerfest has been moved to a venue in George. However, we have heard nothing from Council in response to our comments; no meeting has been arranged and no reply received. It is disappointing that decisions relating to Wilderness and its residents are not made in consultation with WRRRA and other representative bodies such as the Greater Wilderness Business Initiative.

**POWER INTERRUPTION**

We have been notified by Eskom that as work continues on the new Blanco - Knysna 132 kV double circuit overhead line, they are planning work at the Wilderness substation and Woodville substations in the month of August or September between 06:00 - 18:00. The planned power outage will affect Wilderness, Hoekwil and Touwsrante users. The preliminary date to interrupt the power at Wilderness substation will be dependent on the completion of the outage for Knysna and Plettenberg

Bay in July as well as the interruption of power to Sedgfield and Karatara early in August. Eskom have asked us to advise them if there are any dates that would not be suitable. As we get nearer the time, and Eskom has more clarity, they will inform the Municipality of the final dates and times. The CBD will not be affected by this interruption.

#### **ELECTRICITY SUPPLY TO WILDERNESS VILLAGE COMMON**

We were pleased to be informed by the Municipality that should anyone wish to have an electrical supply provided for an event on Wilderness Common, the Municipality has in place a system whereby they will install a temporary kiosk to provide this supply. There is a daily charge for this service, and the person to contact should you wish to make use of this, is Eugene Saaiman at Electrical and Technical Services.

#### **NEWS FROM SANRAL**

- We trust that the recent special newsletters regarding the roadworks on the N2, and the efforts of Hugh Pharoah, have resulted in an improved understanding of what is being planned and the constraints imposed on the contractors. Due to the reckless behaviour of certain motorists, the stop-go measures at intersections have had to be more strictly enforced.
- Neville Ewing reports that the windbreaks that have been set up to stop the sand that keeps blowing on to the N2 have been changed in line with SANRAL's new procedures and these have been repositioned so that they are at roughly right angles to the wind and not parallel to the N2 any more.
- Mr Johan Nel from Qunu Consulting, who has the contract for cleaning the N2 in our area, was also adamant that no temporary signs may be erected on the N2 without the proper permission from the municipality and if we become aware of any, he would like to be informed and will have them removed and the perpetrators fined.
- Authority for the upgrading of the cycle path at a cost of R500 000 has been received and this has been put out to tender.

#### **GENERAL**

- We are very pleased to inform you that the quality of our drinking water falls well within the SABS specifications.
- We would appeal to dog owners who walk their animals on the Village Common please to ensure that they pick up their "doggy litter" and do not simply leaving it lying in the grass where other users of the Common encounter it.
- We would ask all residents to take extra care on our roads and to adhere to the speed limits, especially the 40 km an hour restriction on Waterside Road and the gravel section that connects the Touw River bridge to the Hoekwil Road. Due to the N2 roadworks these roads are taking a much heavier traffic load than they were designed for, so ignoring the speed limit places all road users, as well as the many cyclists and walkers who use these roads, at particular risk.
- Crime in Wilderness has increased in August, after a quiet July. There have been 4 break-ins and a number of thefts out of vehicles over the last few days. The police have made two arrests and are following up other leads. The modus operandi seems similar in all cases: during the day time, one person knocks on the door and asks for work or food; if the door is not answered an accomplice appears and the house is broken into. **The police have asked residents to report any suspicious activity or persons in the area.** It is appropriate in this connection, to commend the Wilderness Station Commander, Bennie Boshoff, and his staff for the manner in which they have responded to calls and their proactive and helpful approach to residents at all times.

#### **COMMITTEE NEWS**

- We are pleased to report that Pieter Naude is making good progress and continues to be involved in various projects, albeit to a lesser degree.
- We are sorry to inform you that John and Marie Callanan have resigned from the Committee. We want to thank them for the outstanding job they have done over a number

of years in charge of the very difficult portfolio of Town Planning. Until such time as we are able to replace them, please address all town planning queries to me.

Phillip Parsons  
(Vice-Chairperson)