

BILTONG BULLETIN

Number 16 - December 2006

Greetings to all readers!

As usual, we start with the formalities: To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter, send your comments or a contribution, contact us at alana@solidariteit.co.za. This free newsletter for South Africans living abroad appears on a monthly basis in both Afrikaans and English. New subscribers are always most welcome. Remember that even though we select our advertisers very carefully, we cannot guarantee their services and cannot be held responsible for their actions.

After a lovely but hectic Festive Season we are back at work at last. We wish you all a blessed and prosperous 2007!

As usual in our December issue, we will give a brief overview of some of the causes of the year, as well as fresh news - more or less dry as well as fresh biltong from the news world ... We hope you will enjoy it!

BOOKWORM'S CORNER - A SUMMARY

- Order South African music and books from www.kalahari.net;
- *The Expat Confessions* is a book about the experiences of South Africans moving to all corners of the globe. Order it from www.sareunited.com.
- *AfricaNews* is a free e-newsletter. It covers a wide spectrum of items and events pertaining to the continent. Subscribe at info@afrika-news.net.
- *African Salad. A portrait of South Africans at home* is a wonderful recipe book of 264 pages with a unique hard cover, more than 200 full colour photographs and 70+ illustrations. Order from www.africansalad.co.za, or aficansalad@dayone.co.za.



- *JULUKA* is a magazine produced in the United States for those interested in South Africa. It is published every other month. For more details, visit www.julukanews.com.
- *Joburg! The Passion Behind a City* is a 408 page coffee table-style book including around 1000 pictures and 100 articles reflecting the renewal and development underway in Johannesburg at multiple levels. It can be purchased directly from the publisher for R330-00 (excluding delivery). For more information or to place an order please contact Joburg@brandsandbranding.co.za or log onto www.thejoburgbook.co.za

CAUSE OF THE MONTH

If you will be driving in South Africa in the near future, take note of the web site www.arrivealive.co.za. It includes loads of news for all road users in South Africa, including

information about road conditions, road safety tips and many useful links. Read more about this web site and the exceptional man who created it without any State funding, at:

http://www.southafrica.info/public_services/citizens/arrivealive.htm.

WEB SITES – A SUMMARY

- www.safarikidz.co.za is an interactive, multilingual package for children about South African fauna and flora.
- For the latest South African news, visit www.media24.com.
- Adventurous holidays in South Africa can be planned for you or your loved-ones by www.experiencethis.co.za.
- Visit the Karoo at www.centralkaroo.co.za.



- South African search engines are: www.anazi.co.za and www.aardvark.co.za.
- Dr. Jacques du Plessis launched a web site where you can learn Afrikaans at no cost. The address is www.afrikaans.us.
- Jan Kriel Institute and school helps children with epilepsy or special educational needs to get a chance in life. The Institute's address is www.jankriel.org.za.
- Henri informed us about a web site for former soldiers – www.valskermssoldaat.com or www.airbornesoldier.com.
- Previous editions of the free e-newsletter *AfricaNews* can be downloaded from <http://www.africa-interactive.net/index.php?PageID=708>.
- www.jump.co.za is a search engine for South African products and services.
- Afrikaanse kinderrympies is beskikbaar van www.swart.co.nz/afrikaans/kinderrympies.
- *Buidelpos*, 'n aanlyn nuusbrieff vir Suid-Afrikaners in Australië, is aanlyn beskikbaar by www.buidelpos.com.au.
- *Afrikaans in Christchurch* se webwerf het 'n nuwe afdeling, genaamd "Geelbladsye" begin. Dit is 'n lys van diensverskaffers wat ook Afrikaans gebruik. Kyk gerus daarna op www.swart.co.nz/afrikaans/geelbladsye.
- SANZ is a service organisation for South Africans in New Zealand – <http://www.sanz.co.nz/>.

NATURE CONSERVATION



In December we picked up an injured swallow in the street. His friends courageously dived towards all oncoming cars to try and save him. What to do with him? He was not badly injured, but needed intensive care for some time. Swallows need to be fed every two hours and because they are an endangered species, cannot be kept by just anybody. We eventually came across Free Me, a wonderful organisation for wildlife in Gauteng that clash with "civilization". Swallow went to Gerda, a Free Me volunteer who lives about 2 km from the AfriForum office. He will live on raw lean beef-mince and cottage cheese until he is strong enough to be released! (We also wanted to book in for a cure, but Gerda said we are plump enough ...) Support Free Me or read about the service they offer and their interesting cases at www.freemewildlife.org.za.

SOUTH AFRICAN NEWS SNIPPETS — DECEMBER 2006

- Have you subscribed to ***Biltong Bites***, our daily free email with a summary of the main articles of the day as published in *Beeld*, *Pretoria News*, *Business Day* and *Citizen* yet?

Not? Well, subscribe now by sending an e-mail with the subject "Bites" to alana@solidariteit.co.za.

- Currently investigations have been launched into the viability of bodies instituted in terms of Chapter 9 of the Constitution. This includes the Public Protector, Human Rights Commission, Commission for Gender Equality, the Auditor General, Independent Electoral Commission, Independent Broadcasting Authority, Civil Service Commission, National Youth Commission, Pan-South African Language Board and the Financial and Fiscal Committee. The institutions have up to middle January to respond to a questionnaire of Government. The ad hoc-committee on the revision of their existence is under the leadership of Professor Kader Asmal.
- R200 000 in cash in two bags was recently picked up in one of the busiest streets in Witbank. This was loot from an earlier robbery at Coin Security's depot in town. All the cash was found back by the police - including these two bags which was left in the street overnight!
- Only 1 of every 5 students who enrolled at tertiary institutions in 2000 completed their studies within the minimum prescribed time and passed. This shocking news was announced by the Minister of Education. She promised to pay urgent attention to the reasons for this problem.
- A South African fired his au pair when she became pregnant, as he felt that she would no longer give the required amount of attention to his child once she became a mother herself. The Labour Court however in November 2006 found that this was a case of unfair dismissal, as the condition not to become pregnant, was not an inherent condition for the employment of an au pair. The former employer had to pay the pregnant au pair damages to the value of R25 000 in addition to R71 500 salary in arrears. No appeal has been lodged against the ruling and it is of great importance in labour law now.
- The legendary South African yachtsman Bertie Reed passed away on 18 December 2006. He had cancer.
- Markinor did a study on South African's support of political parties. The largest group supports the ANC, while the second largest group of eligible voters indicated that they have no political affiliations and do not support any specific party at all.
- The British government has made R14-million available for higher education in South Africa. It will be divided amongst tertiary educational institutions in the country.
- An initiative will be launched in the near future to recycle a total of 50%, in stead of the current 20%, of South Africa's waste glass. In the process up to 4 000 employment opportunities will be created. Currently only 20% is being recycled, as we have already said. Even so, this amounts to an astounding 140 000 tons of glass per year. Visit www.theglassrecyclingcompany.co.za for more information.
- Five old buildings in Rosebank, Johannesburg, will be demolished for a new Old Mutual development project to the value of R623-million. They are Admirals Court, Rosebank Boulevard, Oxford Corner, Knightsbridge and the old Fournos Bakery.
- Approximately 16 000 social workers are required to meet the South African need. The Department of Social Development currently tries to make it a more desirable career for young South Africans. Friends in this line of work however state that they work very long hours for very low salaries.
- Megan Coleman and Zizo Beda respectively have been crowned as Miss SA and Miss SA Teen.
- South Africa is the 7th most popular destination amongst British emigrants.
- SAA's cheap airline, Mango, is being criticised a lot as a result of flight delays and lost baggage problems. Hopefully only teething problems. Reservations can be made at www.flymango.co.za.
- South Africans average life-expectancy has decreased with 13 years since 1990 to 51 years only. This dramatic drop is mainly ascribed to the Aids-pandemic. What is even more shocking, is that an estimated 30% of the cases of infant mortality in South Africa are never recorded at all. The latter has been revealed by *Health Review* of 2006.
- A time-share 5-star hotel will be erected in Port Elizabeth to make the city even more attractive for tourists. The hotel will comprise 150 suites and will cost an estimated R250-million. It will be known as The Reef on Marine and is being developed by Auspex Properties.
- A conman is collecting money "on behalf of Nampo" for an alleged farm safety project to combat farm murders. Please be extremely careful when making any donations!

- Buddy, a South African explosives sniffer-dog was injured in a freak accident in Iraq. The required medical help was not available for him in Iraq and rather than to put him down, he was flown back to South Africa where he was operated on. It cost his employers, Minedogs, R80 000, but they do not mind as they say that Buddy is not just an asset to them, but a loved animal. South African dogs are currently working all over the globe, including in Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan.
- In 6 provinces of South Africa there are approximately 200 000 teachers who are still waiting to be paid increases or bonuses, although the decision has already been made in April 2006 to award it to them.
- Kgononyane High School in Ganyesa probably is the worst high school in the country. In 2006 only 1 of the school's 650 pupils passed the grade 7 to grade 11 final exams!
- The main reason why South Africans borrow money is to pay food.
- Bok van Blerk's debut album *De La Rey* has just achieved double platinum status.
- The African Union expressed its concern about racial relationships, violent crime and politicians who are increasingly following careers in the private sector in South Africa.
- The thief who stole a Pierneef painting in May 2005 from the SABC building has been arrested at last. The painting is still missing and might have been destroyed.
- A plague of locusts is causing a lot of damage in the Northern Cape.
- South Africans are watching a court case in Paris, France, with great interest. It is the case of 11 Dutch farmers who suffered damages as a result of the nationalisation of their farms in Zimbabwe. The case takes place under the auspices of the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes. It is a body of the World Bank. The farmers demand R107-million from the Mugabe government. Many South African farmers suffered the same fate in Zimbabwe and will follow suit if the Dutch farmers win their case.
- A former street child, Mkhanyiseli Kapa (23), has just been awarded the Eat Out-Johnnie Walker Restaurant Award for the country's most dynamic upcoming chef. He says that the My Life Project for street children gave direction to his life. He has even studied cookery in London and today is a popular chef amongst South Africa's rich and famous - our own Jamie Oliver!
- On a lighter note, but still 100% true - the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) provides a valuable service to prevent misleading advertising in the South African media. Members of the public may lodge complaints about ads with them. One of the most recent and most interesting cases was the one which proved that the little pink rabbit of a certain battery brand indeed does not last 6 times longer than other battery brands ... Anyway, one of the funniest complaints which the ASA had received this year, came from a certain Mr Steyn who said that a specific washing-powder ad referred to him personally in a most disrespectful way. In this ad, the following words offended him: "... removes fatty stains".
- Ever heard of Marie Warder? She is also known as the unofficial ambassador of South Africa, because she is the popular author of more than 20 books all with a truly South African background. She lives in Canada, but was born in South Africa and visits often to do research for her books.

WELFARE – A SUMMARY

- The Helping Hand Fund was founded approximately four years ago by the trade union Solidarity in order to launch social projects for children in the communities from which Solidarity's members stem. Read more in this regard on the Solidarity web site (www.solidariteit.co.za) or contact helpendehand@solidariteit.co.za.
- Since 1994 a non-profit organisation, Operation Bobbi Bear, provides a great service to minor victims of sexual abuse in Kwazulu-Natal. Their motto is "Every little body is a somebody" and their address is www.bobbibear.org.za.
- Help visually challenged South Africans to regain their independence by supporting and visiting www.sanct.org.za.
- One of the most wonderful pictures is the total confidence, friendship and independence of a blind person and his or her guide-dog. Support the Guide-Dog Association at www.seeme.za.org. [By the way, this address is correct!].

LETTERS, MARKET SQUARE AND REQUESTS

- **Dr. Evert van Dijk writes:** We want to help South Africans to travel more affordably between New Zealand/Australia and South Africa. People who will fly between the countries during April 2007 by direct flight, should contact them immediately please. As soon as we have a group of 16 or more passengers, we can fix a date for the flights in April 2007. Each member of such a group will save approximately R1 000 or 200 AUD at the current exchange rate. You can contact Evert and Delia van Dijk at deliag@slingshot.co.nz or in Australia at (09) 5701490. We already have more than 100 prospective participants, and more are always most welcome!



NEWS: Our web site has just been revamped – please go and have a look at www.comehome.co.za or www.komhuistoe.co.za – and we would like to include a new page on the site where people can share their own emigration experiences. We are not prepared to have a "chat-room", there are too many weird people on earth and we do not have time to monitor a "chat-room". If you send us your letters, we will load them onto the page. Below are examples of most interesting letters which we received during the past week. Do you agree with the writers, or do you differ from them? The mailbag is waiting for your news!



- **From Canada:** Thank you for the opportunity to tell others how hard and wrong it is to leave your country. We have been living in Canada for 3 and a half years now. We miss home very much and if we can get work back home, we will return immediately [letter abbreviated].
- **From South America:** I am very happy here and it is much better here and less corrupt and with less crime and you are free to stroll around outside at night. I see no future in South Africa. It is too hard to find work in South Africa, especially as I am a white male.
- **From the Netherlands:** It is a nightmare to try and find a house here. Rent as well as buy. The Dutch way of doing things is rather rare and in addition the rental market is very small. We have been looking for a place to rent for 7 months and during that time I have only seen 4 homes. There is almost nothing available and legislation is so tough that few people rent out homes. To buy is just as interesting - it is expensive and you get little for your money. The previous owners take everything of the old home - light fittings, glass, plants from the garden, so if you go to look at a house you will find a shell only. In my opinion it is shocking to think you buy something for so much money and it is totally inhabitable, you will still have to fork out another 30 000 euro in order to make it barely habitable. Putting in floor-planks, etc. I even saw a home in Rotterdam where the people who sold it even took the grass from the garden. I have no idea what they could do with the grass and things, but they rather remove all than to leave it for the next owner. Very, very rare! We wanted to buy in 2002, but the banks would not allow it as we did not have permanent residence - they required a huge cash deposit first and we decided to wait. By now I am ready for my own place where I can paint interior walls red if I wanted to, so I hope we will find a place soon.

Herewith best wishes for 2007 and kind regards from all of us at AfriForum, namely:

*Kallie, Annatjie, Deon & Alana
AfriForum*

[www.comehome.co.za / alana@solidariteit.co.za]