

Bring back shame campaign – Carlisle

Jan Cronje

DRUNK driving arrests have started to climb in the Western Cape since the province's Name and Shame road safety campaign ended in November 2012, Transport and Public Works MEC Robin Carlisle said yesterday.

Carlisle said the province would ask the Department of Justice – who he claims shut the campaign down – to reinstate the initiative. If unsuccessful, he would consider taking the department to court to force it to reverse its decision to “shut down” the initiative.

Carlisle has written a letter to Justice Minister Jeff Radebe, asking for the campaign to be reinstated.

Provincial traffic chief Kenny Africa said between August 2010 and November 2012, some 25 motorists were, on average, arrested for drunk driving in the Western Cape every week. Since November 2012, when the campaign ended, this number had increased to about 55, said Africa.

But this was still lower than the weekly toll of 100 arrests before the campaign started. “While the trend is still fresh, early indications are that alcohol is reasserting its primacy as a killer on the Western Cape’s roads,” added Carlisle.

The campaign saw a monthly list of the names of convicted drunk drivers published in the Cape Argus and on the province’s departmental website to “stigmatise drunk-driving”.

But in November 2012, Western Cape courts stopped sending the province records of what offences drivers had been convicted of, and the campaign ended.

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RIVER FEEDS INTO SEWERS

City’s spring water wasted

Melanie Gosling
Environment Writer

FOR eight years Caron von Zeil of Newlands has worked on Reclaim Camissa, a project that uncovered and documented the vast amount of fresh water that flows to waste underneath Cape Town.

Her work has been cutting edge: most of the springs and rivers that flow from Table Mountain have been paved over and forgotten, and every day millions of litres of fresh mountain water rushes away unused into drains or sewers.

Von Zeil’s archive research showed that historically there were 36 springs in the City Bowl. She has uncovered 25 springs and four underground rivers. The City of Cape Town has only 13 springs on their records. Parliament is sitting on two springs and a huge underground reservoir.

Von Zeil’s research began as a master’s degree at UCT and developed into Reclaim Camissa, a non-profit organisation that worked on ideas to harness this underground water, and on cultural projects that could be developed.

Since 2005 she has been trying to get the city council to endorse Reclaim Camissa. Today she is no closer to this goal – although several officials and councillors say her project is “great”.

“We don’t understand it. We’ve done all this work at no charge and we’ve shared it with the city, with officials, from just about every department, with councillors, and they all say it’s great, but we get nowhere,” Von Zeil said.

Her work has excited several water scientists, planners and academics.

Reclaim Camissa’s first pilot project was called Field of Springs, which was to be based on vacant council land in Oranjezicht where several springs were located. It would harness the spring water and



FRESHWATER FOLLY: Caron von Zeil wades through a tunnel under Oranjezicht, one of many built by the British in the late 1800s, through which millions of litres of fresh Table Mountain spring water run to waste. *Picture: COURTNEY AFRICA*

be an outdoor water museum with natural ponds where people could see the water being cleansed. It would have an outdoor laboratory, education centre, bird hide and a bottling system where offices that used large glass water coolers could tap into the spring water.

Reclaim Camissa won first prize in the 2010 Multiplicity competition for inclusion in the city council’s winning bid for the World Design Capital and it was recognised by the Cape Town Partnership as “One of the Big Five Ideas” for the city. Premier Helen Zille awarded the Field of Springs project her 110 percent Green Flag status, which confers prestige on projects by “green pioneers”.

But for all that acclaim, the project has gone nowhere because it lacks city council endorsement.

Now the city has given the Oranjezicht land Von Zeil asked to lease for Field of Springs to another organisation, which applied after her.

“They are growing vegetables on the land. Agriculture on top of freshwater springs. That is crazy and it is illegal in terms of the National Water Act and the National Environmental Management Act.”

Von Zeil has called on councillor Garreth Bloor to rescind the lease. However, she says, the city’s property management department has told her the land has not been leased, although a vegetable garden

has been established on it, with access to 4 000 litres of free water a day.

Von Zeil brought the matter to the attention of the city in March last year, but says it has not been addressed. “If there is no lease, it is tantamount to a land invasion.”

David Dewar, emeritus professor and senior research scholar in the School of Architecture and Planning at UCT, is one of the trustees of Reclaim Camissa, and has made several visits to the Civic Centre with Von Zeil to get the city council’s endorsement.

“We got pushed from one department to another. We’ve given presentations to almost every city department and they say ‘fantastic, but it’s not

my department’,” Dewar said.

“We had a meeting with mayor Patricia de Lille, who made Ossie Asmal the point man to make things easier, but we’ve never heard from him. We had a meeting with councillor Garreth Bloor months ago where he promised to treat it as a matter of urgency, but nothing happened.”

The Reclaim Camissa trustees have since heard the city is planning to apply to the Department of Water Affairs for a water licence for the spring water.

“They’re seeking to make this their own,” Dewar said.

The council was asked for comment on Wednesday, but had not replied by deadline yesterday.

briefs

Man held for alleged kidnap lie

A Brooklyn man, who could not give his girlfriend money he had promised her, was arrested for allegedly lying about being kidnapped, police say. The 35-year-old told police he was kidnapped in Orange Street in Cape Town, forced into a blue car, taken to a house and assaulted by three men who demanded his money before he was dropped next to the N1.

“The investigating officer got suspicious after the complainant could not provide adequate information. The complainant later admitted to have submitted a false statement,” police spokesman Frederick van Wyk said.

The man would appear in Cape Town Magistrate’s Court.

One arrested as perlemoen seized

Police seized perlemoen worth R120 000 at a house in Schaapkraal near Philippi after a tip-off, said police spokesman Frederick van Wyk. “They arrested a 29-year-old suspect who will appear in Athlone Magistrate’s Court on charges relating to the illegal possession of perlemoen,” he said. Van Wyk added that the police appreciated the public’s help.

Acts of racism must be condemned, says Chabane

The cabinet has commended the Department of Basic Education for its quick action on school racism, Minister in the Presidency Collins Chabane said yesterday. He said racism should be stamped out – especially in school classrooms.

“There is no room for racism in our country and democracy, let alone in our schools, where the values of our constitution ought to be promoted and defended.”



COLLINS CHABANE

Tutu appeals for clerics’ release

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu has appealed to the captors of two church leaders in Syria to release them.

Archbishop Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim of the Syriac Orthodox Archdiocese of Aleppo and Archbishop Boulos Yazaji of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Aleppo were kidnapped on April 22 while their driver, a deacon, was killed, Tutu said last night.

“There is no justice, no justification in any circumstances for such inhumanity. We are members of one family, the human family, God’s family,” he said.

Firearms seized in Hout Bay

Police will probe whether firearms and ammunition seized in Imizamo Yetho in Hout Bay were used in a recent business robbery and attempted murder at the seaside town.

Police spokesman FC van Wyk said following a search of a Khayelitsha house on Wednesday, the police’s tactical response team had been led to a field in Imizamo where they found a 9mm pistol, a gas pistol and a handmade firearm.

Five suspects aged 23 to 32 will appear in the Wynberg Magistrates Court today.