

# New home for pygmies

**RUSTENBURG - Kedar Country Retreat just outside Rustenburg really had to bend over backwards in meeting the requirements of two guests who were not easy to please! The rest is a long, long story...**

The RecreationAfrica Group of Companies has a particular interest in preserving our great wildlife heritage and has embarked on assisting in saving the Pygmy Hippopotamus.

While the Pygmy Hippopotamus is not indigenous to South Africa, as South

Africa forms an integral part of the African Continent, continental conservation has to be taken into account in view of the conservation status of the Pygmy Hippopotamus.

Allowing that the "pygmy" is native to four possible isolated areas in West Africa, their survival depends on Zoos and Private Reserves albeit that they are not indigenous. If conservation efforts are not taken the "pygmies" of West Africa will become extinct as did the Western African Black Rhinoceros in 2006.

Accordingly, Recreation Africa has acquired a breeding pair of "pygmies" - Stoffel 0909 and Mathilda 0708. Both are registered with the Basel Zoo, Switzerland as a breeding pair. The Zoo holds the international studbook and coordinates the entire captive "pygmy" population that freely breeds in zoos around the world.

Between 1970 and 1991 the population of "pygmies" born in captivity more than doubled. The survival of the species in zoos is more certain than the survival

of the species in the wild. In captivity, the "pygmy" lives from 42-55 years, which is longer than in the wild.

The greatest threat to the remaining "pygmy" population in the wild is loss of habitat. The forests in which "pygmy" live have been subject to logging, settling and conversion to agriculture. As forests shrink, the populations become more fragmented, leading to less genetic diversity in the potential mating pool.

Another threat is the human. "Pygmy" meat is said to be of excellent quality, like that of a wild boar; and while the "pygmy" teeth have no value, folklore has had devastating results. The myth says that "pygmies" carry a shining diamond in their mouths to help travel through thick forests at night; by day the "pygmy" has a secret hiding place for the diamond, but if a hunter catches a "pygmy" at night the diamond can be taken.

These peculiar dwarves are found in West Africa where they are now a threatened species due to habitat destruction and poaching.

There are currently less than 3000 Pygmy Hippos left in the wild. Due to deforestation their habitat has shrunk considerably during the 20th century and even more dramatically in the last 30 years. Hunting is also proving to be

a threat as hippo meat provides protein to local people.

With all this in mind, RecreationAfrica approached hippo.co.za to give its favourable consideration to provide financial assistance for Stoffel 0909 and Mathilda 0708 under a support sponsorship. Recreation Africa is pleased to confirm hippo.co.za's support sponsorship. The support sponsorship of the endangered Pygmy Hippopotamus will bring with it the satisfaction of being directly involved in nature conservation.

On Friday 19 March, Stoffel 0909 and Mathilda 0708 were relocated to their new home at Kedar Country Retreat where an authentic environment relative to their native/indigenous habitat save for the dense forest has been created. They will have a natural dam to wallow away those hot lazy summer days, local aquatic grass and an expanse of land made up of bush, reeds and savannah grassland ideal for their night time feeding.

*(Rustenburg Herald plans to revisit Kedar Country Retreat soon to see how Stoffel and Matilda are doing in their new environment and how they have adapted to conditions in this excellent retreat. We are however, interested in proving that this story really has a happy ending for a very fortunate and special couple...)*



The scene on Friday at Kedar Country Retreat when two pygmy hippos which were relocated to their new home outside Rustenburg, were released.

## Belastingbetalers weer byeen: Is jy daar?

**RUSTENBURG - Eerskomende Donderdag, 25 Maart, is D Dag! Of moet ons sê B-dag? Dis nou vir mense wat ernstig is oor sake wat Rustenburg en sy onderskeie gemeenskappe raak - veral gemeenskappe wat uit wetsgehoorsame burgers bestaan en getrou belasting en dienstefooie betaal.**

Vir belastingbetalers wat teen hierdie tyd nog nie die stem dik gemaak het en by Rustenburg se Belastingbetalersvereniging aangesluit het nie, is hierdie prakties gesproke "laaste kans!" Rustenburgers kan net eenvoudig nie langer toelaat dat ons stad se pragtige infrastruktuur en dienste in duie stort nie. Of nog erger, Rustenburgers kan nie langer agteroor sit en kyk of iemand anders nie die verantwoordelikheid vir ons stad wil aanvaar nie.

"Nee, nou is die tyd vir almal om saam te staan en op die diens aan te dring waarvoor ons betaal". Só het mnr Johan Schoeman - interim-voorsitter van die Belastingbetalersvereniging en mnr Johan de Klerk - interim-sekretaris van die Rustenburgse Belastingbetalersvereniging vandeeweek aan die Herout gesê.

Rustenburgse Belastingbetalers moet doodseker maak dat hulle eerskomende Donderdag

(vanaand) se vergadering om 18:00 by die Laerskool Proteapark in Soetdoringlaan bywoon. Nie alleen is daar geleentheid om as lid aan te sluit en uit een mond saam te praat nie, maar daar sal ook ruim geleentheid wees om te verneem wat gebeur het tydens die Belastingbetalersvereniging se jongste ontmoeting met die munisipale bestuurder - mnr Andries Boshoff - en verskeie direkteure van die plaaslike munisipaliteit. Boonop sal die vergadering ook die samestelling van die Belastingbetalers se finale bestuurskomitee eerstehands ervaar. Slegs opbetaalde lede sal na afloop van die vergadering geleentheid hê om vir bestuurslede van hul keuse te stem. "Ons mense moet beseft dat die Belastingbetalersvereniging 'n organisasie is wat hom vir die belange van sy opbetaalde lede beywer - net soos enige ander organisasie of instansie! Die Belastingbetalersvereniging sal op die langtermyn geld nodig hê om 'n verskeidenheid van aksies en dienste 'n werklikheid te maak. Daarvoor het ons die ondersteuning van ons lede nodig!"

Addisionele personeel sal vanaf 17:00 op die terrein wees om te help met die registrasie van lede wat wil aansluit. Aansluitingsfooie beloop

'n geringe R60 per persoon, - 'n R30-registrasiefooie en daarna 'n jaarlikse fooie van slegs R30.

'n Beroep word ook op alle voornemende lede en besoekers gedoen om die beursies saam te bring aangesien daar heerlike worsbroodjies

beskikbaar sal wees. "Kom ons help die Laerskool Proteapark om ook 'n geldjie vir hul skoolfonds bymekaar te maak", het mnr Schoeman gesê. Die vergadering sal stiptelik om 18:00 begin - sorg dat u daar is!



Mr Cobus Nelson, a business owner in Vanadium Street, showing the overgrown area behind his business premises where the suspected serial killer raped and strangled at least three women.

## SERIAL KILLER SHOT

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of murder, rape and attempted murder, but the final number of charges will only be determined once the investigation is completed.

The man was cornered after detectives lured him into a trap, having tricked him into believing that he was meeting with a potential victim. According to police, the man, who is from the Rustenburg area, allegedly lured his victims, who are all women in their twenties,

with the promise of work and by offering them lifts. In one incident, he allegedly attacked one of his victims after stopping to help her and her boyfriend, who had been knocked down in a hit-and-run accident. She was fortunate to have survived the attack after she was left for dead.

The first murder occurred in December last year, with the last victim having been murdered on Sunday, March 7.

 	
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