

# The Current Times

Connecting Community - Rooi Els, Pringle Bay, Betty's Bay & Kleinmond

## EDITOR'S NOTE

In the ever-shifting currents of the media ocean, printed newspapers are facing significant challenges, especially as many publications are shutting their doors and journalists losing their jobs.

With digital information being at our fingertips through AI, social media, and an astonishing 4.7 million podcasts reaching 600 million listeners and viewers, it might seem a bit unconventional to invest in print. Yet, there's something deeply human about the desire for tangible experiences that digital formats simply can't replicate.

While print advertising may come with a higher price tag, it often yields a better return on investment. Research shows that consumers tend to trust ads in printed publications more than those found online. For local businesses, advertising in our newspaper effectively promotes services to an audience that genuinely values print.

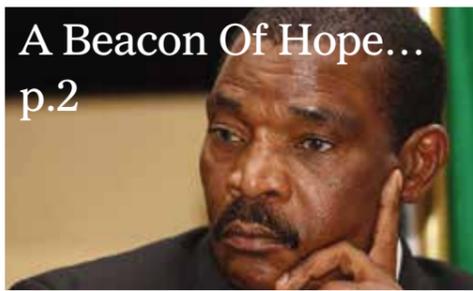
Is there room for another printed newspaper in our community? Absolutely! *The Overstrand* is home to a variety of local publications, and **The Current Times** seeks to complement these with distinctive and thought-provoking content.

Printed newspapers remain a vital part of our media ecosystem. With the launch of **The Current Times**, we're not just introducing a new publication; we're making a commitment to the enduring power of print. In a world flooded with fleeting digital content, the permanence of print provides a space for us to think, feel and stay informed together.

We would love to hear from you, so feel welcome to write us at [editorthecurrenttimes@gmail.com](mailto:editorthecurrenttimes@gmail.com)

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## Third Spaces: Finding Places Where The Light Falls Just Right

Marie-Luce Vogel

One by one, book or reader in hand, they arrive. Nine silent book clubbers gathering at Mr Write, the cosy tea café and gift shop on High Street, Hermanus, where the smell of fresh matcha and coffee complements the scent of books. They gather there every Saturday morning, this group, each immersed in silent reading in the café adorned with mismatched furniture and unique gifts and art, creating a warm, inviting atmosphere.

Meanwhile, in Betty's Bay, working from home as a business advisor, Mary gets up from the desk, mobile phone and wallet in hand, heading for iconic Coffee, On Clarence up the road from her Marine Drive home to spend time in this *third space* where muted conversations and the hustle and bustle from the coffee shop provide her with a sense of belonging and being alive, overhearing snippets of conversations of fellow patrons while taking care of business messages. Further west, Dan packs some water in his backpack and heads up the Brodie Trail, taking in nature and encountering fellow hikers for a quick hello or simple banter.

Marguerite, a freelance journalist from Cape Town, finds her belonging, inspiration and connection in the Company Gardens just around the corner from her apartment. "Being a single person who mostly works from home, one often yearns for a neutral space to engage with others, to feel a sense of community, albeit for an hour or two. For me, these spaces provide a connection to the inner core and to the world. One's soul feels somewhat hollow, depleted, without visiting them..." Embroidering further, Marguerite says the Gardens are her haven, where she spends time reading, chatting with strangers or serving staff, and enjoying a coffee at the restaurant. "I love walking amongst trees, pigeons and cheeky squirrels, engaging

with mothers and children or other singles, elderly folk or tourists, chatting about nature, the weather, beautiful (and complex South Africa) or the shenanigans of the animals around us. We don't know each other, but we share the longings of city dwellers."

On the bench in Harold Porter National Botanical Gardens, overlooking the ocean, retiree Harry takes a coffee flask from his backpack and watches the morning sun peeking over the Kogelberg mountain. Just down the path from him, on a piece of lawn, Elsie's easel is ready for her to continue her painting from the previous afternoon. As the hours turned into days, their morning encounters became a cherished ritual. They talk about life, art, and their dreams. They become familiar faces to other visitors and the staff of the garden. The bench became a meeting place, a *third space* (after the *first space* being the home environment and the *second space* being the workplace) where anyone who stops or passes by can share a hello or a light remark. They feel welcome to join in for a moment of connection. A few words or a joint admiration of the incredible view. It is here that strangers transform into friends, united by the simple enjoyment of a shared space.

These stories highlight the essence of third spaces as public or semi-public places where individuals can connect, find comfort, and foster relationships, ultimately enhancing their sense of belonging within the community. "Third spaces equal happy places for a typical city dweller like me," says Marguerite. Interestingly, the term "third spaces" was first used by Ray Oldenburg, a sociologist, to describe spaces that are neither home nor work. He describes third spaces as being accessible and inclusive, allowing visitors to keep a low profile, welcome regulars, and provide room for

▶ CONTINUE ON PAGE 2



Dr. Marie-Luce Vogel

Entrepreneur, research scientist, author and academic of international trade and competitiveness.

Marie-Luce happily resides in Betty's Bay.

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conversation, playfulness, observation, or chosen isolation. These spaces are varied: retail spaces, libraries, and airports, cafés, coffee shops, or a bench in the park. Another example of a third space that serves multiple purposes is a health and wellness centre. I have observed the need for people to feel welcome and treated with compassion when a health issue arises. I have seen people who want to sit in the lounge for a while, just to be or to receive support or advice.

As third spaces, coffee shops and cafés have become popular worldwide as places that offer more than just coffee or the occasional snack. Historically, cafés have offered a democratic meeting space, even a refuge for some. In one of her memoirs, Simone de Beauvoir described spending whole days in the Café de Flore in Paris' Saint-Germain-des-Prés during the long and cold winters, arriving early to secure the warmest seat. "We always had a shock of pleasure, emerging from the cold darkness, coming into this warm, bright den," she wrote. "We felt at home, safe, and sheltered." A friend describes her experience as, "in need to be among people in a positive space. I consume far too much coffee, while blissfully ignored by fellow patrons,

feeling secure among others doing the same. I felt I belonged."

Mostly, a third space is a simple, unpretentious location where you can be unbothered, minding your own business, experiencing positive energies and used by people of all ages and backgrounds. They are welcoming, accessible, and inclusive and healthy for the community. The community aspect should not be underestimated, especially considering the cost of loneliness or social isolation, which has been classified as a global health issue by the World Health Organisation. These calming third spaces affirm physical and mental health, always offering emotional and physical safety and a sense of belonging. Marguerite's words confirm this: "Walking the Sea Point Promenade, smelling the kelp, feeling the sun on my face, perspiring in the afternoon sun, I love the engagement with people - smiling, chatting to somebody with a cute dog, sitting on a bench having a drink of water and admiring the sea view with a stranger - sometimes there's shared camaraderie in two strangers sitting side by side, enjoying the simple pleasures of life." So yes, to the purveyors of coffee, the restaurants, the creators of third spaces, the bench in the park, the community centre, and the way we live.



Unexpected connection in a *third space* (Mr. Write Tea & Gift Café)

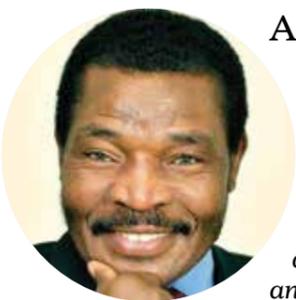


Alone, but not lonely (Dr. Fulvio Franchi - Coffee, on Clarence)



When transactions and conversations meet (Harold Porter Book & Craft Shop)

## South Africa: A Beacon of Hope in the African Renaissance



A heartfelt message from Professor Joseph Diescho in Germany to the people of the Overstrand.

*In the unfolding narrative of the African Renaissance, South Africa stands out as a pivotal player, embodying a rich tapestry of cultures, languages, and histories that contribute to the continent's identity and future. Africa is home for many with disparate histories and experiences, all aspiring to live alongside one another in peace. With over 2,000 languages spoken in 54 countries across modern Africa, South Africa stands out as a uniquely significant reminder to the world that Africa matters. "Afrikaans is the only language in Africa today that has the word 'Africa' in it, thus transcending geographical limitations to represent the essence of our continent. You may not know that South Africa is the home of the youngest language in the world that has enough lexicon, syntax and grammar to cover aerodynamics and science subjects," says Diescho.*

*Afrikaans, often misunderstood and marginalized, is not merely a remnant of our colonial past but a vibrant expression of a people deeply intertwined with Africa's journey. "I urge my fellow Africans of all hues to recognize and embrace Afrikaners as an integral tribe within our*

*continent. Their contributions are essential in fostering sustainable development and critical unity among Africa's diverse populations."*

*South Africa's role in the African Renaissance cannot be overstated; it is a land of hope that has emerged as a symbol of resilience and limitless possibilities. South Africa matters—not just for its economic potential or political influence, but for inspiring a collective vision of unity across the continent. It represents a microcosm of what other nations with past struggles aspire to be.*

*In my view, the awakening of Africa lies in embracing our linguistic and cultural diversity, with Afrikaans playing a vital role in this dialogue. Let us move forward together, fostering understanding and collaboration as we work towards a brighter future for all Africans. South Africa shines as a beacon and reminder that, on this arduous journey, we are not yet what we want to be, but thank God we are not what we used to be. It is indeed our journey together.*

Joseph Diescho is a senior visiting professor at the University of Bonn in Germany, known for his insights into political science and African identity. He holds two PhDs in Political Science and International Relations (University of Fort Hare, South Africa, and Columbia University, New York). Joseph is an author, TV presenter, political commentator, and speaks several Namibian languages, Afrikaans, German, and English.



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# Join The Movement: Volunteerism As The Heartbeat Of Our Community

Pete Dall



Pete Dall is a volunteer with multiple local organisations, a horticultural advisor, a businessman, and a proud long-time resident of Betty's Bay. Along with his wife Paddy, he owns Jamie, their beloved black Labrador, who earlier this year helped raise over R100,000 in pet food for KAWS.

In the charming coastal villages of Rooi Els, Pringle Bay, Betty's Bay, and Kleinmond, a vibrant spirit of community thrives through the power of volunteerism. Residents come together to lend a hand, and the benefits of volunteering extend well beyond merely addressing the immediate needs of local organisations.

Many newcomers to these four villages have traded the hustle and bustle of city life for a more laid-back lifestyle. Yet, some find themselves feeling bored in their new surroundings. Volunteering is an excellent remedy for this boredom, offering a fulfilling way to stay active and meet new people. In fact, many volunteers have discovered new friendships and life partners through their involvement in these social groups.

Volunteer activities in the area often involve hands-on tasks such as gardening at the Harold Porter National Botanical Gardens or participating in local hack groups like Rooi Els, Pringle Bay, Betty's Bay, and the Hardcore Hangklip Hackers. These groups focus on plant rescue, helping stack branches for penguins to use in their nests, and assisting at the Kogelberg Wildlife Rescue Centre.

Regular participation in such activities can lead to improved *physical health*, as volunteers find themselves more active and engaged. This not only enhances fitness levels but also contributes to overall wellbeing. Working outdoors in our stunning environment can reduce stress and elevate mood, making volunteering a rewarding way to stay fit while giving back. Plus, there's the added bonus of soaking up some much-needed Vitamin D! The *emotional benefits* of volunteering are profound as well. Helping others instills a sense of purpose and fulfillment, boosting self-esteem and alleviating feelings of loneliness and depression. Many volunteers report a heightened sense of happiness and satisfaction from making a difference in their community. *Intellectually*, volunteering can be incredibly stimulating. Learning about the fynbos, the life cycle of penguins, and the nuances of plant rescue can be deeply engaging. With over 1,800 plant species in Kogelberg, getting to know them all is both a challenge and a delight.

Groups like BEST (Betty's Bay Emergency Support Team) offer training to become first responders, providing a valuable service to the community. For those eager to make a difference, meet new friends, and learn new skills, numerous volunteering opportunities await. Here is a glimpse of some groups looking for volunteers:

- BEST (Betty's Bay Emergency Support Team) – First Responders
- Hangklip Community Care Centre – Providing meals and home assistance for independent living
- Harold Porter Book and Craft Shop – Profits support hacking activities and educational programmes

- Kogelpark Wildlife Rescue and Training Centre – Pioneers in wildlife rescue in the area
- Penguin Kidz – A secondhand shop supporting early learning programmes
- Volunteer Firefighters – Making a significant impact in emergencies
- Oom Petrus Charity Shop
- Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society – An umbrella organisation for various conservation and educational efforts
- Betty's Bay Park Run – A weekly community fun run organised by dedicated volunteers, fostering friendships and fitness
- Conservancy groups – Kleinmond, Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay, and Rooi Els all work tirelessly to protect local flora and fauna
- Rate Payers Associations – Advocating for community interests
- Rooiels Outreach Trust
- KAWS (Kleinmond Animal Welfare Society)
- The Butterfly Effect SA NPO - with a focus on community upliftment through animal welfare and providing support for those in need
- Child Welfare South Africa Kleinmond
- NSRI (Station 42 Kleinmond) - National Sea Rescue Institute
- Kidscan! [www.kidscan.co.za](http://www.kidscan.co.za)

This list is far from exhaustive, as there are many more volunteer groups in Pringle Bay, Rooi Els, and Kleinmond that deserve recognition, though the writer is a proud resident of Betty's Bay.

Reflecting on the devastating fire of January 11, 2019, which destroyed over 44 homes, the community came together in an extraordinary show of support. Crassula Hall buzzed with activity for eleven straight days, with volunteers tirelessly assisting those affected and supporting firefighters and other organisations. This remarkable effort showcased the strength of community spirit, fueled by the many volunteer organisations that foster connection and collaboration.

Volunteering can truly be life-changing, and countless individuals will attest to this. There's something for everyone—whether you prefer non-physical roles or more active positions, from assisting in shops to administrative tasks, a wide range of opportunities exists. Almost every volunteer I've met has echoed the sentiment: "Volunteering was the best decision I ever made."



Harold Porter Book & Craft Shop is entirely managed by a group of volunteers. From left to right: Peter Dall, Jacqui Parker, Gwen Coetzee, Pat Nichols, Heike Kruger, Alta Jones & Paddy Dall

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Danicka's beloved Axel



DANICKA KRUGER (MCSI)

She is a wealth manager and entrepreneur based along the Western Cape coast, where she lives with her husband and two rescue dogs. She holds an MBA with distinction and is pursuing a Doctorate in Business Administration focused on leadership empathy and organisational resilience. Her work combines finance, research, and human experience to create meaningful impact across industries.

# When a Pet Dies: The Grief We Often Overlook

Danicka Riehl-Kruger

Most people who have loved a pet know the depth of the bond that forms over time. When that bond is broken, the loss can be profound. Yet this experience is not often talked about openly. Grief after pet loss is sometimes quietly set aside or misunderstood, even in caring communities. Many people wonder how to express their sadness or whether their feelings are valid. The reality is that losing a pet can be as real and intense as losing a close human companion.

## What Really Happens When You Lose a Pet?

Grief after pet loss is more than sadness. Research confirms it can deeply affect mental and physical health. Many people feel shock or numbness at first, as if the world has shifted beneath them. Disbelief is common, especially in the early days. It is natural to replay final moments, to question choices, or wish for more time. Anger or frustration may surface, sometimes directed at circumstances, illness, or even oneself.

When your daily routines are intertwined with a pet, their absence can leave a deep emptiness. For some, it prompts reflection on the meaning of life or concern for other loved ones. These responses reflect the depth of the bond we share with our animals.

## How Grief Affects the Body and Mind

Grief is not only emotional, it is physical too. You might struggle to sleep, lose your appetite, or experience headaches, stomach aches, or exhaustion. Others feel restless or unable to focus. These physical effects are part of grieving and can last for days, weeks, or even months. If you notice them, know you are not alone. They are a reflection of the love you shared with your pet.

**“Our relationships with pets are built on trust and unconditional love.”**

Pets witness our best and worst moments and offer comfort few others can. For some, a pet is their closest companion or even their only family. When that bond is broken, the loss reaches into every part of life: the emptiness at home, the disrupted routines, and the changed sense of self.

This was our experience when we lost our dog, Axel. His death was not something we could simply “move past.” Axel shaped our family and identity, making us parents and drawing us closer together. He was there when we bought our first home, when we adopted our second dog, Jaeger, and even when we got married in our backyard during the pandemic. Axel was a constant presence who shaped our days and our lives. Even now, two years after his passing, we still feel the echo of his absence. In his short five years, Axel became woven into every corner of our lives. Through him, we discovered the power of rescue, how adopting animals changes not only their lives but ours too.

## The Importance of Rituals

Unlike human loss, there is often no funeral or ceremony for a pet. Yet rituals of mourning and remembrance play an important role in helping process loss and find support. Without them, many people grieve quietly, feeling isolated or even embarrassed by the intensity of their emotions.

The term “disenfranchised grief”, coined by researcher Kenneth Doka, refers to grief that is not acknowledged or supported by others. Pet loss often fits this description. In my doctoral research, I have found that many people disenfranchise their own grief, holding back from asking for help because they do not feel worthy of it. Recognising this is often the first step toward healing.

## Healing and Continuing Bonds

There is no “right” way to grieve a pet. Some people find comfort in sharing stories, keeping mementos, or creating small rituals of remembrance. In our family, lighting a candle for Axel connects us to our grief and to the joy we shared. These “continuing bonds” help us stay connected to those we have lost and can be deeply healing.

If you are supporting someone who has lost a pet, simply listening and acknowledging their pain can mean a lot. If you are grieving, know that your feelings are valid. Healing takes time. Be gentle with yourself. The pain may not disappear, but over time, most people find ways to live with the loss while still remembering the love.

## A Personal Note

As part of my Doctorate in Business Administration, I am researching how grief after pet loss is experienced in workplaces and communities across South Africa and beyond. My goal is to help organisations and individuals better understand this often-overlooked form of loss.

I am also the creator of Ucco Pet Living, the Memory Candle, and a resource guide for those facing pet loss, each designed to bring comfort and understanding to anyone walking this difficult path. If you are struggling, please remember: you are not alone, and your grief matters.



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# WhatsApp Groups: Connecting Hearts & Homes

In Betty's Bay, one resident is using the power of digital communication to connect people, support charities and boost business. Marie le Roux, a member of the community for many years, has taken on the monumental task of creating and managing twenty WhatsApp groups that serve the villages of Rooi Els, Pringle Bay, Betty's Bay, and Kleinmond. With a combined membership exceeding 13 500 residents, these groups are revolutionising the way locals interact and engage.

Among her most active groups is the "Local n Lekker" group, dedicated exclusively to local restaurants and food discussions. With 891 enthusiastic members, this vibrant platform enables the community and businesses to share recommendations, promote special offers, and support local eateries.

Marie's "Buy & Sell" group, now celebrating its 10th year, has become a trusted space for community transactions, boasting a scam-free track record. Beyond commerce, these groups have played a crucial role in the community's safety and well-being. Marie's WhatsApp groups have reunited countless lost pets with their owners over the years and have prevented thousands from taking wrong routes due to roadworks or other incidents. Notably, during the devastating wildfire of 2019, it was through these groups that the news spread rapidly, leading to the evacuation of the entire village of Betty's Bay and saving numerous lives.

Regularly, Marie leverages her platforms to raise funds or collect donations for local charities and causes. "It's heartwarming to see how willing people are to give back," she says. Through our WhatsApp Group platform we have managed to secure around R25 000 for the year for local charities. All thanks to participating businesses.

However, managing these groups is not without its challenges. With hundreds of messages pouring in daily, Marie often finds herself inundated with inquiries, complaints, and the occasional rude comment, particularly during after-hours. "It can be overwhelming at times," she admits. "I try to respond to as many messages as I can, but it's a lot of work, and I do my best."

"I do this on a volunteer basis because I believe in the power of community," she explains. "It's rewarding to see people coming together and supporting one another, especially when it comes to charitable causes."

Marie is supported by a number of volunteer admins, including her daughter Xanske le Roux and Hilda Lourens.

Her efforts also highlight the need for greater understanding and appreciation of the work involved in managing these digital spaces. As more residents engage in these groups, fostering a culture of respect and gratitude will ensure that local WhatsApp groups remain a valuable asset for the entire community.



Marie le Roux

Animal lover, community champion, enthusiastic volunteer, and proud mother, Marie le Roux has been a resident of the Overstrand for 54 years.



## WhatsApp groups to join:

To join any of these community groups, please send a WhatsApp message to Marie le Roux at

**074 823 8501**

1. Local n Lekker Food
2. Overstrand Buy and Sell
3. Tuinvriende/ Garden Friends
4. Clothes and Accessories
5. Baboon Lovers
6. Baboon Watch Kleinmond
7. Business ads for Pringle to Kleinmond
8. Stony Baboon Watch
9. Kleinmond General and Info
10. Betty's Bay Help and Info
11. Manure Selling
12. Market and Events and Fun Things To Do
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14. Water and Electricity Outages
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18. Safety in Betty's Bay
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# Bite By Bite: Strengthening Our Economy Through Local Eateries

The Editor

In a world where global chains and fast food often steal the show, the local restaurants, coffee shops, pubs, and cafés in our area provide a refreshing alternative. With around 45 eateries and takeaways to choose from in Rooi Els, Pringle Bay, Betty's Bay and Kleinmond, it's the unique charm and community spirit of these spots that truly deserve our support.

Do not forget the over 130 eateries in nearby Hermanus, Botrivier, Stanford, and the surrounding areas, along with the many excellent wine farms that provide dining options.

Local eateries are not just places to grab a meal; they are the heart of our communities. When you dine at these restaurants, you are keeping money within the area, which is crucial for their survival. By choosing to eat at your neighborhood café or bistro, you are helping to create jobs and boost growth, contributing to a vibrant local economy.

Many of these spots also prioritise supporting local suppliers – think bakers making fresh breads, jams, and cakes, as well as businesses sourcing from nearby grocery stores and farms. They rely on local transport services for their staff and often give back by supporting charities, schools, and community events.

Beyond the economic benefits, local eateries foster community connections. They are the places where friends and families gather to enjoy meals and drinks while making lasting memories. (See the front page article about *third spaces*) Many venues host events that showcase local talent, from musicians to artisans.

Whether you are enjoying a cosy cup of coffee in Pringle Bay or having a tasty curry in Betty's Bay, remember that your choice to go local makes a real difference. You are not just satisfying your hunger; you are also nourishing your community.

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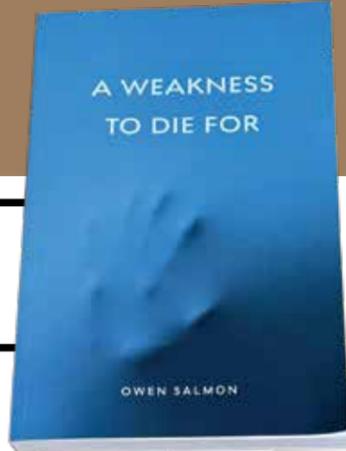
# BOOK BITS

BOOK REVIEWS...

## Local Authors

### A Weakness To Die For

by Owen Salmon ★★★★★



Peter Truman, a cherished family patriarch and esteemed figure in the Cape Town legal community, is just days away from an official inquest into the mysterious death of his family's au pair. *A Weakness to Die For* is told through dual perspectives — one current and one reflective — allowing readers to explore the dark and powerful demons from Peter's past that he feels compelled to confront, culminating in his ultimate personal triumph.

Owen Salmon's *A Weakness to Die For* is a skillfully crafted, gripping psychological thriller set in Cape Town. It delves into one man's reckoning with his history, as layers of betrayal, guilt, and inner turmoil gradually unfold. Picture a blend of "Unfaithful," "Fatal Attraction," and "The Undoing," where desire and attachment, success and failure, truth and shame collide as the life of a legal patriarch begins to crumble.

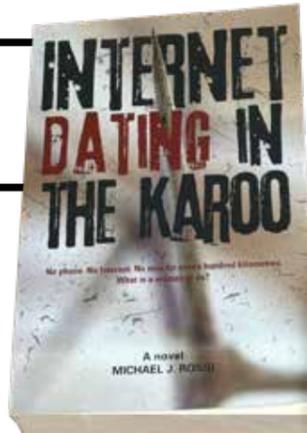
Owen Salmon is a senior advocate at the Johannesburg Bar. His leisure time is spent with family and friends at his property in Betty's Bay, keeping fit, playing the guitar, listening to music and creative writing. Owen has authored two non-fiction titles: *Law Made Simple: Compliance for Business, Citizens, and for Government* (Lawful Living, 2016) and *Intellectual Property Made Simple* (Siber Ink, 2021). *A Weakness to Die For* is his debut novel.



Available: Amazon, Exclusive Books, Coffee, On Clarence (Betty's Bay)

### Internet Dating in the Karoo

by Mike Rossi ★★★★★



*Internet Dating in the Karoo* explores love, loneliness, and the quirky nature of human relationships in the stark setting of the Great Karoo. The story centers on Gilda le Roux, a woman in her late forties who unexpectedly becomes a widow. Despite her loss, Gilda decides to keep running her sheep farm, showing strength in a landscape that reflects her isolation. Rossi vividly describes the desolation of the Karoo, using it as a backdrop for Gilda's emotional journey.

Gilda's adventure begins when she boldly decides to seek companionship through lonely heart letters. This leads to a series of funny and touching encounters with a range of eccentric suitors, each representing different aspects of love. From Willem Botha, who is escaping family troubles, to a whimsical magician and a misguided pig-minder named Varkie, each character highlights Gilda's diverse search for connection.

Rossi writes with humor and warmth, making Gilda's unusual meetings both amusing and thought-provoking. The story includes moments of reflection as Gilda confronts her past and her desire for love to fill the emptiness left by her husband.

The novel's strength lies in its exploration of love's complexities, especially in later life. As Gilda navigates the ups and downs of Internet dating, she faces not only potential partners but also her own beliefs about love and societal expectations for women her age. Rossi challenges these ideas, suggesting that love can appear in unexpected ways and that the journey to find it can be just as meaningful as the love itself.

*Internet Dating in the Karoo* is a delightful and insightful read that offers a fresh take on love and loneliness.



Michael Joseph Rossi worked for thirty years in advertising in London and South Africa as a creative director and business owner. After retiring at fifty-eight, he focused on photographing landscapes in black and white. Mike lives in Betty's Bay with his wife, Bonita.

Available: Amazon, Coffee, On Clarence (Betty's Bay)

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Nicola Lloyd receiving her Protea colours for representing South Africa at the World Transplant Games in Germany

## Pringle Bay's Nicola Lloyd Shines at World Transplant Games 2025

The Editor

**N**icola Lloyd, who has been living in Pringle Bay for 26 years, received a lifesaving liver transplant in December 2018 and recently returned from representing Team South Africa at the World Transplant Games 2025 in Dresden, Germany.

The World Games are held biennially to celebrate the gift of life through transplantation. Nicola was one of 65 transplant recipient athletes in Team South Africa, competing against 2,600 athletes from 53 countries. The team brought home 72 medals and placed 8th on the medal leader board.

"Being part of the South African Team at the Games was a life-changing experience – very emotional and inspirational. Besides the

honour of representing our country in green and gold for the first time on an international stage, sharing the experience with so many other transplant recipients was overwhelming. Without the gift of life through transplants, many of us would not be alive to experience it. It wasn't just about the medals," says Nicola. "It was about participating and honouring our donors."

Nicola qualified for the 3000m race walk and pétanque but could not race the 3000m due to injury. She participated in the pétanque competition, finishing 5th out of 36 participants in her age group.

She received her lifesaving liver transplant in 2018 as a cure for a rare inherited liver disease.

Before the transplant, she spent two and a half years in the UK participating in a medical trial for the disease, which ultimately ended prematurely, leaving her with only one option – a liver transplant. She was on the waiting list for exactly six months before receiving her gift of life in December 2018.

One donor can save up to seven lives through organ donation and improve the lives of 50 more with tissue donation.

**To become an organ donor in South Africa, you can register online at [www.odf.org.za](http://www.odf.org.za) or by calling the Organ Donor Foundation's toll-free number at 0800 22 66 11.**

## Island-Hopping Conservationists Make Betty's Bay Their New Home

The Editor

**M**ichelle Risi and Christopher Jones, who have spent most of the last decade living and conducting research on remote seabird islands in the Atlantic, Indian, and Southern Oceans, have now made Betty's Bay their home.

The pair recently took the plunge and had a house built remotely, only seeing it for the first time once construction was complete! This dynamic couple is well known for their extensive research on seabirds, with seals as an occasional sideline. Over the years, they have dedicated themselves to protecting albatrosses, petrels, and the fragile island habitats these species depend on.

Both Chris and Michelle hold MSc degrees in biology and first met during their honours year at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Their partnership has flourished from a shared passion for wild islands and critical conservation

work. Their adventures have taken them from the challenging cliffs of Gough Island to the turquoise lagoon of Aldabra Atoll, both UNESCO World Heritage Sites, where they have played vital roles in projects tackling invasive species that threaten seabird populations.

Their experiences on Gough and Marion Islands have profoundly shaped their understanding of ecosystems largely untouched by people. On Gough, known for its steep cliffs and dense birdlife, they assisted in efforts to combat invasive house mice that attack nesting seabirds. On Marion Island, they encountered another extraordinary landscape, home to wandering albatrosses, penguins, and elephant seals. "The most rewarding aspect of life on these remote islands is seeing what nature looks like when humans step back," they reflect. "It gives you a rare glimpse into how thriving ecosystems can function on their own."

"We have a bit of an obsession with islands, especially the wild and rugged ones," they admit with a laugh. That same love of untamed places inspired their move to Betty's Bay, the closest they could find to their island homes, with hiking trails at their back door and penguins at their front door.

The couple will both be starting PhDs at the University of Cape Town next year, continuing their work on the impacts of climate change on seabird populations. But before that, they'll be heading south again, this time as naturalists on board expedition ships bound for Antarctica over the coming summer.

Chris and Michelle are eager to share their experiences and passion for wildlife. Locals can look out for them cycling their mountain bikes down to the beach, a sure sign that two island-hopping conservationists are happily at home in the Overstrand.



Chris and Michelle surrounded by thousands of King Penguins and Macaroni Penguins, at Kildalkey Bay on Marion Island. On the right she is surrounded by Wandering Albatrosses also on Marion Island.



Michelle using a colour chart to objectively measure the amount of yellow in a Sooty Albatross' bill stripe on Gough Island.

## TREND WATCH 2026

# Kitchens That Don't Look Like Kitchens

The Editor \_\_\_\_\_

In the picturesque area of Vyeboom, halfway between Grabouw and Villiersdorp, Annelies de Wet has redefined her kitchen into a welcoming space, perfectly embodying the latest trend in home design for 2026 — the “living kitchen.” This concept blends the functionality of a kitchen with the comfort of a living area, making it an ideal spot for family gatherings and socialising with friends.

Annelies collaborated with specialist interior designer Misi Overturf to create a warm and inviting atmosphere. Annelies’s inspiration came from a vibrant, colourful carpet she purchased in Quarzazate during a trip to Morocco, which set the tone for her cosy-looking kitchen.

The living kitchen does not resemble a traditional kitchen at all. Instead, it features hidden appliances and soft design elements that make it feel more like a homely lounge. Here are some key aspects of this trend, some of which are showcased in Annelies’s kitchen:

1. *Blending Spaces:* Different materials are used to visually separate the cooking area from the living and dining spaces. This distinction creates a sense of flow while maintaining functionality.
2. *Intimate Seating:* Annelies added comfortable seating options, a sofa and armchairs encouraging relaxation and conversation. This makes the kitchen a social hub rather than just a cooking space.
3. *Curated Displays:* Instead of traditional cabinetry, open shelving displays beautiful kitchenware and decor, adding personality and warmth to the room.
4. *Concealed Functionality:* The kitchen features handleless cabinetry and built-in appliances, keeping the space clutter-free and stylish. Small appliances are stored away, maintaining a serene atmosphere.
5. *Softening the Look:* Curved islands and rounded edges soften the sharp lines typical of traditional kitchens. Textured materials like beadboard and warm colors help create a welcoming environment.

Annelies de Wet’s living kitchen is a perfect example of how modern design can transform a space into a multifunctional area that feels personal and inviting. With its vibrant inspiration and thoughtful design, it illustrates the essence of the living kitchen trend beautifully.



Annelies de Wet enjoying the living kitchen on their farm, Môreson

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# The True Cost of Being Unhealthy

## Bespoke Wellness And Aesthetics Now Within Reach

Marguerite van Wyk

As chronic illness and fatigue become the new normal, experts warn that the true cost of being unhealthy extends far beyond medical bills. This article explores how an integrative approach to wellness, combining nutrition, exercise, and mind-body balance, can help restore vitality, prevent disease, and ultimately save lives and livelihoods.

As lifestyle-related illnesses continue to climb, experts are sounding the alarm: the financial and personal cost of being unhealthy has never been higher. Chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity, and heart disease are placing unprecedented strain on individuals, families, and healthcare systems. Many of these conditions are preventable through an integrative approach to health and wellness. At the centre of this approach lies a growing understanding of gut health, which influences metabolism, immunity, and even mood.

Ivy Wellness Hub, focusing on bespoke well-ness and aesthetics, has opened its doors at OneHealth Medical and Wellness Centre in Harbour Road, Kleinmond. Their mission is to provide a curated wellness experience, blending medical knowledge with personalised care. At the helm are Dr. Chanel Robinson, an emergency medical doctor and researcher, and Dr. Marie-Luce Vogel, an entrepreneur and research scientist.

There has been controversy regarding intra-venous therapy (IV therapy), labelled as a health fad for celebrities. But Dr. Robinson explains: "All our research rests on medical foundations. With our hubs, we are equipped to handle any crisis." Research confirms that IV therapy is a more rapid and effective way than tablets to replenish essential nutrients and restore balance when quick results are needed. IV therapy can boost energy levels, and high-dose vitamin C and zinc strengthen our immune systems, resulting in a healthier-looking skin glow.

Imagine OneHealth Hub as a 'medical and wellness shopping mall.' You choose a 'shop' that resonates with your needs, empowering you to make

correct lifestyle choices. Marie-Luce says: "We believe many people crave ownership of their health. Transformation is within everybody's reach." If they could help teach clients to eat well and get moving, they would be happy. It is all about nourishment of the body and soul. "Good health is an investment in your future," says Marie-Luce.

Intentional living is part of their vision. Exercise and movement remain fundamental pillars of wellness. Research indicates that regular physical activity enhances cardiovascular and metabolic health, reduces stress, and improves mood. Yet, more than half of adults fail to meet minimum exercise recommendations. Poor diet and sedentary living contribute to weight gain and metabolic dysfunction, key drivers of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Beyond health, the economic cost is staggering. South Africans spend billions annually treating preventable conditions, while lost productivity adds significant financial burden.

The real cost of being unhealthy is the loss of vitality, creativity, and years of quality living, says Dr. Robinson. The result: rising rates of metabolic disease and declining quality of life.

Dr. Robinson adds that bespoke weight loss, exercise, and intravenous treatment programmes are created according to individual clients' needs. Patients with serious weight issues receive weight control injections. Recent research suggests that weight loss injections have benefits beyond weight loss, including improved cardiovascular health. "We believe the pros of the injection far exceed the dangers of being overweight," adds Dr. Robinson. She is enthusiastic about the benefits of NAD+ (nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide) infusions, which protect the brain from degeneration associated with Alzheimer's.

Investing in fresh foods, regular exercise, weight control, and stress reduction pays lifelong dividends. A total health approach offers a roadmap to longevity, resilience, and well-being.



Dr. Chanel Robinson  
Emergency medical doctor, researcher, lover of art and aesthetics.

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# Kleinmond Welcomes A Game Changer

Marguerite van Wyk



*A revolutionary health care model, conceptualised by Dr. Leon Siecker, has opened in Kleinmond. This one-stop health hub, newly rebranded as OneHealth (previously Kleinmond Urgent Care), consists of a range of health experts supporting patients in their journey to optimal health.*

OneHealth opened its doors in Harbour Road, Kleinmond, in February. The aim is for OneHealth to set the trend in holistic health in the Kogelberg area.

“I don’t believe that prescribing chemicals in the form of pharmaceuticals leads to better health,” says Dr. Siecker. “Sometimes medical intervention is the only solution, but we aim to raise greater awareness about preventative health care.” He emphasises that “OneHealth is all about service — whether it is your need for immediate health care, access to a myriad of health professionals to equip you with holistic lifestyle tips, or referrals to the best professionals in the greater health sector.”

Dr. Siecker, who has extensive experience in emergency and remote site medicine in Cameroon, Nigeria, Chad, Liberia, Ghana and Iraq, also oversees the Emergency Centre at Medi-Clinic Hermanus.

OneHealth focuses on an integrated, unifying approach to balance and optimise the health of people.

“Most people know what healthy living entails, but we all search for ways to successfully implement an integrated, healthy, day-to-day lifestyle,”

Dr. Siecker explains. At OneHealth, patients have access to a variety of health and wellness practitioners, including general practitioners Drs. Leon Siecker, Tim Nunn, Anmarie Maré, and Eileen Brown, along with nursing sisters Estelle Nagel and Sarita Berner. A physiotherapist, psychologist, and dietitian are also available.

“We have a gymnasium where patients can exercise under supervision. Some people feel overwhelmed by a public gymnasium,” adds Dr. Siecker.

A healthy lifestyle demands commitment. Dr. Siecker admits that getting up early to exercise with a personal trainer is often tough. “But after my workout, I feel on top of the world.” He is adamant that intentional eating and exercise lie at the core of healthy living.

OneHealth’s timing seems to be spot on. The statistics are staggering: in 2022, research published by The Lancet showed that more than 1 billion people were living with obesity. Since 1990, the rate of obesity in adults worldwide has more than doubled, while adolescent obesity has quadrupled. In 2022, one in eight people were classified as obese. A 2024 study by the Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa found that almost half of the South African population is overweight or obese. “Obesity can trigger numerous health problems, such as Type 2 diabetes, many forms of cancer, strokes, and cardiovascular diseases,” Dr. Siecker warns.

Ideally, Dr. Siecker would like to establish a rewards programme linked to restaurants and supermarkets that support the OneHealth concept. “Rewards programmes could motivate patients to support this health initiative and instil a legacy of better eating habits for the whole family,” he explains.

Dr. Siecker concludes: “OneHealth is not rocket science, but it provides a unique service in our part of the world. It would be wonderful if people bought into the concept, and if we could help patients on their health journey.”

## OneHealth Medical & Wellness Centre



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# Dear Alice\*...

[helpmepleasealice@gmail.com](mailto:helpmepleasealice@gmail.com)

\*While "Alice" is a real person, this name is used as a pseudonym to protect identities and respect our readers' privacy. If you're facing a challenging situation in your life, feel free to connect with Alice.

Please note: Alice brings wisdom through valuable life experience, however, she is not a licensed mental health professional.

**The Negative Friend...** I'm 37 years old and we live in Kleinmond. I've been friends with someone for 8 years, but lately, they've become increasingly negative. Negative about living in Kleinmond, negative about other people and life in general. How do I confront them without ruining our friendship?

**A:** You can care about someone deeply and still protect your peace. The next time they spiral, try saying, "I love you, but this energy is exhausting, what's really going on?" Living in a small town can be isolating, and it's not for everyone. Sometimes the problem isn't the place, it's something deeper. And sometimes, our personal paths just stop running parallel for a while. We need space alone to grow, it doesn't mean the friendship has to end, it just means the growth needs to happen apart. It's important to protect your state of mind, especially in a small town where energy travels fast and moods linger longer. Friendship shouldn't feel like emotional labour, and giving each other room can be one of the most loving things we ever do.

## The Grandkids and Their Phones...

My grandkids are always on their phones, and I feel left out of their world. How can I bridge that gap and connect with them over technology?

**A:** If you cannot beat them, join them, on your terms. Ask them to show you their world. Let them teach you how to make a silly video or photo edit. They will love being the expert for once.

You might not care about TikTok, but you will care about the laughter. You can also use their screens as a bridge, not a barrier. Try playing something together, side by side or over a video call. Games like Draw Something or Heads Up! will get everyone laughing. Wordle or Scrabble Go are perfect if you enjoy a good word game. Or try a fun photo challenge: each of you takes a picture of something that makes you happy and shares it. The goal is not to love the technology, it is to love what it gives you: a reason to talk, laugh, and connect.

**Family That Overstays...** We moved to Betty's Bay 7 years ago and love our quiet life. My cousin and other family members often visit (sometimes without notice) and stay for days. How can I set boundaries without hurting family feelings?

**A:** Move to a beautiful holiday destination, they said. I do not think there is a family in the Overstrand that has not faced this exact issue at some point.

Family arrive with love and luggage. The trick is setting boundaries wrapped in kindness. Say, "We love having you, but please just check first." You need to help them understand that this is your life, not an endless vacation. Just like them, you have work, chores, and a rhythm that requires energy. Have an open conversation, ask how they would feel if you dropped in on their busy lives unannounced. For some reason, family often imagine we are perpetually on holiday here. It is important to protect your peace. If they love you, they will understand, and start arriving with notice instead of surprise.

**The Job Seeker...** I'm 23 and I've been looking for a job for months with no luck. What are some creative strategies to find employment locally?

**A:** You would be surprised how many successful businesses are run remotely from these small towns and how many people quietly need help that you might enjoy giving. The trick is to inject yourself into the community. Physical networking might feel like it belongs to the dinosaurs, but in a small town it matters. Talk to people. Visit local coffee shops. Engage with patrons and staff. Opportunities here are built on connection, not just CVs. Offer to intern or freelance for a month to prove your value. Our towns run on word-of-mouth, so be brave, be seen, and make it known that you are looking for something to do.

## Coping with Crowds...

With more tourists and new residents, our villages have become crowded. How can I adapt to the changes while still appreciating our area?

**A:** We live in one of the most beautiful places in the world, and of course, others want to share it. Sometimes avoiding the onslaught of tourists can be tricky, but the beauty of being a local is knowing the secret spots they will never find. I have learnt to remind myself that tourism is also what keeps our towns alive. For many of our small businesses, the peak times are what help them survive the quiet months. So, as much as the crowds can test our patience, they also put food on tables and keep doors open. Change is tricky when you fell in love with the quiet. But the truth is, places evolve, and so can we. Focus on what is still the same: the smell of the sea, the mountains that do not move, and the people who

wave when you walk past. Gratitude grounds you, and that is something no amount of tourists can take away.

## The Wind in Pringle Bay...

The constant wind in Pringle Bay puts me in a bad mood. How can I stay positive despite the weather?

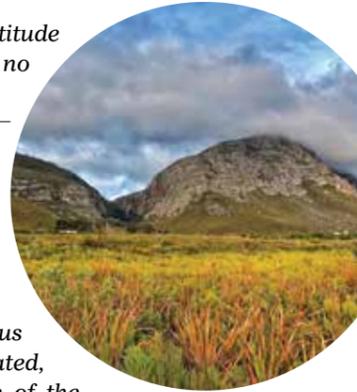
**A:** The wind attacks each of us so personally. When we relocated, it was during a winter with some of the worst winds, and I remember thinking, "What have I done?" But most days, I take a drive or stop to look around, and I am reminded of just how beautiful this place is, and for me, that outweighs the wind. Try to plan your day around it. Bake, paint, and walk when it is calm. The beauty of the microclimates here means it can be howling in Kleinmond and perfectly still in Rooi-Els, so you can always escape it for a bit. The wind clears out more than just the air. Sometimes it clears your head, too.

**The Struggling Small Business...** I own a small service business in Kleinmond, but still can't make ends meet. How can I attract more customers?

**A:** It is tough to make it in this area, you are not alone, it is tough everywhere. But in small towns like ours, connection is everything. Focus on relationships: show your face, your story, your craft, whether online in community groups or in person. Collaborate with neighbours. Support others. Here, people buy from people they know. And one last piece of advice: stay out of the drama. Nothing stops people from supporting a business in this area faster than a scandal. Your reputation is your marketing.

**The Facebook Rage...** The comments on community Facebook and WhatsApp groups make me angry and depressed. The rudeness and lies make me question people. Should I leave the groups and risk missing updates?

**A:** There are all kinds of people in this world, and some of them seem to have made negativity their full-time job. I have been there, I have clapped back once or twice myself, but I have learnt that protecting your peace is more important than proving a point. Mute, unfollow, or step away. Stay informed through real conversations, the kind you have over a coffee. Those cannot hide tone or sarcasm, and they do not allow for lies or people hiding behind their screens. You do not owe anyone your energy, especially if it costs you your calm.



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