From the Mayor's Desk

Dear readers,

What an exciting time this autumn has been in Knysna! We painted the town pink during the Pink Loerie Mardi Gras and Arts Festival, we displayed a wonderful range of classic cars at the Knysna Motor Show, and then the last and furious arrived for the Knysna Street Carnival. The Jaguar Senna Hill Climb event, also in Knysna, hosted the Expedition Africa Adventure Race and then we’ve got the Knysna 200 cycle race coming up along with the highlight of our winter calendar: the Pick n Pay Knysna Oyster Festival.

Knysna is fortunate to host an array of events that add life and interest to what can be a very grey winter. Thank you to all the event organisers for an amazing job done. We know that these events bring a welcome boost to our local economy and to our local charities. I received a R180 000 donation on behalf of the Vincent Centre during the Pink Loerie Mardi Gras and Arts Festival – a memorable and immensely generous gesture. This one gesture has made a tangible difference in the lives of the 60 people who call the centre home. I feel it will be an interesting exercise to add up all the charitable contributions of the events Knysna plays host to during the year, monetary or otherwise. It may change the way we look at the events.

My office is inundated with requests from charitable organisations and individuals, but it is impossible to help everyone. There are families within our municipal area with nothing to eat. Food provided by the e-Pop programme at some of our schools, is often the only meal some children have. Drive past the Louro Park entrance in George Rex Drive on any given day and one notices the huge number of people lining up, looking for work.

Margaret Mead, world famous anthropologist and women’s rights activist, said that one should never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. “Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

The individuals providing soup to the people sitting next to George Rex Drive are such people. So is the couple who made the generous contribution to Vermont, and the event managers, never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world.

The aims of the youth council are:

- To give the youth of Knysna a voice concerning civil matters;
- To promote leadership qualities - as well as a healthy interest in municipal, civil, administrative and community matters - within our youth;
- To organise projects (in line with the aims of Council) to the benefit of the communities; and
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The Youth Council plays a unique role in the councils. This unique role is essential to the regeneration process; it promotes sustainability as community members have ownership of communities; it enhances effectiveness as communities bring understanding, knowledge and experience essential to the regeneration process; it enables government policies and programmes to be relevant to local experience; it enables government policies and programmes to be relevant to local experience (by listening to, and identifying the problems of, the people); and it enables the community to participate in the governance of the country.

The Solid Waste Department attends to numerous sites where community members dump waste illegally. Dumping occurs on vacant land and public open spaces. Illegal dumping adversely affects the entire community. It can cause harm to people and nature. It can also cause contamination of our already threatened water supply. It also increases the cost of municipal service delivery. It can also attract pests and disease.

If you see any dumped refuse, please contact 044 302 6405 or write to knysna@knysna.gov.za.

From the Mayor’s Desk

Ward Committee Meeting: Ward 3
Ward Committee Meeting: Ward 6
Ordinary Council Meeting
Youth Day

South Africa celebrates Youth Day on 16 June. On this day we commemorate and celebrate the courage of our youth, and ourselves as South Africans. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Soweto uprisings.

“Young people need and deserve our support,” said Executive Mayor Geordin Willemse. “I believe that the members of the newly established Knysna Youth Council will address challenges facing our youth. As we commemorate the youth of 1976, it gives me great joy to see young people still interested in the affairs of local government. And making efforts to improve the living conditions of our people. I am confident that they will fulfill their mandate.”

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The GREEN COLUMN: ILLEGAL DUMPING CAUSES SERIOUS CONCERN

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The importance of public participation:

- Active participation of local residents is essential to improve democracy and service accountability;
- Enhanced local community as government recognise the value of working in partnership with each other and with statutory agencies;
- It enhances government as communities bring understanding, knowledge and experience essential to the regeneration process;
- It enables government to develop the skills and networks that are needed to address social exclusion and crime;
- It promotes sustainability as communities develop ownership of communities and can develop confidence and skills to sustain community based projects.

The Executive Mayor will table the final budget on Thursday 26 May 2016 at an ordinary meeting of the Council.

The Breakdown of road works done in the Industrial Area and the CBD is as follows:

- R1 million was spent on resurfacing in Podtief, Nobel, Hadada, Jonker, Boswerker, Menu and Queen Streets. Remembered and Nathomount Drives and the George Rex Intersection.
- R2.4 million was spent on road patching at Rawson, Long and Boswerker Streets and the N2 Main Road at the Provincial Hospital.
- So far R 240 000 has been spent on pothole repairs in the CBD and work is in progress in other areas in the greater Knysna municipal area.

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