



Nature's Valley News

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Editor: Jeanne Biesenbach

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Clivias: a beautiful sight in spring in the Valley. *Photo: Beefy Mance.*

Chairman: Jeanne Biesenbach

Although this is only the second newsletter of the year, owners have been kept informed of important events by means of special newsletters and notices that were sent out.

The most important issue that holds far-reaching implications for Nature's Valley has undoubtedly been the proposed alienation (sale) of the Phyl Martin park and Fynbos reserve for development purposes.

Working together, the NVRA and NV Trust immediately informed all owners and affected persons of this fact and urgently requested the strongest possible opposition to the proposal.

The 773 written objections that were received and hand delivered to Bitou by the NVRA bears unequalled testimony to the community's depth of feeling for and commitment to Nature's Valley. Thank you for this truly outstanding support.

At the same time it is a remarkable achievement that the NVRA and NV Trust could manage such a massive administrative process so successfully within such a short space of time.

It is further irrefutable proof of the crucial role that the NVRA plays in serving the interests of the ratepayers and the necessity for the association to continue functioning. This statement can further be borne out by the proud track record of previous achievements by the NVRA in the interest of Nature's Valley.

- The establishment of a permanent manned office that enables owners to contact the NVRA at all times, and an extended data base by means of which the NVRA can immediately reach the ratepayer body.
Given the fact that 90 % of all ratepayers live elsewhere, this function is of critical importance - as has once again been proved by the proposed alienation of the park and reserve.
- Continuous pressure by the NVRA played a leading role in the decision to repair the Groot River and Bloukrans passes.
- The completion of the NV Spatial Development Framework (NVSDF) commissioned by the NVRA. When this document is incorporated in the Bitou SDF it will gain statutory status thereby protecting the single residential character and public open spaces of the Valley.
- Obtaining a successful court order against Bitou to prevent the sale of service erven 335 and 336.
- The successful mobilisation of the community who submitted 320 written objections to the development proposals of the Bitou Draft Land Audit.
- The establishment of an open spaces sub committee that manages and maintains the open spaces, and annual financial support for the Phyl Martin park.
- The protection of the sensitive front coastal dune (erf 444), the Groot River estuary flood plain (erf 382) and lagoon frontage (erf 434) by entering into a 30 year Contractual Park agreement with SANParks to provide the highest conservation status possible.
- Successful negotiations with Eskom prevented highly visible and intrusive electricity supply lines over the indigenous forest to the new toll gate, and resulted in cables being laid out of sight under the forest canopy and under the estuary.
- After successful discussions, Telkom agreed to remove unsightly telephone lines running along the estuary adjacent to the R102, and fibre optic cables were laid under existing Eskom cables.

The NVRA is wholly dependent on the financial support of owners and their regular annual voluntary contributions that enable the association to continue with its work.

We hope and trust that this call for financial support will result in the same wonderful response that was experienced with the opposition to the alienation of the open spaces.

INFRASTRUCTURE: JEANNE BIESENBACH, DOUG BLAINE

Unfortunately Juan le Roex has moved to Gauteng and can no longer manage this portfolio. The chairman has taken over and has liaised closely with the CLO Mornay du Plessis and Ward Representative Paul Zietsman concerning all service delivery issues.

In July a meeting, attended by the chairman and Ward Representative and organised by the CLO, was held with municipal department heads to address ongoing service delivery problems and to make an early start to arrangements for the December holiday season.

As a result of the meeting the waste transfer station on erf 337 has been upgraded and made animal proof. At present urgent attention is being given to irregular weekly waste removal and emptying of the holding structure.

The 24-hour 365-days dedicated help line of the municipality has so far delivered very good service.

HELP LINE: 086 124 8686

- * Phone this number for a conservancy tanker
- * Phone this number for ALL service delivery problems e.g water, waste, electricity etc.

Roads

Sustained efforts by Paul Zietsman to see to the improvement of the gravel roads has resulted in the paving of Iris Street.

Water

The debilitating drought in the Southern Cape is continuing. The flow of only 65 litres water per second into the Groot River is the lowest recorded in the 80 years of monitoring.

The Groot River is Nature's Valley's only water source and there is no holding facility than can be used in an emergency situation. Should the river dry up, Nature's Valley will be without water.

Strict water restrictions apply until further notice and owners are also urgently requested to use household water as sparingly as possible.

WATER RESTRICTIONS

No municipal water may be used for the watering or irrigation of gardens until further notice

Groot River pass

Work has started on the eastern section of the pass (NV to PE) and at present the approaches to the Groot River bridge and the bridge itself are being repaired.

From **12 October 2009 to 9 December 2009** the road from the Nature's Valley rest camp up to the lookout point at the top of the pass will be closed to traffic.

For the holiday season - from **10 December 2009 to 12 January 2010** - the eastern section of the pass will be opened up for traffic to come through to the Valley.

Good news is that tenders for flood damage repairs to the historic Bloukrans pass are going out in January 2010. The NVRA has registered as an interested and affected party for the purpose of providing input concerning the heritage elements of the pass.

FINANCES: ABRIE DU TOIT

Our finances are in a poor state!!

We are currently being forced to use the reserve fund that has been carefully built up over the years for emergency situations, to cover our monthly expenses. This is cause for grave concern as future legal action concerning the Phyl Martin park and Fynbos reserve cannot unfortunately be discounted.

Increased activities and actions by the NVRA during the course of the year have led to substantially increased expenditure for instance: legal fees, direct costs of the NVSDF process, special letters and notices e-mailed and posted to owners and the administrative costs incurred with the proposed alienation of the public open spaces.

Our sincere thanks and appreciation to those owners who have made their contributions for the 2009/2010 financial year.

Bank details:

Account: Nature's Valley Ratepayers' Association

Account: 08 260 9217

Bank: Standard Bank

Branch: Plettenberg Bay

Branch code: 050714

Please ensure that your NAME and ERF NUMBER appear on the payment advice for reference purposes.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT: JEANNE BIESENBACH, ROBERT KLEYN

Building matters

Robert Kleyn, experienced project manager resident in Nature's Valley, has agreed to manage building plans for the NVRA. Robert has been co-opted on the above portfolio and we truly appreciate his willingness to serve in this capacity.

Regular meetings are held with the senior building inspector. In spite of sustained efforts we again have to report that unauthorised building activities continue to occur and that there are unfortunately owners who simply disregard relevant legislation and building regulations. These issues can only be resolved by the municipality.

Nature's Valley Spacial Development Framework (NVSDF)

After completion of the first draft, the NVSDF was submitted to the ratepayer body and other interested parties for comment during a comprehensive public participation process.

Comments were assessed, the document re-worked and amended where necessary, and the public participation process together with all the responses included in the final draft as an annexure.

The final draft has been completed and formally submitted to Bitou municipality as part of the IDP Review Process 2009/2010.

Phyl Martin Park (erf 429) and Fynbos Reserve (460)

The incredible total of 773 written objections was received. Of this number 372 responses were from ratepayers and their families; 384 from interested persons e.g. friends of owners, long time holiday visitors; 17 authoritative documents from funding organisations, scientists and experts, conservation agencies and other institutions.

We have been told that the question of the two public open spaces will serve before the Mayco meeting of 9 December 2009. We shall report on the outcome of this meeting at the AGM.

ENVIRONMENT: JAMES MARTIN, MICHAEL PERLMAN, INA BRAND
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Contractual Park Area

The parking area of the lagoon has not yet been repaired as the estuary mouth has been closed most of the year, and the road and parts of the parking area consequently regularly partially submerged. Talks with the resident engineer in charge of the Groot River pass repairs indicate that they might possibly be able to help in this respect in 2010.

Owners must please take note of the fact that boats may only be moored at the designated area.

In addition to the normal arrangements for the season there will be access control to the lagoon parking area; additional toilets and waste bins will be placed at the lagoon and cleaning of the beaches is being negotiated with **Working for the Coast**.

Open Spaces Sub committee

The ongoing project to supply all plants and trees in the Phyl Martin park with uniform identification labels endorsed by Kirstenbosch, is progressing well.

The servitude path between erven 422 and 423 Lagoon Drive that leads to the Phyl Martin park has been neatly cleaned after years of organic waste was removed. Research into the "servitude" has revealed that this path is in fact part of the Phyl Martin park erf and provides access to the park from the lagoon.

Indigenous trees

Danie Muller (082 3201 8331) and Frans Wagener (082 562 5859) have delegated powers from Forestry to advise you with regard to the removal, cutting or pruning of indigenous trees which is prohibited by law without the necessary permission having been granted.

SAFETY AND SECURITY: PETER HARPUR

Information gained from the security survey has been assimilated. The NVRA is continuing to research various long term security options. Nature's Valley's greatest asset - that of the village being surrounded by the Tsitsikamma National Park - is proving to be a great problem from a security point of view as it means there will always be unimpeded access to the residential area.

As far as short term measures are concerned the NVRA has maintained regular contact with the area manager of ADT during the year. This has definitely had a positive effect on ADT presence in NV for instance, the ADT response vehicle is regularly stationed at the entrance of the Valley. ADT also offers a "meet and greet" service that should be of value to permanent residents.

Since the first term of 2009 there has been a marked decrease in the number of burglaries and instances of petty theft.

BEACH AND SEA: MORNAY DU PLESSIS

The following important notice is placed in co-operation with Bitou municipality:

In spite of its undoubted beauty the long stretch of beach at Nature's Valley is recognised as a particularly dangerous bathing area.

- Five experienced lifesavers will be on duty at Nature's Valley from 15 December 2009 until 15 January 2010 from 09:00 until 18:00
- The lifesavers will be on duty at **BEACH 4** which is the only official swimming place. They will, however, try their best to monitor the entire beach and will be in contact with the NSRI at all times.
- The sea at the **MOUTH OF THE ESTUARY** and **BLUE ROCKS (EXIT 1)** can be particularly treacherous.
- Only swim in the area demarcated by flags.
- Enjoy the beach but respect the sea at all times.

Please store the following emergency numbers on your mobile

NSRI: **082 990 9575** (*National Sea Rescue Institute*)
MORNAY: **083 294 3954**

RAINFALL FIGURES 2004 – 2009: YVONNE BATH

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
January	70	61	89	54	62	4
February	86	49	20	41	48	44
March	82	109	62	97	42	6
April	61	47	101	30	39	68
May	21	46	100	102	8	16
June	42	23	46	41	69	51
July	34	13	91	40	14	66
August	38	8	232	55	78	11
September	142	34	16	18	21	68
October	74	14	57	86	90	53
November	20	93	61	308	98	32
December	203	46	60	89	31	
Total mm	873	543	935	961	600	419

NVRA: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009

The AGM will be held in the Church Hall on Tuesday 22 December 2009 at 17:00 (5 pm)

- Payment of annual voluntary contributions will be highly appreciated. (The committee will be on hand from 16:30 pm.)
- The meeting will be dealt with as speedily as possible.
- Matters for inclusion in the agenda must please be submitted to the NVRA office beforehand to ensure proper response at the meeting.
- **Please support the NVRA that serves your interests by attending the AGM.**

BABOONS AND VERVET MONKEYS

Because of the ongoing drought baboons and monkeys are moving around in the Valley on a regular basis.

- Please under no circumstances feed them or leave any food outside.
- Please see that your household waste is stored in a strong bin with a baboon proof lid.
- Do not leave doors open and close the windows when you go out.
- Do not confront the baboons.

What does this baboon say?



We wish you and your loved ones a pleasant holiday season. It will be a pleasure to see you in the Valley.

Safe journey!