

A trip down memory lane in St Francis Chronicle - funny and weird happening in St Francis over 15 years

Some of the most popular 'I kid you not's'

How to fix a pothole

Well, we've all heard the one about: "How many people does it take to fix a light bulb?" Now we have a new one: "How many municipal staff does it take to fix a pothole in St Francis Bay?" The answer is six. One to drive the tractor, one to place the orange cones on the roadway, one to sweep the pothole clean, one to drill and compact the hole, one to place a mud-coloured soil inside, and one to paint the bitumen and tar. These guys have a great job; each member of this fine team only performs his specifically appointed task, in turn, of fixing the pothole while the others idly look on, and each receives about a full daily wage. The only problem is that when the rains come, the potholes are washed clean and are bigger than before.

Yacht goes awool

A would-be sailor must have thought he'd hit the jackpot when he made off with someone else's highly expensive yacht, berthed at St Francis Bay Port last week and went sailing the high seas. However, he didn't know too much about directing the thing and it landed up being beached at Port Elizabeth. Of course it was immediately spotted and the cops were soon on the scene. Well they say crime doesn't pay.

A sea plane that wasn't

A pilot of a small plane ran out of petrol last week outside the same Port and made a sea landing. He was reportedly unharmed and swam 200 metres to safety. His plane was also retrieved. That's what we call plane sailing.

Window bashing

A reveler at one of St Francis Bay's watering holes was under the weather last month. Having had one too many, he took a flying leap out of a pub window and was left with his biggest hangover the next day.

Ladies, look before you leap

Only one ladies' toilet at a packed St Francis Bay pub during the festive season led to a long line of women standing legs crossed, impatiently in town outside. One of the 'helpful' local lads told these ladies that there was another loo right next door, whereupon several grateful ladies rushed into the other loo, only to come out scarlet-faced. Our local lad's accomplice had idly leaned on the door with his arm concealing the word: "Gents".

Helping themselves

Only the festive season a family consisting of moms, mams and paps and some kleintjies arrived at a local caravan park with a trailer in tow. They checked in and ostensibly went to bed, but in the middle of the night they filled the trailer with the chaise's contents and disappeared.

Damb ones

At an End of Vaele bash, someone was given a lamb carcass to share with her dog and two other people's dogs at the Humansdorp SPCA. Some bright sparks in the village have dubbed her "bones", to which she casually retorted: "It's better than some other nicknames doing the rounds..."

Water cutoffs

Some St Francis Bay residents spent two days without water this month, owing to broken pipes. We hope there is no truth in the rumour that it's going to get worse.

Still on the subject of water: The following two articles have been taken from the Greater St Francis Spatial Development Plan. The St Francis Chronicle has only changed the original headlines.

Golfers in for a pang

The majority of evens in St Francis Bay are serviced by means of conservancy tanks. However, a bulk waterborne sewer system has been installed and an ongoing programme is under way whereby evens are being reticulated and connected to the system. At the present rate of sewerage it is estimated that St Francis Bay will be sewered by the year 2020 (sic)

Cape St Francis is serviced by means of septic tanks, soakaways and conservancy tanks. There are no plans at present to reticulate Cape St Francis.

Wastewater treatment is carried out at a site adjacent to the solid waste site between St Francis Bay and the Air Park.

The capacity of the plant at present is 500 m³/day and this will need to be upgraded periodically as sewerage of the town progresses.

The effluent produced by the wastewater treatment plant is of general standard quality and is thus suitable for discharge into natural watercourses. The effluent is presently sprayed onto the surrounding bush by means of water cannons, but should the proposed golf estate proceed there are plans to use the effluent as irrigation water on the golf course. Once the whole of the town is reticulated the ultimate capacity of the treatment works will be approximately 2,5/day.

Why our water tastes funny...and they say we have enough...

St Francis Bay and Cape St Francis obtain their water from two sources, the main source being boreholes, which draw water from a natural aquifer in the sandstone bedrock.

During peak periods a pipeline from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality's Churchill system supplements the water supply. During December the water supply is not sufficient and it is intended to upgrade the Churchill pipeline connection by the addition of a 250 mm diameter pipeline to St Francis. The estimated cost of this upgrading is approximately R9 million and it will be carried out in 5 phases of approximately equal value over the next 15 years.

The borehole water has high iron content and is currently treated by means of aeration and a micro-filter system. However, this is insufficient and a programme is under way to upgrade the water treatment plant to eliminate the iron. This upgrading is a three-phase project and will involve the expenditure of approximately R5 million over the next three years.

Once treated, the water is stored in a 1,0 and two 4,5 reservoirs which are sufficient for the immediate requirements. Additional storage will be needed within the next 5 years.

Cape St Francis is fed directly from the St Francis Bay reservoirs and it has its own reservoir which is adequate.

- Published in St Francis Chronicle over the years...

Written by Bev Mortimer

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'No school bus' saga finally resolved



Finally! School bus arrived to fetch children

After nine mornings of hitching to school, a school bus arrived to fetch St Francis Bay high school pupils and take them home from Humansdorp to St Francis.

Parents told how children, who were writing tests for q week and who had to hitch-hike daily to and from school, which is a dangerous practice, were overjoyed to find the school bus operated by Van Rensburg Tours waiting for them after school on the ninth day.

And on day 10 at 6 am the school bus was there waiting for them again, so they did not need to walk down the hill from Sea Vista to the entrance to St Francis Bay and hitch lifts as they did for the previous nine mornings.

A spokesperson for Van Rensburg Tours said that after negotiation and pleading by them with the provincial Education Department, as well that of other interested parties, the company finally received a call from the department to say their new correct permit to transport the children daily was ready for collection. The company was awaiting this new, correct permit from the department after their previous five-year contract expired. The department had been stalling in issuing the new permit, as apparently there were bureaucratic procedures it had to follow.

During the week Kouga Mayor telephoned the department during a meeting with some parents one morning to ask the department to issue the permit. However, nothing transpired and the children continued to hitch for several days thereafter.

When the Sea Vista Ward 1 councillor, Zolani Maysa, heard of

their plight he offered to break the impasse and to push the department into action. He also negotiated with the Kouga Wind Farm to organise a bus for the children in the interim until the department issued the permit. The Wind Farm also stepped in to negotiate with the department to arrange a bus from 26 February.

Apart from the long walks, pupils also faced other dangers, such as bad drivers, overloading of vehicles with too many pupils in cars, mini buses or bakkies.

Then parents were frightened for the safety of their children, particularly girls. Even the boys hitched in unsafe conditions. Two St Francis school boys were robbed in Humansdorp when they were standing on the R330 to hitchhike back home to Sea Vista.

They were hitching on the fifth day of having no transport to school and back. It is alleged that 'some guys from Kwanazamo township' approached them and robbed them of their shoes.

More than 200 Sea Vista school children hitched to Humansdorp from St Francis Bay and back. After all the walking, especially up the steep hill after school, they were often too tired to do their homework when they eventually got home, parents complained.

Some of the parents, mostly mothers, demonstrated their anger and concern at the traffic circle at the entrance of St Francis Bay every day. They were furious their children had to hitch to school and that no replacement bus was organised.

But in the end parents told St Francis Chronicle how thankful and overjoyed they were that finally there was a bus. They thanked everyone who helped to break the 'No bus' impasse.