

Jeffreys Bay residents to march

Jeffreys Bay residents are marching on Friday this week to the Kouga Municipality to hand over a petition detailing their complaints related to service delivery.

March organisers have invited all other Kouga residents to join them on the "March for 100 Reasons" that starts at 8 am at the Billabong Village on 6 February.

This march follows complete dissatisfaction by residents following the three-day black out in their town during this past festive season. A power line went down on the Saturday morning before Christmas Day causing a major power failure in JBay. Many shops and businesses had to close doors and millions of Rands were estimated lost when visitors packed up and went to other towns to spend their holidays.

"We as proud residents of this beautiful town that we have all come to love so much, will stand up and be counted

during this march to show the KM that we are serious and that we have had enough," one of the march organisers, Gerhardt Fouche says. "We will also show the world that we will not sit back and accept this substandard service delivery that severely affects the tourism of this region."

Fouche also said in a statement to the media that Jeffreys Bay's Winterfest in 2015 established itself as one of country's premier sporting and music events. But this last festive season saw many facets of the Jeffreys Bay infrastructure not being maintained and service delivery spiraling downwards at an alarming rate.

"As if the Eskom load shedding was not enough, with impromptu disconnections and no schedules available for JBay, other aspects affecting roads and bridge infra-structure then started showing signs of collapse."

It was widely reported in the media that retailers and restaurants reported dismal trading during the lengthy power failure, plus petrol stations ran out of diesel when business people with generators tried to keep their doors open for trading. There were also reports of sewerage spills onto the central beaches and also at Paradise Beach owing to pump stations not functioning.

Fouche said residents they should participate in the march. "We will no longer sit and talk, now is the time to walk the talk."

Nigel Aitken of the St Francis Bay Residents' Association says the association is not organising a march from this side but St Francis residents are welcome to join the march in Jeffreys Bay if they wish.

Fouche said those wanting to march need to make a banner and email their reasons they have issues with to km@jeffreysbayonline.co.za to be added to the "100 reasons".

Programme, 6 Feb:
8 am Gates open at Bottom of Diaz St
8.05 - 8.45 am: Signing of Petition.
8.45 Welcome and Briefing
9 am March starts from Billabong Village
9.30 am Set up around Kouga Moun Entrance
9.45 Hand over of Petition to Koerat
Info: Gerhardt Fouche 082 464 309; Garth Ford: 078 234 9791

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The festive season has flown and seems like ages ago already... time is moving forward at a rapid rate and next month I will be writing about Easter and activities planned!

We extend a warm welcome to all the Swallows who have flown in to roost here until May. We hope the weather will be kind as it normally is this time of the year and that they have a delightful, fun sojourn here this year.

This month we have the controversial Ward boundaries changes - some say they are pleased with them, others not, for various reasons. But at the end of the day changing boundaries is hardly going to make someone vote for another party instead, a political analyst told me....

We also have news about the state of the beaches - or should that be the disappearance of the beaches completely at times. For 13 years St Francis Chronicle has written about the solutions to fix the beach... wonderful schemes such as artificial reefs, groynes... sandbags, replenishing of sand and the controversial plastic pipes that a Danish guy invented and placed on our beaches. And as in Denmark his invention was likened in the press to the Emperor's 'no clothes' story... everyone kept asking where is the extra beach... and the Danish government then announced his scheme as ineffective to prevent erosion or to get more sand back on the beach and he was refused

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Editorial Column



permission to keep his pipes on any Danish beach, a Danish government official blandly told this newspaper.

Everyone agrees that if one wants more sand a way has to be found to replenish the beaches with it, but also one needs to sand the waves simply taking the sand away again. Moreover, money has to be found to fix the beaches... residents voted against forking out money for repairs to the spit a few years back... so it is great that the riparian committee is plans to hold fund raisers for this task.

It is hoped that a solution will be found because visitors come here from Gauteng and other inland towns around South Africa because they want to be beside the seaside to spend most of their days on the beach in this town... not to trudge daily to other beaches in other villages.

In this edition we also have news that the world surfers will be back in Jeffreys Bay this July. The hordes that attend the surfing event also make their way to St Francis... so it is always a nice boost for local 'businesses in the middle of winter'!

We wish everyone here enjoyment of the long, lazy summer days we have left...

Till next time
Keep happy and well
Peace and blessings,
Bev, The Editor