

Bulletin

#overstrand4all

Official newsletter of the Overstrand Municipality

#C4ourself

FIRST THURSDAYS

WINDE AND ENTOURAGE GOT A RUN FOR THEIR MONEY



Premier Alan Winde and Executive Mayor Dr Annelie Rabie manning a roadblock along the R43.

On one of the legs of the Premier's Cycle Tour through the Western Cape, Premier Alan Winde and members of his provincial cabinet recently passed through the Overstrand.

The intention with the tour is to promote safe cycling as an alternative mode of mobility that can connect communities and enhance service delivery.

Along the way, the entourage hand over bicycles to several schools and neighbourhood watches and engage with local authorities to discuss matters pertaining to safety and security.

To illustrate just how serious Overstrand is about building a safer society, the Premier and his fellow cyclists had to pass through an integrated roadblock manned by traffic, law enforcement and police officials along the R43 at the Sandbaai intersection first.

"The rules are the rules," the Premier conceded, adding that "even if you are a visitor, you must know that in this province, everyone must abide by the law".

The Premier's visit coincided with the First Thursday event that was scheduled to take place in Hermanus the very next day... and what a memorable event that turned out to be!

As a true demonstration of open government in action, those in attendance spent some quality time on discussing pressing matters that fall outside the purview of local government.

Premier Winde was most impressed with the professional manner in which the event was handled, the buzz despite.

"To the best of my knowledge, no over government in the world hosts First Thursdays, and that makes Overstrand rather unique," he said.

NEW R5 COIN GRACED WITH SOUTHERN RIGHT



Executive Mayor, Dr Annelie Rabie, was most pleased to learn that R5 coins will in future be sporting a Southern Right cow and her calf and 10c coins the Cape honeybee.

Given that details about South Africa's new banknotes and coins were released on the eve of Africa's Travel Indaba, she said the new range will make for "excellent conversation starters".

Around June each year, Southern Right Whales visit the shallow waters along the Cape Whale Coast to mate and calve.

This phenomenon has earned Hermanus the reputation of being the best land-based whale watching spot in the world given the excellent vantage points the cliffs along Walker Bay offer.

Several other Overstrand villages, such as De Kelders and Gansbaai, also have fantastic land-based vantage points which means "visitors are bound to spot a whale while strolling along one of our pristine beaches or enjoying breakfast on the patio of several of our top-class accommodation facilities", the Mayor promised.

OVERSTRAND CROWNED "BEST MUNICIPALITY"



On Friday, 12 May, Overstrand was announced winner of the category "Best Municipality" at the Western Cape Government's Service Excellence Awards event held at the Century City Conference Centre. Well done team Overstrand!

K9 UNIT STRUT THEIR STUFF

Recently, the same unit paid a visit to Gansbaai Primary to, in conjunction with Gansbaai Police, to create drug awareness amongst the kids and to reinforce their positive relationships with the SAPS.

This event was the brainchild of the Gansbaai Community Police Forum and 1 Life Rescue who joined forces with the teachers at the school to reinforce the message that children should inform their teachers or a police officer the minute they feel threatened or pressured by someone to do something that makes them feel uncomfortable.

The dogs' random searches for drugs and dangerous weapons enthralled the kids and some even got to know the dogs up close and personally.

Mostly though, the message "TEAM WORK IS DREAM WORK" was reinforced, namely that rather than fear police officers, children should feel free to approach them at any time.



Pictured here with some of the learners are Gansbaai Primary teachers (back left) Francois Gerber, Devin Sauls and Jonathan Doyle (school principal); WO Woensdregt Basson (Gansbaai SAPD); K9 Unit members Velencia Solomons with Demi, K9-Inspector Lance Mara, Patrick Stranfliet with Sassy; and Justin de Koker from the Rural Safety Unit.

WHY CONTROLLED BURNS ARE NECESSARY

In ecologically sensitive areas such as the Overstrand where raging brush fires pose a major threat to not only lives and livelihoods but can also cause a loss in biodiversity, controlled burns serve as a practical means to reduce the build-up of combustible plant material that could fuel a fire.

These burns are undertaken in accordance with a prescribed schedule in preparation for the annual "fire season" (i.e. the time of year when brush fires are most likely to occur).

This schedule is decided upon following on extensive consultation with CapeNature and involves cooperation with the Greater Overberg Fire Protection Association, Overberg District Municipality, Enviro Wildfire and Working on Fire as well as non-profits the likes of Volunteer Wildfire Services and Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue Volunteers.

Given that a multitude of agencies are involved whenever a controlled burn is conducted, an Incident Command System is set up as a standardised means to command, control, coordinate and respond to any emergencies.

Furthermore, burns are divided into functional divisions, each with an assigned a group that must focus on specific objectives both before and after the controlled burn.

During the first prescribed burn for the 2023 season involving 80 hectares of the Blesberg Mountain in the Betty's Bay area, Angelo Aplon (Overstrand's Assistant Fire Chief: Operations and Training) acted as Incident Commander.

"Approximately 150 people took part in the burn, of which 60 were volunteers from Pringle Bay, Betty's Bay and Rooi Els who conducted a 'wildlife search and rescue operation' before, during and after the fire," Aplon said.

Overall, Aplon is most pleased with the outcome of the burn and the cooperation of residents in general.

Unfortunately, as reported by the Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue Team, most wildlife casualties caused by the burn can be ascribed to motorists speeding along the R44 in an attempt to escape the smoke, resulting in animals such as frogs, chameleons and mongoose – who were actually fleeing from the flames – being trampled.

"The sad state of affairs," Aplon said, "is that both Overstrand and Provincial Traffic were on hand for the duration to ensure both the public and motorists' safety. So there was absolutely no reason to panic – or to speed."

Moving forward, Overstrand's Fire Chief Lester Smith said that since prescribed fires are much easier to control and can limit the damage caused by runaway brush fires, "we will continue to explore every avenue to secure the full cooperation of the public at large and to ensure that we all act in the best interest of our fragile environment".



With the cooperation of CapeNature, Greater Overberg Fire Protection Association, Overberg District Municipality, Enviro Wildfire and Working on Fire as well as Volunteer Wildfire Services and the Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue team, Overstrand's Fire Department completed its first controlled burn in anticipation of the 2023 fire season without incident. There to compliment the firefighters and volunteers on a job well done under the command of Incident Manager Angelo Aplon were Executive Mayor Dr Annelie Rabie, Deputy Mayor Lindile Ntsabo, Fire Chief Lester Smith, Director: Protection Services Neville Michaels, Senior Manager: Environmental Management Services Liezl de Villiers and Biodiversity Conservation Manager: Tarron Dry.



Photo courtesy Joan Isham

TRAVEL INDABA HAILED A MAJOR BOOST FOR OVERSTRAND TOURISM



AFRICA'S TRAVEL INDABA:

GOING ALL OUT TO LET THE OVERSTRAND STORY SHINE

Pictured here are Overstrand Executive Mayor Dr Annelie Rabie, Municipal Manager Dean O'Neill, Overstrand Tourism Manager Frieda Lloyd and Gansbaai Tourism's Glenda Kitley.

Following on three days of intense networking and marketing at Africa's Travel Indaba 2023 in Durban, the contingent from Overstrand Municipality returned home to report that having a separate stand most definitely paid off.

In previous years, Overstrand Municipality was allocated a small desk as part of the Wesgro stand. This year, though, a team of senior officials (led by Dr Annelie Rabie in her capacity as Executive Mayor and Chair of the Tourism Portfolio) went full out as a stand-alone exhibitor to spread the word that Overstrand truly deserves all the accolades it has earned as a destination of choice.

The Travel Indaba is a platform where exhibitors from Africa's 21 countries can showcase their tourism products and offerings.

Overstrand was well represented at Indaba 2023 with Marine Dynamics exhibiting on the Cape Country Routes stand; The Marine Hotel and White Shark Projects on the African Travel and Tourism Association stand; the Arabella Hotel Golf and Spa on the Southern Sun stand; Mosaic Lagoon Lodge as part of Inspirational Places; Coot Club as part of the Classic Portfolio; and Nydia Carelse as part of the Hidden Gems SA Tourism stand, while the Grootbos Private Nature Reserve and SA Forest Adventures had their own stands.

Also at the Indaba were Annamarie Sales of the Pottingshed Guesthouse, Charl de Kock of the Whale Coast Hotel, Madeleine Smuts of The Windsor, Alta Pretorius of the Hermanus Chamber, and Jeanette du Toit of the Hermanus Whale Festival.

The plan now is to see if a more extensive group of stakeholders can be taken to the 2024 Travel Indaba. However, logistics pertaining to attendance of a travel show is rather daunting, so some careful planning will be called for.

Tourism stalwart gets to dazzle!

Ever since 2003, **Glenda Kitley** (Gansbaai Tourism Manager) has attended the Travel Indaba without fail and, also without fail, entered Northern Cape Tourism's lucky draw every year.

Each year, the diamond industry donates two diamonds as part of a lucky draw where the winners can walk off with accommodation prizes – or one of the diamonds.

This year, Glenda got lucky: She won a diamond!

Asked about her impression of the 2023 Travel Indaba, she said: "I found it to be much more personal and am convinced that the connections we made will draw many, many more tourists to the Overstrand. As always, shark cage diving and marine big five excursions were huge drawcards."