

Lagoon breach causes chaos



LEFT & RIGHT: Volunteers young and old helped to rescue the birds in distress. MIDDLE: Klein River Lagoon after it was allegedly illegally breached on Sunday morning. PHOTOS: Martin Etsebeth

Writer
Taylum Meyer

The Klein River lagoon, which is about 10 km long and just over 2 km wide at its widest point, breached at Grotto Beach on Sunday morning, leaving hundreds of birds in danger of drowning.

Overstrand Municipal Manager Dean O'Neill says the breach appears to have been done illegally. "Artificial breaching of estuaries can only take place with proper authorisation and according to the guidelines set out by the approved Klein River Mouth Management Plan (MMP). We once again appeal to residents to not take matters into their own hands by breaching the estuaries. Transgressors are liable to a fine or imprisonment if convicted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA)."

Before artificially breaching an estuary mouth, careful consideration is taken due to the detrimental effects it can have on the natural functioning of estuarine ecosystems, resulting in ecological degradation and potential danger to human life.

Wildlife rehabilitator Michelle Watson, who is part of the Kogelberg

Biosphere Wildlife Rescue team that arrived to help rescue the distressed and injured birds at Grotto Beach, says, "The massive surge of water from the lagoon breach caught a lot of the resident water birds by surprise and resulted in many drowning or being washed out to sea. The aftermath of Sunday morning revealed tens of dead birds and many more struggling with seaweed entanglement, exhaustion, and hypothermia.

"First to arrive at this devastating scene was Kathryn Marshall from KROW (KleinRivier OverWatch), who immediately started rescuing and containing those birds that concerned beach goers were able to catch. An impromptu incident command centre was established on the lawn alongside the public toilets where volunteers dropped off cardboard boxes and towels. Volunteers from other NGOs such as The Whale Coast Conservation Fund, and the Kogelberg Wildlife Rescue Team, also arrived to help round up the floundering birds."

Michelle says Kathryn and her team's heroic efforts resulted in 289 birds being safely relocated to a release site further up the Klein River, inside the pristine Coppull Private Nature Reserve. "A further 13 Reb-knobbed

Coots and 4 Grebes, which were found barely alive and suffering from extreme hypothermia, were given first aid by myself. Overnight these critical patients were given warmth, food and 24-hour care which ensured that all 17 survived. Large-scale rescues like this are becoming more common as we encroach on wild spaces and change the landscape around us. The Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue Team is addressing these issues by planning to open a wildlife rehabilitation centre in the Overstrand." (To support this cause, visit <https://kogelbergbiosphere.org.za/wildlife-rescue/>)

Vets and nurses from Bergview Veterinary Hospital also assisted in providing much-needed care to the birds.

Several local residents who were on the scene during the breach have stressed their concerns about the poor reaction times by some of the relevant authorities. Dr John Bristow says, "We called the relevant authorities at 09:20, stressing the urgency of the situation. Unfortunately, there was no response from them until after 12:00."

John also says that off-leash dogs did not help the already chaotic

situation. "We were in the midst of a very obvious crisis of helpless birds drowning in the surf. We had to fend off uncontrolled dogs while trying to rescue the birds from the surf and the beach. Both the relevant authorities and the public need to be taken to task for the situation that arose on Sunday."

Apart from the disastrous effect that the illegal breaching of the Klein River had on the estuary's ecosystem and the surrounding bird life, there were two more serious incidents on Sunday morning.

The first took place just before 11:00, when NSRI Hermanus received a distress call that a vessel with one person on board had been pulled out of the estuary and was in difficulty in the mouth of the breach. The vessel was safely grounded on the beach before rescue resources arrived and the sailor was safe.

The second took place not 30 minutes later when a young swimmer attempting to cross the breach was caught by the strong current. Dr Michelle Emmett of The Real You in Hemel-en-Aarde Village was there to witness what could have been a tragic event. "A local swimmer got into trouble as he attempted to

traverse the lagoon breach. The water was flowing excessively fast and the currents were turbulent in both directions," Michelle recounts. "When the swimmer couldn't manage to make it all the way across to the other side of the channel, he attempted to allow the current to push him onto the west side of the channel on Grotto Beach. Unfortunately, due to the riptides he was swept out to sea.

"At this stage I and a young bodyboarder, Matthew Phillips, tried to keep eyes on the swimmer who had allowed himself to float beyond the breakers in an attempt to reach the shore further down the beach. We notified NSRI who immediately got their spotter plane and ground rescue teams to the scene. Next thing the swimmer's head popped up through the surf and Matthew ran in to get him. As we walked out of the surf, he gave Matthew a big hug and thanked him. It was his lucky day, which could have had a very unfortunate ending!"

The public is advised to not try to cross the breach at this time.

Keep an eye out for The Village NEWS 12 May when we will be publishing an article on the ecological harm that can result from breaching an estuary at the wrong time.

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MY COMMUNITY

When wanderlust calls

Overberg resident Annette Yell joined The Village NEWS last year as a journalist. Much loved by the local community and with a long history in print media, she was welcomed with open arms.

Not one to shy away from hard work or a challenge, Annette soon proved herself to be indispensable. So much so that when revered Village NEWS editor, Hedda Mittner, left the newspaper, Annette was the obvious choice to replace her. Annette confidently ushered in a host of changes, and The Village NEWS staff were immediately in awe of her confidence, can-do attitude, and leadership skills. She made a point of forming relationships with each of the staff, just like she has done with all the people she has met through writing articles.

Annette made sure that the good news was always front and centre as she believes in reporting on things that lift people's spirits and building and promoting community – which is also the ethos of The Village NEWS.



Annette has decided to accept a job opportunity that will also allow her time to follow her sense of adventure that is always calling her. Her love for road trips, off-road biking trails, travel, and much-needed time with her husband means that we sadly had to say goodbye to

Annette as The Village NEWS editor (luckily, she will still be writing stories for the newspaper in her spare time).

The Village NEWS team truly feels the loss of this incredible woman who has been an inspiring role model and great asset to the newspaper we all love.

Annette has embodied the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." Thank you for leaving a trail, Annette. We wish you everything of the very best and will miss your special, bright smile and seemingly boundless energy and positivity!

– The Village NEWS team

Blue Cranes poisoned

Wicus Leeuwner, co-founder of the Overberg Crane Group (OCG), was called out to the site of a suspected poisoning in the Overberg in April. Twelve Blue Cranes were already dead at the dam, and another 11 were so affected that they could not stand up. Their deaths are believed to be as a result of organophosphate consumption, which will make it the second reported poisoning incident in under a year in the Overberg.

Quick reactions vital

Late on Good Friday morning, members of the OCG were alerted about the dead cranes on the farm by a neighbouring farmer. CapeNature was also contacted, and Allistair Pietersen responded immediately by rushing to the site. Wicus said, "The surviving cranes reluctantly left their partners' sides and flew off when we approached."

An unusually large amount of maize and wheat was found strewn around the small dam. As poisoning was suspected, all the prescribed procedures were followed – including collecting the stomach contents to be sent for analysis. The dead cranes and a dead Spurwing goose were buried. Thanks to the quick reaction of all involved, the 11 affected Blue Cranes – who were in urgent need of medical attention – were attended to.

Wicus said, "Being a public holiday it was almost impossible to get hold of any assistance. At this point, the wonderful staff of Bergview Veterinary Hospital in Hermanus saved the day. They opened after hours specially for us and generously donated enough medication to treat all 11 affected cranes for suspected organophosphate poisoning. What a wonderful gift to the cranes."

On Saturday morning nine of the birds could walk on their own accord to a small safe dam near to where they were taken for treatment. Two birds were kept for further treatment but subsequently also left the site fully recovered.

Wicus would like to thank everybody involved in this process, especially CapeNature and the Bergview Veterinary Hospital who deserve special mention. CapeNature will release their official findings on the case as soon as the stomach analysis is completed. If poisoning is confirmed, a case will be opened to investigate the offence. The Nature Conservation Ordinance states that people are not permitted to lay or allow anyone else to lay any poison at a place where it could be ingested by an animal. Those found guilty of contravening the law face jail time of up to 10 years and a fine of up to R100 000.

Goodbye, Murray

Our much loved columnist, Murray Stewart, has decided to put his pen down and retire from writing his weekly column for The Village NEWS.

Over the years, Murray has entertained our readers with a string of successful columns in The Village NEWS – *Wit's End*, *A Far Kraai*, *For Fact's Sake*, and most recently, *Mental Floss*. He was the runner-up for Best Columnist at the Forum of Community Journalists Excellence Awards for three years in a row.

Murray hails from Johannesburg where he grew up in Craighall Park. In Grade 3 he was encouraged by his father, an accomplished jazz pianist, to take up piano lessons, a skill that would benefit him later in life in his career as a composer and sound engineer. In high school Murray was very involved in sports and was also the lead drummer of the school cadets. His plans to study Industrial Psychology after school, however, fell by the wayside when he had to enlist in the army.

After his stint in the Medical Corps in Voortrekkerhoogte, Murray turned his focus to sound engineering and completed a course at the SABC, later becoming a director/partner in three leading audio production houses.

Murray was the sound engineer on various Springbok Radio soapies and dramas such as *Squad Cars*, *Dans van die Flamink*, *The Mind of Tracy Dark* and *Danger Mission*. He also worked extensively with the advertising industry creating jingles for commercials. During this time he composed approximately 100 adverts for radio, TV and film, and thousands of regular radio adverts.

Murray established himself as a respected composer and sound engineer and won gold three times at the Clio Awards in New York – one for Best Radio Production and two for Best Original Music.

In 2007 Murray bought a small farm in the Tulbagh Valley with the intent of semi-retiring. It was then that he realised he had no

knowledge whatsoever of how to farm, and that he had bitten off a lot more than he could chew. The positive side of this endeavour was the little dog that he rescued and named Snowy, who became the inspiration for Murray's first book, *Snowy - The Story of Another African Farm*.

Over the following decade, Murray ascertained that he was definitely not cut out for farming, and with his creative juices once more flowing, he made the move to Hermanus where, in 2017, he was nominated to the board of Whale Coast FM for a year.

Around this time Murray started writing a weekly column for The Village NEWS and returned to his passion for composing and sound engineering. He continues to record adverts and programme billboards for Caledon FM.

Murray has become a familiar face at the quiz nights that are held during the winter months in Hermanus.

His knowledge of music and unusual trivia make him a wanted team member, and he is always ready to show his support to the restaurants hosting the events by ordering two beers.

Murray lives in Sandbaai with his dog and cat. He is often seen stopping at the local shop in his little truck with the dog that accompanies him everywhere. Murray is easy to spot – he is the man who furiously waves and calls from the shop door for his dog to stop blaring the hooter.

Continue enjoying Murray's one-of-a kind humour by visiting his website www.murraystewart.co.za. The website hosts a selection of his award-winning columns and his book *Snowy - The Story of Another African Farm*. Also available on the website are an assortment of Murray's jingles which you can listen to, and a collection of audiobooks called *Storytime Africa* which Murray collaborated on.

– Barbara Hayn



THE VILLAGE NEWS

www.thevillagenewsmedia.co.za

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TIDES		TIDES		TIDES		TIDES	
HIGH	02:46 • 15:12	HIGH	03:20 • 15:47	HIGH	03:55 • 16:24	HIGH	04:34 • 17:05
LOW	09:05 • 21:11	LOW	09:38 • 21:47	LOW	10:14 • 22:24	LOW	10:52 • 23:06
HIGH	05:17 • 17:51	HIGH	06:06 • 18:49	HIGH	00:59 • 13:34	HIGH	19:10 • 20:05
LOW	11:36 • 23:56	LOW	12:28 • --:--	LOW		LOW	

A thrilling long weekend of extreme sports

Writer & Photographer
Barbara Hayn

This past weekend saw the Walker Bay Outdoor (WBO) hit Hermanus shores once more. The sports festival ran from 29 April to 1 May, hosting numerous events, as well as the HI-TEC Dash4Charity, which was held at the amphitheatre at the Hermanus Waterfront.

The WBO Big 6 Xtreme was the ultimate culmination of an exciting weekend, with athletes needing to compete in, and finish, six selected events to qualify. The winners were determined by a 'percentage of winning time' formula.

The festival kicked off on Friday at 17:30 with the popular Ledlenser Twilight Run, which started at Grotto Beach. The route went along the Cliff Path and ended at the Old Harbour. The event, open to all ages, was also the first qualifier of the Big 6 Xtreme.

Running enthusiasts were up early on Saturday morning to take part in the WBO Trail Run with an option of a 14.6 km or 19.6 km route. The race started at the Hermanus Cricket Club, wound through the hills of the Overberg and then returned to the Hermanus Cricket Club where a crowd had gathered to cheer the



The HI-TEC Walker Bay Outdoor sports festival took place in and around Hermanus from 28 April to 1 May. Athletes competed in various events including the Ledlenser Twilight Run, the See-en-Sand Swim Run Jump, and the WBO Mountain Biking.

athletes on to the finish line. The 19.6 km route formed the second of the Big 6 Xtreme qualifiers.

For families, and the more relaxed athlete, a two-hour Fernkloof hike was hosted on Saturday, and at the Hermanus Waterfront, the Dash-4Charity event was underway. Activities included a 10-metre timed sprint, a hang bar and a dance-off captured by a 360-degree camera. Participants stood a chance to win a share of R15 000, with proceeds from the event going to Planet Savers, a registered non-profit organisation.

The gruelling See-en-Sand Swim Run Jump was Saturday's main attraction, drawing a throng of onlookers to the waterfront.

Entrants navigated the rocks in front of Bientang's Cave to take up their standing start positions on Piet se Klip, from where they jumped into the sea. See-en-Sand Director and senior lifeguard, Henk Esterhuysen gave the countdown and the swim began, with plenty of lifeguards on hand to ensure the safety of the swimmers.

The intended cliff jump off Dreunkrans had to be cancelled owing to high sea swells, and a new route was decided, which included a jump off Gearing's Point.

Sunday was the day for mountain bikers who could choose from one of two options – a short race of 23 km, or the long race of 40 km, with the former being a Big 6 qualifier.



The route ran through the scenic Hemel-en-Aarde Valley and included challenging terrain, but the cyclists were all smiles for the cameras.

The next qualifier was the 2.5 km open-water swim which started at the New Harbour and finished at the Old Harbour. The event was supported by many onlookers who used Gearing's Point as the vantage point to watch the race.

The Dash4Charity continued throughout the day at the waterfront, and for the not so faint hearted, a yoga and cold-water swim session was held at The Marine Pool. Other events on Sunday included a 15 km trail run, a beer run and the Hi-Tec Pirate Fun Walk.



The sports festival concluded on Monday with the WBO Sprint Triathlon, the final of the Big 6 Xtreme qualifiers. The triathlon consisted of a 600m swim, 23.7 km cycle and 5.6 km run. Athletes started with a loop of the Old Harbour, followed by a cycle to Grotto Bay and back, and a final run to the finish line at the Hermanus Waterfront.

After an exhausting and exhilarating weekend, the winners of the Walker Bay Outdoor Xtreme were crowned on Monday.

First place in the women's category went to Bridget Theunissen (22) who came first in four of the Xtreme events. Rudolf Naudé (32) took home the win in the men's division.

Finding a way forward for the Country Market

Writer
Barbara Hayn

The follow-up meeting between the Overstrand Municipality (OM), Hermanus Country Market (HCM) and other relevant stakeholders took place at the Hermanus Auditorium on 3 May.

This comes after HCM was given permission to keep the market operational until the end of May 2023, as structures that extended beyond the boundaries of the market ('area 9') had been removed.

The meeting, hosted by OM, was to report on progress made with regards to the way forward for HCM, as well as matters of concern previously raised by the municipality. These in-

clude non-compliance, determining a permanent location for HCM and securing a lease agreement.

Mayor Annelie Rabie gave a brief recap of the last three months, saying that on 8 February 2023 a steering committee was created, with representatives from OM, HCM and Hermanus Sports Club (HSC), and it was agreed that meetings would be held bi-weekly in order for all parties to stay on course.

The steering committee meetings were held on 22 February, 8 March and 27 March, and a meeting scheduled for 5 April was postponed to 26 April. During this time, chairperson of the Hermanus Ratepayers Association, Brian Wridgway contacted Dr Rabie and offered to act as mediator

between the parties on a number of matters, with the goal of reaching an amicable, solution-based outcome. All parties were agreeable to Brian acting as mediator.

Dr Rabie said that there are still outstanding matters which include the need for clarity as to who the legal entity is for HCM. She also addressed the matter of previous requests received from HCM to use the market grounds for additional purposes such as functions, and said that a land use application would need to be submitted and a public participation process would need to be followed.

In addressing the attendees, Overstrand Municipal Manager (MM) Dean O'Neill added that there are

still legal matters that must be attended to such as the liquor license. He thanked Brian for taking on the task of mediator pro bono.

The floor was then opened to questions. One of the questions asked by the traders was why OM would only allow the market to remain operational until the end of May, and whether the OM would extend this period.

The MM responded that the OM would like to see constructive movement on the way forward, and that the submissions they receive will determine their decision. He said the decision should be made by the second or third week of May.

Michael Bayer, owner of HCM,

addressed the attendees and said that the HCM has always been trying to find a way forward. He said that HCM wants a constructive process, which it hasn't always been. "We are all fighting for something very precious," Michael said, "but we see it in different lights."

Brian Wridgway concluded the meeting by saying that the goal is to get people to forget about the past and look towards the future. He requested that the public avoid creating tension and refrain from posting to social media. Brian said he hopes to see "all the role players on one side of the table and the problem on the other".

Dr Rabie said that a follow-up meeting would be held on 2 August 2023.

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WHAT'S ON OVERBERG

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EVERY FRIDAY

Hermanus Hacking Group

Volunteers are welcome to join the HHG and help clear alien vegetation, every Friday morning. All tools are provided. For more info contact Charlyn on 082 558 8731 or charlynvosloo@gmail.com.

Meet at the Green Reservoir above Total Garage off Mountain Drive | 06:45 for 07:00 – 09:00

Bhuki Café

The Friends of Hermanus Library are back in action! Come and enjoy tea or coffee with two sweet/savoury treats for only R35, every Friday morning. All proceeds go towards purchasing new books for the library.

Hermanus Library | 09:00 – 11:00

Friday Morning Market

Hosted by Gansbaai NG Kerk, this fun-filled market offers lovely fresh, home-baked goodies, from jams to cookies and much more, every Friday morning.

Pretorius Hall, Gansbaai Main Rd | 09:00 – 11:30

Kolwyntjie Teetuin

Enjoy a sweet or savoury treat with tea or coffee for only R40 and make new friends at the Onrus Care Centre (Dienssentrum), every Friday morning.

Onrus Dutch Reformed Church | 10:30 – 11:30

Hermanus Duplicate Bridge Club

Bring a partner for an enjoyable afternoon of duplicate bridge. For further information call Elsabé on 084 482 9233 or visit their website at www.bridgewebs.com/Hermanus.

De Wet Hall, Onrus | 12:50 (also on Mon & Wed at the Botanical Hall in Fernkloof)

EVERY SATURDAY

Hermanus parkrun

For all the 'fast and furious' as well as the 'slow and steady' – experience the joy of exercising outdoors in a safe environment as you walk, run, or jog this beautiful 5 km course.

Forest Adventures, Camphill Rd, Hemel-en-Aarde Valley | 08:00

Junktique Market

One man's junk is another man's treasure. Pop in and give new life to a previously loved item. Treats and nibbles will also be available. R50 per stall. To book contact 028 341 8516 or email stanfordtourism@overstrand.gov.za.

Stanford Tourism Office Courtyard | 09:00 – 12:00

The Gansbaai Market

Specialising in fresh produce, home-baked foods, and crafts. Come and enjoy entertainment and refreshments at this popular kuierplek. For enquiries, contact 028 384 8325 or email Glenda.gansbaai-tourism1@overstrand.gov.za.

Kapokblom St, opposite Gansbaai Tourism | 09:00 – 13:00

Die Markie, Hermanuspietersfontein

Saturdays... no better time and place to relax and catch up with family and friends than the smallest little market in Hermanus. Share a platter and a bottle or help yourself to a brekkie, brunch, or lunch.

Hermanuspietersfontein | 09:00 – 13:00

Stanford Square Market

Come and experience country life at this down-to-earth, family-friendly market, every Saturday. Meet the makers, creators and entrepreneurs offering a range of local foods and crafts.

Stanford Village Square | 09:00 – 14:00

Lemm's Corner Antique Market

Surrounded by art galleries and sublime eateries in Hermanus Old Town, this friendly market offers antiques, bric-a-brac, collectibles, vintage clothing, and second-hand books.

Lemm's Corner | 09:00 – 14:00

Hermanus Country Market

A favourite among the locals: young, old, two-legged, and four-legged family members are all

welcome. You'll find an array of fresh organic produce, wholesome foods, home-made delicacies, arts & crafts, plants and flowers, beers and wine, coffee, and live music – everything that's good for your health and happiness!

Next to Hermanus Cricket Field | 09:00 – 14:00



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05 | FRIDAY

The Art of Movement

Join white belt NIA instructor Jeanette Hogg for her class every Friday. NIA stands for 'neuromuscular integrative action' or 'non-impact aerobics' and is a fusion of fitness types that combines dance, martial arts, and mindful movement. These holistic movement classes are a type of somatic movement therapy that incorporate all aspects of mind, body, and soul. To book your spot contact Jeanette on 083 273 9753. The price is R100 pp.

ProActive Fitness | 07:45 – 08:45



ART WALK HERMANUS

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06 | SATURDAY


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09 | TUESDAY

Wild Wellness Community Walk

Join Wild Wellness for their free Tuesday walks in Onrus. The walk is 3 to 4kms long and dogs on leads, prams and walkers of all ages are welcome. The routes are beautiful with loads of fresh ocean air and incredible scenery. There is no need to book – simply meet at their head office at The Photo Shed.

23 Molteno St, Onrus | 07:15 (walk starts at 07:30)

U3A Talk: World Heritage Sites

U3A will be showing two DVDs on World Heritage Sites. The first is on Virunga, one of Africa's great national parks, home to the mountain gorilla, which is only found here. The second is on Mount Fuji, which was granted World Heritage Site status in recognition of its deep association with Japanese history and culture and its presence in Japanese religion, poetry, and folklore.

Catholic Church Hall | 10:00

Onrus Mountain Hike

Join Wild Wellness as they hike 10 km across the back of the mountains of Onrus and Vermont. This is a reasonably steep hike to start, but with the zig-zag paths it makes it easier. The 600m elevation offers sweeping views and the fynbos is unique and incredible – this hike is a treat for the slightly fitter folk. Well behaved and fit dogs are welcome. On a clear day, you will see Cape Agulhas, the Elgin Valley, The Bot and The Klein River estuaries plus the Helderberg and Langeberg mountain ranges. To book visit <https://wildwellness.co.za/product/onrus-hike>.

Meet at 23 Molteno Street, Onrus | 06:15

10 | WEDNESDAY

L2L Wednesday Walks

The L2L Wednesday Walks are a beautiful way to explore our town and make new friends while raising funds for charity. Everyone in the family is invited to join including well-behaved dogs. Choose between 5 km or 10 km and bring a donation of R20 (or more if you wish) to participate in the walk. Please ensure that you wear a hat, put on sunscreen, and bring enough water.

Onrus Beach | 06:45

11 | THURSDAY

Wild Wellness Community Walk

Join Wild Wellness for their free Thursday walks in Onrus. The walk is 7 to 8kms long and is not suitable for dogs. The routes are beautiful with loads of fresh ocean air and incredible scenery. No need to book – meet at their head office at The Photo Shed.

23 Molteno St, Onrus | 07:15 (walk starts 07:30)

Probus Lunch Meeting

Retired Professional Business (Probus) members meet for lunch and an illustrated talk on the second Thursday of every month. The cost is R150 pp and visitors are welcome but prior booking is

essential at probus.hermanus@gmail.com.

Hermanus Golf Club | 12:00 for 12:30

12 | FRIDAY

U3A Talk: The History of Nature Conservation in South Africa

Kobus du Pisani presents this talk which deals with nature conservation – the protection of air, minerals, plants, soil, water and wildlife – in South Africa up to 1961. It includes the conservation of the Outeniqua forests, fighting soil erosion in the Karoo, hunting restrictions, the proclamation of the first game reserves, the establishment of Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens and early development of the Kruger National Park.

Catholic Church Hall | 10:00

14 | SUNDAY

Mother's Day Lunch

Spoil the leading lady in your life with Mother's Day Lunch and live jazz. This day is about thanking mom for all the times she was there for you. Celebrate with friends and family: eat, drink and be seriously, joyfully entertained. To book email info@benguelacove.co.za.

Benguela Cove | 12:00 – 17:00

Neighbourhood Nights at C'est Ça Cooking

Silwood-trained chef Lindi will be preparing another sumptuous brunch in Onrus to celebrate Mother's Day, served on their all-weather patio. The morning's experience is intimate and homely, and the focus will be on indulging in delicious, mouth-watering treats. The four-course meal will focus on food, fun and sharing time together. Contact Renée on 082 892 2557 to receive the menu, email info@cestca.co.za or visit www.cestca.co.za to make your advance booking, as seats are limited. The cost is R295 pp. Kindly bring your own drinks as it is not licensed.

C'est Ça, 38 de Villiers Street, Onrus | 18:30 – 22:00

15 | MONDAY

OnVerWag AGM

The Onrus Vermont Neighbourhood Watch is holding their Annual General Meeting. The topic will be 'Safety at Home'. For more information email theowl@onverwag.org.za or WhatsApp 0794199276.

NG Kerk, Berg St, Onrus | 18:00

18 | THURSDAY

Brain Plasticity Workshop

Dr Arien van der Merwe will be hosting a workshop on brain plasticity on behalf of Overstrand Hospice. For more information go to <https://online.fliphtml5.com/xkcxj/dtqn/#p=22>. A fee of R450 per p includes refreshments, handouts, and notebooks. Booking is essential on 083 731 2049.

Harvest Fork & Farm, Stanford | 10:00 – 13:00

19 | FRIDAY

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STANFORD



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Blue Gum Country Estate is a working wine farm and developing vineyard hidden in the valley that ascends towards the small town of Stanford. This lovely estate is nestled among ancient blue gum trees and overlooks the leafy banks of the Klein River – the perfect place to relax and enjoy some of the natural beauty on offer in the Overberg.

Zane Campbell Gibson bought the farm and renamed it Blue Gum Country Estate in 1999, transforming the property into a small bed and breakfast. In October 2011, Zane’s daughter Tarryn and her husband Anton de Kock took over the management of Blue Gum with the intention of creating a family-friendly environment focused on quality, attention to detail, good food and wine, tranquillity, and relaxation.

In 2019, Anton and Tarryn moved into the charming village of Stanford to take a break from running the guest lodge and to experience village life. They returned to the estate again in 2021 with the goal of creating a simple country lifestyle space and focusing on local tourists. It was in this year that

Campbells Café was launched in homage to Tarryn’s father’s family name – a place where guests can enjoy the slower pace of life away from the hustle and bustle.

Campbell Café’s carefully curated menu offers both breakfast and light lunches as well as ever-changing blackboard specials. Choose from something healthier like their muesli and yoghurt with honey and seasonal fruit; or go all out with their farmhouse breakfast which consists of eggs, bacon, tomato, mushrooms, sausage, and toast at a very reasonable price. For a light lunch they offer delicious homemade burgers as well as a variety of toasted sandwiches. If you are only wanting a coffee and something sweet to snack on, try one of their scrumptious cakes or the dessert of the day.

What you’ll find at Campbells Café is comfort food at its best, simple and wholesome with a country flair, which showcases the talent of their chef, Reagan van der Heerden. The café has also recently relaunched their popular Sunday Lunch Buffet for winter (booking is essential), which is updated weekly. Last week, the buffet menu consisted of a

starter of roasted tomato soup with homemade garlic rolls, followed by mains of beef sirloin with Yorkshire pudding and homemade gravy, Cape Malay chicken curry, seasonal vegetables and oven-baked stuffed mushrooms, with apple crumble with Chantilly cream or ice cream for dessert.

Campbells Café is also licensed, and apart from the usual beers and liqueurs you may find in any restaurant, offers a good selection of locally produced wines including Black Oystercatcher, Raka, Stanford Hills, Lomond and Strandveld Vineyards.

Blue Gum is home to a deli and wine shop for those who cannot stay for a bite to eat at the café, and there is a space dedicated to pre-loved items for thrifters and bargain hunters. There is also a children’s playground and ‘The Block Shop’, Anton’s pandemic project, which sells sustainable, pre-loved and recycled Lego to keep children entertained while parents enjoy the estate’s amenities.

In the short term, Anton and Tarryn plan to develop more self-catering units, establish a larger play

ADVERTORIAL

WHAT’S ON IN STANFORD

Every Sunday
Campbells Café at Blue Gum Country Estate in Stanford is offering its winter Sunday Lunch Buffets once more. The price is R265 pp and booking is essential. Email reservations@bluegum.co.za or call Anton on 065 626 5456.

Every Friday
Misty Mountain Casserole Evening. R185 pp. For more info and to book email info@mistymountains.co.za.

Sunday 14 May
Enjoy a delicious Mother’s Day Lunch at Campbells Café for just R265 pp. To book Email reservations@bluegum.co.za or call 065 626 5456.

Spoil your mom with Mother’s Day Lunch at Misty Mountains. Book via email info@mistymountains.co.za.

area for children and expand the farming side of the estate with a focus on cultivating the production of Campbells Peak wines. With three hectares of Shiraz and a hectare of Sauvignon Blanc, the aim is to produce 25 tons of grapes a year to either be sold or made into delicious wine that expresses the unique terroir of the Walker Bay area.

Campbells Café at Blue Gum Country Estate is open daily from 08:30 – 17:00. For more info visit www.bluegum.co.za/eat or their Facebook page. **To book for Sunday Lunch, or a table for any other occasion, contact Anton on 065 626 5456 or email reservations@bluegum.co.za.**

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Talented youngsters create 'Art on a Plate'

The passion, skills and expertise of a group of exceptionally talented high school learners was on full display as they took over the kitchen at Warwick's Chef School in Hermanus last Thursday. They were the 12 finalists in the Aspiring Chef of the Year competition, launched by Warwick's in collaboration with Core Catering and Hermanus FynArts.

The youngsters cooked their hearts out as each prepared a dish according to the brief: Re-inventing a family favourite chicken dish by giving it a modern twist. The top 3 stood the chance of winning fabulous prizes, and the overall winner would have the opportunity to showcase their skills as part of this year's FynArts Culinary Series of chef demonstrations presented at the FynArts pop-up kitchen during the festival.

The competition was open to all Grade 11 and 12 learners in the Overberg and the entrants had to submit a detailed step-by-step recipe with a photo of the plated dish. More than 50 applications were received from schools all over the region, including Hermanus, Bredasdorp, Swellendam and Caledon. Twelve finalists were chosen for the cook-off last week, with each preparing and plating one portion of their dish to be presented to a panel of judges.

The young cooks had to create all the elements of their dish from scratch, using fresh ingredients. They were judged by the panel on creativity/originality, presentation and taste, with marks also allocated for the cleanliness of their workstation, equipment and utensils used. As the dishes started coming out for tasting by the judges, it was immediately apparent that these were no amateur efforts.

One of the judges, well-known caterer and cookbook author Christine Capendale, said she was blown away by the sophisticated cookery techniques that were used to create the flavour-packed dishes. "If this is what these youngsters, who have not even started on their culinary journey, are already capable of, they are clearly on track to achieve great heights."

Kevin Warwick, owner of Warwick's Chef School for more than 30 years, concurred and said he had to commend everyone's efforts. "We had some fantastic dishes that were presented with flair. We were overall very impressed with the standard at this high school level."

Choosing a winner proved to be a difficult task indeed, and the scores by all the judges – Kevin, Christine, Carina van der Merwe of Core Catering (the main sponsor) and Hedda Mittner of FynArts – were extremely close. After much deliberation, it was Danielle Lindes, a Grade 11 hospitality study learner from Curro Hermanus, who emerged the triumphant winner. Fol-



lowing close on her heels were Benita Fourie from Overberg High in second place and Abbi Romburgh, also from Curro Hermanus, in third place.

At the prizegiving in the Municipal Auditorium that evening, Kevin said: "Promoting our beautiful area, and teaching the art of cooking has always been my passion since I started the school in 1991. After the Covid pandemic, I thought it would be a good idea to get our high school learners excited about the culinary world, and open their eyes to careers in the hospitality and tourism industry – an industry that was hit very hard but which has bounced back with amazing resilience, creativity and more opportunities than ever."

Kevin said when he and his wife, Sumien started planning this competition, they went straight to Mary Faure from Hermanus FynArts. The sole beneficiary of this annual festival is the FynArts Development Fund, an NPO with the purpose of initiating, or identifying and supporting projects that promote forms of self-expression through the arts and the development of skills that will lead to employment. The Aspiring Chef of the Year was a perfect fit and together they brainstormed about how to approach the competition and elevate it to a different level.

"Mary was so keen to include this competition in the 2023 FynArts festival programme that we there and then decided that the winner of this competition will also have the chance to be a celebrity for a day when they will be cooking their dish as part of the FynArts Culinary Series."

Kevin said this competition would also not have been possible without the partnership of Core Catering Supplies Hermanus, whose owner Carina van der Merwe was excited to be on board right from the start. "I must thank Carina for her huge contribution to this competition. Not only

was she on the phone for hours to liaise with her suppliers regarding sponsorships, but she herself dug deep into her own pockets."

was she on the phone for hours to liaise with her suppliers regarding sponsorships, but she herself dug deep into her own pockets."

Warwick's Chef School offers internationally accredited certificate and diploma courses through Highfield International and their students graduate as qualified professional chefs. Their focus has always been on daily practical hands-on training for small groups of students to ensure personalised attention. "The opportunities for chefs in the hospitality industry are very diverse," said Kevin. "We have students working in some of the best restaurants and hotels here in our area, as well as all over the country, and abroad – including on cruise liners and super yachts."

Other speakers at the event included Mayor Annelie Rabie and Carolyn Martin of Creation Wines, who sponsored all the wine for the event. Kevin credited Carolyn for her innovative contribution to our wine and food industry and the significant impact it has made on the development of our region.

And finally, all the finalists were called onto the stage one by one to receive a gift bag filled with lots of treats, including products from Core Catering, Van Blommenstein Butchery, WP Packaging, Warwick's Chef School and Hermanus Tourism.

Apart from the top 3, the other finalists were Alecka Brikkels, Ayana Leigh-Clarke, Jade Beukes and Zoey-Leigh Hoffman from Overberg High School, Amanda Gouws from Bredasdorp High School, Siseko Mhlana from Qhayiya Secondary School, Rourke Neethling from Curro Hermanus, Sunah Huyser from Swellendam High School, and Zané Louw, a homeschooler from Struisbaai. Their dishes ranged from a spicy lemon chicken risotto, to a deconstructed chicken pie, cashew-crust chicken with



Mexican salsa, chicken maize ball schnitzel with chakalaka, and many more impressive and memorable creations.

At the end of the day, however, Danielle Lindes of Curro Hermanus won the judges over with her deceptively simple chicken noodle soup, which was a sensational combination of flavourful deboned chicken in a heavenly broth and the most delicate little balls of potato noodles. Runner-up Benita Fourie of Overberg High School made a sophisticated spinach purée chicken risotto, and the second runner-up, Abbi Romburgh from Curro Hermanus, an impressive basil pesto chicken roulade.

They walked away with coveted prizes that included a Tramontina frying pan, Hamilton Beach Mixing Machine, a cookery book by Christine Capendale, Moulinex stick blenders and, for the winner, a Creation Food & Wine pairing experience for six guests. Kevin thanked all involved for their positive response to this inaugural competition. "An event such as this one is not a one-man show. Many generous people have sponsored prizes, their time, expertise and professional assistance to make this a successful event."

Last but certainly not the least, he congratulated all the finalists for being brave and entering the competition. "This young generation of foodies represent the future and it is their curiosity and creativity that keeps our hospitality industry alive – and our restaurants full."

Aspiring Chef of the Year, Danielle Lindes, will demonstrate her winning dish in the FynArts Pop-up Kitchen at the United Church, appropriately on Youth Day, 16 June at 11:00. Tickets are available at Webtickets, Pick n Pay stores, Hermanus Tourism and the FynArts Gallery. Visit hermanusfynarts.co.za for the full programme.

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THE VILLAGE NEWS

OAK presents Maria du Toit and Vera Kooper

A South African/Dutch duo of fearless females, Maria du Toit and Vera Kooper, radiate positive energy and absolute joy in music making. In their programme, SHE/HER which has been received with much enthusiasm in the Netherlands, where the duo is based, Maria and Vera perform music by female composers of diverse nationalities, eras, and musical styles.

For this special Mother's Day concert hosted by Overstrand Arts/ Kunst (OAK), they have selected the most romantic and easy-listening pieces from their repertoire of female composers, to celebrate all those we call mother.

South African-born clarinetist Maria du Toit is widely regarded as one of her home country's finest instrumentalists. Having been the solo principal clarinetist of the



Maria du Toit and Vera Kooper will be performing a special Mother's Day concert in Hermanus.

Cape Philharmonic Orchestra for 13 years, she currently lives in the Netherlands where she is pursuing a solo and chamber music career. Critics have described her playing as "sensational" and "astounding",

and often compliment her flawless intonation, baffling technique, and mellifluous tone.

Dutch pianist Vera Kooper has been described as a "sensitive and expressive performer, with impressive instrumental control and all-out dedication, capable of transforming each performance into a poetic, moving artistic experience".

Maria and Vera will perform a Mother's Day concert at 15:30 on Sunday 14 May in the Munisipal Auditorium in Hermanus. Tickets are R180 per person. OAK will also be hosting a second concert in May with Israeli pianist Amit Yahav. Reserve tickets for both concerts and receive a discount.

To book tickets contact René du Plooy on 082 940 4238 or rened-up@telkomsa.net.

A table for wine lovers

Zolile Baleni, a 57-year-old resident from Zwelihle, is showcasing his newly invented and exclusive mosaic glass wine table, which is sure to bring joy to many a wine lover, through his charity organisation, Ekuphumleni Empowerment Solutions.

Ekuphumleni Empowerment Solutions was established in 2018 and assists young people to acquire skills in art with an aspect of innovation. Zolile, along with his young trainees, make tailor-made, indoor mosaic pot plants.

While artists in the table-making space do amazing work, Zolile's work is highly appealing, evocative, custom-made, and potentially the first of its kind. Wine lovers in Hermanus and surrounding areas will now be able to gracefully enjoy a glass of wine around a beautiful table with family and friends.

The glass wine table can be loaded into the boot of an SUV with ease, taking into cognisance careful handling of the toughened glass.

Inga Sbulele Mfundisi is the co-founder of the organisation. She also coaches children that come from disadvantaged communities in chess skills which she does with diligence. She can be contacted on 067 025 3435 or via email ingas.mfundisi@gmail.com for further information on what they do at Ekuphumleni Empowerment Solutions.



Zolile Baleni with his innovative mosaic table for wine lovers.



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Building Blind – the great adventure

Writer & Photographer
Elaine Davie

The whole point of being an adventurer/explorer is to go where no one else has gone, carving a path through the wilderness. But building a house? Not exactly unexplored territory.

Yet, that is exactly the challenge that fellow adventurers, Chris Venter and Riaan Manser decided to take on together: to build a house for Chris, his wife Tamlyn, four-year-old Tate and their dog, Scooter. What made this undertaking extraordinary was that Chris is blind – totally.

It began as a casual 'what if' conversation between friends about three years ago; then before long, it was, 'why not?' They called it Building Blind, and that's what it was. For both of them.

Up to that moment, the only things the two men had in common were that they had both travelled unaided up Africa – Riaan on a bicycle and chef Chris on a scooter; they got off on pitting themselves against the rigours of nature, and they both had little boys more or less the same age, who liked to play together. Neither of them had built a house before.

It was, in fact, during his trip through Africa that Chris contracted a virus which resulted in his losing his eyesight. Now he wasn't able to tell a straight line from a skew one and was chronically impatient. "The process was like putting a puzzle together,



Tamlyn and Chris Venter with Sam, Chris's new guide dog and Riaan Manser prepare to welcome their guests at the Great Reveal event.

but the person putting it together was blind," he says. "I was determined to prove that a blind person could do anything a sighted person could do if they set their mind to it – with a little help from their friends."

As his 'foreman', not only was Riaan his eyes, but he was responsible for rallying the 'friends', since Chris's other problem was that his resources were extremely limited. "In the end, this project turned out to be my biggest challenge yet," says Riaan. Always excited and enthusiastic about any new adventure, Riaan soon found that time was going to be his greatest handicap. He had other projects on the go at the same time and was being pulled in

too many directions at once.

On top of that, his first sighting of the extensive Fisherhaven stand where they would be building was not encouraging. It was covered in a forest of alien vegetation and large rocks, with one indigenous inhabitant, a small tortoise, which required re-homing.

But this was only the first in a series of both anticipated and unforeseen stumbling blocks that were to test the perseverance of the two men and their families. Bob Marley's words kept ringing in Chris's head every time they hit a snag: 'You never know how strong you are until being strong is your only choice'. But while he was

on site every day supervising the building, even discovering mistakes in the installation of the roof trusses and sliding doors, Riaan was feeling his way through a corporate wilderness and knocking on doors.

"I had no idea what building was all about," he admits, "but the more doors I knocked on, the more the magic began to happen. We filmed the process for DStv and YouTube; our cameraman, Jacques Malan lived with Chris from start to finish and was sometimes on the job from 4 am to 11 pm. With Chris telling the story on tape, businesses, both local and national, started buying into it. They wanted to be part of this remarkable journey."

One of Riaan's greatest breakthroughs was to get the enthusiastic, can-do Craig Cronjé, Marketing Director of Everite and Nutec on board. With their product, once the foundations were laid, there was virtually no further need for bricks and mortar. Building materials came in the form of precast panels which were simply slid into place. Another key member of the team was local builder, Koos du Toit of 360 Home Developments, who was responsible for other hands-on operations like the foundations and floor slabs, as well as daily project management, in consultation with an impatient Chris.

Some of the materials were sponsored and some were paid for, but there was a strong sense that those who got involved were motivated by a desire to do something good for someone special. "Everyone wanted Chris and

his family to have a place that they could call home, where they could find peace and security, as well as comfort," says Riaan. "And here it is, a 340 square metre luxury home worth R6 million, way beyond his wildest dreams. It seems almost inconceivable that it's all come together in the end, despite the many hiccoughs we experienced along the way."

Tamlyn, Chris's wife, calls Riaan their dream catcher. "He caught our dream and turned it into reality," she laughs. After a year of blood, sweat and tears, as he describes it, Chris himself is exhausted, but very excited. "I think I need an island holiday," he says. "I have paddled the ocean solo in a kayak and climbed mighty mountains, but this has been by far the most challenging thing I have ever done." Amongst other things, he is particularly proud of the beautiful wooden bar counter and kitchen cupboards he built himself.

During the process, he also acquired his first guide dog, Sam, and is already planning to paddle round Robben Island with Sam in a couple of months' time, but only after he's recovered from this adventure.

And so, as in all good fairy tales, the happy ending finally came – on Friday 21 April – with the Great Reveal. Many of their building partners, as well as friends and family members gathered in the street outside the property in anticipation. Then the gates were flung wide and The House that Chris (and Riaan) Built was revealed – a real-life tribute to the power of dreams.

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Your skin has been under attack for several weeks with extensive exposure to sunlight, heat and, in some cases, extreme conditions from which it may not have been fully protected.

It's time to repair the skin damage that too much sun has done to your skin throughout the summer. The autumn season is here, but the cooler weather should be a reminder of the times you enjoyed spending time at the beach or adventuring outdoors. That also means the marks and aging signs that have been left on your skin.

Preparing skin for autumn usually entails two steps: the first is addressing pigmentation and sun damage, and the second, restoring hydration to tired, weathered skin. We have a few autumn SOS repair solutions for you. The time has come to repair the damage. Serums and creams may offer an easy daily solution, but when it comes to tackling these problems, you also need to arm yourself with more effective, targeted action.

Autumn SOS Repair Solutions

1. Peel away Damage

• ME LINE Peel - For serious pigmentation ME LINE, the newest launch of peeling

agents in the clinic, is an innovative professional peel (and mask) with specially chosen chemical agents which work together to control pigmentation, decrease melanin production, improve sun damage, and even out the tone and colour of the skin.

It also stimulates the growth of new skin cells to rejuvenate your complexion. ME LINE has achieved excellent results in 95% of cases of facial and body hyperpigmentation, and is suitable for caucasian and ethnic skin types. The process is referred to as 'controlled chemical dermabrasion'. These types of peels are best done in the cooler months, when exposure to sun is minimal.

2. Blast away Pigment

• IPL-DYE SSR - Super skin rejuvenation Get rid of sun-damage with the newest technology. Blast blemishes, pigmentation, sun damage, and redness. The new in-motion technique makes IPL a pleasant treatment. The thermal heat stimulates neocollagenesis (the formation of collagen and elastin), supporting a reduction in fine lines, wrinkles and pore reduction through skin rejuvenation. And don't forget that the sun damage on your chest and hands can be treated

with IPL as well.

3. Improving skin, one dot at a time

• Plasma pen
A hand-held device that uses a focused and controlled micro beam of plasma energy to sublimate the superficial part of the skin (epidermis), without causing any damage to the underlying or adjacent tissue, for the removal of unwanted marks, sunspots and keratosis. Also known as the non-surgical blepharoplasty. This device has been proven to give excellent results in 'smoker's lines', crow's feet and loose skin on the eyelids.

4. Laser away summer damage

• Fractionated Non-Ablative Laser
A super anti-aging treatment for uneven skin tone, fine lines and wrinkles, lifting, firming and skin tightening. The epidermis remains intact, meaning there is minimal to no downtime; you may feel a slight heat sensation, tightness and dryness for up to 24 hours. The thermal reverse effect will promote neocollagenesis and elastin formation, leaving you feeling plumper, younger and rejuvenated.

5. Plump up the volume

• Mesotherapy

Dehydrated skin is more likely to show fine lines and wrinkles. Cooler weather makes your skin more prone to dryness and dehydration. This in turn can make the skin look more weathered and volume loss can look more pronounced. Mesotherapy uses super-fine needles to inject amino acids and nutrients directly into the skin tissue, beyond just the outer layers. You can be sure that your skin will receive all of the nutrients it needs to be healthy in the long term. Over the autumn months, when this nourishment and hydration is essential, Mesotherapy can be the perfect choice.

In the clinic we have numerous options for Mesotherapy – even a needle-free Transdermal technique to get active ingredients into deeper levels of the skin. Another great option for dry, weathered skin can be Profilla, an effective injectable moisturiser containing 100% synthetic hyaluronic acid (HA) injected by a tiny needle into the face. Because it gets deeper it rehydrates and plumps the skin far more effectively than a topical cream ever could.

This bio-remodelling treatment stimulates collagen and can make your skin firmer and more elastic. In addition,



it gives a lifting effect and makes fine lines disappear. In the clinic we are preparing for winter and are ready to give you the best in treatment, technology, and products. We are looking forward to changing skin as the seasons change. May this be a season of happy changes!

The other big event in May is of course Mother's Day. We have great specials ahead, and we would like to celebrate the face that has always had the warmest smile for you. Follow us on social media for all our great deals this Mother's Day. And to all the mamas, happy Mother's Day and thank you for everything that you do!

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BRING YOUR FUR-KIDS FOR A SPA DAY

Local boxers bring home gold



LEFT: Siphamandla Damesi (in blue) of Overstrand Whale Boxing Club placed first in his category. PHOTO: Barbara Hayn. MIDDLE: The Western Cape Youths and Elites Boxing Championships were held last week at Qhayiya Secondary in Zwelihle. There was a lot of young talent that competed and many of the fights were intense. PHOTO: Barbara Hayn. RIGHT: All of the competing boxers showed extreme skill and determination in their fights. PHOTO: Taylum Meyer

Hermanus hosted the Western Cape Youths and Elites Boxing Championships at Qhayiya Secondary School in Zwelihle from 28 – 30 April. Approximately 200 talented young boxers from the Overberg, Cape Winelands, Cape Metro, Eden and the West Coast took part to compete for the title of champion in each category (the categories were divided by sex, age and weight) under the

careful eyes of coaches and officials. There were many excited spectators on the day of the finals, with loud cheering as they supported their favourite boxers. The following nine boxers from the Overberg district made it into the finals: Hassan Ngom (Youth Males 57kg), Simamkele Damesi (Youth Males 57kg), Oyama Devese (Youth Males 67kg), Sipa-

mandla Damesi (Elite Males 67kg), Likho Macwarhane (Elite Males 71kg), Francois Botha (Elite Males +92kg), Akhule Mgoqi (Elite Males 54kg), Masibulele Mqamelo (Elite Males 75kg) and Thobile Mqambala (Elite Males 60kg).

Of those who made it to the finals, Hassan, Simamkele, Siphamandla, Likho, and Akhule won their categories, with Oyama, Francois, Masibulele and Thobile placing second in theirs.

This championship was organised by Western Cape Boxing with the help of Overberg Whale Boxing coach Mzi Damesi, and Overstrand Municipality Sport and Recreation Manager Ayanda Stali. Deputy Mayor of the Overstrand, Lindile Ntsabo, says, "It is a privilege to host such a select

provincial event in Zwelihle. I hope that the athletes enjoyed some of the natural beauty of our scenery during the fierce competition and that they will return sometime soon to relax in the Overstrand as visitors." Lindile was there for the prize giving on Sunday.

The top boxers will be competing in the national championships which will be hosted later this year.

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JAC Motors launches the T9 at Shanghai Show



Compiled by John Floyd

JAC Motors has taken the double-cab market by storm with the launch of its ground-breaking T9 double-cab range at the prestigious Shanghai Automotive Show. The T9 line-up comprises a range of efficient ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) powerplants, as well as BEV (Battery Electric Vehicle) and PHEV (Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle) derivatives, all boasting stylish design, cutting-edge technology, advanced features and outstanding performance. JAC Motors proudly calls the T9 its "high-end passenger" double-cab, setting a new standard for the market.

JAC Motors South Africa earlier announced plans to introduce the T9 line-up as the top-of-the-range offering in the T-Series, featuring the full range of powerplants in 4x4 and 4x2 options, as well as various specification levels. The luxurious T9 will lead the company's quest into the competitive double-cab lifestyle market.

"We are thrilled to introduce the exciting new T9 as the range-topper of our T-Series bakkies. The T9 will lead our charge in the double-cab market, with our versatile T8 and economical T6 line-ups focusing on specific target markets within this market segment," says Karl-Heinz Göbel, CEO of JAC Motors South Africa.

The new T9 is the most advanced pick-up ever developed by JAC Motors in its 55-year history of building light commercial vehicles. It is based on the company's third-generation international platform, which provides increased stability, comfort and safety. The T9 boasts 5-star safety ratings from five different global safety rating agencies, making it a top contender for buyers seeking the best safety standards.

Designed for both left- and right-hand drive markets, the T9 is manufactured in state-of-the-art production facilities in China. The T9 diesel and petrol turbocharged derivatives will be introduced in South Africa and Australia in the second semester of 2023. The BEV and PHEV



4x4 derivatives will follow in 2024, and the first quarter of 2025 will see the addition of a 2.5L turbo-diesel derivative.

"South Africa was the first right-hand drive market for JAC Motors. With the brand also making inroads in the Australian market, we are fortunate to get the latest products soon after the global launches," says Göbel.

The T9's bold design results in a wheelbase measuring 3 110 mm, a ride height of 210 mm and a payload of 1 000 kg. Its multi-link rear suspension offers improved ride quality and stability, while the large body design, measuring 5 330 mm (L) x 1 965 mm (W) x 1 920 mm (H), ensures a spacious and comfortable cab. Upmarket features such as genuine high-grade leather, a 7-inch digital instrument cluster and a 10.4-inch touchscreen infotainment system provide a luxurious driving experience for both driver and passengers.



PHOTOS: QuickPic



The T9 offers a host of active- and passive safety features, including autonomous emergency braking, forward collision warning, rear cross-traffic alert, blind-spot monitoring, lane-keeping assist, adaptive cruise control, tyre pressure monitoring, a 360° surround-view camera, and ISOFIX child seat anchors. It also features seven airbags, including a front centre airbag, ensuring the highest level of safety for occupants.

The T9 derivatives to be introduced in South Africa this year feature highly-efficient diesel and petrol turbocharged engines. The 2.0-litre four-cylinder turbo-diesel engine produces 125 kW and 410 Nm, and the 2.0-litre four-cylinder turbo-petrol engine produces 168 kW and 380 Nm. A ZF eight-speed automatic transmission sends the power to the rear wheels. The 4x4 derivatives offer electronic part-time 4WD with low range and an electronic diff-lock. The T9 supports a towing mass of 3 500 kg (braked).

The T9 BEV 4x4 is powered by an 88 kWh LFP battery pack, allowing for a reach of over 400 kilometres per charge. The PHEV 4x4 derivative features the T9's 2.0-litre four-cylinder turbo-petrol engine and a 26.8 kWh LFP battery pack, resulting in a 30 km/litre fuel consumption.

"The new T9 is a welcome addition to the T-Series line-up, offering great value for money. We expect the T9, with its powerful and efficient powerplants, large body design and innovative technology, to be an extremely attractive alternative at a more affordable price point," concludes Göbel.

The retail prices of the new T9 derivatives will be announced closer to its planned introduction date in the second semester of this year. The T9 features a five-year/100 000 km warranty, a five-year/100 000 km service plan and 24-hour roadside assistance.

Easter road fatalities see massive increase

Compiled by John Floyd

While South Africa celebrated a decrease of 13.9%, without lockdown restrictions, after the 2022/2023 festive season, following the four-day Easter weekend we should be lamenting the stats. There was a nearly 40% increase in road fatalities with 185 fatal crashes that resulted in 225 deaths. Compared to last year, 59 more people lost their lives this year.

The CEO of *MasterDrive*, Eugene Herbert, noted the Minister for Transport, Sindisiwe Chikunga, points to human error as the main cause of crashes. These include speeding, unlicensed vehicles and drivers, not fastening seatbelts and driving with worn tyres. "Human error as a cause, while challenged by tenets of the safe road system, is not a new one. Approximately 95% of crashes are attributed to driver error rather than aspects out of their control.

"It is encouraging that in response to these tragic statistics, Minister Chikunga plans to implement a 365-day road safety campaign where traffic policing will become a 7-day, 24-hour job in an effort to improve enforcement and increase visibility. *MasterDrive* has

always propagated that there are three sectors equally responsible for improved road safety: the government, organisations and drivers themselves. Such a campaign, is a step in the right direction."

With government's plan that could potentially have considerable results, what is the next step? "Speeding was the cause of the most accidents. This indicates drivers need to take the next step. Every year speeding is in the top five causes of road fatality rates and, yet, many drivers still engage in this behaviour without hesitation. There is a belief that it will never happen to me. Ask yourself, is the ten mins you might arrive earlier, worth the tragic results it can have. Drivers think it will never happen to them... until it does.

"Change to road fatalities, whether over a holiday period or any time during the year, will never happen to the degree it is needed, until drivers take responsibility for their actions on the road. Even if you returned home after Easter unscathed, how many times did you speed, how many near-misses did you have, did you drink and drive or use your cellphone while driving? Your answers should motivate yourself

to be a better driver."

Lastly, is the role organisations play. "Organisations have the greatest means and ability to help drivers affect change. Upskilling drivers does not just benefit them during work hours but they will naturally implement these skills in both their daily work lives and in personal driving.

"A 40% increase is truly a tragedy for this country. To place this in perspective, 225 people is

equal to, on average, 56 mass shootings, 28 incidents of the Cape Storm from 2017 and 36 more drivers being hijacked during a four-day period. This does not even account for those seriously injured in these crashes."

Such a great loss, during what should have been enjoyable time with the family, is a tragedy. "*MasterDrive* gives their condolences to every family that lost a loved one and to families that were affected by serious injuries to other family members," says Herbert.



PHOTO: MotorPress

Alfa Romeo with the Carabo concept car



Compiled by John Floyd

As part of the week when Milan celebrates design, Alfa Romeo – the epitome of noble Italian sportiness since 1910 – is featuring with one of its most precious gems: the 1968 Alfa Romeo Carabo, a style prototype by Bertone and one of the brand’s greatest expressions of style.

The exclusive event that brought Alfa Romeo into Milan Design Week was the opening of the new LARUSMIANI boutique, a historic brand and big name for over a century in Milanese elegance and the “Made in Italy” quality of the

MonteNapoleone District.

The new LARUSMIANI Boutique was designed in collaboration with the renowned architect Benedetto Camerana, who headed the 2015 renovations of the Alfa Romeo Museum in Arese, where the Carabo is usually on display. As well as embellishing the opening of the distinctive new boutique, the Alfa Romeo concept car is the first vehicle to be included in *The Automotive Gallery* project: a permanent exhibition area within the store, focused on the automotive world. The only car that could head up this Milanese project is an Alfa Romeo.

Alfa Romeo and LARUSMIANI are also two ambassadors for Made in Italy around the world, united – among other factors – by their strong bond with Milan, the hometown of both of them. The two brands have managed to

bring about products that have become part of the collective unconscious, as icons of style, quality, elegance and craftsmanship.

Designed by Marcello Gandini and built by the Bertone bodyshop, the Carabo was a concept car based on the mechanics of the iconic **Alfa Romeo 33 Stradale**, an emblematic car for the Milan brand. The collective unconscious still identifies it as one of the most beautiful cars in the world, the epitome of functional design and beauty devoted to performance. The futuristic Carabo style prototype’s height remained the same, at less than one meter, but the rounded lines had disappeared completely. Everything in the Carabo is clear-cut, from the wedge design to its “scissor” doors. Only one model of the prototype was ever built and became a source of inspiration for many other successful cars.

The name Carabo was inspired by *Carabus auratus*, a brightly metallic-colored beetle. The same hues are used in the style prototype: luminescent green with orange details. In the late 1960s, Alfa Romeo began to pay extra attention to extravagant colors and special paintwork techniques, to highlight the brand’s uniqueness even further.

Raffaele Russo, Managing Director of Alfa Romeo in Italy, stated: “I’m sure that the inclusion of our futuristic Carabo here will arouse great amazement among the participants in Milan Design Week. And I’m just as sure that an item of such great stylistic value will in itself serve as an invitation to all enthusiasts for Made in Italy to visit the fascinating Alfa Romeo Museum in Arese, the home of extraordinary cars that have written indelible chapters in automotive history.”

Civic Type R Sets FWD Nürburgring Lap Record

Compiled by John Floyd

Honda Motor Co., Ltd. have announced that the All-New Honda Civic Type R has set a new lap time record for a front-wheel drive car*1 at the Nürburgring Nordschleife in Germany during testing conducted for the model’s performance evaluation. The new lap time record, 7 minutes 44.881 seconds*2, demonstrates that the Civic Type R, which underwent a full model change, further improved its dynamic performance compared to its predecessor model.

The All-New Civic Type R was developed with the goal to achieve the “ultimate pure sports performance” by attaining the ultimate in both speed, which is the essential value of a sports model, and driving pleasure, which appeals to the emotion of the driver.

Key technologies behind the fastest lap time

- Based on the 2.0-liter VTEC Turbo engine inherited from the previous-generation Civic Type R, the engine performance was further improved to deliver maximum output of 243 kW³ and maximum torque of 420 Nm through the adoption of all-new turbocharger and other advancements.
- Cooling performance along with heat release and aerodynamic performance were improved through various measures, such as the enlargement of the front grille opening area and the effective opening area of the radiator.
- By adopting detail-oriented body parts designs both in the front and rear of the vehicle, the downforce was enhanced effectively, which realized stability while driving at the vehicle’s full potential.



- For the two-piece disc brake system, inherited from the previous-generation Civic Type R, the master power characteristics were modified to further improve controllability of the brake for the entire speed range, from low speed to high speed. In addition, by increasing the efficiency of air intake toward the brake system, an increase in brake temperature during continuous driving on a closed course was reduced, which realized solid braking effect and fade resistance.
- The Michelin Pilot Sport CUP 2 Connect tyre was jointly developed with Michelin using know-how amassed through the development of the Michelin Pilot Sport 4 S, which is the standard tyre for the Civic Type R. The Michelin Pilot Sport CUP 2 Connect further

enhances the circuit performance of the vehicle, improves dry grip performance and realizes well-balanced handling.

Message from Hideki Kakinuma, Civic Type R Development Leader:

“To our Civic Type R fans all over the world: Under the concept of ‘Ultimate SPORT 2.0,’ we developed the All-New Civic Type R with the spirit of ‘going beyond our past achievements’ and strived for the ultimate FWD sports car by refining the ‘essential value’ and ‘emotional appeal’ unique only to our Type R models.

Since the start of sales in Japan in September 2022, we have received numerous customer feedback from all around the world filled

with amazement and joy, far exceeding our expectations. However, we still had one more mission to fulfill, which was to claim the title as the world’s fastest FWD car with a record Nürburgring lap time.

Six years after the lap record was set by the previous-generation Civic Type R (FK8), we reached this new dimension as a result of all of the passions we poured in and all the advancements we made for this Type R model. Finally, our wish to share this title with all Type R fans all around the world came true.

We sincerely hope that all current and prospective owners of the Type R will enjoy and love their vehicle with the pride we share with you.”

MY ENVIRONMENT

Old Fourlegs: a misnamed fish

By Dr Anina Lee



As most people of my generation will know, 'Old Fourlegs' was the name given by the popular press to the first 'in the flesh' coelacanth to be discovered, off East London. At the time (December 1938) the fish was thought to have been extinct for 65 million years.

The coelacanth was only known from fossil records – mainly from Madagascar. So you can imagine the excitement of the scientific community, the public and the press about this historic discovery. JLB Smith, who correctly identified it, became as famous across the world as any modern-day celebrity.

Incidentally, the nickname for the coelacanth was coined by the press as a result of the taxidermist having mounted the fish with its fins pointing down, resembling legs. We now know that the fins are not used as legs but like oars to keep the fish steady in underwater currents.

The dramatic, suspenseful story of the identification of the fish, told by JLB Smith in his book *Old Fourlegs: The Story of the Coelacanth*, has been updated by Mike Bruton with annotations (available on Takealot).

The error about its legs was only one of several stories circulating at this time. Another was that the coelacanth must live in very deep water – else why had they never been found before? In fact, fishermen along Africa's east coast had caught specimens before, but they were no good to eat as the flesh is very oily and were thrown back.

JLB Smith postulated that the fish's habitat was shallower rocky reefs at about 100 to 500 metres – else why would it be bright blue as colour is unimportant at great depths? He was indeed correct, and with the right equipment, you can now scuba dive (under supervision) with coelacanths in Sodwana Bay at depths of 100 metres or even less. They like to hang out in caves and crevices on rocky reefs where they are opportunistic feeders, grabbing whatever comes along.

After this initial find, JLB became obsessed (even more than usual) with finding another coel-

acanth, so that the organs could be studied in detail. He made several hair-raising expeditions to East Africa and the Comoros Islands (where he believed they lived) before, after exactly 14 years, he received news of another coelacanth.

The story is told about how, in desperation, and late at night, he phoned the then SA Prime Minister (DF Malan) who was sick in bed and on his December holiday. Without hesitation, and to his credit, Malan instructed an air force Dakota (dubbed the 'Flying Fishcart') and its crew to fly JLB to the Comoros to fetch the fish. This dramatic story is itself worthy of a movie script.

Mike Bruton writes: "The word 'coelacanth' even entered public parlance when a 'prominent member of the British parliament... in attacking an opponent, called him a 'coelacanth' on the grounds that from his long silence in that august assembly it was a surprise to find him still alive" (Smith 1956).

Coelacanths are really quite remarkable in that they have been around for a very long time – about 400 million years. They pre-date the dinosaurs by 170 million years and have survived several great extinctions, including the Cretaceous extinction that wiped out the dinosaurs,

and 75% of all life, 65 million years ago. They were around even before living creatures moved onto dry land.

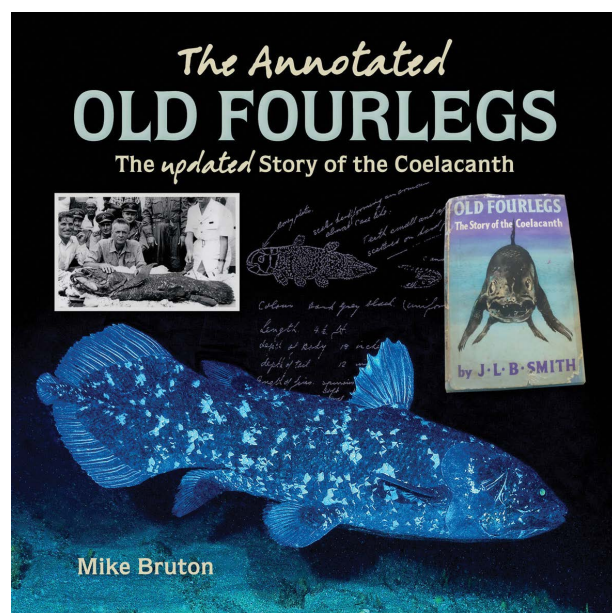
Coelacanths are often called 'living fossils' but they are not fossils at all, as they are still evolving. They are doing so very slowly because there is very little environmental pressure on them to change.

Mike Bruton knew both JLB Smith and his wife Margaret. Theirs is a story of deep understanding and commitment to each other and to science.

Mike has told their story in a recently published book, *The Fishy Smiths*. If you are fascinated, as I am, by what drives remarkable people to achieve what they do, you will love the book.

What is the future of this amazing fish? According to Mike Bruton, "Rapid environmental changes wrought by humans... represent a severe threat even to the most exquisitely adapted organisms, and particularly to the most specialised ones, such as the coelacanth. Humans have brought about many changes to the environment of the coelacanth, including global warming, plastic and insecticide pollution, alterations to predator and prey populations, direct mortalities... and the environmental impacts of blast fishing, poisoning and the destruction of coral reefs." Sound familiar?

* Subsequent to the first publication of this article in 2019, more coelacanths have been discovered further south, off the coast of KZN – exactly as JLB Smith predicted.



ABOVE: The coelacanth provides a glimpse into the past as it hasn't evolved much since prehistoric times. Researchers say that this is because they live in a relatively unchanging environment of deep-sea caves where there are few predators. PHOTO: Hoberman Collection/ UIG, Getty Images

LEFT: *The Annotated Old Fourlegs: The updated story of the Coelacanth* by Mike Bruton includes a facsimile reprint of South African ichthyologist JLB Smith's original book (published in 1956), to which Mike has added notes and images, as well as new introductory and explanatory chapters that bring the coelacanth story up to date.

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