

Village Life

CAPE OVERBERG WHALE COAST

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Tourist Mecca welcomes all

The Overberg Whale Coast is one of the most popular tourist destinations in South Africa, offering many unique features for both local and overseas visitors. This can be enjoyed by all, but must also be treated with care and respect.

BY MARÉ MOUTON, EDITOR

Estimated figures for 2002 show that the total population in the various coastal municipalities in the Overstrand more than triples during the holiday season, from 50 000 to about 170 000 souls.

Hermanus shows seasonal growth from 31 000 to 75 000 people, while the Gansbaai area explodes from 6 700 to 46 778. Stanford, with a total population of only 5 000, sees an increase of 10%, equal to the number of White people living there.

So many additional people put strain on all facilities, as well as on nature and on other people. The ideal would be to maximise enjoyment without causing harm or irritation to others.

Most towns in the region have law-enforcement officers, not only to make sure everyone sticks to the rules, but also to assist people where necessary.

Mr Tommie Kapot of Stanford lists some of the most common transgressions:

- Not stopping at stop signs
- Speeding, especially in built-up areas
- Talking on a cellphone while driving
- Parking on the wrong side of the street
- Parking on red lines
- Walking a dog without a leash
- Littering and excessive noise.

One of the major complaints after this year's Hermanus Whale Festival was of people, especially youngsters, drinking in public. The authorities have declared a hard stand

on all forms of alcoholic misbehaviour, so don't even think of driving after drinking – there will be roadblocks, and the penalties will be harsh (a sentence of six years' imprisonment was recently handed down for driving after only two glasses of wine).

Drinking also does not go well with swimming, as the many drownings involving alcohol attest year after year.

Those who venture onto the water, should remember some additional basic rules concerning your own safety and that of

others, of which the first one is to treat the sea with respect. Do not go out on a boat in uncertain weather; wear a life-jacket on a boat at all times; stay away from rocks close to waves; do not take your jetski or surfboard amongst swimmers...

Familiarise yourself with rules concerning specific areas. In the case of the Klein River at Stanford, for instance, the part of the river inside the municipal boundary is a no-wave zone to protect the sensitive river banks and to protect other people from the noise of a speeding motor-craft. Paddle-craft have the right of way before any motorised vessel. And look out

for swimmers in the water, whether in a river or the sea.

The roads are going to be crowded, but impatience and aggression actually do not help one to get there much quicker.

It all boils down to being considerate to your own safety, other people, the environment and the creatures in it.

May locals and visitors enjoy the holiday in this beautiful part of Creation! ■



Mr Tommie Kapot,
Stanford's law
enforcement officer



The Stanford Klopse were a highlight of the Blom & Blits Festival during the second weekend in November. The procession was led by a greatly transformed Denzil Smit (a.k.a. Rasta). The Klopse are planning to "walk" again on Christmas and New Year's Eves. People who would like the minstrels to come and serenade at their homes, should call their leader, Willy Dempers, on 028 341 0028. More photos on page 7

Our paper is here to stay!

The reaction to VILLAGE LIFE from both readers and advertisers has been wonderfully positive. Everyone seems surprised that this paper could have emerged from a village as small as Stanford.

The fact is, the paper is here to stay. This issue already sees the addition of four full-colour pages and an increased print order, thanks to new advertising support from Hermanus, Gansbaai and Caledon.

While the paper was started as a cooperative effort by a handful of Stanford residents, each of whom still had his or her own business to run, the publication is now produced by husband-and-wife team Maré and Annalize Mouton. Maré has long experience, having worked as senior sub-editor at *Die Burger* as long as thirty years ago, and later managed his own businesses in graphic design, advertising and publishing for 17 years. He

"retired" to Stanford two years ago, but still does work for corporate clients, while Annalize has been living in the district for seven years and is well-known in the community.

The paper will endeavour to be a journal of life in our interesting and bountiful part of the world. It will not compete with ordinary newspapers in reporting crime and violence, but will focus on the positive aspects of rural life. Issues which are deemed a threat to the community or the environment will, however, be addressed. Its eco-friendly approach should be useful in promoting tourism and economic growth in the region.

The business plan for the paper is simply to maintain the highest standards in content and production quality. Growth will be organic and incremental.

Readers' comments and suggestions are welcome – see page 9 for contact details. ■



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