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Regional Events / Streeksgebeure

BotSoc Talk

Saturday 19th July AGM at 5.30p.m. Nivenia Hall after which Alan & Jenny Mountain will speak on Madagascar. Liquid refreshment will be served after the AGM and before the talk.

At all talks a voluntary collection will be taken and the attendance register will be circulated.

Other

Gansbaai

Junie/Julie - Fees van die Ganse and Winter Fynbos Show

Hermanus

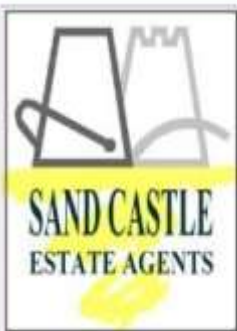
August - Kalfie Fees
Food and Wine Fair
Wedding Expo

Hangklip-Kleinmond - Kleinmond

August - Gravity Adventure Festival – river, mountain, bike etc. sporting event

Hangklip-Kleinmond - Pringle Bay

September - Windgat Festival – enviro (eco & family)



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Deadline for submissions:
20th of each month

<http://www.bettysbay.info/>

Please send us your comments, suggestions, events and news.

Subscribing to the BBRA

R60 per person per year, payable to:

BBRA Current Account

ABSA Hermanus

Branch Code 632005

Account No 4066 6164 39

NB! Reference must include your surname and Erf Number. *Please do not send cash.*

Contact: Adrian de Kock 028 272 9998

Obtaining the BUZZ

The following options are available:

1. Get a copy at the Village Centre Café or Penguin Place, normally first week of each month.
2. Download a PDF version from our web page. Go to link 'The Buzz' at <http://www.bettysbay.info>
3. We also leave a number of copies at the Betty's Bay Library.

Advertising and Crassula Hall payments

Payable to:

BBRA Current Account

ABSA Hermanus

Branch Code 632005

Account No 4066 6164 39

NB! Reference must include your business name. *Please do not send cash.*

Contact: Liz Fick 028 272 9800

Disclaimer: The views expressed by the Buzz contributors are the authors' own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor of the Buzz.

Notice: The Buzz is a private newsletter, administered, financed and published by the BBRA so as to communicate important issues with its members. The committee reserves the right not to publish letters or articles it may receive.

SAPS Emergency Contact Numbers

Charge Office **028 271 8219**

028 271 8200

Capt Marthinus **082 778 6793**

Additional Cell Nos. **079 894 1624**

079 894 1622

082 443 6069

082 522 1831

From the Committee

Sadly we bid farewell to Nancy van Heerden, wife of Louis van Heerden our former Chairman of the Association and former Councillor of Ward 10, who passed away early in June after a long illness. Nancy will be remembered for her involvement in BotSoc, which she served as Chairperson, the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve and the Ratepayers' Association. Our sincere condolences to Louis and the family.

Our Vice Chairman/Treasurer, Adrian de Kock is recovering in MediClinic in Hermanus from surgery some three weeks ago. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Dan Fick representing the Executive of the Community Police Forum attended a function of the Hermanus Cluster in Bredasdorp to bid farewell to Cluster Commander Brigadier Cetyana who has been promoted and transferred to Oudshoorn to take command of the Oudshoorn Cluster. Captain Marthinus (Station Commander) was also recently promoted to Lt. Colonel and transferred to Ladysmith.

It has been hectic for Wilna Rademeyer (Roads and Stormwater Portfolio) after the heavy rains dealing with the flooding of roads and ultimately properties. She has been successful in getting the Municipality to scrape the more badly damaged roads and to undertake emergency maintenance so as to assist residents in reaching their homes. Thanks to Wilna for all her hard work.

Dan attended a presentation of all Chairmen of Overstrand Ratepayers' Associations as well as businessmen convened by the Hermanus Chamber of Business. Some of the salient points made are worrying if in fact true. The theme was that we as Associations have to assess recent budgets and determine for ourselves what action, if any, should be considered. The feeling was that despite representations made to the Overstrand Municipality (OM), it was simply being ignored. It is being maintained that the OM is in financial difficulties with serious consequences for the ratepayers. There is more and more reliance on revenue from ordinary cash strapped ratepayers, mostly pensioners, to rescue the OM. Expenditure is outgrowing the revenue being collected from ratepayers. Expenditure over the last five years was given as 91% as opposed to revenue of 70.74%. There was a decrease in Capital Expenditure which would ultimately result in a decrease in maintenance of aging infrastructure. According to the stats presented, unemployment in the OM area is highest between the ages of 18 and 35 years. This is the group that should ideally be contributing towards rates and taxes but it is the 65 years and older that are in fact having to carry this burden. Revenue targets are not being met due to savings by ratepayers on water and electricity usage. This also impacted on sewage. Ratepayers were then faced with increases in rates so as to balance the budget. The issue of salaries and wages was once again discussed. It was stated that average salaries in the hospitality industry (highest employer in the Overstrand) was R2500pm as opposed to R5300pm for municipal officials. Salaries are growing at a rate of 14.64%pa something which the ratepayers simply cannot afford in the long term. Many are already dipping into their savings to balance personal budgets. Executive salaries are reputed to be the 13th highest in the country out of 278 municipalities. It was also stated that when comparing the size of municipalities, the

OM Manager is earning far more than the Manager of Stellenbosch. It was maintained that whilst the rest of the country was taking austere measures through difficult times to cut costs, the OM was not adjusting to changes in the economic and commercial environment. Although they undertake not to fill any vacancies they took no measures to reduce staff; this is the practice in the private sector during difficult times or otherwise companies would simply go bankrupt. Of particular concern was the R84mil being spent on Contract Services and R12.8mil being spent on Consultant Fees. This was a 37% increase since 2009. It was maintained that political agendas were overriding socio-economic realities. It was suggested that the Municipality should become non political and that independent councillors be elected at the next election. In other words councillors should be representing their constituents and not their political parties. Another matter of concern that was raised was that the OM wanted to take over the Eskom services in towns like Betty's Bay where we enjoy pre-paid services. This would result in much higher rates being charged to residents in Betty's Bay. The meeting was concluded with plans to establish a Steering Committee to engage with Council on these matters.

One of our members, Gottlieb van der Merwe, a resident of Nerine Crescent has taken the initiative of reviving the Betty's Bay Dune Interest Group. His report back is as follows.

The Betty's Bay Dune Interest Group was established in November 2013 with a Committee empowered by a mandate to approach the Municipality regarding the sand problems at Main Beach. Since that time your Committee has been trying to set up a meeting with senior management of the Municipality. Fallout from the court case delayed matters, but we finally had an official meeting with a senior delegation from the Municipality which included the Municipal Manager, the Engineering Manager and the Area Manager. Also present was Councillor Lisel Krige and the BBRA. The main purpose of the meeting was the rebuilding of a co-operative relationship between the affected ratepayers and the Municipality. The confrontational route via the Courts (case lost by the applicants) was not successful and the Municipality is now convinced that they cannot be compelled by law to stabilize the dunes. A reconciliatory approach, with an emphasis on the moral obligation of the Municipality towards their ratepayers, is now the best strategy.

A short summary of the main points discussed after our opening statement is presented below:

1. The municipality believes that they are not responsible for the stabilization of the dunes (this belief stems from the Court ruling) and that they are not authorized by law to spend money doing work not within their jurisdiction. They do however have empathy with the affected ratepayers and will do their best to facilitate a solution and to assist wherever they can and to keep the roads open.
2. Therefore the Municipality approached Cape Nature for advice and assistance. A Municipal delegation met with senior officials of Cape Nature on 2 April and the Municipal Manager reported on this meeting as follows:
 - (a) The requirements and limitations of the NEMA and EIA Laws and Regulations prohibit any work on the dunes until a Dune Management Plan has been generated

and approved. Although the Municipality has started working on such a plan, it is in fact the responsibility of the Coastal Management Committee of the Overberg District Municipality in co-operation with the Provincial Coastal Management Committee. The Dune Management Plan should actually be part of a larger Coastal Management Plan of the Overberg District Municipality.

(b) Cape Nature is concerned about the occurrence of problems involving mobile dunes and experienced at a number of towns along the Provincial coast line (Vleesbaai, Stilbaai, Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay, Sandy Bay, etc.) and believes that as a matter of urgency, a sand/dune management framework should be created for the Province in co-operation with the Provincial Department of Environmental Management and Development Planning (Minister Bredell). Cape Nature has recommended to the Province that the problems at Betty's Bay be used as a case study for this project. All stakeholders (including representatives of the affected property owners) as well as specialists will be involved. It is hoped that this initiative will deliver an approved dune management plan for Betty's Bay.

3. The Municipality is prohibited by the Municipal Management Act to spend money on areas not within their jurisdiction (i.e. the dunes). In response to a question from the Committee about the ownership of Erf 3784 (a large area located between the seafront stands in Morea and Nerina Roads and the high water mark and labeled on the map as "Public Place"), the Engineering Manager consulted the town plans and reported back to the meeting after a few minutes that Erf 3784 is "commonage" – it therefore belongs to the Municipality! This is very valuable information for our case and will be taken up with the Municipality again once a Dune Management Plan has been approved.

4. In response to a question from the BBRA about the conditions for development of a stand covered by sand, the Engineering Manager gave a very interesting answer. The previous interpretation of the NEMA and EIA Laws and Regulations was that an EIA is required prior to development of any stands covered by mobile dunes or located close to a wetland or river. There is now a new interpretation which holds that if a town development has been started before these laws were published, then the laws do not apply even in the case of new development of a previously undeveloped stand which forms part of the town development. This new interpretation still has to be confirmed officially by the Province, but this is VERY good news for the all owners of undeveloped plots with sand problems or located close to a wetland or river. One should however not forget the Set-back Line Project. This new interpretation removes one EIA trigger, but other development restrictions may become applicable for stands to the seaward side of the set-back lines once these have been determined. More about this in a future communication.

5. The Municipal Manager promised to provide more information regarding the meeting with Cape Nature as well as the contact details of the responsible person at Cape Nature. This has now been done and we will contact this person soon.

It is clear that nothing can be done before we have an approved Dune Management Plan and we will now work with Cape Nature and the Coastal Management Committee to make this happen as soon as possible. Unfortunately this is bound to be a time consuming pro-

cess and one will have to be patient. Once we have an approved plan the next hurdle will be to find the money. From our discussions with the Municipality, Cape Nature and the Province it very clear that at least some of the funding will have to be provided by the affected property owners. The Committee plans to start work soon on a proposal for a sustainable and affordable funding model which involves all the stakeholders – including the affected property owners. We will discuss this proposal with the Group before it is taken further.

Our thanks to Gottlieb for all his efforts in getting this very important issue off the ground once again.

SAPS are promoting a system referred to as DataDots. This has become a measure to assist both SAPS and owners to identify stolen property. This consists of tiny particles also known as "microdots" which are placed on items of value and which will identify ownership if later recovered by the police.. Each particle is between 0.5mm and 1mm in diameter. In the case of motor vehicles, the 17-digit PIN number is laser-etched onto each DataDot. On purchasing a set of DataDots one's particulars are registered with SAPS. More news about this in the next issue of the Buzz.

Dan Fick (Chairman)

Bugs and dead zones

Bugs, smelly water and marine dead zones-that is no fish zones.

Many, very many, global measurements by oceanographers tell us that the sea almost everywhere from surface to seafloor contains moderate quantities of dissolved oxygen gas. Nonetheless, certain restricted areas either contain far less dissolved oxygen than normal or none at all. Regions with low dissolved oxygen are called **hypoxic**; those with no measurable dissolved oxygen are **anoxic**, or anaerobic. Such environments, usually with a sluggish water circulation, are created by an excessive inflow of easily oxidised matter, most usually dead phytoplankton ('plant' plankton), which uses up much dissolved oxygen as, sinking, it is decomposed by rapid, efficient bacterial action, in the process recycling the essential major nutrients, carbon, nitrogen and phosphorous.

But why bother about dissolved oxygen at all? Well for a start, all higher living creatures need oxygen to live! Marine inhabitants from the tiniest zooplankton or shellfish to the largest finfish all access dissolved oxygen through their gills. Marine mammals, turtles and so on, of course breathe air from above. However, should hypoxic conditions pertain, those fish o

that can, will although distressed, swim away; unfortunate sessile ('fixed') creatures like limpets or mussels, will suffocate and soon die. Even worse, should anoxia follow hypoxia as often happens, all that survives will be specialised microbes such as anaerobic bacteria and some plants, while the chemistry of the water changes amazingly as dissolved oxygen disappears. These "**dead zones**" of anoxic waters may be temporary and a good storm with high waves will mix freshly oxygenated sea water down flushing out the anoxic layers, or deeper ocean currents may bring in a new supply of the essential dissolved oxygen. The only large volume of "permanent" anoxic water in the world ocean lies below 100 m or so in the Black Sea, which is cut-off and not really a part of the main ocean system, in fact

the lack of incoming oxygenated water is the major reason why it remains anoxic. However, large areas of the near bottom, near coastal seafloor world-wide are becoming more and more anoxic as excess fertilising compounds (mostly nitrate and phosphate) flowing in both from intensive agriculture and from excessive human sewage wastes vastly stimulate natural algal growth, called eutrophication, massively increasing the downward flow of dead matter, putting much extra strain on the deeper dissolved oxygen supply and thus reducing it. Ultimately this creeping anoxia drives away coastal commercial fish stocks and wipes out those marine life forms unable to migrate away from such dead zones. Worse, some anaerobic microbes are pathogenic causing very nasty diseases if ingested. Dead zones are 'very bad news', but regrettably are increasing globally both in volume and in area.

Remember: Dead Zone equals No Fish.

But another thought. Geochemists tell us that the ocean has only contained measurable dissolved oxygen for about half its lifetime-before this time it was everywhere anoxic and home to microbes we would definitely not select by ourselves! These specialised microbes used hydrogen gas, then far more abundant, along with much carbon dioxide, and made methane (natural gas) in quantity, some using sunlight as an energy supply; note that unlike today these early photosynthetic organisms did not produce dissolved oxygen. Others used dissolved iron then orders of magnitude more abundant than today as an energy source, still more used elemental sulphur and its compounds like hydrogen sulphide, a "rotten-eggs" smelling gas, extremely toxic to all higher life forms. Then an "environmental crisis" took place. Evolving photosynthetic cyanobacteria near the ocean surface discovered how to create organic matter far more effectively by the photosynthetic process we know today and which process now produced free oxygen gas as a by-product. When such photosynthetically generated dissolved oxygen first arrived in the sea it was like a horrible environmental pollutant since even in minute quantities, it annihilated entire native populations of anaerobic microbes by the trillions. As dissolved oxygen increased in stages, the ocean changed its chemical character to that of today, higher life forms evolved then proliferated. The life giving gas to us-oxygen-thus sounded the death knell for the earliest marine inhabitants which had occupied the young ocean for billions of years. Before long, geologically speaking, oxygen gas seeped into the overlying atmosphere where it oxidised gases like methane and slowly built up, eventually through its making of stratospheric ozone, providing our ultra-violet umbrella shielding us from these harsh rays given out by the sun. This was a truly earth-changing event, permitting life as we know it to flourish-and photosynthetic oxygen was the prime mover.

However, these ancient marine anaerobes have simply gone into hiding and when pollution or natural causes induce anoxic waters, back they flock, the waters soon reek of poisonous hydrogen sulphide gas and even more evil-smelling phosphorous compounds, even traces of the "war gas" phosphine (PH₃), are generated; kreek "walk out" of the water and fish move away. Anoxic waters occur naturally in mid-depth layers off our west coast, growing and subsiding at intervals. Near-shore hypoxic waters are increasing globally mainly from man-made effluents, but it is fascinating to recall that such unpleasant smelly "dead" waters are in every sense a "throw-back" to the youthful days of our mighty ocean.

Prof Michael Orren

See same article on web page, with images. -Ed.

The Wind Bloweth...

Hi!

Curlz MT. That is the name of the font I chose for the heading of my little bit of nonsense this month. Something to resemble the state of what is left of the red hot poker in our garden (whose long stems and beautiful blooms were literally tied in knots by the wind). Tatty, also, as the wind-torn stems with meagre green triangles, where a few days ago lush leaves surrounded regal (if small), arum lilies. Very few of our collection of Proteas remain – those tough stalwarts of the Betty's Bay fynbos who always seem to grit their teeth and shout "vasbyt!" in the Northwester, (bar the tall Compactas), seem to have decided to throw in the towel and simply turn brown and dry up.

The large troop of our furry friends seems to have split into smaller factions in order to cover larger areas, as two to three of them frolic on our roof at a time, regardless of the weather conditions. Check the capital T in the font above... it resembles the downpipes of our once proud outside plumbing while the adolescent baboons swing on them, jungle gym style – before they part company from their horizontal counterparts. And the n – bent and curved – could be the supports for the gutters before they broke yet again under the weight of the revellers.

The i would represent our Little Prince Proteas with their beautiful deep pink buds... until the baboons picked them and ate most of them, leaving the remains on the driveway. Their bare stems now resemble the l in "bloweth." And the rest of it? Well, look in the mirror when you return from shopping or visiting, and depending on how much hair you have left, it could reflect the entire phrase. The old King James version of the Bible states that the wind "bloweth where it listeth", a polite way of saying it does as it damnedwell pleases, but we have come to realise that as long as we position buckets in a couple of strategic places when it blows rain horizontally, the resulting drips through the ceiling pose no threat at all. If it listeth vertically, the worst that could happen would be that the overflow from the ponds cause attractive little rivulets down the driveway, and as long as we stay indoors, that looks beautiful and our feet stay dry.

The wind on the sea in those violent storms takes one's breath away! We love to stand at the upstairs windows and watch as the cold fronts move in over the sea – watching, as first the horizon disappears from view, and then the storm approaches steadily, blotting out the visible swells, and finally everything is enveloped by the rain, sometimes accompanied by hail. If it is cold enough, there's the added fun of building and lighting a fire in the little stove in the lounge, a ritual of sheer delight to the grandchildren whose hearts and bodies are warmed by both the participation and the flames. Add to this a mug of coffee or some other hot beverage, good company and lots of laughter, and who cares which direction the wind chooses?

Somehow the internal storms of life seem a lot more difficult to deal with – especially when we try to deal with them alone. As we age, so many things we took for granted now reside in the past, like the

energy we had to go out jogging early in the morning, revelling in our physical, mental and creative fitness. The air wasn't so clean, but we had nothing to compare it with, and we

jogged before the vehicles' exhaust fumes fouled that freshness later in the day. Now we live in this beautiful environment, blessed beyond measure, but without those almost life-long friends who contributed so much to the fun and contentment. Three of our closest friends have died, and we have lost contact with many others. Our siblings live far away, and family reunions are rare – but what a joy when that rare occasion presents itself!

But no storm lasts forever, does it? We have experienced a deeper warmth of friendship in Betty's Bay than we have ever known before, and some of you who read this will be part of our circle of friends who lovingly tend the wind-damaged lives of the community around them, sharing the God-given gifts of hospitality and generosity, and good old-fashioned love at the heart of it. Many we know are hurting in some way at present, but for as long as it takes, let us all do what we can in the storm to help steady their boat, simply by being there for them. God bless.

Beverley Green

Occultations

My excitement about an occultation which was to occur on 10 June 2014 from 19:15 to 20:16 was met by frowns from a few people who most probably thought that I had plans to slay a black cat. Let me begin by defining the word occult.

Dealing with supernatural influences or phenomena, beyond the realm of human comprehension, inscrutable or available only to the initiate are the more common associations. However, occult also means hidden from view and knowledge of the hidden.

Before I am forever labelled a witch, let me assure you that my excitement was all about an occultation of an astronomical object and nothing sinister.

After days of heavy rain in the Western Cape, the skies cleared as a gibbous Moon glided by while the more distant Saturn disappeared and was completely out of sight for an hour or so. Even though I knew I had time to spare, I braved the cold and kept looking through my telescope, fiddling and adjusting my camera. The moments of disappearance and re-appearance, when two astronomical bodies seem to be touching one another, are the most thrilling. With Saturn, even more so because first the rings "touch", followed by the planet. For just a few seconds Saturn and its rings seem to be halved.

I have often witnessed bright stars being occulted by the Moon. On the other hand, occultations of planets by the Moon are not as frequent but during every year there's bound to be at least one to observe from somewhere on Earth.

Occultations of one planet by another are rare. The last time such event occurred was on 3 January 1818 when Venus occulted Jupiter. The next occultation involving planets will occur on 22 November 2065 when the same two planets will have a new generation of astrologers in a flurry.

It is also possible for two planets to be occulted at the same time. Such events are extremely rare. I could only find one reference to such an event. On 23 April 1998 the Moon occulted Venus and Jupiter simultaneously for observers on Ascension Island.

Since Aristotle recorded the Moon covering Mars way back in 357 B.C, occultations have been observed, not only for the sake of wonder, but mainly for scientific purposes. Ura-

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Emergency Contact Numbers

Overstrand Emergency	24 Hours	028 313 8111
Fire Department	Control Room	028 312 2400
	Marlu Rust	082 776 9287
	Wendy Tawse	082 442 8005
	Fires in Reserves	082 783 8585
Police	Emergencies	10111
	Charge Office	028 271 8219
	Capt. Marthinus	082 778 6793
	Sector Policing Officer	082 522 1831
Security Providers	Safe Security	028 272 9110
	Response	082 410 7845
	ASK Security (Office)	028 272 9500
	24 Hour Emergency	082 951 1892
		071 135 9029
	Sandown Bay Security	028 271 5633
		028 271 3306
		028 272 9575
Ambulances	Provincial	10177
	ER24	084 124
Doctors	Dr Du Plessis	028 271 4227
	Dr Van Niekerk	028 271 4227
	Dr Morkel	028 271 4227
	After Hours	082 653 6355
	Dr Greeff	028 272 9999
	After Hours	082 659 9437
	Dr Moses	028 271 3152
	After Hours	078 417 5628
Dentists	Dr Duvenhage	028 271 3467
	After Hours	082 861 0616
	Dr Engelbrecht	028 271 3662
	Dr Visser	028 271 5321

Hospitals	Hermanus Provincial	028 312 1166
	Hermanus Medi-Clinic	028 313 0168
	Vergelegen Medi-Clinic	021 850 9000
Child Welfare	Kleinmond	028 271 4044
Veterinarian	Dr Dave	028 271 4183
	After Hours	083 440 5191
KAWS	Animal Welfare	028 271 5004
Pharmacies	Albertyn Pharmacy	028 271 4666
	After Hours	082 927 5240
	After Hours	082 868 4267
	Kleinmond Pharmacy	028 271 3320
	After Hours	082 652 4309
Optometrists	Obermeyer	028 271 3119
	Optical Eyes	028 271 5684
Municipality	Betty's Bay	028 272 9263
	Kleinmond	028 271 8400
	Fire & Water	028 313 8111
	Law Enforcement	028 313 8111
		028 271 8466
	Traffic	028 313 8111
	Sewerage Removal	028 271 8435
	Hermanus	028 313 8000
Seawatch	Betty's Bay	028 272 9532
	Mike Tannett	082 994 9300
NSRI	Gordons Bay	021 856 1992
	Hermanus	028 312 3180
Electricity (Eskom)	Electricity	021 859 5304
	Emergencies	08600 37 566
General	Councillor Lisel Krige	028 272 9533
	Betty's Bay Post Office	028 272 9363
	Centre Shop	028 272 9230
	Penguin Place	028 272 9257
	Tourism Bureau	028 271 5657
	Fynbos Service Centre	082 719 6200
	Fire Extinguisher Service	083 741 9914

nus's rings were discovered when the planet occulted a star in 1977.

Even with occultation excitement abating, The Lord of the Rings will still be prominent in our night skies for the next few months to wow observers.

To find Saturn in the night sky visit: <http://www.saa.ac.za/whats-up/june-2014/>

Carol Botha

Water - Did you know?

The Western Cape is critical to any conservation efforts in South Africa: it is not only one of the most complex and bio diverse areas in the world, but it is one of the primary water catchment areas for the country. The work that happens here has a direct bearing on the quality of life of millions of people in the province as sound ecological infrastructure in water catchment areas provides clean, safe water to rivers, dams and the end consumer.

Did you know that 57% of the strategic water resources in South Africa are held in the Western Cape and that 90% of the water catchment areas in the province are managed by CapeNature?

Did you know that on average a mature tree consumes 40-50 litres per tree per day?

The greatest impact on water from a healthy mountain catchment area occurs when seasonally dormant vegetation is replaced by evergreen plants. Thus, where grasslands or shrub lands are invaded by alien trees, the overall water use by the vegetation increases, leaving less water for the streams.

Studies have shown that infestation can result in a 55% reduction in stream flow (from 600 to 270 mm) in fynbos catchments after 23 years of infestation with pines.

#Environment Month (Wendy Tawse)

August 2014 Phenomenon

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

This year, the month of August will count 5 Fridays, 5 Saturdays and 5 Sundays. **This phenomenon occurs only once every 823 years.**

Chinese people call it: 'Pocketful of money'.

So ... send this to all your friends and in 4 days, you will have a pleasant monetary surprise ...

Based on Chinese Feng Shui. Whoever does not forward this message ... could find himself without a clue of what's going on in his life ... and that's no laughing matter.

Last time was in 1191 and next time will be in 2837!!

A Serial In Thirteen Episodes



Dramatis personae:

Chief Pilot:	Captain Mamat Munsib 1961
Sweetheart:	Mei Mei Hong
Her Father:	Lee Hong
Imam of Al-Alidayh Mosque on Penang Island:	Shaykh Ibn Sina
Instructor on Bayan Penang International Airport:	Paddy
Penang Minister & Friend	MayangTeuku
Mamat's wife	Aisyah Mussa
Co-Pilot	Jamal Hamad bin Tengku
Military Radar recruit	Abdul Haqq

Episode 1: Ending

The sun came up silently. There was no thunder. The only sounds were the soft sough of the jet engines and the sigh of the airflow. In the West the dark blue sky held a few pin-pricks of the fading stars. Above, the sky loomed deeply purple. Sunlight touched the tops of cloud-meringues with pink. Below, hundreds of white horses galloped across angry seas.

The burgeoning apricot sunrays slowly moved down, illuminating hundreds of oxygen masks, gently swaying. As the sun rose, the rays descended to show the bodies, some still sitting in fastened seat-belts, others scattered in confused heaps across the deck.

In front, Noor Abang, the chief stewardess, in her colourful dress and groomed hair in disarray, slumped against the door to the pilot's cabin, her torn nails and bloodied fingertips streaking stains down the surface in futile supplication.

As the sun rose further the rays became blood red and bathed two more bodies. One, in the left seat had dark epaulettes on his white shirt. It has four golden stripes; the other wore only three stripes. Neither was wearing a cap. Only one was strapped into his seat his mouth open in disbelief. The blood covering the front of his shirt, black in the red sunlight. His neck gaped.

Then the jet-sound suddenly diminished. The port motor had run out of fuel. The aircraft veered sharply left and spiraled viciously to the mountainous seas. The autopilot was totally unable to cope with this situation. In four minutes it hit vertically with a surprisingly small splash. Only a solitary Wandering Albatross bore witness. Now only the crashing of the waves echoed across the empty sea.

The emergency beacon activated automatically but its radio was drowned before it could transmit.

Seven minutes later the engines hit the sea-floor in a cloud of silt, one by one. Much later scattered pieces of aircraft fluttered down over a wide area, Dispersed by deep ocean currents. The broken tail, still largely intact, auto-rotated slowly like a Combretum seed through the depths and buried itself in the silt, with but a tip of the vertical stabiliser showing. The black boxes beeped forlornly, their sounds muffled by the silt. Lighter bits were swept with the current willy-nilly.

Some pieces floated for a while, but the roiling cyclonic seas soon found holes in empty spaces and leaked in to drown the flotsam.

The fragments of the aeroplane snuggled deeper into the silt.

The dead were not forgotten for a while, but soon memories faded

There was no sound. It was pitch dark.

Blind, strange denizens did not see or care.

Episode 2: Beginning

Mamat (Mohammed) was the apple of his father's eye. He was his father's first child and first son and so doubly loved. From the age of six he was taken daily to the maktab in the masjid Al-Alidayh Mosque near his home in Bayan Lepas, where he lived in the modest house of his fisherman father.

There Shaykh Ibn Sīnā taught the qu'ran, Islamic metaphysics, language, literature and ethics. He was a bright child and progressed to the madrasah at 14 where he was taught both the religious and the "secular sciences", logic, mathematics and philosophy.

Ibn Sina was named for the famous Muslim scholar, born in 980, and called Avicenna by the west.

All sorts of aircraft overflew his home in the flight path of Bayan Penang International Airport and often had to be rooted away for supper from the boundary fence.

"Mamat, why do you waste your time at that noisy place? You should be at home looking after your mother and sisters. You are a big boy now."

"Baba, I want to grow up and fly aeroplanes"

"That is ungodly – I will tell Ibn Sina to chastise you. You are clever and should study the Qu'ran to become an Imam"

"But Father!"

"No buts! Either that or you will grow up and inherit the boat and catch fish to feed our family when I am gone."

"Father, I fear Allah, but do not want to be an Imam or a fisherman. I want fly in the sky!"-

“Enough! I will speak to the Shaykh”

Shaykh Ibn Sina listened patiently, and considered his answer, then said to Mamat:

“You are a good and pious boy. The Holy Qu’ran states in the Surah Al Isra (17:23) “Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour.”

“So I say to you, obey your father, help him catch fish for the family, learn the trade. Then, when you are 18 years old and still want to fly Aeroplanes, thank your father and mother for giving you life and pointing you down the road to righteous living and follow your dream in faith. Go with God”

The Imam, being a scholar, knew of Ignatius of Loyola, the Basque Catholic priest who had founded the Jesuits and had led the Counter-Reformation. The Jesuit saying; “Give me a child until he is seven and I will give you the man” was an adage he accepted and applied. Therefore, he took an interest in Mamat and every week, after Friday prayers he continued his religious education. But also plied him with books on Aeronautics, Physics, and Mathematics. He recognised the intelligence and potential in the boy and gambled that the effort needed to master flying would pall and bend the boy towards Islamic scholarship and a religious life. He was only partially successful.

Mamat joined His Father on the boat when he was nine, learning to be a fisherman from baiting hooks cleaning the boat, pumping bilges, and as he grew, to handle lines, read the compass and steer the boat. The books the Imam gave him taught him about charts and navigation and ‘rules of the road’

He was able to persuade his father to investigate likely reefs out of sight of land, where other fishermen skippers were scared to venture and found abundant fish stocks. Mamat’s studies were put to good effect, he persuaded his father to get a patent log to measure speed and distance. He found a second-hand Stowe example cheaply, and he purchased a better compass and had it ‘swung’ (to be able to draw up a deviation card to compensate for the distortion produced by the steel mass of the engine).

He gained confidence in the use of ‘Dead Reckoning’ (Deduced Reckoning) and soon was navigating far into the Malacca Straits.

Catches skyrocketed. The enterprise prospered, the family grew rich, his sisters could make good marriages and they moved to a bigger house.

His Father bought a bigger boat with Radar and Echo-sounder. Mamat was paid an increasing wage as his competence grew and everyone knew he would inherit the boat and eventually captain a whole fleet.

But Mamat kept his own council, saved his money and continued his studies, while dutifully giving full measure to his Father and family.

Aged 13, he entered the Penang Free School in George Town and received a first-class secondary education and more particularly learnt to speak English. Every week-end he bussed home and continued to help his father’s business.

Episodes 3 –13 to follow

Bettysbaai Se Paaie

Brief van 'n inwoner aan die OM, rakende die toestand van paaie in Bettysbaai.

Môre Danovan,

Ongelukkig moet ek weereens 'n skrywe aan jou rig om jou vir die hoeveelste keer te herinner aan die gehawende toestand van die paaie in Betty'sbaai onderandere Oxalisweg!!!

Ek het jou ook vanoggend (09h00) probeer skakel maar jy was nie daar nie. Ek het 'n boodskap gelaat maar tot dusver nog geen reaksie gekry nie!!!

Die pad is nou op plekke bykans onbegaanbaar en dit vererger by die minuut. Ek het ook geen reaksie gesien NA my oproep na jou verlede week inverband met die stormwaterpyp wat onder die sand begrawe is nie (By Erf 4706). Ek glo Mnr Lakey, Lisel en Petrus sal ook onthou dat ek dit sowat 3 maande gelede al aan julle uitgewys het. Wanneer dit reën soos die afgelope week is die pad heeltemal oorstrom en veroorsaak dat die pad verder verbrottel.

Van die inwoners se erwe raak heeltemal oorstrom!!

Ek praat nie eers van die gate by Erf 4708 wat nou al dwarsoor die pad is. 'n Mens (wat omgee vir sy voertuig) moet heeltemal tot stilstand kom en dan stadig daar probeer deur beweeg.. Soos wat dit nou aangaan sal die pad eersdaags heeltemal herbou moet word. Ek merk dat by my huis 4733 die mense nou al oor my sypaadjie begin ry wat my nog meer kwaad begin maak.

Ek was stomgeslaan vanoggend toe een van die Riolverwyderingsvoertuie by my verbyjaag teen ongeveer 60km/u in Oxalis deur die slaggate om die tenk by Erf 4819 op die hoek van Oxalis & Retzia te gaan pomp. (Dit was ongeveer 08h45 en die registrasie nommer van die voertuig is CAM20030). 10 minute later jaag hy toe verderaf in Oxalis teen dieselfde spoed deur al wat 'n slaggat is om die nog groter te maak met die gewig en geweld waarmee hy daardeur beweeg.

Tot my verbasing kry ek dieselfde wa ongeveer 10h00 in Porter maar die keer kom hy van vooraf (ook teen 'n ontoelaatbare spoed). Ek merk toe dat daar geen nommerplaat aan die voorkant van die voertuig is nie. Toe hy by my verby is en ek kyk in my truspieeltjie, sien ek dat dit wragtig dieselfde bestuurder is wat so jaag. Moet iemand eers baie ernstig bekeer of selfs dood wees voordat hierdie gedrag aangespreek gaan word??? Ek verstaan hulle word beboet maar klaarblyklik is die boete te min want hulle steur hul net eenvoudig nie daaraan nie.



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