



WRRRA NewsBites July 2019

Wilderness Ratepayers and Residents Association

UPCOMING EVENTS:

WRRRA FIRE FORUM LAUNCH - 7 August 18:00 for 18:30 at the Wilderness Hotel

With the George Fires still fresh in people's minds, the approach of summer with hot berg winds and dry vegetation is leading to another situation of potential large fires.

Wilderness and surrounding areas are at high risk! Whilst we were largely spared in the last fires this means there is a lot of dangerous fire fuel load in the area.

Communities need to be more aware and vigilant in being prepared to deal with this looming threat. With this in mind, the newly formed WRRRA Fire Forum Launch is a 'must attend' with guest speakers on topics such as:

- What you need to know about Fire Insurance
- Presentation by the George Fire Chief on Risk Assessment findings in the Greater Wilderness area
- Actions taken and still to be taken
- Community involvement in Fire Management

A highly informative booklet on Wilderness as a high fire-risk area and what to do will be available.

We urge you to attend this launch, interact with your fellow community members and help in taking action to protect a possible major disaster.

Are you a member of your local Fire Forum?

WILDERNESS ART FESTIVAL - February 2020

The dates for the second annual Wilderness Art Festival have been confirmed as Thursday 27, Friday 28 and Saturday 29 February, 2020.

WRRRA TALKS

The talk by Jonathan Britton from SANParks on the Touw River Estuary earlier this month attracted a large attendance and was very well received by the enthusiastic audience.

Don't miss these next two exciting talks:

The next WRRRA Talk is bound to be a sure winner when **Hugo Leggatt**, one of our most popular speakers, will deliver an educational and entertaining talk about the Rock Art in our area. ***The Rock Art of the Southern Cape: Forgotten Treasures of Our Distant Past*** will take place on **Wednesday, 28 August**, 18h00 for 18h30 at the Wilderness Hotel.

And, SAVE THE DATE.....

Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water: Our talk postponed from June about **Sharks** is now in the diary for **Wednesday, 16 October**, 18h00 for 18h30 at the Wilderness Hotel. **Dr Enrico Gennari**, world-renowned marine researcher and Director of Research at Oceans Research in Mossel Bay, will present research insights and the multipronged approach to **Shark Conservation along the South Cape Coast**.

CALLING ALL MEMBERS - do you have any suggestions for future speakers or topics?
Please email the committee secretary using the [WRRA Talk suggestion link](#) on the [WRRA website](#).

NEW VILLAGE MONITORS

Our new team of Village Monitors is up and running! We wish to extend a warm welcome to them and ask that our residents, business owners and visitors make acquaintance with them. It is important that we get to know who are the official Monitors in order to avoid unpleasant incidences that have occurred in the past. The photo below will help and we will be posting their pictures and names on the Village Notice Board next to Spar as well.



From left to right:

Vernon Gewelaar, Marius Grootboom, Mervin Veldman, Dawid Saptou, Henry Luiters, Benet Baardman, Benedict Solomons, Errol Gouws

Front:

Reginald Louw

MASTS / TOWERS IN THE VILLAGE

Concern has been raised by local residents and businesses about the recent appearance of a tower between Pomodoro and the Wilderness Hotel. Our Councillor, Marlene Barnardt asked for guidance from the George Municipality and Clinton Peterson from the Town Planning Directorate has commented:

"This appears to be what they call a light mast installation. It is a smaller mast designed to improve localised connectivity. The 4G networks require the traditional larger mast as the main transmitter. The smaller masts

are used as an intermediary to boost the signal between the devices and these masts. These smaller masts do not emit much radiation. The radiation from the larger masts dissipates over a distance of about 15m. The property where this mast is located is zoned as a *Utility Zone*. The zoning permits the erection of the mast as a primary right. There are thus no town planning matters to consider and none of the neighbouring property owners were required to be informed thereof".

SAFETY

Please remember that safety at home starts with you! Be aware, think about vulnerable access points on your property and activate your alarms.

A frequent community concern raised is that of the 'loiterers' around the Village. We have previously noted that whilst the VILLAGE MONITORS play a role in 'controlling' these folk, they are not trained to deal with, or to apprehend anyone. REMINDER - our Village Monitors all wear WRRRA vests with their photo and name on the front. If they do not have that identification, they are **not** a WRRRA monitor. Be vigilant of 'car guards' asking for payment for parking or donations.

SAPS LIAISON

Sadly, we have to report that yet again SAPS are notifying us of the increase in criminal activity in our area, which appears to be the work of a fairly well orchestrated group. At the July SAPS Community meeting, the most recent spate of burglaries was discussed and a 'way forward' agreed on:

1. The various Greater Wilderness Security WA groups need to work more closely and consolidate ideas and actions.
2. A proposal for mobilising CCTV cameras at selected streets/intersections is getting underway.

We cannot stress the importance of each one of us as residents taking responsibility first and foremost for our own personal security (SAPS just don't have the manpower available) and secondly to attend the security meetings and get involved in putting preventative measures in place before it becomes a crisis.

Since George has implemented its CCTV camera project, the move by criminal elements to other areas such as Wilderness is noticeable.

Once again we need to bring your attention to the risk of walking along the railway line across Kaaimans without being accompanied by a guide or as part of a large group. This is an ongoing issue and is sadly putting residents and visitors at risk. Please share this information and stress that the risk is not only of being mugged, but that the actual structure is in a state of disrepair and could present a danger to safety. Whilst there is signage that warns people of danger, it is not being taken seriously.

We urge our guest houses to please communicate these risks to your guests?

PLANNING/BUILDING CONTROL AND GENERAL

- The paving of Lake Road is now complete, with only clean-up still taking place. Traffic calming has also been installed.
- There is no further news as yet on the regional landfill, and local composting sites.

GENERAL

Dogs on the beach: A concerned Sands Road resident has noted with utter dismay, the flagrant disregard for walking dogs on the beach. He is distraught at how pet owners can allow their dogs to defecate both on the

beach as well as resident's private lawns, and do nothing to pick it up. Further, he has also had his 5 year old daughter 'stormed' by dogs, which has now left her terrified.

As a community concerned about the cleanliness and safety on our beaches, we urge all dog owners to please respect your fellow residents and visitors, and to take responsibility for your pet. Familiarise yourself with the dog walking signs and comply by keeping your dogs on a lease where required.

Monitoring of the beach is a SANParks responsibility and you could be fined if found to be transgressing the law. However, let's not adopt that stance, rather let's take responsibility for doing the right and honourable thing?

Happy August and Stay Warm