

RV NEWS BULLETIN

MARCH 2015

1. GENERAL NOTICE

1.1. Leopard Sightings

An unusual number of leopard sightings have been reported on the estate in the last two weeks. We urge members to remember this is a wild animal and extreme caution has to be exercised when out and about on the estate. Please report any sighting to Byron in order to monitor its movements.

1.2. Scheduled Power Outage

The following notification was received from Eskom:

POWER INTERRUPTION/OUTAGE

MIRAGE/MARULA/AIRBASE

There will be a power interruption/outage on

31 March 2015 from 08:00 to 13:00

Affected feeders: Marula York, Marula Kapama and Maruleng 2 22 kV feeders

The reason for the interruption of supply/outage is due to the Splitting of the Hoedspruit feeders by energizing Marula York, Marula Kapama and Maruleng 2 22 kV feeders.

The affected customers:

All customers in Hoedspruit town including Kapama
Drakensig

For their own safety, customers are requested to consider all electrical points as live during the interruption.

Should you require more information, please contact the Eskom Contact Centre at 08600 37566 (Eskom)

2. RV, LEAVING A LEGACY

In the 6 months from September 2014 to end February 2015, 22 properties were registered to new owners on Raptors View. With the economy and the property market still in a depressed state, that says something for properties on our estate, which seem to be holding their value way above market average.

In February 2010 there were 147 homes on the estate. In February 2015 there are 200 (some still under construction) – that's an average of over 10 per year. We can be happy that our investments on the estate appear to be sound, and your board is doing its best to see that they continue to grow, and to ensure that we leave a legacy for future generations.

This is why we instituted a capital projects fund – to ensure that our water, electricity – in fact all our infrastructure, as well as our security – can cope with current and future circumstances that might prevail, and that the standard of our lifestyles can be maintained.

2.1. RV Article

Raptors View was recently featured in the Wild Life Ranching Magazine, Issue 1 2015.

Attached is the article in PDF format.

3. HEALTH AND SAFETY

3.1. Malaria

Limpopo has seen an increase in malaria cases again this summer.

WE urge all residents on the estate to make use of one or more of the following preventative measures:

- Make use of fly screens
- Sleep underneath mosquito nets
- Make use of insect repellants
- Burn coils at night
- Use household fans whilst sleeping
- Wear long sleeve clothing when outdoors
- Inspect standing water (buckets, overflowing French drains, drinking holes) for mosquito larvae
- Keep Malaria home tester kits on hand

3.2. Geyser Temperatures

In our previous bulletin we made mention of ways to reduce energy consumption as per Eskom insert.

One of these ways was to reduce the temperature of the geyser. A resident pointed out that if there are storage tanks that contain water without getting replaced in a longer period and the temperature is too low, legionella bacteria infection can happen. Between 30 and 45°C is the range in which they increase at maximum speed. From 55°C no more increase and at 60°C they will be killed.

Therefore the recommendation is to keep the temperature of the hot water at 60°C at all times.

3.3. Private Alarm Reactions

Currently there are not many homes which are monitored by private security companies by means of silent alarms. In order to respond to these alarms we will be making use of the following procedure:

- Private alarms are billed by their respective companies for monitoring only
- Any reaction requirement must be communicated by the monitoring company to the Quemic control office on 060 3010 837. The Quemic control will dispatch the mobile unit.
- Residents will be entitled to two free call outs per month which should cover false alarms.
- Any additional call out will be billed from the HOA to the resident at R75 per call out.
- Therefore please have your alarm checked from time to time, to make sure that it is in good working order.

3.4. Personal Staff Security Screenings

We remind all residents that as per the previous bulletin, all personal Staff have to undergo security screening by 31 March 2015. After that date personal staff who have not been screened may be denied access onto Raptors View. You can book a screening at the Quemic office on 015 793 1850. If you have any problem in this regard, please contact the office or Byron.

3.5. Tenants Security Screening

Security is one of the top, if not the number one concern on the estate. We are continuously working proactively to improve security on the estate - to identify risks and to address them. One of the concerns raised was the potential for tenants to pose a threat internally. A method to discourage would be to have all tenants undergo the IDECO security screening. We would like to know your thoughts on this suggestion. Please email your comments to security@raptorsviewhoa.co.za

3.6. Gate Access

We have been monitoring the access of residents at the main gate. We have communicated to members that no contractor will be permitted through the main gate as a visitor. We have also noticed an increase in residents bringing personal staff through the main gate without access cards. Residents are misusing their own access system and if this is not stopped, we will enforce the moving of all personal staff back to the contractor's gate.

3.7. Fire Season

We have had the lowest rainfall this season in many years. We are already into the dry season and thus the risk of veld fires is very real.

1.1.1 Fire Marshalls

We would like residents living permanently on the estate to volunteer to act as fire marshalls. We will provide training in identifying veld fires and the correct procedure to report fires etc. If you are interested please contact Byron or the office.

1.1.2 Fire Breaks

It is time again for the annual fire breaks to be done around all the houses, and because of the dry conditions this needs to be done by the end of April. The estate staff will be able to assist with the cutting of firebreaks and bush clearing – the cost will be determined by the extent of work to be done. Please contact Byron to book or for any information.

4. CAPITAL PROJECTS AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

4.1. RV Electrical Grid - Detailed Design of the Raptor's View Electrical Grid

The electrical network rescue upgrade was done in 2009 in order to meet the immediate requirements of the estate, with the knowledge that this was only a partial fix. At the time there were less than 140 dwellings on the estate - with the houses already under construction this figure has already increased to 200, and we have been advised that the original upgrade is no longer sustainable at the current rate of development (eg. certain cables, transformers etc need upgrading). Your Board cannot ignore this if it wishes to uphold the lifestyle of each of its members.

Motla Consulting Engineers (Pty) Ltd, our electrical consultants, have estimated that we would have to spend a minimum of R3.6m over a 2 – 5 year period to ensure a supply of 5kVA ADMD (not 7kVA which is more usual) to each household. ADMD is a method used to determine how much power each household is likely to use based on factors such as the local weather conditions, average floor area per house, the use of energy efficient technologies and the average occupancy per household. However we will not know exactly what needs upgrading before Motla has done the required detailed design at an estimated cost of R190 000.

An important part of Motla's overall brief will be to establish how much of the cost of the total electrical upgrade we can save if homeowners invested in more efficient appliances, gas stoves and solar or heat pump water heating systems.

We remind you of the implementation of energy efficient methods for all new houses.

4.2. Water

It is now a matter of extreme urgency that we erect water storage tanks to end the almost daily interruptions to the supply from town. We are getting final quotations on 1 tank initially that will see us through for at least 2 days, which we want to erect on stand 10. The tank will not be seen from the road or any neighbouring property, and will be the same colour as the background foliage. We will advise you of the costs as soon as they are available.

4.3. Town planner

Stand 10, which is now registered in the name of RVHOA, needs to become part of the common property and thus owned by all the members of the Association.

To achieve this we need to rezone the stand from Residential to Special use. The board recommends the appointment of Kago-Boswa Consulting (Spatial Planners) to do the re-zoning, at a cost of R27400. There were only two qualifying tenders submitted and the Board has had previous experience with Kago-Boswa. This process will in all probability take several months so needs to be started as soon as possible

4.4. Dams

Many of you will have noticed the erosion on the back slope of all the dams on the estate. There has been flooding of the dams almost every year for the last few years, aggravating the erosion problem. We have had the dams surveyed in order to determine the cause and the rectification of any issues.

Some of the problems are:

- Dam spill way is too small for the catchment area
- The dam wall free board is too low (the distance between the overflow and the top of the dam wall)
- There are trees in the wall that could result in future leaks in the dam wall.

We will put the work out to tender to determine final costing for the repair of the dam walls.

4.5. Estate Vehicles

We have employed additional staff and will be purchasing an additional vehicle. If you are aware of a Toyota bakkie in excellent condition in the R120K to R150k region, please let Byron know.

4.6. SCS Wetland Dam

As you may be aware, the Green Scorpions were called in to inspect a neighbouring property early last year. As a result we engaged with an environmental consultant to conduct an environmental audit for Raptors View. This was to ensure that we are compliant with all the required environmental legislation. The estate came out with flying colours apart from one issue - the dam built at Southern Cross School in 2008, in response to the raw sewerage flowing from town via the school into Osprey Dam. Unfortunately this dam was constructed without the relevant approvals and permissions and a fine of R80 000 has been issued against the RVHOA by the Department of Environmental Affairs (these fines can be anything from R250,000 to R5 million – the lower fine took into account the mitigating circumstances). There are various other aspects which need to be progressed, such as the rectification of the settling ponds, a water use licence etc. and SCS will be finalising these with the environmental consultants and the Department of Water Affairs.

5. ECOLOGY

5.1. Bush Clearing Project

Selective clearing is ongoing in the common wilderness area along the eastern fence for removal of encroaching plant species. The main species that are selectively being thinned out are *Grewia* spp, *Acacia exuvialis* and *Dichrostachys cinerea*. If you would like the same type of clearing done at individual stands, please contact Byron for more information.

5.2. Baboon Spiders

We have re-launched the Baboon spider program on RVHOA. With the assistance of the local reptile park, all new stands to be developed are surveyed for baboon spider nests. Any nests found within the building circle are recorded and those that can potentially be destroyed are relocated by the reptile park.

5.3. Feeding Animals and Baboon Problems:

People generally seem to feed wild animals for their own self-interest i.e. in order to get good viewing or photographic opportunities or to try and entice them back regularly.

Most feeding of wild animals contains a degree of unsuitable or unnatural food that they would never find in their normal environment or diet e.g. dog food pellets put out to attract and feed mongoose.

Baboons seem to be becoming more and more of a problem on Raptors View. We have had numerous instances recently where baboons have substantially damaged thatched roofs, and broken through gauze doors and windows whilst unattended, in search of food. We are likely to have a particularly dry winter which will increase the pressure on primates to search for food.

Feeding not only disturbs the natural foraging behaviour of the animals concerned but creates a dependency of these animals to being fed. This in turn leads to them becoming habituated and unafraid of humans, to associate humans with food, expect it and become belligerent if they don't get it. Often they have to be put down as a result.

We make a final plea – **DON'T FEED THE ANIMALS**, so please:

- a. **DON'T** throw your wet waste (cabbage leaves, carrot and potato skins etc) outside or onto a compost heap
- b. **DON'T** give popcorn or anything else to porcupines or mongoose
- c. **DON'T** leave breadcrumbs or fruit out for birds – you will also attract the monkeys and baboons
- d. **DON'T** attempt to feed an animal by hand – any wild animal can be dangerous
- e. **PLEASE STOP THIS PRACTICE, FOR THE SAKE OF THE ANIMALS**

5.4. Wheely-Bins

Monkeys, Baboons and Honey Badgers can be a nuisance in raiding dustbins. On waste days some members put their waste bags out for collection, attracting more problems. In light of this we propose that you purchase a wheely-bin that can be locked with a clasp or bolt. The estate will assist you with the purchase and delivery of the bin. We would like all residents to have one by 1 July 2015. Owners who have objections can raise this in a letter addressed to rvhoa@mweb.co.za.

6. STAFF

6.1. Dirk Lourens

Dirk has been re-appointed as assistant to Byron in running the estate, and we welcome him back.

6.2. Tinus Koen

Tinus Koen will be joining the RV team as of 1 April 2015. He has a passion for nature and people and will be an asset to the estate. We wish him all the best for his future with us.

7. SOCIAL

7.1. River Braai

We remind you of the next River braai to be held on Saturday April 25 2015, at the same spot in the river bed next to the western fence. We will provide the fires and salads, you bring the "dop and chop", your chairs and cutlery. Please let the office know if you will be joining us along with the number of people attending.

If last year's party was anything to go by, this is an event you must not miss.

This party is for all residents – owners and tenants.