

PERSBERIG VIR GANSBAAI COURANT

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PEARLY BEACH BEWAREA – VAN DIE LESSENAAR VAN DIE VOORSITTER, ELRINA VERSFELD

The Pearly Beach Conservancy held a very successful AGM on Friday 17 December 2010. The following members were elected to serve on the Management Committee:

Elrina Versfeld – Chairperson

Dr Hans Steyn – Vice Chairperson

Gerald Henrici – Treasurer

Beatrice Bollman – Secretary

Heilie Mostert – Responsible for the Herbarium

Warren Rutherford – Responsible for the beach clean-up project and benches

Suzanne Fuchs

Jason Stonehewer

Two persons from the Agulhas National Park were invited as guest speakers, namely Ettienne Fourie, the Park Manager and Angela Altendorfer from the SANParks Honorary Rangers Agulhas Region. Mr Fourie gave an interesting presentation on the Agulhas National Park, including its history, rationale for selection, outstanding features, development prospects, future plans and management structure. Mr Fortuin is the manager of the Eastern section of the Park and he will be the main point of contact between Pearly Beach residents and the park. Detailed maps indicating the extent of the park were included in the presentation. Mr Fourie also conveyed facts about the proposed Southern Tip precinct that provides the tourism focus of the park and is the major source of income. Angela provided interesting insight into the life of an honorary park ranger. She explained how the system is being operationalized and gave inputs on where and how honorary rangers are being used. She mentioned a number of projects implemented by honorary rangers, specifically in the Agulhas National Park, is which a hiking trail was but one. Honorary rangers form part of a national system of rangers across all South African National Parks. Honorary rangers have to fund themselves and are responsible for buying their own uniform. She stressed the fact that they do it for the love of supporting management in the parks as they do not get any special benefits from being honorary rangers.

Several members of the Conservancy were involved in a rescue operation of a 6,5m male Whale Shark that has washed onto the beach on 23 December 2010. Although the Whale Shark was successfully rescued and placed back into the sea, it unfortunately died 5 days later and was buried above the high water mark by the Overstrand Municipality. However, the whole rescue operation played a huge role in uniting all the residents and stressing the conservation message to all involved.

VIR PLASING ASB OP 20 JANUARIE 2011.