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Bulletin

Official newsletter of the Overstrand Municipality

UNQUALIFIED AUDIT REPORT ONCE AGAIN

TOP PERFORMANCE, GROWTH UNDER DIFFICULT CONDITIONS

The 2009/2010 Annual Report of Overstrand Municipality as well as that of OLEDA were tabled by the Executive Mayor during the special council meeting of 26 January 2011 and the big news is that we received an unqualified audit report for the fourth consecutive year.

In her foreword, Executive Mayor Nicolette Botha-Guthrie said it is an excellent report for a municipality that managed to show top performance and growth under difficult economic circumstances. She praised her predecessor, Mr Theo Beyleveldt, who was the mayor during the reporting period for putting systems and mechanisms in place to monitor service delivery and budget implementation and to effect changes timeously.

An annual report is one of the most important guiding documents for any municipality in its quest to achieve its constitutional objective of providing democratic and accountable governance to local communities.

Both the reports for the municipality as well as OLEDA were open for comment by the public and other role players until 4 March 2011. Council will consider the annual report together with all these comments and representations during a meeting which is to take place on 30 March 2011. This meeting will be open to the public.



At the commissioning of the new electrical switching station in Gansbaai on Friday 28 January 2011 were, from the left, Theo Potgieter (Kwezi V3), Stephen Muller (Director: Infrastructure and Planning), Mayor Nicolette Botha-Guthrie, Danie Maree (Gansbaai's electricity chief), André Coetzee (Gansbaai Marine), Bertie Ramsauer (Dyer Island Fisheries), Deputy Mayor Pieter Scholtz, André Hugo (Racec) and Cllr Andrew Komani.

NEW ELECTRICAL SUBSTATION COMMISSIONED IN GANSBAAI

The new Gansbaai electrical switching station commissioned on Friday 28 January 2011 by Overstrand Mayor Nicolette Botha-Guthrie is a monumental achievement in more than one way, she said.

"This facility is a monument for co-operative governance as well as for service delivery. Governance in its purest form is a partnership between those who govern and those they serve. It is not a one-sided affair. And the way I see it, in the case of Gansbaai's refurbished switching station, all parties in this equation more than did their bit to turn this into a model of cooperative governance," Mayor Nicolette Botha-Guthrie said.

She then referred specifically to the roles played by Gansbaai Marine and Dyer Island Fisheries, who were represented at the occasion by André Coetzee and Bertie Ramsauer respectively.

Among the others attending the function were Deputy Mayor Pieter Scholtz, Municipal Manager Werner Zybrands, Consulting Engineer Theo Potgieter from Kwezi V3, André Hugo from Racec and municipal officials.

Mayor Botha-Guthrie added that with the new facility, Overstrand Municipality is meeting all of its strategic objectives. Gansbaai is a major economic growth point and while there is an economic

downturn in the rest of the world, it is with gratitude that she can say the need for this new electrical substation was driven by sustainable growth.

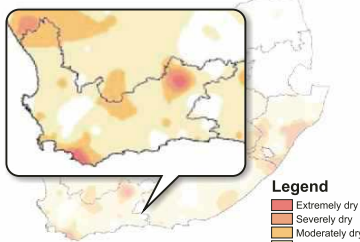
The project also enabled the municipality to promote a safe and healthy environment. The old facility, which was badly damaged in a fire last year, was way past its sell-by date. With the new facility, Gansbaai's residents and business fraternity can now rest assured that their electricity supply is once more safe and sound. Features built into the new substation will make the facility less vulnerable for fire.

The contributions made by Dyer Island Fisheries and Gansbaai Marine enabled the municipality to construct an aesthetically pleasing building and to promote economic development, the Mayor said, adding that it is the municipality's sincere wish to continue building on this mutually beneficial relationship in the years ahead.

Mr Stephen Muller, director of infrastructure and planning, said the previous facility served the community for fifty years and proved the importance of quality workmanship. It was decided in 2008 to upgrade the facility and tenders were called in 2009. The fire in April 2010 expedited the project. The cost of the new substation amounted to almost R5 million.

EXTREMELY DRY CONDITIONS CONFIRMED

Standardised Precipitation Index for
December 2009 to November 2010



The map above, which was issued by the SA Weather Bureau, confirms that the areas surrounding Hermanus and Beaufort-West received far below their usual average rainfall last year. It is still anyone's guess what conditions will be like this year, but we are keeping our fingers crossed that the La Nina conditions that prevailed in the interior will also result in good rains here early on in the winter. Meanwhile, Greater Hermanus residents are called upon to maintain and even improve upon their efforts to save water, efforts which resulted in a 25 percent drop in consumption per month during December and January.

WESTERN CAPE ECO-SCHOOLS SHOWCASE

The Overstrand Eco-Schools have done it again. Not only are they the best but also the biggest node in the Western Cape. No wonder the Wildlife and Environmental Society of SA (WESSA) has agreed that the annual awards event for 2011 will be organised by the Overstrand Conservation Foundation (OCF) and will take place on 29 and 30 April in Hermanus.

This year, the event will take the form of an Eco-Schools Showcase to be presented in the Overstrand Civic Centre. The showcase will attract

delegations from 120 Eco-Schools, their Eco-Schools coordinators and programme partners from across the Western Cape.

On both days there, will be a programme of eco-outings arranged for the delegates, and the highlight of the event will be a fancy-dress picnic and 'enchanted forest' experience in Piet-se-Bos.

Everyone in Overstrand is invited to attend this prestigious and fun educational event. Entrance to all activities is free. Watch the press or visit the OCF website (www.ocf.co.za) for details.

THE ECOLOGY OF FYNBOS (Part 2)

By Niel Fairall

In towns, cities and on farms, fragmentation is the single most important factor impacting fynbos. On farms, fields are ploughed to establish artificial pasture. The scale of fragmentation correlates directly with the intensity of the interventions but are mostly of a type where patches of natural veldt still about one another and can be managed as a unit.

In towns, fragmentation increases rapidly and after a short while, patches comprised of one or more plots which are separated by roads and residences will occur. Eventually, all that remains is a handful of plots and commonages where reasonably natural flora is accommodated, and managing this vegetation with a view to long-term sustainability becomes complicated and, almost without exception, contentious.

As indicated previously, fire has a huge impact on the flora and for this reason, fire is the main technique employed as a management device. Evidently, using fire in a built environment is dangerous and dense, established veldt near homes not something residents will tolerate as a rule. It can be assumed that isolated plots cannot be burnt and that, consequently, a gradually altered flora will be evident since many species need fire for the purpose of germination and rejuvenation. If the assumption is that even will

become built up in time, this state of affairs is not too serious since it is possible to manage these plots as natural parks.

However, we want to keep commonages and nature reserves as natural as possible and in this case, using fire becomes a necessity. It is at this point where all the other factors, such as the fire season and whether it is a hot or cold fire, come into play but, in all likelihood, the most important factor would be controlling the fire so that it can be executed safely. The natural fire season is summer, when it is dry and windy and a clean fire can be brought about. It does, however, pose dangers. It is preferable to burn a huge area in one go, but fires can easily get out of control. It is under these circumstances where it would be better to compromise by only burning controllable spots at a time when the veldt is either soaked or moist.

Huge nature reserves can be burnt in blocks, and the scale of the fire will be more natural. Spot fires are preferable in smaller reserves, such as the Kleinmond Coastal Reserve. The fire will be cool and not burn as cleanly, but its manageability makes it safe near homes.

Fynbos ecology turns fire into a prerequisite and for this reason, it should be utilised, irrespective of how controversial this practice may be.



PERFECT HOST AT 102

Well-loved Kleinmond centenarian Arthur Cowley (left) received a visit from Overstrand Mayor Nicolette Guthrie-Botha (middle) and Deputy Mayor Pieter Scholtz (right) to congratulate him on his 102nd birthday on 28 January 2011. Their gift to him was a fruit and Swiss chocolate bouquet. Mr Cowley was the perfect host and offered his guests a slice of chocolate cake, which they enjoyed together. He also showed the Mayor a newspaper clipping of the two of them at last year's Armistice Day ceremony in Hermanus, where he was welcomed as the oldest survivor of the Burma Theatre of World War II. Arthur clearly enjoyed the visit thoroughly. He has a wonderful sense of humour and jokingly referred to his one knee which seems to be better after a prayer to the good Lord. "It is just a pity" he said "that I forgot to ask the Lord to also see to my left hip."



SOUL OF CHOPIN

On Thursday 24 March at 19:00 OAK will present Ching-Yun Hu, pianist, currently from Munich, in concert at the Overstrand Auditorium in Hermanus. Called 'dazzling' and 'a pianist with the soul of Chopin', Ching-Yun Hu captured the top prize at the 2008 Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition in Tel Aviv. Ms Hu made her solo debut at age 13 and at the age of 16 walked away with the silver medal at the Taipei International Piano Competition. In 2009, her first prize at the Concert Artists' Guild International Competition secured her a Carnegie Hall recital. She will perform works by Beethoven, Schumann, Schubert and Liszt. **Book at Bellini in Hermanus on 028 312 4988. Phone René du Plooy on 082 940 4238 for any further enquiries.**



COMMUNITY SAFETY

Being vigilant in the interest of all helps to curb crime

A key element of any successful crime-fighting campaign is that people should look out for the interests of others. In Pearly Beach, there is a group of dedicated and willing men and women who take turns to patrol the town every night.

This neighbourhood watch regards all properties as their responsibility, irrespective of whether such properties have signed up with a direct-response security service or not.

At this stage, Pearly Beach Patrols is limited to a small group of people, says Mr Theo Coetzer, but they nevertheless succeed in keeping crime to the absolute minimum.

"Should residents and home owners wish to support us in our endeavours, it will be highly appreciated. Not only do we need financial support; we also ask residents to join the team so that

we can strengthen our forces," he said.

Contributions are welcomed and can be deposited at the Pearly Gate shopping centre, the restaurant and pub going by the name of Die Rooibier and with the restaurant known as Loko 15. Direct electronic transfers are also possible, and banking details in this regard are as follows: Pearly Beach Patrols, Nedbank Gansbaai, Savings account number 2820001343.

This is an example worth following, and those interested are welcome to contact Mr Coetzer on 082 461 8475 to learn the ropes.



MORAL STANDARDS INITIATIVE

The value of responsibility

What do you make of this dream? The community of Overstrand sits down next to a fire and together debates the following issue: What type of community would we like to be? Everyone gives an input and, eventually, we all agree that respect, responsibility and caring will be incorporated in our values. This would make a huge difference!

A community can only coexist effectively if they have reached an unwritten agreement on what is acceptable and what is not. This is what we call values. Parents teach their children certain behaviours because they believe it is in keeping with the values of the community where they reside. Their approach will only be successful if the community cooperates and everyone tries to emulate these values.

A good example would be cooperating to save water. Since responsibility

is one of our communal values, we all unite in our efforts to save water. People do this because they take responsibility for the community's future wellbeing. Children see how their parents are conserving water and, in this way, are taught the value of responsibility.

The more people emulate these values, the less the need to employ law enforcers and rules. May the valued people in our towns always outnumber those who simply live to please themselves.

Compiled by Dr Wilhelm Burger.

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if you want to participate in a discussion on how we can entrench responsibility as one of our key values.