

JULY

SPECIALS



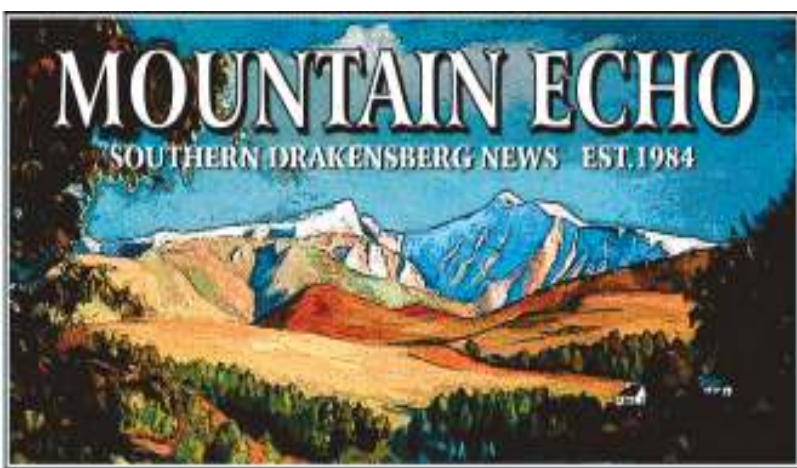
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INTERNATIONAL

- POLOCROSSE WEEKEND -



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31 JULY - 2 AUGUST 2026

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Underberg Gran Fondo is proud to Host the

Sani Spoons are proud to announce that the Underberg Gran Fondo has once again been selected as the host of the 2026 KwaZulu-Natal Gravel Championships, reaffirming its position as one of the province's premier gravel cycling events. Taking place on Saturday, 25 July 2026, in the spectacular Southern Drakensberg, the Underberg Gran Fondo will welcome cyclists from across South Africa to compete for provincial honours while experiencing some of the country's most scenic and rewarding gravel roads. Enter at www.events.myactive.co.za

The KwaZulu-Natal Mountain Bike Commission has confirmed the official championship distances as follows:

- 140 km – Elite to Veteran Men and Elite to Sub-Veteran Women
- 90 km – Masters and older Men, and Veteran and older Women

While riders are welcome to enter any of the event's three distances—140 km, 90 km or 40 km—only competitors completing the designated championship distance for their category will be eligible for official KwaZulu-Natal Championship recognition. Find out more and enter here www.events.myactive.co.za

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JULY 25

JULY 25

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JULY 31 - 2 AUG

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AUG 8

AUG 14

AUG 8

AUG 18

AUG 22

SEPT 4

SEPT 5

SEPT 12

SEPT 19

OCT 2 - 4

OCT 3

NOV 7 - 8

NOV 14

NOV 14

NOV 28

DEC 5

DEC 12

GRAN FONDO Underberg@Sani Spoons,The Olde Duck enter online www.events.myactive.co.za

Winter Market @ The Local Collection 9.30 - 13.30 contact Lauren Perks 0792449601 to book a stall

Quiz Christmas in July in aid of GCAW @ UCC, 6pm . Contact Trish Scott 0660033773

International Polocrosse. teams from Australia and the United States @ Underberg Grounds. Contact Melissa 0827363286

Bred 4 the Wild Golf Day, a Bearded Vulture Conservation Fundraiser, @Underberg Country Club, Contact Steve 084879 3629

FAB FAIR, live music and market stalls @Spiers Restaurant, Himeville. Contact Michelle Pitman for a table.

Historical Society AGM guest speaker archeologist Len Van Schalkwyk @ 6pm

CHOC Walk up Sani Pass @ Sani Pass For more information: dbn@choc.org.za

Garden Club Meeting @Underberg Country Club 10am Guest Speaker Lindsay Gray, the founder of The School of Garden Design.

MOTHS fundraiser golf day @ Underberg Country Club. R450 per player contact Ivan Reynolds 082 530 0935

Putt for a Purpose UEMS fundraiser@Underberg Country Club. American Four Ball Scramble.Sponsorships & Entries: 072 486 6895

Pevensey Place Fete @ Underberg Primary School Contact Ilene van Dyk 082 925 7869

Swartberg Farmers Association Show @ZFA Showgrounds contact Caela Fitch for stalls and info 0605060077 or zfa@zfa.co.za

Rhino Peak Challenge to pledge/payment/entry, please email: rpc@africamassive.co.za

2026 UFA Agri & Lifestyle Show! @Underberg Farmers Association Showgrounds contact admin@kznufa.co.za to book a stall

Sani Pass Time Trial visit www.sanipasstt.com to enter

Underberg OPEN GARDENSon Underberg South, and Loopy Lane.Follow us on Facebook for updates

Sani Stagger info@Sanistagger.co.za

Underberg SUPERSPAR food and wine show

Himeville Museum Christmas Market @Himeville Museum contact Kitt Du Preez 071 898 7892

Sani Round Table Touch Rugby Tournament contact Matt Hayes 0636828571

Christmas Market @ The Local Collection contact Lauren Perks 079 244 9601

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Highlands Church International
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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 4668134

Berg Community Fellowship meeting at Faithway Christian School 11 arbuckle Street
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Obituary - Felicity Davies.

'If you don't want an axe in your head Eat your poisoned mushrooms.'

This phrase was vocalized in the Davies household to soften the conversation. Take it as the sort of sharp wit the Davies family had to interpret from Felicity. In good 'British' lingo that's probably interpreted as - Just get on with it or/and over it! Felicity was well travelled at all stages of her life. Europe, Africa, Asia, South America, Israel, Jordan, Turkey and more she was wise and worldly. Born in England toward the end of World War 2 her family relocated to Germany, her father being an officer in the Armed forces. After a stint back in Britain, they moved to Kenya where she completed her schooling at Lumera high school outside Nairobi. Later she travelled back to the UK where she trained as a Florist, a skill she took with her to South Africa and later turned it into a business. There in the 70's, she met and married Ian a native of Scotland. They then made a home in Johannesburg where they lived for 40 years. They had two children, Andrew who died tragically as a teen and Julia who later trained as a horticulturist. Their life was always action packed. For 20 years she ran an indoor plant business while Ian worked as an Electrical Engineer and consultant. There were parties, many parties but in between good deeds. Julia remembers the Salvation Children's home kids in and out of their Linden home, Felicity was born with a solid and golden heart. Something she and Ian transferred to Underberg where they lived for 15 years. They arrived in Underberg 'Guns Blazing' and joined everything. Their home 12 Polo Way soon became a buzz with lots of entertaining and a center for activities and influence. For which they will be remembered for by so many. In turn the community welcomed them warmly, something they acknowledged with gratitude. Their garden was established with large trees and Felicity set about filling the gaps, she grew beautiful roses. The Pevensey fete plant sale has her name imprinted on it. Clouds of Hope and Pevensey place became extended family. Who could not forget the soup collections during the bleak Covid days instigated by Felicity, the community followed in her wake. A stalwart of so many society's and organizations: Country Women, the Garden Club, and Fossil Fitness to mention but a few, she got stuck in. A cancer survivor of 20 years Felicity was a doer and a fighter, she soldiered through all adversity with wit & charm and will be remembered as one who led by example. She left a gap when Ian and her relocated to Howick two years ago and now with her passing at 82 years on the 2 nd July. The Underberg community extends condolences to her family. You came you saw , you gave us your heart and soul. **Hamba kahle.**



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This solid timber home offers three spacious bedrooms and two bathrooms. The main bedroom boasts an en-suite bathroom complete with a bath, shower, basin, and loo, while a second shared bathroom is fitted with a shower, basin, and loo. A large open-plan living area, with a cosy fireplace, double doors open onto a deck overlooking the beautifully manicured garden, with the mighty Hlogoma in the backdrop. Mature trees provide shade and character, creating a peaceful outdoor retreat. A garden shed offers additional storage and practicality. Adding further value is a newly painted flatlet.

UNDERBERG R2 200 000
Mountainairs Village - Wake up to uninterrupted 180° views of the majestic Southern Drakensberg mountains, with the iconic Giants Cup taking centre stage. Nestled in the secure and highly sought-after Mountainairs Village, this expansive family home offers privacy, space, and breathtaking scenery. Featuring 5 bedrooms plus a guest suite, 4½ bathrooms, generous living spaces, an enclosed garage, and double carport, this home is perfectly designed for comfortable family living and outdoor adventure.

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FAITHWAY COLLEGE TEACHER PROFILES
This issue provides the opportunity to meet t
wo more of the dedicated teachers at Faithway College.

Nosipho Nyawose

Nosipho was raised in Himeville and received her primary and secondary education at Faithway where she was Deputy Head Girl when she matriculated in 2019. Nosipho then gained a Higher Certificate in Healthcare at Regent Business School in Durban, after which she undertook a broad-based, four-year B.Ed. at Varsity College (now Emeris) in Pietermaritzburg. Her subjects included English, Afrikaans, Natural Science and Technology, Social Sciences and the Creative Arts. This has enabled her to teach several subjects in several Grades at Faithway College to which she returned on graduating because she so valued the education she gained at the school, as well as its good ethics. Nosipho entered teaching because she is a good communicator, loves helping people, and enjoys nurturing children's minds in their development and growth. Her strength lies in the arts and she was actively engaged in staged drama as a pupil, leading to her continuation with these activities at the school as a teacher. She believes that acting in drama gave her confidence, taught her how to communicate and, importantly it taught her discipline and how to think critically, skills that she uses today in her profession. Nosipho values interaction with the other staff at the school, gaining value from their experience. She is a vibrant, pleasant person who makes a positive contribution to the life of the school.



Elza van Aardt

Elza grew up in Wadeville on the Witwatersrand and attended the Hoër Volkskool in Heidelberg. She then undertook a four-year National Higher Education Diploma (NHED) at Goudstad Onderwys Kollege which is now part of the University of Johannesburg (UJ). Despite her secondary and tertiary education being in Afrikaans, all her 36 years of teaching have been in English! While qualified to teach the Foundational Stages up to Grade 3, she most enjoys teaching Grade 1 entrants to the school. Elza is a born teacher and believes that it is her calling. She is passionate about nurturing children at the start of their education, focusing on the whole person, especially in terms of their confidence and self-esteem. She also loves drama, music and the arts and crafts, and teaches these at Faithway. She loves her little ones and successfully includes parents in their progress through regular updates, which they greatly appreciate. Apart from her involvement at Faithway, Elza is also involved in various church activities.



Living the Dream: Underberg’s Young Star Shines in New York City

From the small farming town of Underberg to the dazzling energy of New York City, ten-year-old Ella Berkeljon has taken a leap that many dancers only dream of. This July, Ella was awarded the Junior Scholarship from the American Academy of Ballet, providing her with the opportunity to attend a week-long summer school programme in the United States.

The programme, renowned for shaping young dancers into confident and technically strong performers, offers intensive training focused on technique, artistry and personal growth. Under the guidance of an international faculty of celebrated teachers and professional artists, Ella spent her days immersed in world-class ballet education.

Her week in New York was more than just training. Ella danced alongside young performers from across the globe, forming friendships, gaining stage experience and discovering the vibrant world of international dance. The exposure fuelled her passion, leaving her inspired and motivated.

Ella’s journey began at the age of three under the guidance of Celeste Barrow at Dance Incorporated. Celeste shared her pride in Ella’s achievements, saying, “Ella has shown a natural talent and love for dance from a young age. Her hard work and achievements have sparked inspiration in the younger dancers at the studio, and my hope is that many more dancers will be exposed to the same opportunities in the future. I am so proud of her.”

From a small South African town to one of the world’s greatest cultural capitals, Ella Berkeljon is proving that dedication, passion and a dream can take a young dancer anywhere.



UNDERBERGER CHOSEN FOR SA Junior Boys Polo Team.

Hilton College is proud to announce William Eustace’s selection to the SA Junior Boys Polo Team. The team is set to represent South Africa in an upcoming Junior International fixture against the **Zambian Schools Team**, scheduled to take place on the weekend of 2–4 October at the Underberg Polo Club. Well done, William!



ALLISON SECURES UNDERBERG'S FIRST-EVER SUBMISSION VICTORY AT LIGHTS OUT 003



takedown early in the opening round and found success from the top position. Allison reversed the position and finished the round with heavy ground-and-pound of his own, shifting the momentum firmly in his favour.

The second round followed a similar pattern, with Allison once again establishing dominant top control. Unable to escape the relentless pressure, Kruger verbally informed the referee that he had had enough, handing Allison the victory by verbal submission.

The result is a landmark moment for Underberg's growing MMA scene, with Allison becoming the first local fighter to earn a submission victory in competition.

Speaking after the fight, Allison credited his work with Berg Protection Services for helping prepare him physically.

Underberg – NUDFC's Andre Allison made local combat sports history at Lights Out 003, recording Underberg's first-ever submission victory in mixed martial arts with a second-round verbal submission over Kruger.

Allison started the fight strongly, getting the better of the stand-up exchanges with sharp footwork and clean striking. Kruger eventually secured a

"Learning how to control and maneuver limbs was valuable, and there was a lot of running involved in our training. It definitely helps when your work contributes to preparing for a fight. I was pushed hard."

He also praised the coaching at NUDFC, saying the improvements to his movement and confidence were evident on fight night.

"My balance and stance improved a lot, and I think it showed in the stand-up exchanges. I was light on my feet with good in-and-out movement while my opponent stayed stationary. When I started, I didn't know much about stance or balance, but I've learned a lot. Boxing, sparring, and getting my body used to everything has been a great experience. Coach Jaden and Tristan also taught me several submissions. It's helped me become genuinely confident, not just in the cage, but in everyday life."

Head coach Jaden Knox believes superior conditioning made the difference.

"I think the BPS training helped a lot. The main winning factor in this fight was outlasting Kruger in endurance, energy and stamina. The roadwork and explosive drills definitely played a huge part. Before the fight I told Andre that, without a doubt, he would outlast his opponent through energy efficiency, and that's exactly how it played out."

The historic victory marks another milestone for NUDFC, with Allison's resilience, conditioning and composure delivering both a memorable win and a new chapter in Underberg's combat sports history.

To learn more contact Coach J here: 074 930 7724 -Cameron Smith, co-owner and co-founder of NUDFC



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Boys Polo
Team V
Zambian
Schools
Team,
2–4 October
at
Underberg
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Those tanks - They needed something! By Don Guy

I must give it to the Municipality, they’ve been forthcoming in allowing us to place murals on public buildings. Commercial property owners are stepping up. Watch the space at FNB. Himeville . It was Ruth’s idea. ‘Those tanks they need something’ she must have said this years ago - Now it’s happened! Bumping into local councilor man Dave Adam at the SPAR he quipped, ‘Those tanks - I have been asking for years for them to be replaced’. The politics of infrastructural maintenance is a slow train , don’t hold your breath. One day they will break and emergency measures will be implemented , that’s my guess. Well ugly and out of maintenance they might be, they’ve had a face lift. The idea was to include kids from the Himeville low cost village in the process. Months ago a mornings workshop was organized and pictures were produced , all on the theme of water. Lots of bubbles waterfalls and fish, these themes seemed to dominate. Our **Tidy towns** Ruth had her own ideas too and that’s where we learnt about the ‘*Snail and the whale*’. She produced the illustrated book and the scene was set. The first tank would have an **Ocean theme** and second a **Catchment theme** with a river a village and mountains, but there were some practical considerations. The circular tanks are in disrepair, some imagination was required ,the first one seemed to resemble a shoreline, the second one has leakage cracks, we turned them into waterfalls with a river running from the mountains through a mountain village.

As this goes to print it’s still work in progress. What started as a whale turned into a ‘whale of a time’ and a most elegant whale painted by Abi who walked up from Thomas street with her hidden talent - You’re on the books now Abi, ‘we’ll have more of you thank you’. Ruth bred talent too, grandchildren and they brought friends all too familiar with the sea. The perimeter of the tank clocked up sea creatures, sardines, an octopus jellyfish a shark and a treasure chest! Not so familiar with the sea are the kids at the Himeville low cost. Over the three days of work they made their way to the action as the morning soon villages appeared on the walls were with cattle and plenty of cars and some soccer, it’s an organic process and yes it’s being tweaked to make it visually pleasing from the road, you can’t have starfish in the sky but importantly community spirit is in it. Let me explain the handprints, Nikki Lowe led the field here, the kids loved dipping their hands in the paint and in some cases identified it with their names.

Identity. I’m going to take that word and expand it. Commercial identity is all over the place in the form of logo’s. Come and buy at my shop ! Murals in a town can give it a community identity and the Himeville reservoir example is even more personal, especially if you were involved. What began with ‘**Water is life - Amansi**

ayimpilo’ has blossomed into a lot more. A dignified gogo walked over to me on her own account. ‘You know’, she said ‘*As I walk past her to my home I feel so happy , these pictures they make happy*’. Mission accomplished! As one behind the scene in a sort of controlled - out of control painting exercise I checked the kids who wanted to scribble words around the pictures. I kept a few though, who wouldn’t keep graffiti that acknowledges genuine energy in our town right from the heart. Perhaps unmaintained infrastructure is there for a reason, one day if and when those tanks burst their banks we’ll be waiting with our rollers and our brushes to do it all over again!



trouble to stop, get out your car and go up close to view the different artwork. We hope to finish this mural in the next few weeks.

2. MANDELA MONTH: Michelle Stevens from Tourism asked what was Tidy Towns doing to commemorate this event so I came up with the idea of 67MMM# =67 Minutes Mandela Movement. She created several beautiful fliers with many suggestions that we came up with, for folk to do some small or big act. Lynn Morgan was the first to respond by donating a concrete bench and two big pots for which I am most grateful and I will use them in the Big Taxi Rank garden bed. It reminded me of how Lynn was the first to enter both the Tidy Town Verge competition for 2023 and 2024. She certainly is a trend setter. This 67 MMM# could well be ‘a damp squib’ as there is just so much going on in this district, folk could be shy or unmotivated or not aware of it. It is not meant for self-validation but rather to in some way, honour Mandela who stood for many values. However for this event I thought the theme could well be’ putting community first, empowering others and it is in your hands that you can make a difference ‘.

3. WINTER WARMTH DRIVE: Together with SCF and Agrimark, Tidy Towns joined forces to appeal for clothing, dry foods, monetary donations, bottles... A big thank you to all those in the community who did contribute. We, together with Arthie Singh and her three lovey daughters, Hayley, my granddaughter and her friend as well as Em Bonsma, went to Himeville Low Cost on Wed 8 th July. Nosipho from Safe House identified those most in need and we distributed the 130 bottles (labels designed by Cathy Fry) which Richard Sunter had filled with lentils, beans, rice and a stock cube plus over 300 packets of 2kg rice. It was heart-warming to see the appreciation on the faces of elderly women as they received the food and warm blankets etc....

I would like to express my thanks for the kind donation from Craig and Cathy Kenmuir whose daughter, Leigh Stokes is also trying to make a difference in the small village of Creighton. She and I both received an award from the municipality in recognition for the work done to beautify our villages.

Three concerning matters **STORM WATER CATCH PIT COVERS:** Despite sending emails and photos since October last year regarding the damaged and unsightly state of them, there is no work done to rectify them. Someone is going to fall in the very deep one near to Shell garage and the one below the big taxi rank, it now so broken up and a truck will fall into it and then the municipality can be sued. **HIMEVILLE SOCCER FIELD:** I appealed three times to have it neatened up and the long grass and wattles removed from the other side and the fence either removed or fixed- especially in light of the World soccer tournament and the youngsters regularly playing there and the Himeville reservoir mural taking shape and my endeavours for this area to be spruced up. I eventually got the wattle saplings removed. But all to no avail. **LITTER:** Lee Hegner, wife of Joseph from Switzerland, said how sad she finds the litter situation. I am concerned how much litter is now developing on the main roads especially from the big trucks. How does one change the mind set and with so many folk descending onto our little village, with taxis going in and out, it is a major problem. Any suggestions? **By Ruth Crouch**



Underberg Primary School, Harry Gwala Hockey Colours. Well done to these learners!

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BIRDING IN THE SOUTHERN KZN DRAKENSBERG

The mild winter conditions might tempt some birds to arrive earlier than normal. It has already had an influence on some altitudinal migrants such as Bush Blackcap, staying right through to July in the lower Sani Pass area, something they seldom do in a normal winter. I found a Lemon Dove which had collided with a window at Sani Pass Hotel on the 4 July, another bird seldom seen here in winter.

The Wattled Cranes are doing very well in the district with at least three pairs with small chicks right now, two with large chicks and three pairs looking at nesting. Sadly one pair appears to have lost the egg or a just hatched chick. A mixed pair of Cranes, Wattled and Blue being seen recently was a surprise. I don't believe this has been observed before. Is this a Wattled looking for habitat and moving into marginal habitat as the rest is occupied?

There is a national Crane Census coming up for anyone wanting to assist. All Crane species to be counted over the 24 to 27 July 2026. Record all possible information, species, breeding, numbers, location and observer details. This can be sent to cranecensus@ewt.org.

TROUT FISHING IN UNDERBERG

With the fish actively spawning some very happy anglers giving good reports of trophy fish being caught. many of the fish being caught has been targeted on spawning beds using indicators with egg patterns. Or for those who frown upon the use of them has opted to use smaller nymphs which in certain situations work just as well. With it being holiday season, many of the reports come from resorts where many start their journey into this great sport we have, with many youngsters catching their first trout on fly. Fortunate or maybe not as some of these reported fish have been big and these anglers will have to fish hard to beat that personal best. Very fortunate for the sport though. It is best to fish the shallow areas later in the morning when the water has warmed up a little after being cooled during the night. the fish sit a little deeper earlier but become allot more active late afternoons. Indicators as well as dry flies do well to suspend the smaller flies at the right depth. A little wind also helps the presentation and makes the fly look a more natural while in the drift. Although fishing like this can be very productive many anglers do not fish this way and will rather fish smaller flies like buzzers, midges and bloodworm under indicators, casting to weedbeds and into channels in searech of fish not procupied with the mock spawn.

UHTFC statistics show 29 fish caught of 62 anglers. All club dams have been reopened for fishing. Rivers remain closed untill September 1st if the rain is in time. Untill then I hope to have some more good reports of Stillwater fishes being caught. Tight lines



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



Glen McLean with his son at Castleburn - what a champ.

The Mzimkulu Vulture Hide is re-opening on the first day of August after a long shut down forced on it due to the Foot and Mouth outbreak. The birds fortunately still found carcasses of dead domestic stock that died from other diseases or accidents, since the Foot and Mouth carcasses were not available to them.

Gavin King saw the conservationist in Wales erect nest boxes for their Common Swifts. More could be done to assist birds all over the world with these strategies. Local bridges and some city buildings are built every year and little adjustments could assist a variety of birds, bats or reptiles for either nesting or roosting in safety. In America thousands of folk visit certain bridges to watch thousands of bats emerge from under the bridges, so it becomes a major tourist attraction

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Photo: Wolf Avni

NOW YOU CAN SEE ME AGAIN

Nestled in the heart of the Southern Drakensberg, the Mzimkulu Vulture Hide offers a rare, up-close encounter with endangered vultures — all while directly supporting their conservation.



Fitted with one-way glass for crystal-clear photography and framed by breathtaking mountain backdrops, it's a must-visit for birders and wildlife photographers alike. Every visit funds the Vulture Safe Feeding Site that keeps these incredible birds coming back.Contact: 082 086 0924 Email: vulture@wildlifeact.com

To our valued friends in conservation and birding, We are very pleased to share that the Mzimkulu Vulture Hide in the Southern Drakensberg will be re-opening to public visitors from 1 August 2026 which will support the operation of this safe feeding site as well as raise awareness for these highly threatened bird, The temporary closure was out of an abundance of caution due to foot and mouth disease concerns, and in support of broader community efforts to prevent the further spread of the disease, all bookings and visitor access were temporarily suspended. While vultures are not impacted by the disease, mitigation factors to reduce foot traffic and protect the livelihoods of the community were necessary. The Mzimkulu Vulture Hide forms part of Wildlife ACT's Southern Drakensberg Conservation Project and is the result of a collaboration between Wildlife ACT and Riverlea Farm, with the shared aim of establishing a sustainable safe feeding site for cliff-nesting vulture species in the Southern Drakensberg. Key conservation partners include Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Project Vulture, the Drakensberg Conservation Initiative, the Bearded Vulture Recovery Programme, and the Endangered Wildlife Trust. The hide has been made possible through the generous support of Laetitia Steynberg, Invicta Wildlife, CHEP, and the European Outdoor Conservation Association, along with the vital contribution of local Underberg farmers and landowners.

www.wildlifeact.com



WELCOME TO THE MZIMKULU VULTURE HIDE RE - OPENING 1 AUGUST

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SANI COMMUNITY FORUM BY: DI SUNTER

“A GOOD HEAD AND A GOOD HEART ARE ALWAYS A FORMIDABLE COMBINATION.” NELSON MANDELA.



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WINTER WARMTH: With Nelson Mandela’s wise words resonating in our hearts, good heads and good hearts came together to distribute winter clothing, non-perishable food, blankets and beanies to those less fortunate in the Himeville community. Sani Community Forum, Tidy Towns and Agrimark have worked together on this very special project over the past few months, and the response has been truly heart-warming. The Winter Warmth Project did more than hand out items; it touched lives, brought comfort, filled hungry tummies and reminded many of our neighbours that they are seen, valued and cared for. In the Himeville Low-Cost Village Community, winter is not simply uncomfortable; for many families it is harsh, frightening and deeply difficult. Cold, poverty and hunger are very real, and when homes are cold, cupboards are bare and children are hungry, even a blanket, a warm beanie, a packet of soup or a kind word can bring dignity, relief and hope.

A heartfelt thank you goes to every donor who gave so generously, whether through clothing, blankets, food, beanies, glass jars, time, transport, energy or encouragement. Your kindness did not disappear into a project; it went directly into homes, onto cold shoulders, into empty tummies and into the hearts of people who needed to know that their community had not forgotten them. A big thank you also goes to all the residents who collected the hundreds of glass coffee jars that Richard Sunter filled with a variety of dry soup ingredients for distribution to those in need. Arthie Singh and Em Bonsma coordinated the clothing, blankets, beanies and food donations dropped off at Agrimark, and what would any NUD town endeavour be without Mrs Tidy Towns, Ruth Crouch? Together with Ruth’s granddaughter, Arthie’s three delightful daughters and Nosipho from the Safe House, this wonderful team distributed food and winter warmth items throughout the Himeville Low-Cost Village

Community. The smiles, gratitude and quiet relief we witnessed made it clear just how deeply these acts of kindness matter. One lesson we will certainly remember for the next drive is to take along sweets for the children, as these small treats can bring such joy.

None of this would have been possible without

Restmount, , the underprivileged children's holiday camp on the Drak Gardens road, hosted a camp 6 - 10 July 2026.

A typical camp consists of the following activities :

A natural treasure hunt, finding items like a porcupine quill, acorn, bone, red flower, leaves on a branch, 5 pointed leaf, egg shell, peacock feather....

The children group up a spend about an hour exploring the homestead and learning about natural treasures found here.

There is a hike up the kopjie with incredible views of the Umzimkulu River meandering through the farmlands, the Rhino "range" stretching as far as the eye can see , the Homestead with its farm animals , a troop of baboons among other wintry scenes as a reward for the climb.

The Wishing Well waterfall hike is a firm favourite - it takes you through some natural forest and to a +- 20m waterfall cascading down sandstone and basalt rock into a little pool where crabs scuttle around; a skaapsteker has been spotted attempting to slither up the rock face and cairns are built. There are challenges to stand under the cold water , and most children cannot believe you can drink the refreshing water !

One of the days is a 4km river picnic hike which includes a polar bear swim challenge , skimming stones and enjoying exploring the river for interesting stones.

Back at the homestead and the dining hall has table tennis, board games, books and drawing. There is a large playfield for soccer, cricket and team building activities.

A large hall allows for evening indoor ball games and more team building activities.

Generally on the last evening we have a bonfire where the children drink hot chocolate, roast marshmallows , stargaze and share values that they see in each other.

This has brought emotional moments and even tears in eyes....

Meals are wholesome - porridge and sandwiches for breakfast ; cooked lunches like chicken ala king; mince ; stewed beef ; a light supper of baked beans on bread, scrambled

egg on bread; mac n cheese; toasties and ending off with pudding like malva and custard; cus-

the extraordinary generosity of our residents and their donations. From Sani Community Forum, Agrimark and Tidy Towns, we sincerely thank NUD for your help and support for this Winter Warmth Project, without which our less fortunate residents would not have benefited to the extent that they did. But the need does not end here. We cannot be an island, insulating ourselves from discomfort while others in our own community face cold, poverty and hunger. This is our community. These are our neighbours. Please get involved. Volunteer. Collect. Sort. Pack. Drive. Visit. Give time. Give kindness. Do something. Every pair of hands helps, and every act of care brings warmth, dignity and hope where it is needed most. Thank you, NUD.

We hope to continue this drive and extend it into Goxhill and Underberg Low-Cost Villages, as the number of people in need across NUD is heart-wrenching. This team relies on NUD’s kindness and generosity, and on the unfailing support of our donors, who have inspired Sani Community Forum for nearly seven years to keep moving forward and helping NUD become the best it can be. Thank you.

LITTER AND INFRASTRUCTURE: It is soul-destroying for the hard-working EPWP teams, Tidy Towns volunteers and residents who care deeply about our towns to see the state of NUD after weekends, with filth and litter left behind. Some municipalities, including metros, are fiercely enforcing by-laws to address urban degradation, with positive results. Yet repeated pleas to our own Dr NDZ Municipality about by-law enforcement seem to fall on deaf ears. Public statements, glittering award ceremonies and social media posts celebrating NUD’s cleanliness and its reputation as the “jewel in the crown” of regional tourism are difficult to reconcile with the reality on the ground. Without volunteers such as Ruth Crouch of Tidy Towns, Sani Community Forum, and so many dedicated individuals like Michelle Stevens, who continue to drive tourism, where would NUD be? Surely Dr NDZ Municipality can do more to earn these accolades, which have largely been built on the hard work of resident volunteers and their private donors and supporters. A cleaner, better-maintained NUD benefits everyone: it attracts investment, strengthens the local economy, creates jobs, supports tourism, increases property values, grows the rates base and improves residents’ quality of life. Surely this is an outcome we should all be working towards? **By Di Sunter**



tard slices; ice cream and choc sauce ; bread pudding and custard.... Teatime treats are a highlight thanks to Whistling Goat and their really yummy chocolate cakes and Liz Mackay and her amazing orange flavoured cake.

We also want to thank Elgin dairies for their sponsor of milk. The bread pudding was flavoured with peach preserve thanks to Gaylyn Pearce. Thanks to Karin and Glenda for donating items like books , puzzles and dvds. Thanks to Paul Welch for publishing this write up .

The underprivileged children of Durban can only experience the beautiful Berg thanks to many who sponsor the camp through groceries; donations of clothing and toiletries , games and books as well as financial donations towards the transport and general running costs like the electricity bill and paying full time staff. Here's to another 80 years of seeing Restmount go from strength to strength.

Kind Regards, **Brenda Rayner. Restmount Children's Holiday Home Homestead: 033 701 1706 Cell: 079 411 1214**

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HIMEVILLE UNDERBERG GARDEN CLUB

19 AUGUST

The Garden Club meets again on 19 August, this time at the Underberg Country Club. The meeting will start at 10h00 as usual and will include the AGM.

Our guest speaker is Lindsay Gray, the founder of The School of Garden Design established in 1994. Lindsay has won many landscaping awards and we look forward to hosting her once again.

Visitors are welcome, your R30 includes teas and eats.

New Owners at Heritage Plants

Paolo Slaviero (originally from Johannesburg) and Kim Evans (originally from Cape Town) are not city people at heart and are happiest where mountains, birdsong and open space are part of every-day life.

Paolo's background is a varied one; from pecan nut farming, crocodile farming to working as a game ranger, and many years spent living in Northern KwaZulu-Natal working for private lodges and KZN Wildlife. He also spent time living in the Okavango Delta. He is an avid birder and photographer, and also enjoys woodworking, golf and, of course, plants.

Kim has lived and travelled extensively around the world and has spent over two decades work-



Paolo Slaviero (originally from Johannesburg) and Kim Evans (originally from Cape Town)

You are warmly invited to stop by Heritage Plants for a coffee and a chat. Cell number 0605552317. Email info@heritageplants.co.za

Linda Odendaal Steps Up for Foot Health at Country Women

By Reine Combrinck

The feet are often the most neglected part of our bodies. We hide them away in tight shoes, worry about making them look pretty for summer, or simply ignore them until they start to hurt. But according to Linda Odendaal, a massage therapist and health educator who recently spoke to the Country Women group, our feet are actually the ultimate warning system for our overall wellbeing.

Odendaal shared her journey into health education with the audience. While studying for her master's degree in film post-production—a career that required sitting at a computer for hours on end—she turned to yoga to de-stress. That choice led her to become certified as an instructor, where she discovered the healing power of physical adjustments and touch. Eager to learn more, she pursued a qualification in massage therapy.

"When I first started, I told myself I would never touch feet," Odendaal laughed, recalling the common "ooey factor" many people feel. "But wouldn't you know it, feet quickly became my absolute favourite part of massage. I got completely over my fear because I realized that the feet are a vital indicator of your health."

During her interactive presentation, Odendaal explained how the feet act as a mirror for the rest of the body. Because they are at the very end of our circulatory and nervous systems, they are often the first place where serious medical conditions show their warning signs.

"Think about diabetes," Odendaal noted. "The feet are frequently the first place to show symptoms, such as a loss of sensation or changing colour. Kidney disease and heart issues also manifest early in the lower limbs, often through swelling and edema in the feet and ankles. They show you indicators of the rest of the body before you might even be aware that something is wrong."

Beyond signalling underlying illnesses, structural foot issues can directly impact our safety as we age. Odendaal pointed out that common ailments like bunions—which are frequently caused by narrow, pointy shoes or a background in ballet—are actually among the strong-

est indicators for a person's risk of falling.

To demonstrate, Odendaal had the audience participate in a series of movement exercises. She encouraged members to stand up, first with their shoes on and then bare-footed, to feel how their weight shifts.

"When you lean forward without your shoes, your toes naturally splay out and grab the floor," she explained. "This gripping action is exactly how our bodies prevent falls. If your feet are constantly trapped in narrow footwear, you lose that essential balance mechanism."

The type of footwear we choose plays a massive role in this mobility. Odendaal warned against wearing shoes that are too confining. "If you put your shoulder in a sling for eight hours a day, it would lose its mobility. We do the exact same thing to our feet when we wear restrictive shoes," she said. She noted that our feet naturally flatten, collapse, and widen as we age, meaning most people should actually be wearing a shoe size or a size and a half larger than they did in their twenties and thirties. She highly recommended looking for footwear with a "wide toe box" to allow the toes to spread naturally, and spending time walking barefoot whenever safely possible.

The core message of Odendaal's talk focused on the critical link between mobility and long-term cognitive health. Foot pain often causes people to isolate themselves and stop moving, which can trigger a decline in overall health.

"There is research showing that walking regular distances can reduce the probability of dementia by up to 40 percent," Odendaal shared. "If that came in a pill, everyone would take it."

Ultimately, keeping mobile doesn't require running marathons. Odendaal advocates for "micro-walks"—short, five-minute bursts of walking that add roughly 500 steps to your day. By incorporating just a few micro-walks into a daily routine, anyone can easily boost their step count, safeguard their independence, and take control of their health from the ground up.

Country Women meet at 10am on the first Wednesday of every month. Contact Reine for more information 076 444 4207.

Right :-Linda Odendaal, guest speaker at country women's group

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FAMILY LITERACY PROJECT



A major literacy opportunity for children and schools in the uMngeni area is poised for implementation as the Family Literacy Project awaits the final commitment from uMngeni Municipality to nominate Reading Champions for training.

A major opportunity to improve reading outcomes for young children across the uMngeni Municipality is ready to begin, with funding, training and literacy resources already secured by the Family Literacy Project.

The only remaining step is for the Municipality to nominate its community Reading Champions for training.

The training, which will take place at the Michaelhouse Trust in Mooi uMngeni, forms part of the Family Literacy Project's proven Reach Out to Read programme—an evidence-based initiative designed to tackle South Africa's literacy crisis by strengthening reading in isiZulu during the foundation years.

The urgency is clear. International literacy research consistently shows that children who learn to read well in their home language are far more likely to succeed academically and acquire additional

languages, including English.

Reach Out to Read combines the latest Science of Reading research with practical classroom strategies, equipping Reading Champions, teachers and caregivers to develop phonics, reading fluency, comprehension and a life-long culture of reading.

The programme has already demonstrated its success. Earlier this year, 18 Early Childhood Development practitioners and community literacy leaders completed an intensive five-day training course at Michaelhouse, where they also gained hands-on experience teaching at local schools. Participants described the programme as "transformational" and immediately applicable in their communities.

Family Literacy Project's Pierre Horn and Programme Developer Cheryl Taylor said the organisation is excited to move forward with its partnership with uMngeni Municipality.

"The funding is secured, the literacy kits are ready and our training team is standing by. We now look forward to welcoming the Municipality's Reading Champions so that together we can give more children the strongest possible start to their education."

With South Africa continuing to face one of the world's most significant foundational literacy challenges, initiatives such as Reach Out to Read offer communities a practical, research-based solution that can change children's educational futures—one reader at a time.

Historical society AGM and Guest speaker

'Before the Blanket'

During and after Covid 19 archeologist **Len Van Schalkwyk** (left) was holed up with his dog in a caravan near Mothotlong as resident archeologist for the new Polihali Dam project.

Schooled at Kearsney college Len went on to UCT. to study archeology eventually specializing in the early iron age period. 'Lucky bugger' he was posted to the Tugela Valley where an iron age site dig was in progress under Dr. Tim Maggs. He then suggested to his army unit commander that two years of consecutive camps in the same spot would suit him just fine - that's how he earned his masters degree. A long story short, Len has familiarized himself with the prehistory of Lesotho and KZN in particular. I first met him on a job at Border Cave Ingwavuma on the Swaziland border in the early 90's, he was assistant deputy director for AMAFA based in Ulundi. He and his wife Catherine lived there for close on 20 years before he moved into consultancy work under the name of eThembeni Cultural Heritage. You will have a myriad of questions for Len. Who lived in our neck of the woods before the Bushmen? Who lived here after the Bushmen? What is the iron age? Where did the Basuto come from? Why do the Sotho people wear blankets? Why is their controversy over borderlands near Matatiele?

Oh yes, his inspiration for getting into this unique career - He tells me he was inspired by a young (Now Professor) David Lewis- Williams an English teacher at Kearsney, who used his students as cheap 'slave labour' on his expeditions.

Friday 14th August - 6 pm at The Anglican Church hall in Himeville. Rolls Soup Wine and snacks R40 all welcome - Subs R50 for members.

Excitement is building both within the Shellhole and the community for our upcoming annual **Fund-Raising Golf Day to be held on 22 August.**

There will be great prizes to be won, an exciting 100 board draw with plenty of prizes, raffles and an awesome auction. Items up for auction will be a whole sheep, 4 sheep quarters, fabulous holidays at exotic locations, trips up Sani Pass, Microlite and Gyrocopter flights and two tickets to Splash Fen Music Festival. Our auctioneer for the event is none other than Underberg's favourite son Gwen Viljoen. Join us in this event by playing in the competition, sponsoring a hole, donating prizes or just joining us for the auction. Everyone is welcome. Should you wish to get involved with the MOTH, either as a veteran or as a supporter of the Shellhole, please feel free to contact me. Monthly meetings held on the 1st Thursday of the month at 18h00. **Ivan Reynolds – Old Bill - Boot and Saddle – 082 5300 935**



Tips to stay safe while keeping warm

Never leave heat sources unattended. Keep a clear space around heat sources, and eliminate trip hazards and loose cords. Watch children carefully in the kitchen, near heaters and around anything that could cause burns. Set geyser temperatures to a safe temperature (ideally 50 to 55 degrees Celsius) Don't use liquid accelerants when making a fire Extinguish fires and switch off heating appliances overnight. Ensure adequate ventilation for indoor spaces. Take care when handling hot drinks, boiling water or steaming food. Check the water temperature before children get into the bath. It should be comfortably warm, not hot. Ensure all electrical plug points and appliance cords are in good working order. Maintain fire extinguishers and know how to use one in an emergency. Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

UNDERBERG 14 NOV 2026 **tops! UNDERBERG**

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GREAT WINE GOOD FOOD MEMORABLE MOMENTS



Acutts Underberg celebrates success at the Acutts Annual Awards, held at The Bond Shed in Durban. Congratulations to the team on these spectacular achievements! Securing 2nd place for Office of the Year, alongside Poppet Acutt's Agent of the Year Titanium Achiever (2nd place) and Kathy Abbett's Agent of the Year Diamond Achiever (3rd place) awards, this is an incredible milestone for our country-side office. It highlights our dedication and the strong trust we have built within our local community. There is no doubt that we are well equipped to deal with whatever themarket has to offer and will continue to be "The Name You Know, The AgentsYou Can Trust" Acutts Underberg would like to thank all of their clients for their continued support and trust over the past year and look forward to a successful 2026!

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From The Saddle of Boot and Saddle

The annual Dellville Wood Parade was held at the Himeville Cenotaph on Sunday 12 July. The parade was well attended by both MOTH members on parade and by friends, family and visitors in the audience. A excellent talk was given by the historian Mathew Marwick who is a direct descendant of Private Walter Bruce Little who was from Underberg and the only person from Underberg Killed in Action at Dellville Wood. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who braved the cold to attend the parade. Lest We Forget.

Our next parade will be the Young Veterans Parade on 20th September commemorating the Bush War and the wars of our generation. Should you wish for someone's name the be read out and remembered or to lay a wreath, please contact me or your nearest MOTH.

The MOTH were involved in the 'Winter Festival' that was held on Saturday 11th July at the Country Club. Never in the annals of history has a bar at a beer tent been so quiet, nevertheless, a lot of fun was had and may old friends met and new friends made. Excellent food stalls were available and some interesting stalls with marvellous items were also available. The live music was excellent and added to the atmosphere. We hold our Annual General meeting on the 23rd July where the Top Table positions are open for re-election or for election of new officials.

We are pleased to welcome Stuart Charlton to the Boot and Saddle Shellhole. He transferred in from the Mpumalanga Shellhole in Nelspruit.

We are sad to say Farewell to John Rae who will be leaving us. We wish John and Emily all the best for the future.

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WINNING STOCK MARKET STRATEGIES

MEMORY LANE:
MICRON'S SELL-OFF IS A
DETOUR, NOT A DEAD END
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WINNING STOCK MARKET
STRATEGIES *

Micron Technology has spent the past three weeks giving its shareholders whiplash. Having touched an all-time high above \$1,200 in late June, the stock has since shed close to a quarter of its value, dragging the broader memory complex — SanDisk, SK Hynix, and the newly listed SKHY among them — down with it. For a market that only weeks ago was toasting Micron as the cleanest way to play the artificial intelligence build-out, the reversal has been abrupt enough to unsettle even seasoned holders.

Fenestra is not one of them. We entered this drawdown as Micron's highest-conviction position and we intend to remain so. Our 24-month price target of \$1,550 is unchanged, and the recent weakness — while sharp — looks to us like a classic sector rotation rather than a crack in the underlying thesis. What actually changed
Three forces converged to produce the sell-off. First, South Korea's SK Hynix completed a roughly \$28 billion Nasdaq listing on 10 July, and capital that had been concentrated in Micron rotated toward the newly tradeable competitor. Second, China's CXMT confirmed plans for an \$8.5 billion IPO of its own, reviving long-standing fears that Beijing-subsidised DRAM capacity will eventually erode pricing power across the industry. Third, and more idiosyncratically, a well-publicised short position taken against Micron added fuel to a technical unwind that was already under way, with the stock briefly entering bear-market territory relative to its June peak. None of these three developments, in our assessment, alters the structural case for high-bandwidth memory. SK Hynix's listing



is a financing event, not a demand event — it does not add a single wafer of capacity that was not already planned. CXMT's ambitions are real but remain years away from qualifying at the leading edge required for AI accelerators. And short positions, however well timed, are wagers on sentiment, not statements about the durability of sold-out order books.

The order book still speaks loudly
What has been somewhat lost in the noise is that Micron's commercial position has, if anything, strengthened. The company has disclosed sixteen non-cancellable long-term agreements worth in excess of \$22 billion of committed high-bandwidth memory revenue, effectively selling out capacity through the remainder of this year. It has also deepened its relationship with Anthropic, both as a memory and storage supplier for next-generation AI systems and, notably, as a participant in Anthropic's own financing — an arrangement that gives Fenestra's holding an indirect line of sight into the frontier-model buildout, rather than only the chips beneath it.

Sell-side reaction to the pullback has been telling. Rather than trimming targets into weakness, several houses have moved the other way: KeyBanc lifted its price target during the drawdown, and Citi reiterated its Buy rating while flagging a ninety-day catalyst window tied to AI-driven DRAM pricing. Micron has also committed more than \$250 billion toward U.S. fabrication capacity through 2035, a scale of reinvestment that only a company confident in multi-year demand visibility would contemplate.

Our GARP discipline requires more than a good story — it requires a reasonable price for growth, assessed against PEG, return on invested capital, and free cash flow yield. Micron's pullback has, if anything, made those metrics more attractive, not less; the earnings power behind the HBM super cycle thesis has not been revised away, only the multiple the market is presently willing to pay for it. That is precisely the kind of dislocation our concentrated, ten-position mandate is built to look through rather than flee.

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Exercise and Mental Health

Article by Heidi Kyle

We have been looking at exercise and mental health and this month I wanted to explore further specific types of exercise to help mental health. We are also going to look at the key reason anxiety and many other mental health issues can be alleviated by a little talked about “trick” called *divergent attention*.

Issues like anxiety and addiction often work as internal feedback loops: emotion triggers physical symptoms and focusing on them tells the brain to react. According to Charles Linden, creator of *The Linden Method*, breaking this cycle requires *divergent attention*—deliberately shifting focus away from internal sensations (eg cravings, anxiety or depressive thoughts) and into complex external activities. Puzzles and games can help, but exercise is one of the most powerful ways to activate it. Next month I will explain divergent attention in more detail.

However, not all exercise will trigger divergent attention. Casual exercise—like walking on a treadmill or riding a stationary bike—leaves too much free cognitive space. These types of activities are repetitive and robotic, and your mind is free to wander back to your racing heart, shallow breathing, wishing you could have a drink, or intrusive thoughts.

True divergent attention requires 100% of your sensory focus, leaving zero thinking room in the brain for anxiety analysis. To achieve this, you need an exercise that demands rapid, real-time decision-making and precise physical coordination.

In Underberg, we are lucky to have arguably the greatest trail running paths in the world and trail running is a fantastic example of an exercise to activate divergent attention. The reason is simply because you must expend all your focus on navigating the terrain and not falling into a hole – literally and metaphorically! This exercise will absorb all your cognitive faculties. It leaves no time for any unwanted thoughts.

Another great example to achieve this is racket sports. Padel anyone? Perhaps explaining the rocketing rise of Padel which combines two

of the most effective sports for activating divergent attention – squash and tennis. Racket sports, trail running and others force absolute outward disengagement from your internal anxiety symptoms due to three critical factors:

High Speed Tracking: Your eyes must constantly track a ball or your feet moving at high speeds, forcing your visual attention outward.

Complex Co-ordination: You must simultaneously calculate your footwork, body positioning, and racket angles.

Real-Time Strategy: You are actively reacting to an unpredictable opponent or terrain, which requires immediate cognitive processing. In a fast-paced game of Padel or a long trail run, your brain is entirely occupied by external stimuli. You cannot safely do this while focusing on your anxiety. This forced, total engagement completely starves the amygdala—the brain's anxiety control centre—of the attention it needs to fuel panic or other unwanted feelings.

In this way we starve the negative emotional response. By shifting your attention entirely to the court, the trail or your opponent, you trick your subconscious into realizing that you are safe. If you were in actual danger, your brain wouldn't allow you to focus on scoring a point. Over time, consistently using these activities to pivot your mind outward during periods of high stress retrains your nervous system, resets your baseline, and breaks the grip of chronic anxiety, additive thoughts and many other unwanted emotional responses or habits.

Next month we will focus on divergent attention and how you can set up your life (and therefore your mind) to engage more of this helpful attention pattern.

Article by Heidi Kyle

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We would caution readers against reading near-term volatility as a verdict on the AI memory cycle itself. Memory has always been the most cyclical corner of semiconductors, prone to sharp corrections even amid genuine structural tailwinds. What matters over our investment horizon is whether the world needs materially more high-bandwidth memory over the next several years than it can currently produce. On that question, nothing in the past fortnight's news flow has changed our answer. Micron's next scheduled earnings release, on 29 September 2026, will be an important checkpoint, and we will update readers accordingly.

Volatility of this kind is the toll paid for owning the picks-and-shovels of the AI era, not a signal to abandon the position. If the past decade of memory cycles has taught disciplined investors anything, it is that the sharpest corrections in this sector have tended to precede its longest advances.

AI used William Meyer to write this article.

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A burning Owlet issue on Hlogoma

By Don Guy



Five years ago, at the onset of the riots of mid July 2021, I woke up to see that Hlogoma had been burnt overnight. Mmm..... was that part of the security plan? I hear not, was it set alight that night by the looting rioters? We walk the mountain regularly, the veld is in good 'nic' the flowers are great, Secretary birds, Rhebok a resident Gymnogene frequently a soaring Vultures, these are notable sightings. There is a Rock art site on the mountain, not very clear but I've known it for 30 odd years and often do a check for old times' sake. There's no doubt who the first settlers were. My parents lived close under the mountain, by the site of the original Kraal established in the late 1860's by Sakeytwa. Two months ago I decided to inspect the rock art site with an 80yr. old cousin Rex. The site has an old blanket in it, suggesting it's still used. Also plenty of animal habitation in evidence, and Owl poo. The images are poor faded from the full winter sun, a mixture of traditional Eland and newer rude 'AmaTola' markings. On this occasion **June 1st** on the spur of the moment I decided we'd exit the overhang by climbing up instead of down to avoid the brambles.

Wow! An owl flew out as we clambered up a dodgy bit of sandstone, we'd chanced upon it's nest with three white eggs one pierced, with a beak protruding on the brink of hatching. We made a hasty ascent, best leave this family in peace. The nest below a small rock overhang was snug. **June 11th** - Curiosity got the better end of me and I was back. This time we scared off the two adult birds before we reached the site, they'd both been keeping vigil close by. We guessed them to be 'Spotted eagle Owls'. The three chicks had hatched , one looked weak. Again we beat a hasty retreat. Settling well below behind a rock we watched as the two adult owls battled ravens who relentlessly mobbed them, those three chicks were now at their most vulnerable.

Then one night after hearing rain falling I had an **Owlet nightmare!**

Yikes- someone's going to burn that mountain! Burning practices are a prickly issue, but there are rules. I phoned Stuart Maclean our local birdman to pick his brains, he said he'd like to make a trip. Beyond burning the question became another, is it a Cape Eagle owl or a Spotted eagle owl? Todd Collins had told Stuart that Cape Eagle Owls call from the mountain. **So July 7th** we set out for an updated inspection. Sure enough the adults flew when we arrived below the nest, two chicks remained. Cape eagle Owls can have slightly orange eyes and the Spotted owl distinctly yellow eyes. The barring on the breast also differs. Stuart listened carefully for a call, we came away unsure. So a scramble for identification details began but more importantly information on when Hlogoma would be burnt this year. For up to 40 days they'd still be dependent on the parent birds, Stuart assured us that the chicks would leave their nest shortly, they'd be hiding in the grass close by, if a fire came through now, they'd be scorched. According to the literature the chicks should start walking away from the nest at 45 days old. It would take about ten days before they could fly. By mid August they'd probably be safe.



The farmer and those leasing it, are responsible for burning the mountain are in tune. They promise to be sensitive and take our cue, but the

SOUTHERN DRAKENSBERG HONORARY OFFICERS

The Southern Drakensberg Invasive Alien Plant booklet is still widely available and it is hoped that those who have bought it are following the details on how to control and eradicate these pests that have been introduced into our mountain environment. **This month people should look at "Bugweed" (*Solanum mauritianum*). It is a relatively new bandit invading our gardens and road verges and has started to move in fast. It has been listed as "Category 1b which means that they must be controlled or eradicated. They may not be planted, propagated, sold or donated" (information from the booklet).**

In November last year the interpretive centre at the entrance to Sani Pass was officially opened. Our group together with Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife were the prime movers in getting this display set up in an open-air location. It is a very worthwhile and informative stopping area for visitors and local residents to include in their trip up the Pass or as a day outing. Recently HO's upgraded the signage to make it more visible.

On the subject of signage, there are new signs for the Giants Cup Trail showing very clearly where it leads especially in places where there has been some confusion. This trail is part of National Hiking Ways stretching from Limpopo Province to Western Province. Our section was officially opened on 20th July, 1979 on a day when all previous weather records pointed to the fact that it had never rained or snowed on that day nor dates around it. Those dignitaries and local people who attended will remember that the rain pelted down and there was heavy snow falling on the mountains during the walk on the first section of the new trail and during the official function in the evening. It was bitterly cold and

mountain must be burnt, it's rank and has not been grazed this year. The fire breaks below the nest were burnt on **July the 9th and 10th**, I'm guessing it will be burnt August /September. Consider for a moment the plight of a breeding bird. **It's a nightmare!** For over a decade Mike and May Bloom near Bushman's neck have been nurturing a pair of Wattle Cranes that nest in a wetland above their dam. They're on their 6th chick this winter, survival is against all odds, serval cats , fences and who knows what have claimed the chicks before - **its war out there!** Stuart says, the Marsh Owls get badly nailed when they burn. Owls near dwellings have another life challenge - Poisoned rats! The rat poison commonly used in households is often a concoction that makes them crave for water that's why you find poisoned dead rats outside the houses. Which is not so cool if rats are your bread and butter.

Don and Helen Guy take hikes in the Southern Drakensberg - They have interests and knowledge of Rock art and the local fauna and flora. WhatsApp them on 066 018 6430 for a group rate quote.

the marquees did not provide much shelter. This goes to prove the local wisdom that no one can predict the weather in our mountain environment. For this reason, all people going into the mountains should be prepared for four seasons in one day no matter what season it is and to take precautions against sunburn at all times because high altitude may take the heat out of the sun but sunburn is still dangerous and life threatening. Hikers have had to be rescued and flown out to hospital in the past due to inadequate sun protection causing severe sunburn, one person died.

Membership to the group is open to all but a period of probation must be done before anyone is accepted as a full member. We welcome Ralph and Joanne Mills and also Simon Vickers as full members. They have been very active during their probationary period by helping at refreshment tables (fund raising), mountain rescue, snake catching and other tasks when extra hands have been needed. **By Rosanne Clark**

For further inquiries about joining the group or offering assistance in any way please contact:-
Chairman Julian Simon 0836516777
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Jelle Meintsma and Jacques Flammand at the successful Winter Festival, SDHO Stall

VETS TALES FROM PRACTICE

I recently went on a bird course where they were trying to help us identify various bird calls. It reminded me of an incident many years ago when I was talking to a vet friend Barry who had a very successful practice on the Bluff in Durban. Someone had brought him a rooster that insisted on crowing at 4.00am in the morning. Understandably the neighbours got a bit fed up with this (they are not as understanding as you country folk). So, they brought the rooster to Barry and requested he stop it crowing. Well, they say “ ‘n boer maak ‘n plan”, as we had had no lectures at all in our training as to how to stop a rooster crowing. So, Barry decides to put a hyfrecator down the rooster’s throat as we know that is where the sound comes from. A hyfrecator is like an electric pen that emits a spar when the pedal is pressed. It is usually used to stop small bleeding blood vessels. Anyway, Barry pushes the button – and sparks and smoke erupt from the bird’s throat ! It did not feel well. As he said to me “Never try this “. I never did. I am not sure how he explained it to the owner. Birds tend to be a dark art in veterinary science. A bit like snakes. No on gives you any training on how to deal with anything smaller than a chicken. I worked with an Irish vet once who just refused to see birds. This came about because someone brought him an aggressive little one once. He put his hand in the cage and grabbed it. The poor bird promptly had a heart attack and died in his hand. The next time he was faced with a small bird in a cage he was determined to do better. So, he slowly opened the cage door and slowly inserted

Congratulations “The Boating Brothers!” A New African Record for the YUKON 1000



Craig and Mark Wilment have done our district proud in completing the 2026 Yukon 1000, the longest kayak and canoe race in the world. It was quite a process, the race recieves about 4 to 6000 applicants which are skimmed down to 30 teams through interviews and then they had to get themselves to the other side of the world. More challenges followed starting with Mark getting his Canadian visa the day before they flew. The two brothers hired a boat in Canada and had to get used to it taking it in turns steering in the front seat. A phone call with Mark highlighted some of the challenges ; ‘It was a quite a relief to take the back seat when it was your turn we were in the boat for 18 hours a day and what a pleasure it was to use your legs when you set up camp. **The most challenging section was Yukon flat, a maze of channels.**



The maps could be deceptive, the river changes every year with the ice flow - you can’t exactly stand up in your kayak to choose the best routes’. It’s wild country, they went for the last half of the race not seeing a sole. Every night we made camp for a compulsory 6 hours

but sleeping was difficult because it’s so light and packing the boat was a complicated business, it took a while to perfect, it took a few nights to get the knack of choosing a good spot’. In his official finish interview Mark suggested they had highs and lows, mostly highs, and those were mostly getting to the markers they set themselves one of many being the Canada/Alaska border. They saw a black bear with two cubs on one day, and plenty of wildlife. Well it’s over now, **they came in 5th , other South Africans have done the Yukon 1000 but the brothers have the best African time so far - 6 days 6 hours 48 minutes.** Their hands wrapped in Duct tape at the finish suggest something; ‘On the last days there were storms and the wind howled slowing us down and wreaking havoc on our hands, some of the guys will lose their fingernails’. Both brothers had Go Pro’s and phone footage will tell more of the story , the race was well covered by the media so I’m sure we will get the full picture in time from our intrepid Underberg natives who I’m guessing had a Huckelberry Finn childhood on the Ingwagwane where they grew up - a world away from the Yukon. Source:- Mark, Craig and Mike Wilment.
By Don Guy.

his hand. With a fast flutter of wings the bird shot past his hand, out the cage and pout the open window. Never to be seen again. So poor George decided birds were not for him. As a vet you have some funny conversations with people. One day a lady whose husband was a judge, so was not an idiot, came to me and asked me if I would help to stop her dog wandering. So, I thought a bit and said “Well we can’t sedate the dog long term. We could castrate him but there is no guarantee the dog won’t continue to wander.” Thinking outside the box, I asked “Are your fences secure?” She assured me they were. As an afterthought I asked, “Are your gates secure?” “No” she replied “We don’t have gates” I gave up at that point. On another occasion, a lady phoned me in a panic to say her dog had eaten all her contraceptive pills. “What should I do?” she asked. I thought for a minute then said “You had better buy some more “. There was silence on the phone then she giggled and said “I suppose I should “. Just common sense. (I did assure her dog would not come over all queer after this.) Recently there has been a row on social media when a local vet from Pinetown was offering cheap vaccinations including house visits if required. Another vet from a very expensive practice accused her of being a cowboy vaccinating out of the boot of her car just to make a quick buck. What a load of rubbish!! At least one local vet was prepared to make the effort to reach out to people who could not afford the high prices and still wanted to get their pets vaccinated. No one was making a quick buck! There is always a problem where people who can afford it try to take advantage. We have seen this on the GCAW vaccination and spay clinics. However, there are many



New Exhibition Panels on Display in Our Art and Crafts Exhibition Room. The Himeville Museum is pleased to share that new exhibition panels have recently been installed In the Arts and Crafts Exhibition room, offering visitors a refreshed and enriching experience that celebrates the depth and diversity of local creativity. These newly curated panels highlight the rich history, artistry and cultural significance ofc traditional and contemporary arts and crafts within our community. Through carefully selected visuals, narratives and contextual information, the exhibition brings to life the skills, materials, and meanings behind each craft practice. Visitors are invited to engage more deeply with the stories that shape the objects on display, revealing how creativity has long served as both expression and preservation of cultural identity. A special feature of the exhibition is a personal story that honors lived experiences and the passing down of knowledge through generations. This element adds an intimate layer to the display, recognizing the individuals and families who have preserved artistic traditions and ensured their continuation into the present day. It is a tribute not only to craftsmanship but also to memory, resilience, and heritage. We warmly ask the community to visit the museum and explore these new additions. Come and experience how heritage and creativity come together in a space dedicated to learning, appreciation, and community pride at the Himeville Museum

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young and old folk who live on a limited means. It is not limited to skin colour. We see many young folks coming to these clinics. What is the alternative? That there are lots of unspayed farm and township dogs having puppies and the risk of rabies and, distemper and parvo cases jump tenfold. As I say it is a grey area but the ladies of GCAW are very good at sifting through the people who attend their clinics. In my own practice I once had a row with a young lady whose parents were both medical specialists and was wanting a referral to the local SPCA so she could get free treatment. Maybe they kept her on a tight budget!! When they started out the dog and cat shows all had to have a vet there to inspect the animals going on show and deal with any problems. I got very friendly with a few of them, and they later became my clients. One I remember was a lady who bred Bull Terriers. She also Had a cat called “Cooking Fat “. It took me a moment to figure out why. There was another couple who bred Afghans. Beautiful dogs that were regularly shampooed with No Tangles shampoo. Unfortunately, the husband was caught in bed with his wife’s twin sister. No amount of No Tangles could help that! Till next time

By Llew Evans
retired vet



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