



# Gam News

Newspaper and Recorder of Gamtoos Mouth Resort

## Gamtoos Homeowners Website –

### www.gamtooshomeowners.co.za

We are grateful to Charlene Greene who designed a beautiful, yet practical and user friendly website for Gamtoos Homeowners.

If you have not visited the website, we suggest you do so and explore every link and page available! You will find much information and detail, including the following:

- beautiful photos of local birds, vegetation and surroundings;

- general information;
- contact details;
- architectural matters
- financial information
- all forms and documents pertaining to the resort rules and regulations

The website (as well as the Gam News) is used as a platform to inform owners and tenants of all relevant information and events, and to render a more effective service to both owners and tenants. We therefore request that owners forward all relevant communication (including the Gam News) to their respective tenants; thus ensuring that the communication flow will be much improved in future!

## Interim Gathering Place

### **—Barnes Cottage declared unsafe**

After much deliberation by the Exco and an inspection by some of the Resort’s reputable builders, the Barnes Cottage has been declared a safety risk to any users. Should anyone enter / use the building, they do so at their own risk and/or peril.

To accommodate the many groups, i.e. book club, craft centre, and other group meetings and gatherings who regularly used the Cottage until recently, we request homeowners to complete the feedback form and forward their suggestions, ideas and opinions regarding an interim gathering place to [gamtooshoa@truewan.co.za](mailto:gamtooshoa@truewan.co.za).

Exco will consider all communication received in order to find an appropriate and acceptable solution.

Please bear in mind that this temporary gathering facility could be funded out of monthly levies.

This facility will be used until such time as Phase III is approved. Thereafter the developer will supply a permanent solution. However your input would be much appreciated and is critical!



Erf No \_\_\_\_\_

Do you see a need for a temporary gathering place to be available in the short to medium term until Phase III is approved and completed? (Please indicate your answer)

YES / NO

Suggestions in brief: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

[You may reply by email ([gamtooshoa@truewan.co.za](mailto:gamtooshoa@truewan.co.za)), in writing (place in the mailbox outside the GAMHOA office), or on the website ([www.gamtooshomeowners.co.za](http://www.gamtooshomeowners.co.za))]

**Firefighting at the Gam** — Riaan Senekal



By now I think everybody, or most of the Gamtoos residents, know me. I am Riaan Senekal, a career firefighter for 26 years. I am stationed at Kwa-noBuhle as station commander. I have been leading the voluntary firefighting unit here at our great resort for some time now. The main reason for my commitment being my desire to

help others. I was born to serve and protect people, the animals and the environment. As you know, the nearest fire station is in Humansdorp which is 50km away and response time would be anything from ± 45 minutes. For this reason, it is necessary for us to be well prepared for any fire outbreak; whether it be a bush fire, or a house fire within our community boundaries. Fortunately for us we have all the resources available. We have exactly the same equipment that the local fire departments carry on their rescue vehicles. I am proud to say that our local volunteers are eager to assist in our firefighting mission. Thank you for the assistance of the volunteers, both old and new!

I know it is not always practical to attend the fire drills, and the repetition may become boring, but it is necessary to learn, know and practice the basic firefighting methods. With regular practice these skills become so well know to one, that you then rely on muscle memory, and no longer have to think to perform the actions correctly.

As some of you know, I saved my own house from burning down the other day using basic firefighting skills. By using only 2 small fire extinguishers, a garden hose, and some welcome assistance from neighbours, I was able to get the fire under control within 25 minutes.

I would ideally like to have a team of 10 or more volunteers,

but sadly, at the last couple of drills only 5 members attended. When we acquire more members, I will gladly start teaching them from the beginning again... Fire drills will be scheduled for every second month for 45 – 60 minutes. I will not waste your time. The more homeowners that learn the basic firefighting drills, the greater the gain in the resort.

The first fire drill for the year will be Wednesday, 8 March 2017, 09:00, at the boat houses. We will discuss fire extinguishers and do a short practical drill there. Please attend! Our current volunteers are listed in the emergency contact section at the back of this edition.



**Safe use of roads in Gam**

At the close of every year, many individuals decide to make New Year’s Resolutions. These are all well intended, but as you may have noticed, most of these good intentions die a quiet death within the first few weeks of the new year. This is reflected in our common behaviour and resultant effects. We are all concerned about the safety of our family, friends and pets and should therefore endeavour to obey rules and regulations ourselves to ensure their safety. Some incidents that caused grave concern during the past months, have led to GAMHOA calling on all residents and

their visitors to take a fresh look at existing rules and regulations in place in the resort rules, and to then commit to abiding by these rules and regulations.

During the festivities, many drivers were driving recklessly, endangering all other road users around them, as well as themselves. This was evidenced at the play park at the Kabeljous Gate in a number of scares where parents had to get their young children out of the road very quickly in order to avoid speeding vehicles, tailgaters, people using cell phones while driving, and parents allowing their children to take over the steering wheel and control the vehicle.

As we are a closed community, with a number of one way traffic flow areas and narrow roads, we urge every individual to familiarise themselves anew with the rules and regulations of the resort.

Should matters not improve exponentially, Exco will be required to look into more stringent measures, which will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for approval. Such measures could be quite costly and will impact levies negatively.

Should you observe any homeowner or resident endangering others, we urge you to submit a report in writing and in as much detail as possible to Bellbuoy, the Managing Agents.

## **N.S.R.I. serving Gamtoos – (N.S.R.I.)**

The National Sea Rescue Institute (N.S.R.I.) was established in 1967. The need for a Rescue Service was realised when in 1966 at Stilbaai on the East coast, just below Mossel Bay, 17 fishermen drowned after three fishing boats sank in a terrible storm. Four boats were out that day and only one came back. Our founder, Miss Patti Price, began a committed letter writing campaign for the formation of a Sea Rescue Organisation in South Africa.

Miss Price's persistence paid off and today N.S.R.I has over 1000 unpaid, highly trained volunteers at 31 bases around the coast and 5 bases at inland dams who serve the community with passion and commitment. Our success story lies in the hands of these volunteers who give selflessly of their time as well as our 80 000 + donors who faithfully give as little as R25 per month.

From humble beginnings with our first inflatable boat Snoopy, Sea Rescue has grown to now having an annual running cost of over R73.4m that is used to run 35 bases, 83 rescue craft, 28 rescue vehicles, 16 quad bikes and 11 tractors. This could only be possible with the phenomenal support from the community. Our volunteers live out the values of Sea Rescue daily through their actions altruism, family, caring, pride, accountability and safety.

During the December holidays the N.S.R.I assisted in a non-fatal drowning of young girl at the lagoon, a Search and Rescue operation for 2 missing kayakers who were rescued at Gamtoos beach, and rescuing of various sea animals in the Gamtoos area. The N.S.R.I. regularly assists coastal hikers crossing the Gamtoos at the mouth, and did so again in February.

The National Sea Rescue Institute identified a serious need to teach children in the rural areas about water safety. Many reports prior to 2006 showed an increased amount of drownings in vicinities where children were living close to dams and rivers. The rate of drowning in South Africa is estimated at 3,6 per 100 000 and 2000 people drown each year of which 600 are children.

Faced with these statistics, in 2006 N.S.R.I saw the need to develop the WaterWise Academy with the mission to promote and cultivate water safety nationwide. To reach all diverse backgrounds through the support and guidance of our local schools and municipalities. This in turn will embrace and foster the need of awareness through education to help preserve life.

Our Instructors go out to the schools, teaching the children the following: A simple 4 step program; How to react when faced with danger in water; Who to call in case of an emergency; Practical tools on how to do peer rescue; and Hands-on CPR (for the older children)

Since its inception, WaterWise has grown to

be an Academy that teaches and raises awareness of water safety. Over 1 000 000 children (between the ages of 5 and 14) have been beneficiaries of this Academy. The children have been taught to be water wise by our instructors giving them water safety lessons in a safe learning environment.

As we celebrate our 50 years of saving lives this year, we have committed ourselves to Drowning prevention through our: ongoing media campaign and public education

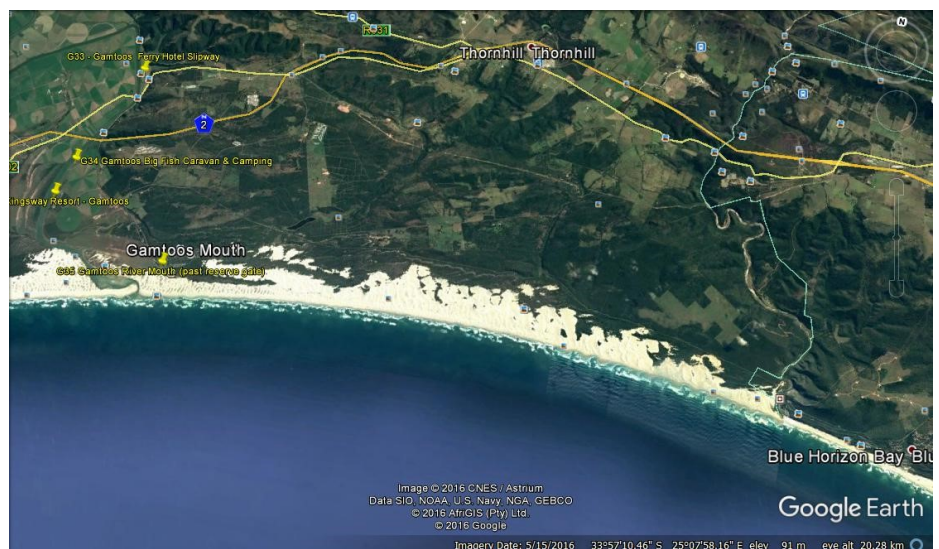
and which has also seen the Western Cape Department of Education including this program into their school curriculum, the introduction of rescue noodles to some beaches in a pilot project, and in an intense collaboration with other services – the SA Police Services, SA Lifesaving, Provincial Government Health EMS, Private ambulance services, Municipalities and their Municipal lifeguards and Municipal Law Enforcement agencies, Fire Departments and local lifesaving agencies, the SA National Parks and other Community Services.

We believe that through the promotion and education of drowning prevention, safety at sea and wearing a lifejacket, Sea Rescue will live out their mission. Saving lives. Creating futures.

Become part of our future.

[www.searescue.org.za](http://www.searescue.org.za)

- *Editor's Note:* In an effort to render rescue operations more effective, we urge the local community to collaborate and list the local names and nicknames for favourite spots with the GAMHOA office. This information will be forwarded to the N.S.R.I. and all other local emergency services, allowing them to respond efficiently to the correct area in the shortest possible time, as they will not have to guess where to find the individual(s) in distress!



It is also useful if you can find your GPS co-ordinates and pass these to the call centre when reporting an emergency.

## Protect Man's Best Friend!



Here at Gamtoos we have many dog lovers, and therefore many dogs. They are not only our pets, but also our family members and best friends, and each has its own personality. Some may fiercely protect their owners; while others are cute and cuddly.

Some are extremely playful or inquisitive, and yet others are shy and fearful.

It is our duty as owners to look after our dogs, feed them, groom them, play with them, and yes, to LOVE them!

This would include that we obey the rules and regulations of the resort, as well as the Municipal bylaws. By abiding to these

requirements we will ensure that no harm or unfortunate event befall our beloved pets.

We therefore urge dog owners to keep their dogs on a leash from the moment they leave the family erf, until they are in an area where they are allowed to run free. E.g. such as on the beach dunes. Furthermore, owners should be pro-active and realise that, since dogs are animals after all, owners should leash them when approaching other dogs, whilst on a walk. This is good etiquette and also for the protection of your dog. Be considerate and clean up dog litter when necessary. The law is clear in this regard. Therefore, protect your beloved pet from the pound and animal handlers, by abiding by the abovementioned rules.



For nuisance dog problems, contact Kouga Law Enforcement at SAPS Thornhill on 042 291 0283 / 0250 Humansdorp SPCA 042 295 2814 Cell 0836076814

## GAMHOA BUILDING INSPECTORATE SERVICE PROVIDER AT GAMTOOS MOUTH RESORT.

Gamtoos Resort requires a Business Service Provider – Building Inspector.

The successful applicant will render services for a maximum of 23 hours per month at a rate of R175.00 per hour.

Functions to fulfil are listed below:

- Conduct onsite inspections
- Complete forms and reports, and report to Arch Comm and Director
- Advise on and arrange for service requirements
- Liaison with Kouga Municipality
- Obtain and maintain all relevant municipal and inspection documentation
- Handle building queries from builders and homeowners
- Substitute for the Arch Comm Service Provider upon request

For more detailed information and a job description, please contact Hannes Visagie on 083 789 7079.

If you wish to apply please submit your CV with your application.



Residents who wish to advertise in the Gam News are encouraged to submit their ad for publication to [gamtooshoa@truewan.co.za](mailto:gamtooshoa@truewan.co.za). For more information on sizes and pricing, please contact Dorette Pienaar on cell number 076 984 2272.

## From the Board Room

### Table...

#### Cell Phone Gate Access

The cell phone system for gate access has been upgraded recently and is now operational. In order to make use of this service it is imperative that you apply and register with GAMHOA at the resort office. Also update your contact details at the same time.

Please update your personal contact details as and when changes occur. This by notifying the Resort Offices, as well as Bellbuoy the Managing Agents.

#### Feral Cats

We are aware of the feral cat challenge in the resort and have put measures in place to handle the situation. We have placed cages in strategic places in order to catch these cats. Furthermore, we check on these cages regularly to ensure trapped animals are removed speedily. We therefore request residents not to tamper with these cages, as this hampers our sincere and humane efforts to solve a difficult problem. Unfortunately these feral cats are a health risk to humans and pets, as they often spread diseases.

#### Environmental Impact Assessment

At present the Developer is in the process of doing an Environmental Impact Assessment for Phase 3 of the Resort. Some holes were drilled to test the ground water there. DEAT also requested that Phases 1 and 2 be tested. They also required that the lagoon water be included.



## Safety First!!

### Accidents do happen!!

It is common knowledge that accidents do happen, but most people live under the false impression that accidents will not happen to them!

The fact is that even a teaspoon of liquid could be dangerous, as a child could drown in it! We have included some tips for specific situations.

Always **STOP!**

**S** – Stop

**T** – Think

**O** – Observe

**P** – Plan

#### FIRE TIPS by Riaan Senekal (Firefighter)

It is important not to panic when a fire breaks out in or around your home. Should you feel panicked, use the STOP acronym as given above.

#### GENERAL SAFETY TIPS AT HOME:

Beware of children playing with electrical sockets or putting objects into it. If the oil pan or any pot is on fire, carefully slide a lid over the pan or pot to smother it. DO NOT pour any liquids onto it!

Turn the handles of all pots inward so the pots cannot be knocked or pulled over

If someone gets burned, immediately place the wound in cool water for 10 to 15 minutes. DO NOT ice the wound, as it will aggravate the injury. Call the First Aiders or for other Medical Assistance immediately.

Keep matches and lighters away from children.

DO NOT smoke in bed and DO NOT fall asleep while smoking!

#### HOW TO GET OUT OF A BURNING BUILDING OR HOME:

Crawl low, beneath the smoke level

where you will have cleaner air to breathe. Cover your face and mouth with a wet towel or cloth and get out safely.

Always ensure you have keys available at all doors to get out during an emergency **IF YOUR CLOTHES CATCH ON FIRE**

**Stop, Drop and Roll!** You will put out the fire. Make sure your hands cover your face. Keep on rolling until all the flames are out.

#### FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT TO KEEP AT HOME

Fire Extinguisher

Garden hose

Fire bucket with sand or water

#### INFORMATION REQUIRED BY DUTY MANAGER OR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Your name and cell number

Describe the emergency

Give the correct street name, number, suburb, phase

Is anyone's life in danger

Give any beacons, landmarks, names of cross-streets, etc.

#### WATER EMERGENCIES – Dorette Pienaar (First Responder)

At Gamtoos we are practically surrounded by water, as we have access to the lagoon, river and surf, as well as some salt water lakes. Although this is so, there are no life guards on duty at any time during the year. It is therefore imperative that you are clear on what to do in case of a water emergency, and how to save someone else in trouble.

The N.S.R.I. teaches us to use the following system: Reach – Throw – Row – Go. To reach for someone, or hold a stick or pole for someone would be the safest option to the rescuer. One could opt to throw a buoyant object attached to a rope. If the person in trouble is too far,

and a boat / kayak / surfboard is available, the rescuer can row out; otherwise the rescuer swims out. It is **imperative** that you do not try to attempt a rescue if you are not proficient in the method used, as you may end up in need of rescue yourself.

In the event of a water emergency, immediately phone the N.S.R.I. on 071 088 7452 or dial the National Emergency Number on 112. Ensure that you give accurate details on your position, the type of emergency and how many people are involved.

#### ELECTRICITY AND POWER TOOLS – Dorette Pienaar (First Responder)

Great harm can be inflicted by both of these, especially when used by an uninformed or untrained person. For each type of incident there are specific protocols to follow in order to ensure the safety of the person assisting the victim, and also that of the victim.

Important steps to follow would be:

- 1) Locate the power source and switch off. If impossible, the power should be disconnected at the main power supply by the Duty Manager
- 2) DO NOT attempt to pry the victim loose from the power source, as there is live current and could cause electrical shock to yourself.
- 3) Immediately call one of the Qualified First Aid Volunteers listed. Should you suspect possible fire, call the Fire Volunteers as well.
- 4) Gather as much information as possible to inform rescuers, but DO NOT place yourself in danger to do so.
- 5) If there are open wounds, and there is no hazard of electrical shock, use CLEAN cloth or gauze to put pressure on the wound to minimize bleeding.

## **Alien vegetation eradication at Gamtoos** – Prof. T Wooldridge

Rooikrans was originally introduced from Australia and among other things, was used to stabilize wind-blown sand along the coast. Ideas have now changed and active eradication programmes are now underway to remove them. From our perspective as property owners at Gamtoos, we introduced an eradication programme some years ago and are progressively doing our bit to clear the area of these invasives. Here are a few reasons why this is necessary:

Rooikrans has the competitive advantage of colonizing soils where nutrient levels are naturally low.

Natural vegetation is unable to colonize and grow when rooikrans becomes too dense – biodiversity is sharply reduced because of this and Rooikrans patches expand.

Live Rooikrans is extremely flammable because of specific chemical compounds in the plant.

Consequently, when Rooikrans catches fire, it burns with a very hot flame – the high biomass associated with Rooikrans stands and also exacerbates the heat and strength of the fire.

Once alight, the heat generated causes very strong updrafts and hot flames reach high into the air.

These updrafts and winds generated are able to transport burning embers etc long distances and new fires start up away from the source. So, our properties are at risk, even though we might be some distance away from Rooikrans patches.

Because of the heat generated, any natural vegetation in the vicinity of the fire is destroyed.

So, the idea is to continue eradicating Rooikrans (and other aliens) where we can do our bit. When staff become available between other jobs, patches are cut down. Dead stumps and roots provide some stability to the soil, but over time, these will rot and become part of the foodweb. Not all wood is removed from site and smaller alien branches are spread across open sand patches and this improves the chance of natural vegetation taking hold. The branches provide a bit of shade, heat levels in the upper layers of sand reduce and moisture content improves. This also means that the rainy season and cooler times of the year can be used to advantage.

Note that the principle we follow is termed natural succession. We don't plant new trees, but allow succession to take place in that simple plants such as creepers first take hold – fast growing and tough. These pioneers provided added shade and protection and over time, the vegetation mix becomes more complex. A variety of birds return and they bring in new and different seeds from elsewhere. When the fruit eaters arrive, consider the vegetation well on its way to recovery!

Obviously, dead Rooikrans lying around is also a fire threat. So this is where we can help by cutting dead Rooikrans for another braai. With a bit of common sense, we can minimize trampling damage as we look for those perfect bits of wood. However, please register at the office so we can monitor the situation.

- *Note from the editor:* Alien vegetation will be cut down by GAMHOA staff. Residents who wish to make use of this as firewood should contact Hannes Visagie (083 789 7079) who will indicate the available wood.

*This issue of the Gam News is written by Dorette Pienaar and produced by GAMHOA.*

*Letters to the editor are welcome: email [familie333@gmail.com](mailto:familie333@gmail.com)*

## **Gamtoos Emergency, Fire Fighting and Office Telephone Numbers**

### **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

Ambulance:	National	10177	
	Private Care	083 587 7556	
	Private (Med Aid)	042 291 0749	
	Provincial	042 291 0020	
Poison Centre		086 155 5777	
		Email: <a href="mailto:caw@sun.ac.za">caw@sun.ac.za</a>	
		Website: <a href="http://www.sun.ac.za/poisoncentre">www.sun.ac.za/poisoncentre</a> (Poison & snake charts)	
Hospital:	J'Bay Med (Old Poly Clinic)	042 293 2000	

### **SAFETY**

Police	10111
SAPS Thornhill	042 286 6200 / 3

### **NSRI**

079 916 0390

### **FIRE**

Fire Brigade J'BAY **042 291 0283**

### **GAMTOOS FIRE FIGHTING**

Weekday Control Centre: GAMHOA Office 042 286 0819

#### ***Voluntary Fire Fighters:***

Team Leader	Riaan Senekal	083 384 7676	
Control / Liaison	Jenny Todd	082 556 0517	
Fire Fighters:	M Unsworth	083 584 5990	A van Staden 074 143 9758
	C Seton Smith	084 765 4050	Jan & Susan Opperman 082 772 7741
	H Visagie	083 789 7079	
Volunteers (Part time)	G Goodwin	073 456 2857 R	Pennachinni 083 588 2563
	M Todd	072 373 2427 R	Gravett 083 307 6919
<i>Please phone Jenny to volunteer</i>		<i>042 286 0819</i>	<i>Monday to Friday 8h00 – 12h00</i>

### **GAMTOOS**

Operations Manager	083 789 7079
Assistant & Duty Manager: S Gerber	076 072 4751
Arch Comm	083 789 7079

### **Office details**

Gamtoos Mouth Homeowners Association

Tel – 042 286 0819

Cell – 081 065 6469

Open weekdays 08:00 – 12:00

#### **Postal address:**

PO BOX 213, Thornhill, 6375

Email: [gamtooshoa@truewan.co.za](mailto:gamtooshoa@truewan.co.za)

Website: [www.gamtooshomeowners.co.za](http://www.gamtooshomeowners.co.za)

#### **Bellbuoy Managing Agent:**

Tel: 041 374 4444      Email: [bellbuoy@bellbuoy.co.za](mailto:bellbuoy@bellbuoy.co.za)      PO BOX 776, Newton Park, 6055

