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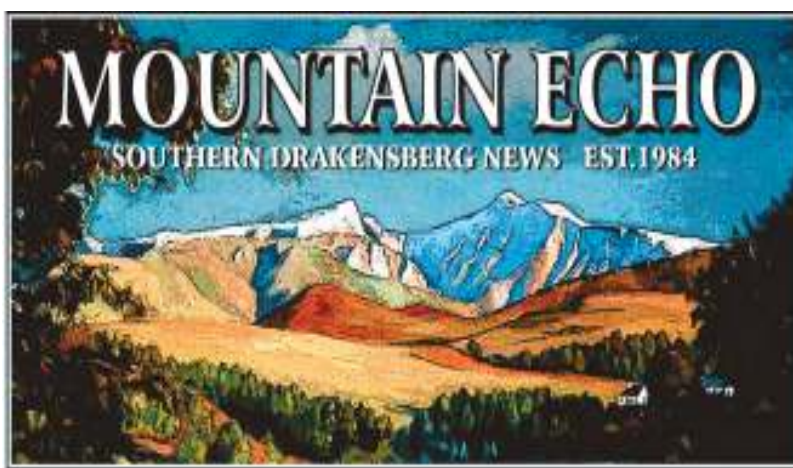
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Kenmo Lake: A Hidden Gem in Himeville.

Nestled in the picturesque landscape of Himeville, Kenmo Lake is a beautiful park captivating visitors with its serene beauty and tranquil surroundings. The lake and surrounding trees and shrubs create an enchanting feature that changes with the seasons. Whether you're an avid birdwatcher, a lover of nature, or simply seeking solace, Kenmo Lake has something for everyone. Enjoy leisurely walks, picnics or even just moments of quiet reflection by the water's edge. The peace and tranquility found here is rare in today's fast-paced world. While Kenmo Lake is a beautiful destination for all, it is privately owned. The Lund family opened it to the public in 1984 and go to great

TIDY TOWNS BANKING DETAILS:-ACC NAME:NUD TIDY TOWNS BANK: NEDBANK ACC NO: 1316748650 BRANCH CODE 198765 REFERENCE:YOURNAME

lengths to maintain the lake and its surrounds, ensuring that it remains a sanctuary. As such, it is necessary to respect the boundaries and regulations set by the owners and ask the public to observe a few important guidelines: No fires or braais, no loud music and to "Leave No Trace", which means ensuring that you take your litter with you, and to report any disturbances or concerns to the owners. Should you wish to host any kind of function or gathering, there is a minimal contribution of R2,000 for the use and maintenance of the toilet facilities - a small request to help keep Kenmo Lake clean and beautiful for all, rather than resorting to the bushes. (It will still be available for local memorial services at no cost). 'The tranquility of Kenmo Lake is a shared treasure and it is our responsibility to protect it for future generations' **The Lund Family**

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NOV 29
DEC 6
DEC 8
DEC 12 -14
DEC 13
DEC 30

GOODHOPE historical display opening 10am. SDHO and Exemvelo Kzn project see page10
Quiz Night @ Underberg Country Club, 6pm R50 per person contact Trish Scott 0660033773
TIDY TOWNS Azalea planting day see page 3
Sani Pass Time Trial (SPTT) visit www.sanipasstt.com
SUPAQUICK Drak 250 Off Road Race for more info Graeme Petersen 084 688 6772see page 6
Harry Gwala Summer Cup Traditional horseracing @ Emakhuzeni traditional horse racing track near Edazini
Sterilisation Campaign and Free Rabies injection see page 11
Museum and Historical Society Traditional Christmas Bazaar at the Himeville Museum.see page 3
Touch Rugby Tournament, Round Table fundraisersee page 8
Christmas Country Market @ Troutwalk centre from 12 to 5pm see page 8
Kzn Doubles canoe Championship and Umzimkulu River Rally @ Khotso see page 5
The Local Collection Christmas market for more info Lauren Perks 079 244 9601
NON STOP DRAK CHALLENGE contact Chris 0829039030

JAN 31 & FEB 1 N3TC Drak Challenge Entries for 2026 Drak Challenge open on 1 November For information www.drak.co.za
APR 2 -6 Splashy Fen Music Festival otter club tickets available from 22 September 2025 see page 5

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Highlands Church International
Johann and Debbie Van As 033 7011470
Sunday: 08:30 Prayer Meeting 09:00 Celebration Service 09:00 Kids for Jesus (all ages welcome) Monday: Homegroups 18:30 Tuesday: 15:00 Pevensey Ministry Thursday: 18:00 Prayer Meeting Alternate Fridays: 06:00 Men's Sunrise coffee (confirm 033 7011470)

St Michael and All Angels, Drakensberg Christmas services:
Quiet Christmas service at St Michael and All Angels Church Date: **7 December 2025**
Time: 9 am (Please join us in remembering lost loved ones, relationships, jobs, homes, and health, or for anyone who is feeling alone in this season)

A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

Tourism, and particularly Christian tourism to the Holy Land, has suffered enormously since Covid in 2020, and since October the 7th 2023.

There is, now, with a ceasefire in place, and the growth of the Abraham Accords, a window for us to consider, once again, visiting the Red, the Dead, and the Med. I mention the three seas in and around the Holy Land, whilst adding one more - the Sea of Galilee, because these are all part of our planned pilgrimage.

From the very southern tip of Israel, to the very northern border, we will be pilgrims through the land of the Bible, the Old Testament and the New. You will notice that I purposely use the term "pilgrimage," because we don't plan Kontiki tours, but rather biblical and spiritual opportunities to walk where Jesus and the disciples walked. You will travel from Israel's only Red Sea holiday destination, Eilat, through the Negev Desert, and the Dead Sea, to the Jordanian hills, and up to the Sea of Galilee and the Golan heights. You will spend time at Capernaum, Magdala, The Church of the Beatitudes, the Church of the Loaves and fishes and more. You will cruise on a wooden boat on the Sea of Galilee, and enjoy Middle Eastern Cuisine. From the Galilee, you will make your way, via the Mediterranean, to City of Jerusalem, old and new, and follow in the footsteps of Jesus. There are too many places to mention, but for now consider, the Mount of Olives, the Via Dolorosa, the Western Wall and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre - in the Old City. And then, the vibrant New City, with its restaurants and happy atmosphere. We will also frequent the Israel Museum, and inter alia, Yad Vashem.

If you are up to doing a considerable amount of walking, praying, and making new Christian friends, and a trip to the Holy Land is on your "bucket list," won't you and a friend or two consider joining Fee and I, for what will be my twelfth group.

Contact Pastor Dennis de Stadler for a detailed itinerary, on 0834407889, or decoloresden@gmail.com


St Michael's and All Angels service The Eucharist service is at 9 am every Sunday with Sunday school at the same time. Thank you. Rev Kayla Urbasch 082 466 8134

Berg Community Fellowship
Berg Training Centre
2 Hlogoma Crescent Underberg

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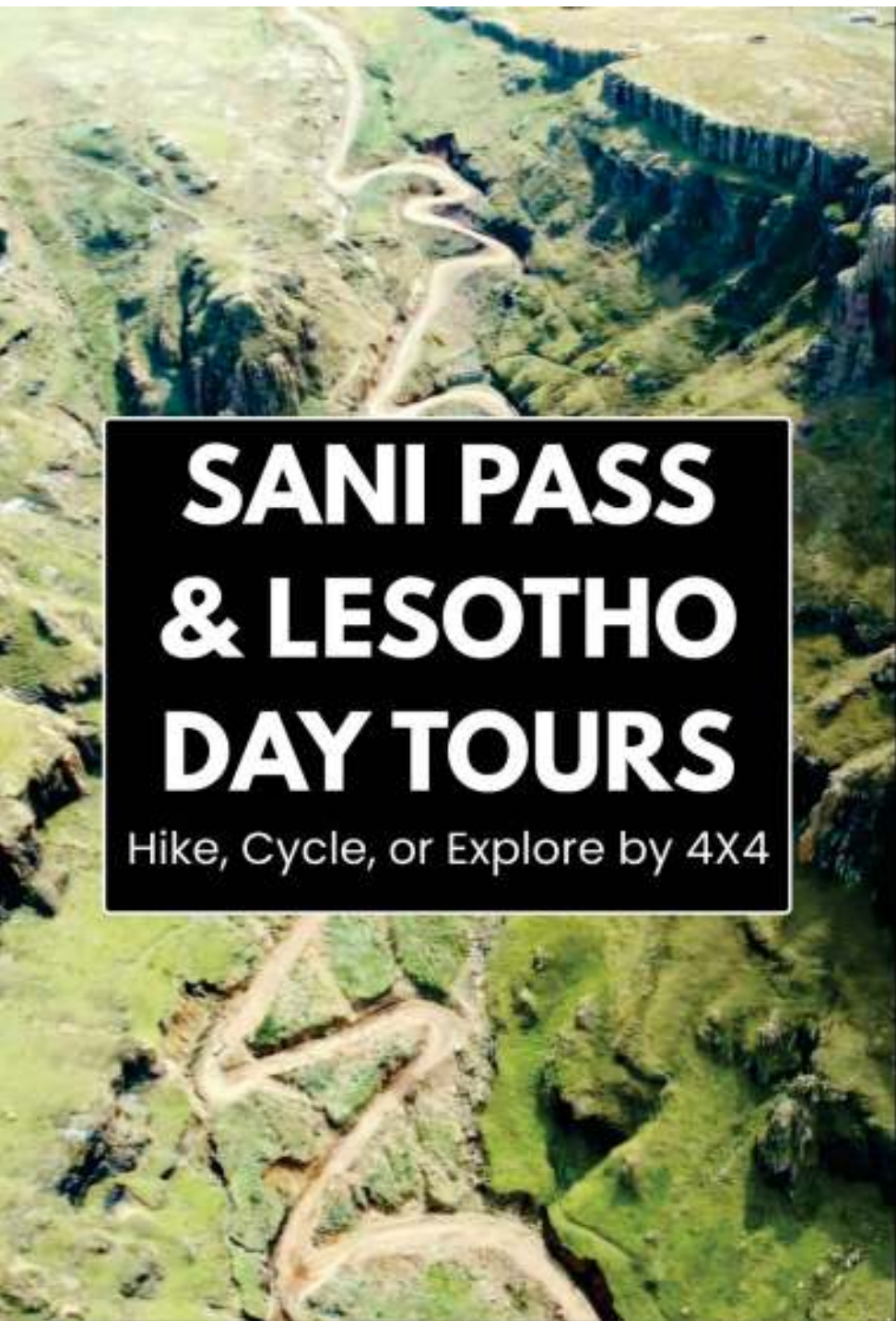
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Secure, Exclusive Living in Serene, Gated Estate

Surrounded by stunning mountain views and nestled on the old polo grounds, this property offers three bedrooms, two bathrooms, with expansive, open plan living areas and gourmet kitchen with a separate scullery, flowing freely through North facing, glass stack back doors, to the very large entertainment patio with lovely mountain views, creating an indoor-outdoor living experience. Also offering a convenient guest loo.

UNDERBERG - R7 950 000-00
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This welcoming 4 ha accommodation property is situated on the tarred Drak Gardens Road, less than 5 km from Underberg. Accommodation for 38 'bums in beds'. The restaurant provides superior meals for both residents and local guests. Upscale furnishings and incorporating a variety of levels of accommodation, from budget to 5 star. Every bedroom has a television. This tourism property offers everything a visitor to our beautiful mountain destination, could wish for. Horse rides, mountain biking, golfers, polo players, extreme athletes, mountain climbers/hikers, trout fisherman and families who just want to get away to clean water and fresh mountain air

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UNDERBERG NURSING SERVICES
CHRISTMAS TREE

A gentle reminder that our annual traditional Christmas tree collection in lieu of Christmas cards to friends and family, will take place from **Monday 17th November – Wednesday 26th November 2025 at the Underberg SPAR**. For those not familiar with our organisation, we are a group of voluntary ex nurses who assist our community in caring for their loved ones at home. We provide non disposable equipment as required in each individual case, on a give and return basis. The service is free, but donations are gladly received. Your generosity affords us the ability to upgrade our equipment. For those of you who are not ‘out and about’ and wish to donate, perhaps you would consider doing an EFT directly into our account. All donor names will be published in the December edition of the Mountain Echo.
FNB UNDERBERG – BRANCH CODE: 221025 – ACCOUNT NO.: 5887 377 4914



Another side of Remembrance day

The significance of our Wreath: **The Red Flanders Poppy signifies those who fought and died**, this now covers all conflicts, not only WWI. We also like to remember through this those who returned injured in body, mind and soul, for all who return from war bare scars of some sort. **The Purple Poppy signifies the animals that died in conflict**. Sixteen million animals “served” in WWI with over 8 million horses, mules and donkeys, 1 million dogs, 20 000 pigeons and numerous other animals including canaries for detecting gas, cats and dogs trained to catch rats and a variety of mascots being killed in WWI. In WWII Millions of horses died on the fronts as the war was still largely waged with horse and carriage transports. Pet cats and dogs were euthanized, as people couldn’t care for and feed them- 750,000 in Great Britain alone. Farm animals were slaughtered beyond sustainable limits in plunder and scorched earth. Starvation by policy, sieges, and blockades led to people eating animals they otherwise would not. Wild animals died as collateral damage in battle, but we have no reliable numbers for how many. At least one species went extinct: the Wake Island rail, a flightless bird endemic to Wake Island. In 1944 the Japanese occupiers, stranded and without supplies, killed the last bird for food. **The White Poppy signifies the over 7 700 00 civilians that died in WWI and 49 000 000 civilians that died in WWII on both sides.**The Armistice was agreed upon at 5:00 a.m. on 11 November 1918, to come into effect at 11:00 a.m. CET, for which reason the occasion is sometimes referred to as “the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month”. **By Ivan Reynolds**



Andre Truter Mayor Of Saldanha Bay Municipality & married into Underberg Pioneer family receives award for best run municipality in South Africa

Mayor of the vast Saldana Bay Municipality, Mr André Truter, received the award for the best performing Municipality in South Africa. André spent many years in the Underberg-Bulwer area. He began as a humble policeman, branched out to be a successful entrepreneur and married Sheena Nicholson a descendant of the local pioneering clan. André can take some credit for being Springbok rugby captain Jesse Kriel's first coach while Jesse and his brothers Daniel and Matthew attended Underberg School. He was also president of SA Endurance Riding (representing KZN) as well as being President of the SA Equestrian Federation, the body overseeing all horse sports in the country. Saldahna is a DA controlled municipality and Mr Truter is likely to represent that party in the SA Parliament very soon. Take a bow, André, from very modest beginnings you have risen to becoming the type of person the people of our country need to emulate, to fulfil its undisputed full potential
By Tod Collins



Himeville Museum
CHRISTMAS MARKET
29th November
Come join us for a day full of festive fun!

What's on offer:

- Homemade lemonade & cool drinks
- Egg & bacon rolls, beef wors rolls
- Venison wors & biltong stall
- Cakes & biscuits
- Homemade Christmas crackers
- Lucky packet stall
- Hot chips
- Christmas-themed candle stall
- White elephant & preloved clothing

Fun for the whole family!
Music, games & festive cheer!

Don't forget to take photos at our Christmas frame and tag us!

To reserve a stall/contact Kitt: 071 898 7892

MAKE OUR TOWNS LOOK BLOOMING MARVELLOUS

Thursday 20 November 2025
08:30 – 12:00

Meet @the local collection, 9 Main Road
Bring your azaleas and spades and join the fun!
(Our friendly Tidy Towns team will be there to help with digging and planting.)

Bank: Nedbank
Account Name: TIDY TOWNS
Account Number: 1316748650
Reference: Your Name / Azalea
For more info, contact Ruth Crouch
084 207 3057

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Trish Scott on the right in her inflatable unicorn holding Kimmi Kyle's hand while doing the Halloween Trick or treat walk that she organised. Trish is a great member of this community and makes great events. On 19 November will be her quiz night, to book contact 066003373



iDesk 2026 – 10 spaces available for High School aged students!

iDesk is a vibrant hub in Himeville, for independent homeschool style learning with a social twist, where driven students come together to grow, create, and succeed.

This isn't a traditional school—it's a dynamic community that sparks self-motivation, respect, and professional skills for the real world. Is iDesk right for your child and your family? Big Dreamers: Do they love thinking outside the box with bold, creative ideas?

Self-Driven: Are they eager to take charge of their own learning and schedule? Home-Based Growth: Want to nurture your child at home through their teen years? Future Leader: Do they show entrepreneurial flair or a passion for innovation? Empowering: Can they see how all mistakes are learning opportunities?

If you're shouting Yes! iDesk 2026 is their admission ticket into a transformative learning experience. Not a school, a community! iDesk is a place for independent learners who actively engage in group discussions and tutor lessons, embrace our ethos, and take ownership of their education. This isn't about showing up and coasting—students must be eager to succeed and contribute! Social Skills + Professional Edge! We foster respect, shared workspace etiquette, and self-motivation, preparing kids for real-world success while building meaningful connections with peers. Flexible Learning and Guided Support! Students lead their learning with paid (or free) online curricula, additional free resources like YouTube, and textbooks, supported by expert selected subject-specific tutors who guide them through their curriculum. Curriculum choices are yours: We don't prescribe which curriculum you would like your child to follow.

Chose from GED (USA), Cambridge (UK) and CAPS (SA). We can help guide you with comparisons between them, in terms of subject matter as well as assessment methods.

We're looking for students who are active participants, not placeholders. They should be excited to dive into discussions, uphold the iDesk ethos of respect and collaboration, and put in the work to achieve results. This is a space for those who want to take charge of their future! Pop in at any time to see how it works!

Get in Touch: Nina Stevens 084 567 1669
(Call or Whatsapp)

**Where We're At: 63 Arbuckle Rd,
Himeville. (Next to the Engen Garage at
May's Auto)**

NOTICE OF ABANDONED VEHICLE

Notice is hereby given that a white Mercedes-Benz Vito panel van (VIN: WDF63960323216770) has been left unclaimed on private property in Underberg since July 2024.

The lawful owner is requested to make contact and arrange collection of the vehicle by 25 November 2025. Failing which, the vehicle will be disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations.

Enquiries: Sonya – 084 362 4855

UNDERBERG COUNTRY CLUB KITCHEN OPERATIONS – TENDER INVITATION

The Underberg Country Club invites interested and suitably qualified parties to submit proposals for the operation and management of the Country Club Kitchen.

This is an exciting opportunity to partner with a well-established community club, delivering quality hospitality to members, guests, and visiting sports events.

Submission Deadline: 20 November 2025

To register your interest, please email your details and expression of interest to:

Karen Hardy

manager@underbergclub.co.za

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted directly. The Club reserves the right not to award a tender.

ONCE AGAIN OUR EVER- CARING COMMUNITY SHINES

November started with a challenging incident on Saturday when we parked my car at SPAR to shop. Driving from Himeville to Underberg "steam" appeared through the vents. We noted, but dismissed the seriousness of this as the car had not been used for some time. However, this "steam" turned to "smoke" and became more dense, turning then to fire. Fortunately I stayed in the car while Dave did the shopping and I began to realise the seriousness of this situation – what do I do now??? Well, so many gentlemen appeared with far more knowledge about vehicles than me, issued all kinds of instructions and, of course, brought the all-important water to extinguish fire in the engine. My heartfelt thanks to each one of you who came to my assistance so quickly. You know who you are but sadly I do not so please accept my sincere thanks for preventing the situation becoming worse than it is.

Our thanks also to the two gentlemen who accompanied us and saw us safely home.
Dave & Pauline Adam

NEW MANAGER AT BUILD IT UNDERBERG

Quwyn Dray has been appointed as manager of BUILD IT UNDERBERG. He has been in the building industry for 18 years since 2007. His wife and two daughters moved here in April. One is at Underberg Pre primary and the other at Underberg Primary. He has been working in the Congo and mozambique for the Teichman Group.

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Drak Challenge entries open and ready for 2026

Entries for the 2026 N3TC Drak Challenge are open and race organisers are encouraging paddlers to get their entries in early ahead of the race from 31 January to 1 February.

The Drak Challenge remains one of the country's premier river races and 2026 will attract the nation's best river paddlers who will be out to battle for glory over the two days on the uMzimkhulu River.

Andy Birkett won back the title that he relinquished in 2024 when he claimed the honours earlier this year ahead of his K2 partner Matt Fenn with 2024 champion Hamish Lovemore claiming third.

In the women's race it was Christie Mackenzie who claimed the crown ahead of Nix Birkett in a race for the ages. The pair were separated by just two seconds across the two days of racing. Saskia Hockly was less than 20 seconds behind in third place.

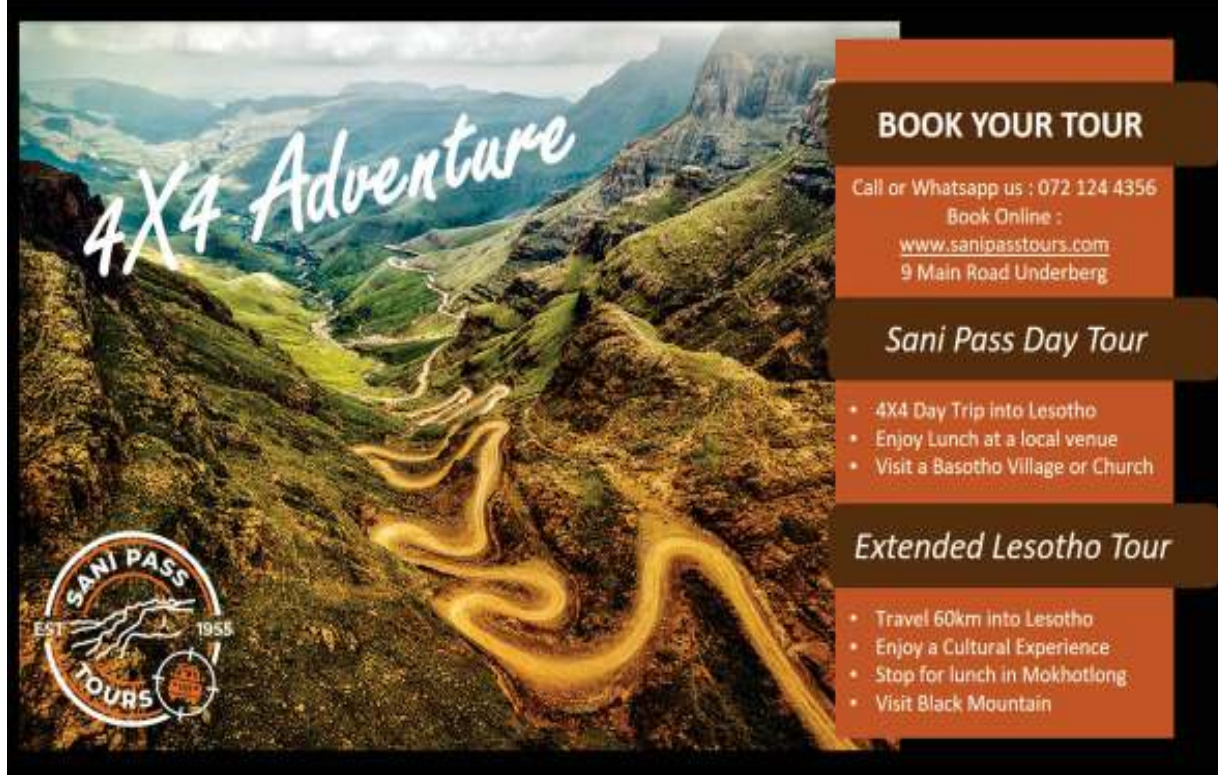
The Drak has always dished up exciting racing at the sharp end of the field, however it's the rank-and-file paddlers that get the biggest thrill from a weekend's worth of negotiating rapids in the Southern Drakensberg.

With another warm and wet summer expected across the country, the Drak Challenge organisers encourage paddlers to commit to the 2026 Drak early.

"It's shaping up to be another exciting summer of paddling in the Southern Drakensberg, and we hope to see an increase in our entries from last year," Greg Hitchins said "If you commit nice and early then you'll have plenty of time to prepare for the race next year. "We're expecting another bumper summer of rain, and this will hopefully translate into great water during the race. "It's still a long way off but we will make sure that we keep everyone up to date on the river levels and the conditions."

Hitchins and the Drak committee are also encouraging paddlers and their families to make a December trip to Underberg and enjoy the KZN Mixed Doubles Championships and the Umzimkhulu River Rally weekend.

"The KZN Mixed Doubles is a great pre-cursor to the Drak, and we encourage as many people as possible to come up and enjoy the weekend with us. **"It's a very relaxed, family-focused weekend that can also provide some good insight into the river and some good 'match practice' for some.**" Our Mixed Doubles Committee are ready to put on a great weekend and it's one that should not be missed. "Khotso will be offering meals and are planning on offering a tubing and running event for the 16th of December which is a public holiday. "We're suggesting that people make a long weekend of it, practicing for the Dark while enjoying the Mixed Doubles Race, which will be starting from Balam and finishing at the Callaway Bridge," Hitchins added. Entries for the 2026 N3TC Drak Challenge are open and can be found here - <https://paddler.paddlesportsa.com/> For more information go to www.drak.co.za **By Nick Tatham**

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ABOUT TROUT FISHING IN UNDERBERG

Im so thankful for the regular showers keeping the rivers in good condition. Just as good the the recent reports of anglers that the rivers are full of fingerlings. A sure sign the rivers are recovering very well. Fishing still seem to be a little on the slow side though. Club statistics show only 2 fish from the river caught off 8 rods. Other reports from the private and reserve sections also tells of slow fishing with fever fish coming to the net than normal. The headwaters producing more fish per angler than further down stream. Although smaller, they make for good fun. It is always a good idea too stalk and creep up to the pools in these smaller rivers and streams. It is very satisfying to catch some of the bigger fish one would find stalking the pools. Rushing up to the river spook these as they are more skittish than the smaller foolish fish. Flies that anglers reported working well were Dry flies like Adams, Royal Wulf and klinkhamers in black. Some fish also taken on Nymphs and small Streamer patterns. The rivers further down are still in good enough fishing condition to target Natal Yellowfish, with some good fish brought to net recently. Pound for pound a much stronger fighting fish than trout and with the right technique easily caught.

The stillwaters continue to fish well, with good reports coming from all around. Both club water as well as private venues mention some really good fishing sessions with numerous good fish being caught. The cool nights certainly helping keep the water temperatures on the

cool side. Unfortunately some of the smaller dams slowly having their temperatures creep up during the day pushing some fish down. These dams are best fished early mornings and late afternoon when the water had some time too cool. The UHTFC dams statistics show 53 anglers fishing with a total of 48 fish caught. Biggest reported catch a 55cm(21inch) Rainbow trout caught from club water. Most of the flies mentioned to catch were again old faithfuls like Woolly Buggers, Crystal Buggers, Red eyed Damsel flies Mrs Simpsons and other Killer style flies. All in natural colors. Tadpole flies were mentioned most off all.

Fished unweighted in shallow water around the edges did well for many anglers. Im hoping the fishing picks up more and hopeful to come back with more good reports.



By Duane Vaughn Howell
Underberg Flyfishing and lifestyle centre at The Clocktower Centre. - Contact 0832286707 or 0655232877 Check out our website at uhtfc.org

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For weeks the empty space between the cottages of CoH was a hive of activity. Slowly under Doreen Whitehead, "Greendoor Landscapes" supervision, different structures emerged. All the children watched eagerly, but obediently kept away. Until Saturday afternoon October 25.

THE IDEA Some time ago the Klimmer family from Germany, in conjunction with Be Your Own Hero (BYOH), commissioned a playground for Clouds.

Their daughter, on a volunteer visit, had identified the need, and Clouds children had drawn what they hoped for in a playground.

THE CONSTRUCTION After much deliberation, Doreen Rode was entrusted with the project.

At last the bespoke playground, envisioned by some of the children, was about to be opened.

THE WELCOMES After Clouds manageress, Zesizwe Mncwabe, had welcomed the guests, and the Father from Reichenau had prayed, and the Chairman of BYOH SA and Clouds, Tsepo Jama, had expressed his pleasure at the project, Doreen explained the purpose of each zone. Fascinating, considering the children's original ideas.

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THE PLAY PLAN FIRST was the Adventure Zone, to reflect the surrounding mountains - a jungle gym with a difference. **SECOND:** From high excitement to the peaceful Meditation Zone - to lie in a meditation swing - one of the features requested by the children, or sit and play on the wood-chip floor. **THIRD:** the Sensory Zone, full of herbs and plants to stimulate senses of hearing, seeing, smelling, touching and tasting. Such a happy concept. **FOURTH:** From there into the one-day-it-will-be Forest - many small trees and shrubs have been planted around a log cabin on stilts, which creates a space for the children to play "indoors" as well as underneath it. **FINALLY** there is a "Mama Zone" A sheltered place where mums can relax or watch the children.

ENTERTAINMENT by BYOH - MUSIC for CHANGE.

This brand new project led by Thobeka Mkhwanazi and incorporating talented youngsters, trained by two teachers, sang their own newly composed creation. All the children and mothers joined in and the scene was set for the cutting of the ribbon.

THE OPENING The "architects" who'd pictured this ideal playground, held the scissors and cut the ribbon. The playground was open. Tsepo gave the nod for the children to "Go play!" In less than a second, the silent seated children exploded into action like firecrackers. Suddenly the word PLAYGROUND became a reality. The Klimmer Family's Vision was a thrilling success. What a joy to see the literal centre of Clouds of Hope, full of active playing laughing children. What a triumph for the project organisers, and for the sensitive creator, Doreen Whitehead. Clouds of Hope, already an outstanding success as it loves and nurtures the parentless, has taken a huge leap forward. I'm sure darling Sr Abigail will agree.

By Rae Higgins



SUPA QUICK DRAK 250 OFF ROAD RACE

The 2025 Drak 250 Off road race will start at 8 for 8.30am with the prologue at The Underberg Country Club. The main race



will start at 10.30ish. The road going towards Kokstad will be best for spectators, river crossing, then the track goes towards Underberg dairies and then comes back to Underberg. Graeme Petersen will be the only local racing and possibly Bryan Berkeljon.

Graeme Petersen
doing the river crossing in 2024

Photo: Paul Welch



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To all our clients, family and friends, This "grow a moustache in (M)ovember" initiative isn't new but this year it was borne out of the desire of a group of our local men to show their support for Jason who was diagnosed with Stage 3 cancer in September. The idea is bigger than one man, though and the men, in collaboration with our local Shellbern Trust (Michele Pitman), are using the opportunity to raise general funds for medical costs where medical aid or financial circumstances fail locals suffering from cancer. Should you wish to contribute to the Shellbern Trust, bank details below: **THE SHELLBERN TRUST STANDARD BANK 10178562791**. Grow some whiskers and come and get your funky sticker from Shell garage, fitness factory, Underberg Hydraulics, FEGC & May's Auto when you make a R100 (or more) donation to the trust. The tagline on the stickers is - 'A community united against cancer!' And we have felt that profoundly! Thank you for all the support and care shown to us and our family during this time love from the Grinwises and Underberg Hydraulics.

SANI STAGGER BENEFITS THE COMMUNITY

The Sani Stagger is a major event in our area and contributes hugely to the local economy and brings visitors in who discover our beautiful area and get a sense of community through volunteers who raise funds for their respective organizations. The Marshalls Club was started by Mitch Atkins to help at events and for mates to get together and work together at events. Rob Scot took over from Mitch and now his son Shane Scott sits at the main co-ordinating farm radio station. Apart from the Marshall Club, Clouds of Hope, Rotary, Sani Athletic Club, Honorary officers, Mqatsheni hiking club, WESSA and Ezemvelo man the water tables on the pass and receive money for their organizations. Mqatsheni Hiking Club also do the sweeping for straggling runners. Local Djs employed for sound system. Registration is run by locals at the Underberg Country Club which get a spin off from meals. Then there are people employed to manage the finish lines at the Sani Hotel and Sani top which includes Underberg Primary School. The taxi association and Major adventures are employed to do shuttles Sani Pass hotel is sold out and approximately 2500 beds in the area. Local vendors sell food including Pevensey Place. Pat Loos supplies portaloos and marquees. The Clouds of Hope fun run raised approximately R8000 and EKZNW approximately R24000 from the Stagger Trail. Thank you to **RUNNING MAN ADVENTURES** for growing this event to the advantage of locals. It is all about community and more people are choosing to live here. By **Paul Welch**

FLA STOCK SALE 4 OCTOBER 2025

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TIDY TOWNS:BY RUTH CROUCH.

HIGHLIGHTINGHIMEVILLE
Himeville Open Gardens was good for Himeville in many ways. It was such good exposure for the Himeville Museum as it was the central venue to purchase tickets to view the nine gardens. It was a hive of activity with beautiful quilts to ooh and aah about, children’s art to view and enjoy a cuppa tea, a breakfast roll or hamburger. So well done to Kirsty Turner, Kitt Du Preez and Nokwazi who co-ordinated everything. Special mention is to be made of Vusi who did a wonderful job of painting all the equipment with such lovely colours and for doing up the garden.
Garden Club would have been pleased as some 430 tickets were sold for entry into the gardens. It proved a successful venture with 8 of the gardens all in proximity and then a short drive out to the farm belonging to Erika and Ed Smith to enjoy Erika’s indigenous garden and Eds many quirky creative items, using old farm tools and imple-ments. Well done to all the Open Garden gardeners - we all worked hard and had our own unique gardening style. But Anita’s garden was spectacular and undoubtedly “The Jewel of Himeville Gardens” with the many magnificent roses etc. It was indeed a showstopper, and she needs to be congratulated Not everyone is a keen gardener, but hers was a sight not to be missed. I do think there might be those who live here in NUD who have never stepped inside the museum or ever visited some of the wonderful gardens that we can boast about in this district.

I would like to make mention of someone who has for many years been mowing a path all the way from Lund St. to the Himeville com-monage in order that residents and visitors can run or walk their dog. Many might not be aware who it might be. A big thank you to Tex Turton for this act of kindness to benefit the community. He, to-gether with Hylton and Ian Crouch, also keep a wide expanse of grass regularly mowed, so we in Lund Street, are fortunate. I wish to quote from Johan Fourie; “What does it take to just keep one’s own verge neat and tidy?” He and his neighbour, Lynn Morgan, who are both often away for several months at a time, keep their frontages of 69 and 71 Arbuckle and their backs into Thomas Street, immaculately maintained. To me, the verge is an extension of your garden and home.

PS. We all love seeing Tex riding round in his quaint little tuk- tuk vehicle which is colourfully painted with their grandchildren hand-prints, flowers etc....

GOING FORWARD Let’s help keep Himeville the pretty little hamlet that it is. In the past municipality have periodically collected people’s garden refuge outside but many times it is left for ages. I went to clarify the issue at the municipality and then I also phoned to get the final take on the situation. I was told that as of July 2025, the process is you phone up and request the supervisor to visit you. Together you decide on what the number of loads it should take, with the cost R344. 50 per big load. You pay up at the municipal office, and it will be removed on the allocated date. So, there you have it; either you cart away your own, or you make a plan with the municipality. But please, we all need to act responsibly and not just dump outside. Imagine if we all left piles outside. Chris Pappas, Mayor from Howick fines his residents

A blight on Himeville-

The Puma Garage as you enter our village. Many of us have tried but finally Tex Turton made some headway and managed to track down the head of this company. They agreed to have it all cleaned up. BUT only the cover was removed, and all the poles were left. It now looks WORSE than ever. Back to square one!!!!

• The Police Station. A big work party took place 28th Dec 2024 with a big blitz clean-up with brush cutting etc. and the roof was duly painted, but the grounds round the staff quarters never gets cut, so hence, it always looks unkempt and run down. The impression it leaves, does not reflect the important role the Police Station plays in the community.

• Two vacant plots up for sale opposite the Whistling Goat. The one owner who lives in Durban refuses to attend to the bramble problem on his plot despite many folk appealing to him.

UNDERBERG

Some 50 Magenta Azaleas have all been planted between the Plane Trees within the school grounds, so in time, this will be a lovely sight. The public participation of planting Azaleas on 20th November, should all have taken place opposite the school between Local Col-lection and the Well. So this should make for a happy and colourful entrance into Underberg.

So, I have paid much attention to Himeville, what with looking after the Himeville Church Garden, the Moths Garden that Doreen keeps



Photo : Lexi Bodman
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FRIDAY	SAM - 4 PM
SATURDAY	SAM - 4 PM
SUNDAY	SAM - 2 PM

brush cut and Tidy Towns weeded and planted up. And of course, there is Gold. I am not giving up on her. We gave her some TLC the other day. Please take note, but oh!... our patience is being tested. We need to get down on our knees and pray for her future.

So, in the last article next month for 2025, I will share one project and vision I have for something in NUD. I just wish, some-thing would materialise if only the powers that be, would put their mind to it. Over and out. **By Ruth Crouch**



Marlene and June Richardson in their garden that was open to the public for open gardens. Marlene sends in the monthly garden club message to the Mountain Echo. There will be no garden club meet-ing in December. Photo: Paul Welch

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CAMERON CHRISTIE - PEVENSEY
FUNDRAISER

Cam Christ completed the 21km Sani Stagger Trail run yesterday and all BAREFEET! Looking at his videos and pictures of his poor feet this was quite a feat! We appreciate you Cam. The aim was to raise funds for Pevensey Place, a home for adults with cerebral palsy and mental disabilities here in Underberg.

You can still donate a once off amount to sup-port this amazing ac-complishment. For anyone that would like to donate, the dona-tions will go into the Sani round table 152 account, every cent will go to Pevensey. Please use barefoot for PP as a reference.

**Account details:
FNB 58870005651
#pevensayplace
#SaniStagger
#sani152**



PHOTO:
Paul Welch

SANI COMMUNITY FORUM

“LET US BUILD A FUTURE WHERE NATURE IS VALUED, AND WHERE EVERY CHILD INHERITS A WORLD OF PROSPERITY, NOT PERIL. LET US RISE TO THIS MOMENT WITH THE CLARITY THAT HISTORY DEMANDS OF US. LET US BE THE GENERATION THAT TURNED THE TIDE – NOT FOR APPLAUSE, BUT FOR THE QUIET GRATITUDE OF THOSE YET TO BE BORN.” PRINCE WILLIAM. RIO

EARTHSHOT CONFERENCE. 2025.

The iconic speeches by Prince William in Rio can so easily reflect the sentiments of so many of us in NUD, who are determined to make our villages and environment, the best it can be. Not just for us, but for future generations, tourists, investors, and those seeking a refuge of peace and tranquillity.

It is women like Ruth Crouch driving Tidy Towns and Michelle Stevens, in the driver’s seat of Tourism, that manage their callings to serve the community, with their self-funded deep commitment, a community soul, and a generous spirit. Thank you, ladies, for reflecting the sentiments of the spirit of Rio, in NUD.

“Himevillans” stood up the challenge of what can be achieved within a community, especially those in Thomas Street, who opened their gardens to the public. Thank you. Well done to the Garden Club, the Himeville Museum, and Ruth Crouch, for this wonderful event that showcased our village. Residents turned out to assist others in tidying and trimming verges and cutting servitudes to showcase Himeville. This is a community that cares and residents should be very proud of themselves, for this achievement.

SANI COMMUNITY FORUM: Along with ESINAM FOUNDATION, SCF continues to identify those in need to assist with food parcels. As always, we are grateful to those still

NO-MANS-LAND – where is it?

doneguy59@gmail.com

This article was stimulated by a conversation with an Unidentified Sani Pass tour guide who recently rather cheerfully recited to me part of his: ‘going up the pass visitor spiel’. He is quoted as best as I can remember; ‘...And I tell them this is No-mans-land, the 8 km from the South African border to Sani top’.

OK I thought, funny how that’s never been my understanding, but who am I to say it isn’t? While working in Australia years ago I came across another no-mans-land, written up in museums and on old maps. Terra Nullius is the Latin term printed on old Australian maps and in exploration archives. In short, the British government based on a flawed understanding of Aboriginal land use, declared the land mass - terra nullius, to assert their land claim.

Terra = land - Nullius = take nobody’s word for it. ‘Google’ a bit and one discovers a myriad examples world wide and yes there is a South African reference but it’s not the Sani Pass. Roughly it refers to territory which is known today as East Griqualand. For those interesting, this is my ‘screed’ regards the origin of that ‘No-Mans-Land’. The Eastern Seaboard went through some dramatic changes from the end of Shakas rule in 1828 until the mid 1800’s. A territory ‘No-Mans-land’ appeared on early maps, spanning from Tina Falls inland to today’s Lesotho and as far north east as today’s NUD. This was Bushmanland as was most of South Africa before it was ‘settled’. For the colonial masters of the mid 1800’s this territory was a problem. European settlers were losing their cattle to raiders, annexation was near impossible - No budget and not enough settler farmers. The Amapondo King Faku Ka Ngqunqushe held his ground on the coast, early colonial maps clearly mark territory south beyond the Umzimkulu river (today’s Port Shepstone) as Faku’s territory. In truth his land was un-surveyed much of it vast and wild so the colonial authorities hatched a plan. They told Faku that he was their ally now, was failing to control his inland territories and bushman thieves were doing as they pleased in and beyond his land. Faku protested that ‘No – one could control that land, and that those mountain people there were lawless’ The phrase was soon adopted - No-Mans-Land. Not Fakus, not the Xhosa or Sotho beyond’. The region was at this time sparsely populated with creolized Bushmen who had horses, guns and were successful in their raiding abilities (they had no option), the game had been shot out, survival depended on raiding. A long story short – Some history books say Faku gave this inland territory to the British in Natal around about 1850, not sure of that date? But what I am sure of is that the British gave it to the Griqua’s in the 1860’s. The Griquas were displaced in a dubious manner from their lands near Philippolis, that territory being contested by Boer Briton and Griqua. The map makers from then on changed the name of No-Mans-land to East Griqualand. That No-mans-land disappeared as fast as it had appeared and now as I’ve recently learnt, one has cropped up in the Sani Pass! The rough road which arguably accounts for more 4X4

tourist traffic than the rest of the Southern Drakensberg. If you venture that way, there are new information boards about the pass at the old trading post near the bottom. The initiative of amongst others the local Honorary Rangers. We need stuff like this, story is important it puts life into the landscape.

Let’s be clear all No-mans-lands are nothing more than a concept or idea, probably first introduced to me through Wilfred Owen’s WW 1 poem Dulce et Decorum est inspired by horror in the trenches on the periphery No-mans-land in France 1917. Today’s world spawns new ‘No-mans-lands’ all the time, Israel ,Gaza, Rus-



donating to this worthy cause, in supporting those less fortunate than ourselves, and of course the generous discounts that have been given to us by Spar, does help our cause. Thank you.

Kevin McDonagh is assisting those with Pothole Claims sustained on the R617. Theoretically, these should be paid out within 24hrs by the Contractors, and we realise that this is a long and arduous process, with the indifferent attitudes that prevail. Thank you to Mr McDonagh for pursuing these damages claims on behalf of residents and visitors to our district.

WATER WOES: This persistent and ongoing problem of no water or low pressure, often accompanied by the sudden absence of Eskom, with no communication, leaves residents frustrated at the lack of service delivery and indifference. A dubious debt collector is now harassing residents trying to recoup some rather well aged, and somewhat spurious outstanding water account amounts, despite most residents being on Pre-Paid Meters. No invoices are issued, and residents are just presented with a carried forward figure, accompanied by threats of disconnection if these amounts are not paid, which is nothing more than extortion. Despite this being flawed on so many levels from a legal point of view, the harassment of residents continues and the number of residents joining the class action against the municipality, increases proportionally.

BY: DISUNTER

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SDCTO

On 5 November 2025, the SDCTO, representing our district and members, attended a meeting with fellow Harry Gwala District CTOs and government sector partners from EDTEA. During the meeting, it was confirmed that we will not be forming a District CTO. Instead, we’ll be moving forward with the Cluster Regional CTO and developing a Regional Tourism Strategy in collaboration with the Harry Gwala and uMgungundlovu CTOs.

Leadership roles;
• Vice Chairperson: Michelle Stevens • Eco Tourism: Luvuyo Gushu • Tourism Offices Coordination: Sphamandla Vezi
Together, we’re building a stronger and more unified regional tourism network

sia and the Ukraine create, ‘in between land’, territorial corridors adjusting as I write. Our very own ‘new’ Sani No-mans-land is certainly more visitor friendly – come and see. The writer/artist’s impression of the Sani Pass No-Mans-Land. Perhaps the Bushman might have painted it thus, complete with a spirited horned reptile snaking its way up the twisted track.

Don and Helen Guy take mostly day hikes in the Southern Drakensberg. They have a knowledge of the fauna flora, geography and history of the area. They have a group rate.WhatsApp them at 066 018 6430 to start a conversation.



From left to right, Rhett Quin (SSPA Chairman), Michca Jansen van Vuuren, Willem du Rand, Andre Fisher, Eric Nortje, Rhino Hattingh and Jacques Minnaar (Pioneer)

The annual Swartberg Stock Theft Prevention Association (SSPA) Fly-fishing Festival took place in Swartberg on 16-19 October 2025.

75 Fishermen arrived from near and far for a weekend of some of the best fly fishing in South Africa. The fishermen gathered at Hopewell Clubhouse owned by Dawie and Mariaan du Plessis, where the committee ladies cooked up a storm every evening spoiling the fishermen and local farmers with delicious meals. Hopewell Clubhouse also hosted some festivities such as live music, the Swartberg School Kids Bass Fishing Competition, prize giving and auction.

This event plays a crucial role in raising the much needed funds for the SSPA to patrol the South African/Lesotho border to protect the live-stock of both commercial and rural farmers. This is not possible without the loyal sponsors who support SSPA every year.

We would like to thank Pioneer, for their 5th and final year as our title sponsor. As well as all the sponsors, dam owners, committee members, SSPA members and fishermen for being part of this festival.

A special thanks to our major sponsors: Xplorer, AG Services, Shiptech, Kokstad Milling, Pannar, Farmers Agri Care, Syngenta, Bayer, AFGRI Equipment, AFGRI Animal Feeds, Dekalb, Valley Lakes, Rigtech, Southern Natal Beefmaster, Dorning Motors, Ecovite, Mahindra Zwartberg Garage, RPO KZN, Kynoch, Saamstaan Voere, Castleburn, Wild Fly, TWK Swartberg and Natal Gun Company.

Congratulations to Warrick Elliot for winning the shotgun raffle. It was a huge success!

The results were as follows: 1st Place: On the Fly (574cm total length) 2nd Place: Lucky Buggers (565cm total length) 3rd Place: Brandis Team (555cm total length) Biggest Fish: Richard Amm (67cm) Hopewell Dam Best Dam: Hopewell (Dawie du Plessis) Riparian of the year: William Rorich Bonehead: Walter Verbaan Thank you to our SSPA Chairman, Rhett Quin on another successful year! **By Caela Fitch**

UNDERBERG YOUTH SHOW

The Underberg Youth Show 2025 was a great success. A total of 47 kids braved the heat, and 76 animals made their way to the show grounds during the UFA Agri and Lifestyle Show weekend. Kids

from ages two to fourteen years old got involved. We saw all different species of animals from the smallest of hamsters to the biggest of horses. Well done to all the competitors as well as the parents who ran around behind the scenes. I would also like to thank the kind souls who offered up their time (and physical strength) to prepare for the show- Tracy Foresyth, Storm Storah, Kevin Fraser, Streatfield family, Kim Parker, Mariska Engelbrecht, Wayne Muller, Pam Smit, Donna Roux, Keren Brown, Fricke boys and Leisha Van As. We are also very grateful to our judges who volunteered their time and did an exceptional job at keeping kids and animals in line- Mike and Cayla Beghin, Megan Swart, Sarah Craig and Sonya Caldecott. I often heard them discussing how difficult it was to separate the placings which is a testament of the kids’ showmanship and hard work. We were so impressed with the diversity of talent and commendable animal husbandry that was on display over that weekend. The support was way more than we ever anticipated and we hope to grow the show year on year. I must express a huge thank you to our sponsors whom are always so eager to get involved in our youth and shaping young farmers. With this sponsorship we were able to run 22 different classes over the weekend and award 66 different prizes to various sections. Not only were we able to prepare goodie bags for the prize winners, but each competitor received a tote bag with all sorts of treats and spoils.

New to the show was the Chicken Breed Showcase. I would like to say a massive thank you to Shaun Van Hysteen for setting this up. It was a crowd pleaser and definitely something to grow on in future years.

We would also like to thank John Eustace and the polo club for lending us the fields to do the jumping and gymkhana. It was so nice to have the space to set up a fun event for the kids and horses to enjoy.

THANK YOU: Branson Chemicals, Farmers Livestock Agency, The Royal Agricultural Society, Afrivet, Underberg Farmers Association, Khotso Horse Trails, Rimax, AgriMark, Antroviet, Spurwing Horse Feed, Underberg Spar, Sani Springs, Underberg Vet Surgery, Epol, Irritech, Blush Day Spa, TWK, Optimizer, Farmers Agri Care, Charlie Bru, Virbac, Ideal Dog , Equifeeds, Hopewell Horse Centre. It was stiff competition and special mention must go to the prize winners.

UNHANLED PETS JNR 1 st Josie Streatfield, 2 nd Becka Storah 3 rd Skyla Bowker **UNHANDLED PETS SNR** 1 st Georgia Quin, 2 nd Ana Davydenkov 3 rd Connor Fraser, **DOG SHOWMANSHIP JNR** 1 st Georgie Lamb, 2 nd Zara Acutt 3 rd Mia Taylor **DOG SHOWMANSHIP SNR** 1 st Lucy Venniker, 2 nd Julia Mutterheim, 3 rd Connor Fraser **DOG AGILITY JNR** 1 st Georgie Lamb, 2 nd Sadie Borrowdale 3 rd Mitch Fricke **DOG AGILITY SNR** 1 st Georgina Scott, 2 nd Georgina Scott, 3 rd William Lamb **HORSE SHOWMANSHIP JNR** 1 st Georgie Lamb, 2 nd Mitch Fricke, 3 rd Lois Du Randt **HORSE SHOWMANSHIP SNR** 1 st Sadie Borrowdale, 2 nd Ivan Fricke, 3 rd Ansel Fricke **HORSE FANCY DRESS JNR** 1 st Mitch Fricke, 2 nd Josie and Darcy Streatfield, 3 rd Kitt Borrowdale **HORSE FANCY DRESS SNR** 1 st Ansel Fricke, 2 nd Ivan Fricke 3 rd Kate Baker **HORSE SHOW JUMPING** Most points Georgie Lamb **HORSE GYMKHANA** Most points Ivan Fricke

By Kim Fraser

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WINNING STOCK MARKET STRATEGIES

*EXTRAORDINARY PROFITS FROM ORDINARY SHARES

* UBER – DRIVING RAPIDLY TO GREATER PROFITS

I have decided this month to expand on my UBER thesis.

Certain companies have become ubiquitous to everyday life – even to the extent of inventing new verbs that we use all the time. For example: “Google it” or “ChatGPT it” or even “why don’t you just UBER”.

Most people on the planet have used UBER – some use it every day of their lives especially of course in big cities. Consider the following:

UBER is available in more than 10 000 cities. UBER will make 14 billion trips in the next 12 months.

UBER has 180 million active monthly users. UBER has 8.8 million drivers.

UBER’s gross bookings exceeded \$130 billion in 2024. This is the total income before driver and restaurant payments.

UBER has over \$7 billion in cash and holds significant investments in many companies. It’s investment portfolio amounts to several billion dollars.

UBER has strong operational execution and a dominant market share in both the mobility and delivery segments. The company has expanding margins and profitability. Uber also leads the ride sharing market with a 74% share of the market in the United States and Uber Eats has 24% market share of food delivery platforms.

There are several key growth drivers. Uber’s market dominance is a very powerful moat, attracting more drivers and more customers which leads to a further strengthening of the platform.

The delivery segment has now achieved break-even and is growing rapidly. Margins continue to expand.

An important factor is the management of the transition to autonomous vehicles. Remember that UBER’s biggest cost is driver salaries. There is serious blue sky potential if these costs can be reduced.

UBER is also a great beneficiary of AI (artificial intelligence) as the gap between what users are prepared to pay and what drivers are



prepared to accept lends itself to special algorithms which dramatically improves profitability.

UBER’s sustained profitability and free cash flow cannot be over emphasised. It is also embarking on one of the largest shares buyback programmes on the market. This means the shares are literally a “collector’s item”.

UBER’s impressive pivot to sustained cash generation and profitability sets up a new and compelling investment proposition, but the market is still not correctly valuing its operational leverage and enormous scaling opportunities. Furthermore, the PEG ratio (price earnings ratio divided by the company’s rate of compound growth) suggests the shares are substantially undervalued.

There are regulatory risks but the company has a dominant market position and its total addressable market (TAM) is constantly expanding. Hardly a week goes by without some new service being added to the UBER and UBER EATS Apps. On demand logistics remains a great investment theme and opportunity.

UBER’s revenue and gross bookings continues to grow in the mid-teens year-over-year, operating income is positive and the company will benefit from incremental margins across both mobility and delivery. Counter balancing all the positives investors must weigh regulatory risks and inherent labour risks, competition and valuations sensitivity relating to geo political risks and macro growth expectations.

The business model and economics is supported by high incremental margins and once fixed costs are exceeded the increased revenue will drop straight to the bottom line. UBER is constantly diversifying and expanding its many and various revenue lines. Delivery, advertising and enterprise mobility and many joint ventures with car manufacturers are obviously important areas of growth. The company has incredible data, which as already mentioned, lends itself to special AI algorithms with ETA predictions and dynamic pricing adding enormous cash flow advantages. The

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People pleasing in close relationships

What creates the behaviour termed “people pleasing”? Like guilt, people pleasing often stems from childhood emotional conditioning and can result from excessive demands placed on children. This often results in a person who prioritises other people’s emotions over their own and can manifest as seriously repressed emotions. Sadly, this can silently undermine even the most loving connections. While it may seem like selfless devotion, this pattern often masks deeper wounds that deserve compassionate understanding. The roots of people-pleasing frequently trace back to childhood experiences. Many people-pleasers grew up in environments where affection felt conditional, available only when they met certain standards or kept the peace. Performative children are a classic example; they learn to perform to receive love and then they never stop performing when they grow up. Keeping the peace is a huge part of people pleasing and the repression involved can be so great it may cause physical illness. The child learns a painful lesson: “I am not enough”. To secure love and avoid rejection, individuals become adept at reading others’ emotional states and changing themselves accordingly. This survival strategy then follows into adult relationships. Even as adults they still feel a deep need to secure love by changing aspects of themselves. Sadly, this often leads a young person into a relationship with the wrong person. When someone struggles to believe they’re inherently valuable, they may unconsciously change or act in ways that are not true to themselves. This emotionally exhausting behaviour means their sense of identity becomes dangerously dependent on another person’s needs. This can make them at high risk of all kinds of abuse and manipulation – both physical and mental. Fear also plays a significant role. For those who’ve experienced volatile relationships or been punished for expressing needs, agreeing becomes a shield against conflict. Even with safe, understanding partners, saying “no” can trigger panic. The body remembers past dangers and sounds the alarm, regardless of present reality. Ironically, people-pleasing damages the very relationships it aims to

protect. Partners may sense they’re connecting with a performance, and, despite physical proximity, the relationship cannot deepen. Unexpressed needs fester into resentment. Eventually, the people-pleaser may erupt over something trivial or shut down emotionally because they cannot express their needs. These relationships often end with everyone left confused. Healing requires recognising that good relationships need two complete individuals, not one person erasing themselves. Boundaries are necessary but they don’t need to be masks —they are spaces created to foster genuine intimacy, rather than fragile scaffolds of fear-based conditioning. Relationships should not demand constant agreement; but space for both people to exist and grow. Couples counselling can be very helpful. Recovery involves practicing small moments of self-care and advocacy. By examining beliefs about worthiness and trusting the right people will value genuinely and not just what can be provided.

Next month, as we approach Christmas, we will look at inter-generational family relationships and why Underberg is a special place to foster these vital connections. by Heidi Kyle



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business is really all based on special software and is capital light lending itself to many partners, independent contractors and car manufacturers. This reduces capex intensity as compared to other asset – heavy transport companies.

Looking forward growth drivers remain continued urbanisation, instant gratification trends, and on demand consumption. International expansion in under penetrated markets will result in continued top-line revenue growth. Advertising, subscription bundles, and Uber for business are growing revenue per monthly active user. Management highlights the benefits of intelligent pricing and improved routing efficiency which increases the monthly number of trips per user and this is core to future margin expansion.

I believe the shares are undervalued and under appreciated by the market and should be bought at these levels. As usual caution is advised and regulatory risks and competition must be carefully monitored. Establish and control risks by adding the correct weighting to your portfolio and considering profit taking levels and stop losses. With these guard lines in place, I believe UBER is a great investment opportunity.

If you are not happy with your portfolio performance or would like a second opinion, please do not hesitate to contact Fenestra for a free, independent, objective and confidential review of your portfolio.

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Travelling the Sani Pass

The Sani Pass is so well known and, according to Chris Wheeler, the most written about pass in South Africa. We who live here will not dispute that it is known throughout the world. In recent years it has been featured as one of the most dangerous roads on television programmes. It is now also known for the ultra-trail marathons that test the endurance of the most fit, and maybe foolhardy, long-distance athletes. It has had an interesting history from the point of view of an access in and out of the mountain kingdom of Lesotho.

The first traders, Lamont and Waering chose this Sani Pass route into civilization to bring in goods and take out commodities such as wool and mohair set up their base in 1913 at what is now the South African border post. Many traders were operating in and out of the isolated village of Mokhotlong but were using the very long route via Buthe Buthe and Maseru. A bridle path started for pack trains to use the pass. When other traders, Ridgeway and White-Smith also set up at the foot of the pass it was estimated that in peak season, before winter and over Christmas that 1000 horses, mules and donkeys and even oxen were plying slowly up the steep gradients and sliding down. One Lesotho trader used women to carry the goods up the pass. If she could lift the load unaided to about as far as her shoulders, she was considered capable to carry the weight. Someone would help her get it on her head and she would set off on the long tortuous path.

For many the only mode of transport was by horseback. Traders, their wives and families had a long ride to and from Mokhotlong. A French-Canadian missionary order sent out their people to their mission stations in Lesotho. These men and women would catch a train to Underberg, overnight at their base on Dieu Donne from where they would ride into the mountains and do the return trip two years later. The majority had never been on a horse before setting off on this endurance ride. Michael Clark rode up with some horses being delivered into Lesotho and said it was very arduous and the last section, where he deliberately chose the old bridle path, he had to get off and lead his horse up the almost vertical terrain. He had worked with horses in Canada on the ranches.

With the opening up of the pass the first vehicles arrived. In 1948 a Willys Jeep made its way up but needed to be manhandled round many of the tight and steep corners at the top. Some years later with the help of Lesotho labour the road was widened and some of the corners became easier to negotiate. David Alexander arrived and got a contract to transport building materials to the government buildings in Mokhotlong and he started by using mules up the steepest part and transferred the load into a jeep. So gradually vehicles of all sorts took over from the pack trains. It was the policy for vehicles to travel on the outer edge of the road when approaching a pack train

which caused much consternation to the passengers. One man from the SPCA who came to check on the welfare of the pack animals was so terrified that he demanded the driver of the vehicle hug the mountain wall and the pack animals could risk their lives instead!

People arrived in all modes of transportation to use this route. The traders used to use motor bikes and were only allowed if they had a pillion passenger who could help push up the slopes and help slow the vehicle on the descent. The Roof of Africa rally, which started in 1965 saw competitors in all sort of off-road and custom-built vehicles. The last race took place in 1980 when there was so much traffic on the road and the route became so tame in comparison to the early years that other internal roads in Lesotho were chosen. In a turn to early history now more people use their own feet to run or walk up and down. There's the annual Sani Flower Walk at end of January but by far the biggest event is the Sani Stagger which attracts entrants from far and wide and draws increasing numbers to do the half and full marathon races at beginning of November. This race was originally organized as a fund raiser for the Police Widows and Orphans Fund. To see the full history of this fascinating pass the new Interpretive



The Southern Drakensberg Honorary Officers and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife invite you to join us for the OFFICIAL OPENING of a historical display involving the history of the Good Hope Store Site and the Sani Pass itself.



This is a celebration of the history of this unique corridor and the eclectic mix of characters who contributed to making it what it is TODAY.

Date: Saturday 15th November
Time: 10am
Venue: The Good Hope Store Heritage Site (approx. 13km along the Sani Pass Road)
Bring: A Hat and your own chair

Refreshments will be served

Centre will be launched on 15th November at the site of a former trading store belonging to White-Smith at the gateway to Sani Pass. Information taken from Michael Clark's book "Saga of the Sani Pass" and his autobiography "Home Run" are available for the full story about the pass. **By Roseanne Clark**

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On 15 October Wayne Mc Namara got a group of agricultural product representatives t to Mlangeni dip Tank near Vergelegen to share knowlege with the local farmers MongeziTaylor from AGRIMARK, Siyanda Mabaso SWAVET, Sheldon Kok GWK, Siyabonga Mbatha AFRIVET, Pat Dlamini TWK and Keren Brown AFRIVET. Tod Collins and Phosile a member of the Kwa Sani livestock Association, and myself. It eas truly hartening to see the easy and positive interaction of the local community who aske many questions that affected their livestock and farming. Siyabonga Mbatha (AFRIVET) from Dundee gave the local farmers the warning that Foot and Mouth Disease had stopped the sale of livestock in the area and it will be a year in December. Keren Brown found a sinecio plant that is bad for livestock and should be eradicated. It is this work that gave Wayne Honorary recognition. I went to the same area years ago with Wayne and John Pearce to give a local leader of the community a farm radio to stop the livestock thieves going up the steep and rocky Gaxamadolo (scrape your knees) pass. I really enjoy these positive interactive outings. **By Paul Welch**



Wayne Mc namara received The Honorary recognition award for the work that he does sharing knowlege with the rural farmers as community liaison officer for the Underberg Farmers Association

.....Congratulations to Shannon Dwen (right of photo) for winning the 2025 Agri Awards "Young Farmer of the Year" With her is Storm Storah winner of awards at UFA Show 2025



JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE OFFICE

Some strange things happen to you as a vet. Some years ago one of my colleagues who was a member of Hillcrest Rotary Club approached me as he was selling tickets to a Box and Dine evening they were putting on as a fund raiser. (Are you listening Underberg Rotarians and even Round Tablers ?) I was persuaded to buy a ticket and on the night duly went down to Lahee Park in Pinetown where they had erected a big marquee. The evening was a very smart formal dinner with all the men in their best suits or even dinner jackets. We were served a sumptuous meal and in between courses there were boxing matches in a boxing ring set up in the centre of the tent. The boxers were amateur boxers from a local club and it was a fine evening. As we were about to start our final course the lights in the tent suddenly went out. It was pitch black ! There was a moment of silent confusion as we all sat there. Then just as suddenly the lights suddenly came on again, and there in the boxing ring was a stripper ! Remember this was in the bad old days !! Anyway she duly did her sensuous dance and wriggled her way around the ring, to much applause from her audience. It was a fine end to the evening. Anyway some time later a lady arrived at my clinic in Kloof with her little dog and as she came in I thought "I know you ". I have seen perhaps far more of you than I should have !" It was the lady from the Box and Dine. Anyway, she continued come to me for some time and proved to had a heart as big as this room. She had taken 7 stray dogs in to her home and they were life. In other ways she was as hard as nails but made up for it in her treatment of her pets.

GCAW Launches Second Sterilisation Campaign of the Year 22 and 23 November

The Giants Cup Animal Welfare (GCAW) team is proud to announce its second Sterilisation Campaign for 2025, taking place on 22 and 23 November.

This initiative is made possible thanks to the incredible support received from recent fundraising events and the continued generosity of the local community. Each rand raised directly enables GCAW to extend its reach — helping more dogs and cats access essential veterinary care.

The upcoming campaign will focus on lower-income households and animals adopted through GCAW, ensuring that those most in need receive assistance and that our adoptive pets are sterilised. "Sterilisation remains at the heart of what we do," says the GCAW team. "By controlling the growing stray and unwanted animal population, we can prevent suffering before it starts — improving the lives of both animals and their communities."

NB: A growing concern in our area is the increase of **TVT (Transmissible Venereal Tumour)**, a painful and contagious cancer that primarily affects unsterilised female dogs who are repeatedly bred. These dogs often arrive at GCAW emaciated, weak, and suffering from open, bleeding tumours that make even simple acts like sitting or urinating excruciating. Treatment involves weeks of chemotherapy, nutritional rehabilitation, and round-the-clock care from our volunteers. Despite the pain and trauma they endure, these animals show remarkable resilience — a testament to their trust once given compassion and proper care.

GCAW continues to appeal to residents of Underberg and Himeville to help spread the word to our those in need. Every conversation helps raise awareness and drives long-term change.

HELP KEEP OUR DOORS OPEN

by becoming a monthly PawPal supporter. This way you ensure that GCAW can continue providing vital treatment, food, and sterilisation services to animals in need. Your contribution — no matter the size — gives hope where it's needed most.

Together, we're not just reducing unwanted litters — we're building a more compassionate community, one sterilisation at a time.



By Sonya Caldecott



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Reichenau Mission, Underberg

The Reichenau Mission Farm continues to lead the way in sustainable agriculture and community development.

On 10 October 2025, **KwaZulu-Natal Premier Thamsanqa Ntuli** launched the Multi-Planting Season at eNhlankheleni Mission in the Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma Local Municipality. **The initiative encourages communities to grow diverse crops to strengthen food security in rural areas.** Premier Ntuli called on young people to embrace farming as a means to fight hunger and boost the local economy. During the event, **Fr Tyiso from Reichenau Mission presented guests with freshly ground 2.5kg maize meal bags, produced at the mission's hydraulic stone mill.** The maize meal, unbleached and preservative-free, is available at the **Lemontree Bistro** in Underberg or directly from the mill.

Visitors must **book guided tours of the mill, mission, and historic church for R100 per person** by contacting **Michelle via WhatsApp at 062 949 2046.**

Weekly Holy Mass services are held at: 08:00am – Rosa Mystica Catholic Church, Underberg (isiZulu and English) 10:30am – St Andrew's Church at the Mission (isiZulu)

By **Michelle Stevens**



One night in the middle of the night, her current boyfriend decided to answer a call of nature. As he got out of bed he mistakenly trod on one of her dogs. The dog shrieked. The good lady of the house woke up furious...and threw the offending boyfriend out of the house start naked. Imagine the scene...he is shivering in the the altogether, in Pinetown in the middle of the night and she has gone back to bed cuddling the frightened dog. What does he do ?? Call a taxi ? Naked ? Ask a policeman for help ? Knock on the neighbour's door ? All while trying to cover the wiggly bits . I really don't know the end of the story but it does intrigue the mind.

On the subject of naked people, I had a friend named Paul who incidentally also had a cottage in Underberg for a while. Over the years he had a number of gun dogs. Finally he came to me one day and asked "Would you buy a dog from a man called "Slang ""? I must say I was hesitant but as it turned out the said Slang was a well known breeder of gundogs who lived I think in Pretoria. Paul duly bought a puppy from him. It turnout to be the most exuberant, uncontrollable gundog I have ever seen ! And big at that. Paul did his best but was thrown out of several dog clubs and asked to remove himself and his dog asap. Then one day he has a bright idea and takes his dog off to Umhlanga beach for a romp. Living in Kloof he can be excused perhaps for not knowing that Umhlanga had its own, not often metioned, nudist beach.

Well , Paul goes down there and turns his dog loose. Can you imagine if you are there quietly lying on the sand in the altogether when a wet nose gets suddenly pushed up your ***** ! The resulting shrieks ad curses can only be imagined. When a running, puffing Paul finally managed to get hold of his dog and drag it away I think everyone's day was spoiled, except for the dog He just loved the outing !! I actually did an awful lot of work on gundogs and working dogs, even on Border Collies that were used for agility trials. They were generally a lot of fun and very well behaved, apart from Paul's. Maybe it was just Slang's revenge !

For many years I was a keen member of Ramblers Hiking club and we often went out for long gruelling hikes on a Sunday. In those day we were able to go right down into the Valley of a Thousand Hill and then climb out again. It really was a tough rocky scramble. But was also used to carry a hiking stove and ,tea, coffee and milk so we could enjoy a welcome rest before heading home again. On this particular very hot day a large group of us scrambled out of the valley and then collapsed in whatever shade we could fine, while we waited for the kettle to boil. In the distance a faint bleating could be heard. One of the ladies finally scrambled to her feet and went looking for the source.

She returned a bit later carrying a scrawny pitiful baby goat. Now her dilemma was how to feed it. She turns to the man nearest to her, whom she does not know, and asks "Have you got a condom ?"

He was stunned. And replied "I never expected to be offered sex on a hike !" (Are you listening, Barry ?) I can't remember how she solved the problem but she ended up taking it home and nursing it back to health. Unfortunately goats as the get bigger do not do too well in a suburban garden so it had to be found a country home.

By **Llew Evans**
retired vet



KwaZulu-Natal Premier Thamsanqa Ntuli with Fr Tyiso from Reichenau Mission presented guests with freshly ground 2.5kg maize meal bags, produced at the mission's hydraulic stone mill. The maize meal, unbleached and preservative-free, is available at the **Lemontree Bistro** in Underberg or directly from the mill.**book guided tours of the mill, mission, and historic church for R100 per person** by contacting **Michelle via WhatsApp at 062 949 2046.**



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