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Mountain Club of South Africa KwaZulu-Natal Section

P.O. Box 50649
Musgrave Road
DURBAN 4062

E-mail: mcsakzn.secretary@gmail.com

Website: <http://kzn.mcsa.org.za>

NEWSLETTER

April/May/June 2012

Club News

A warm welcome to new members James Arding, David Lincoln and Jonathan Kirkman, who have recently joined the KZN Section of the Club.

The following members resigned at the end of last year: Garth Williamson, Merrick Mitchell, Lorraine Welch, Dickie Dicks and Claus-Peter Manzau. Fourteen members have been struck off for non-payment of subs.

The 2012 Annual General Meeting was held at the Assagay Hotel on Saturday 3rd March, and was attended by thirty one members. Hannelie Morris has stepped down as President, a position which she has very ably carried out for the past two years. Thanks from fellow Committee members are due – and good luck for the future!

James Voortman is back at the helm as President. Anne Rodwell continues as Secretary and Beth McLeod joins the Committee, having taken over the portfolio of Treasurer from Dave Drummond. Thanks Dave, for your contribution to the Committee! There have been some other changes regarding co-opted members, whose names and contact details are on the last page of this Newsletter. Speaking of which, the new Editor of the Newsletter is Felicity Kromhout, who is taking over from Anne Rodwell. Anne would like to thank all those who have assisted with the newsletter over the years; be it writing articles, sending photos, or folding/packing/mailing!

At the AGM, Hannelie mentioned that we have some members who have belonged to the Club for many years, and they are:

(40 years) John Bradshaw, Christine Cooke, Tim & Marianne Foley,
Mervyn Gans and Jan Phelan

(50 years) Margerite Adams, Antonie Gildenhuys and Iona Stewart

(65 years) Lorna Peirson

(70 years) Sherman Ripley

Congratulations to all of you - may you enjoy many more years as Mountain Club members!

Thank you to those members that have paid their 2012 subs.

PLEASE, members who have not yet paid, state your NAME AND MEMBERSHIP NUMBER when making your subs deposit – it costs the club time and money making enquiries at the bank as to who has made payments without giving the necessary details.

'SNIFFING THE BREEZE' - 2012 July Camp - Cobham

The 2012 July Camp sub-committee has chosen to go "Deep South" for this year's Camp and we have had approval from Ezemvelo KZ-N Wildlife in this regard. We have found a superb site in Cobham which has Himeville as the closest village. This area is drained by the Emerald, Pholela and Mzimkhulwana streams and abounds with caves. It is arguably one of the most beautiful areas of the Southern Berg. It is also an area rich in Bushman art, with the most well-known sites being the eSiphongweni Shelter and Pinnacle Rocks.

Those wanting to make it onto the escarpment will probably ascend via Masubasuba pass which bisects the gap between Hodgsons Peaks; this after sleeping at Spectacle Cave (12) or Pholela (12) Cave. Thereafter, walking north for 4km would leave you at the top of the historic Sani Pass and needing to follow the road, downwards of course, for 4 km before taking a 7 km walk across to Gxalingenwa (12) Cave for the night. Passport entry from Lesotho to SA without having officially entered Lesotho might make this option unpredictable, so walking south from Hodgson's Peaks would offer a great escarpment walk descending, say, via Pisaneng or Stones Pass. Again a good cave (Wilson's) is "waiting" at the foot both of these passes.

To the south of Masubasuba Pass, you also can shorten the escarpment walk by descending via the Amakehla and Minaret Rock Passes. In the case of all 3 of these more southerly passes, you have caves such as Lakes (12), Venice (4/4) or Chameleon (12) as logical stop over points.

For those wanting to roam in the Little Berg, besides the above-mentioned caves, there are also Nutcracker (6) and Weaver (12) caves, walks along the Giants' Cup Trail and numerous interesting rock features and vistas to delight the soul. There are also many opportunities for climbersplease consult the Drakensberg Route description book for more details.

MOOIHOEK MEET - March 2012

by Hannelie Morris

This year we had a Mooihoek meet with a difference... not only because there was just one KZN MCSA member, the rest being from the Magaliesberg

Section. We started the trip off with going to visit Isandlwana, Rorke's Drift and Blood River. Those of us who did this extension to the trip really enjoyed seeing and hearing about more of our country's history. Listening to Thulani, our guide, telling the story from the Zulu side and in the typical Zulu way of story-telling was quite an experience!





Mooihoek was great as always. Beautiful days, with lovely sunrises and sunsets. The first day we went to Bootklipkuil – a family favourite: an easy hike, with a lovely pool to swim in at the end. All of us swam and had lunch and some of us eradicated some wattle. On the Saturday everyone went their own ways – some to eradicate more wattle and others to hike up a mountain stream looking for cycads, when they were supposed to be

looking for tree-ferns... but everyone came back happy!

RESCUE NEWS

by Gavin Raubenheimer

30th December 2011

A 46 year old male hiker became ill and collapsed while hiking in the area of Injisuthi Lower Cave on the 29th of December. He was hiking with his two sons at the time. They requested a rescue and several attempts to reach them with a private helicopter failed due to heavy cloud. The following day an MCSA, EMRS team on board a Police Airwing helicopter extracted the patient.

7th March 2012

A 19 year old male fell approximately 12 meters down a cliff, off the path near the bottom of Rokeries Pass, breaking both lower legs and his ankle as well as sustaining a laceration to his head. He was rescued at last light by joint team of MCSA, SAAF and Ezemvelo members in an Oryx helicopter and flown to MediClinic hospital in Pietermaritzburg, where he has since undergone surgery to his legs.

10th March 2012

During the Rory Lowther Memorial Challenge, two women (a mother and daughter) had hiked up van Rensburg Kop at Swinburne and were unable to reverse the scramble down an exposed arête. They called for assistance by cell phone and members from the MCSA team on standby at the challenge walked up and helped them down, walking out the last few kilometers in the dark.

Quote:

“How to get the best of it all? One must conquer, achieve, get to the top; one must know the end to be convinced that one can win the end - to know there's no dream that mustn't be dared. . . Is this the summit, crowning the day? How cool and quiet! We're not exultant; but delighted, joyful; soberly astonished. . . Have we vanquished an enemy? None but ourselves. Have we gained success? That word means nothing here. Have we won a kingdom? No. . . and yes. We have achieved an ultimate satisfaction. . . fulfilled a destiny. . . To struggle and to understand - never this last without the other; such is the law. . .”

— *George Mallory, Climbing Everest: The Complete Writings of George Mallory*

CONTACT LIST – MCSA KZN COMMITTEE 2012 - 2013				
Name	Home No.	Work No.	Cell No.	Email
President James Voortman	031 785 1928		082 466 1731	mcsakzn.president@gmail.com jamesv@icon.co.za
Hon. Secretary Anne Rodwell	031 767 2038		073 174 8369	mcsakzn.secretary@gmail.com faraway@chillibyte.com
Hon. Treasurer Beth McLeod	031 764 1991		082 820 1100	mcsakzn.treasurer@gmail.com mcbeth@iafrica.com
Rock Climbing & Mountaineering Trevor Johnson	031 466 2121		076 123 6196	mcsakzn.climb@gmail.com trevorjohnson83@gmail.com
Sport Climbing Murray Sanders	033 701 1772	033 386 6337	082 568 5178	mcsakzn.sport@gmail.com murraymsanders@yahoo.com
Hiking Nic Shaw	033 263 1858		082 804 9270	mcsakzn.hiking@gmail.com nic@enviroed.co.za
Rescue Convenor Gavin Raubenheimer	033 343 3168	033 343 3168	082 990 5876	mcsakzn.rescue@gmail.com gavin@peakhigh.co.za
Meets Convenor Kim Breytenbach			082 871 6292	mcsakzn.meets@gmail.com sunbirdkim@gmail.com
Access Murray Sanders	033 701 1772	033 386 6337	082 568 5178	mcsakzn.access@gmail.com murraymsanders@yahoo.com
Conservation Iona Stewart	033 330 4942		082 990 3968	mcsakzn.conservation@gmail.com iona@sai.co.za
PR & Durban Socials				
Assistant PR Eric Penman	031 708 3553		074 867 9972	
July Camp Rikki Abbott Wedderburn	033 330 3921		082 538 5389	ronwedd@netactive.co.za
Cambalala Hut Clem Robins			082 771 2514	robinsca@telkom.co.za
Cambalala Bookings Alison Misselhorn	031 764 2692	031 260 8081	082 488 8391	misselhorn@ukzn.ac.za
Webmaster Dan Ryding	031 764 0685		076 819 2486	mcsakzn.webmaster@gmail.com dan.ryding@virgin.net
Newsletter Editor Felicity Kromhout	033 344 3052		072 239 2842	felicity@satweb.co.za
Maritzburg Socials Ian Bailey	(h) 033 345 7501	Fax: 033 345 7501	083 269 6201	ianbailey@telkomsa.net
Mountain Rescue KwaZulu-Natal	082 990 5877 / 10177 (in KZN) / Toll Free: 0800 005 133			
Drakensberg – 5 day weather forecast	082 231 1602			
MCSA - KZN Section Website http://kzn.mcsa.org.za			MCSA (National) Website www.mcsa.org.za	