Dear Hamerkop beneficiaries,

Our fifth newsletter this year! We spent one afternoon, one night and early morning at Hamerkop last week, thank you to Frikkie & Annabe Pretorius and Humphrey & Maryse Farrer for allowing us to show my nephew from Belgium during his short stay in South Africa, our beautiful place in the Magaliesberg – so yes, this visit inspired me yet again to send out another newsletter!

REMINDER OF HAMERKOP 2016 AGM

Thursday 24th November at Claudine Bennetts' home, 19h00.

Please attend?

HAMERKOP'S RESPONSE TO RECENT FIRE

View from stoop of burnt area (October 2016)

View from stoep, lovely recovery from the fire Wed. 9th November 2016

View Southwest from house – October 2016

View along driveway, 9th November

Beautiful new growth near the driveway after the recent burn

Grazed and not burnt (left), Hamerkop ungrazed and burnt (right), separated by partially collapsed fence.

Spalled rock and minimal growth indicating very hot fire locally.

One of several tongues of fire that crossed the path below the house.

Composite showing burnt vegetation coppicing after the fire and rain.

Reginah told us that Jacques Cilliers came into Hamerkop property to fight the fire which, of course, we must thank him for in some nice way – any suggestions?

We were extremely lucky that the fire missed the main house, Reginah's cottage, the tank on its wooden stand and really have to be pro-active in removing dead wood around the house and getting the firebreaks done in time before the next fire!

DEAD WOOD – we have again asked Reginah if Joseph and she can please remove dead wood well away from their cottage. I trust that they will do so as the recent fire was a pretty scary experience for them!

A dead tree has fallen over behind the annex which will need to be sawn into pieces and removed. Any volunteers or should it be done by a paid person?

There should be a working electric chain saw in the jail. Humphrey noticed today that the electrical cord of the chainsaw is missing. Has anyone seen it or taken it home by mistake?

Removing dead wood away from the house is a continual task which must be done by any physically abled beneficiaries, please, or should be done by hired labour?

WATER LEAK – According to Reginah, the water leak on the pipe from the tank to the reservoir has been repaired – there no longer is water gushing out when the pump is on. We have asked Noel Modes to have a look at it.

ELECTRICAL PROBLEMS -The pump was struck by lightning this week, so unfortunately there is no water for the house and for Reginah's cottage. Noel Modes is going out to Hamerkop tomorrow (Monday 14th November) and will contact a local electrician (Japie Traut, cell 082-318-5289) to come out to hopefully sort out the problem if he cannot do it himself.

WEEDING – please volunteer if you are willing to organise and supervise workers (manual labour) digging out Pampas grass, Crofton Weed and American bramble in the stream of Hamerkop and on Cilliers' property? Please note that we do need Steve to contact Jacques Cilliers if we are going to work on his property.

AFDAK – Reginah proudly announced that she had arranged for all the "afdak" things behind her cottage to be removed. We went to see, and yes, it has all gone! There is still some junk that was not under the afdak that should be removed. Volunteer(s) please!

Steve and my nephew Quentin, posing next to the empty "afdak ☺!

SIGHTINGS - bushbabies are still very much living under the roof of the main house, we lost count of how many there are, because they seem to be coming out of two (may be more) entrances. We counted between 5 and 8 bushbabies.

My nephew from Belgium was exposed to, and impressed by the speed at which vervet monkeys manage to steal food from under our noses. Our loaf of bread disappeared of the front stoop table in an instant!

We saw three klipspringer on the Hamerkop ridge, nice!

ACCESS TO ANNEX BEDROOMS – the keys to the security doors of the annex bedrooms don't all work, probably due to poor quality copying of the key. Reginah says that her key works well. She kindly offered to try out all the security keys on those two security gates, and to put all the non-working ones in a container, so that only working ones will be on the key rack in the kitchen.

REGINAH - I had conversation with Reginah regarding lack of communication and absenteeism.

Margie Owen-Smith kindly had sent me information on grievance and disciplinary procedures. Based on that I discussed the following:

(i) **Communication** - I explained that I have been given the responsibility of "looking after her" in Hamerkop, that any problems she has at Hamerkop please to let me know, and I will try and deal with them. And vice versa, if any beneficiaries have problems regarding her or her work, that they convey that to me, and I will convey it to her i.e. no instructions or criticism to her, please give your concerns to me and let me deal with them? Of course, do praise her for good work done.
The committee has suggested a Hamerkop cell phone which Reginah keeps with her, so we will be able to contact her, preferably during her work times (8-10am summer time, 9-11am winter time, every day except for Sundays. Tuesday is cleaning day so she works most of

the day.) She will be given airtime to be used for Hamerkop matters when needed. Reginah is happy with this suggestion. Apparently her own phone is not reliable – has been dropped ☹

I will circulate the Hamerkop cell number once it is in place. In the meantime please phone her on her cell, even if it is unreliable? Her cell is 072-265-3591.

Reginah is unhappy that the house is often not occupied, beneficiaries not coming out on their week and not letting her know. My suggestion, to be discussed at the AGM, is that beneficiaries must let Reginah know when they are coming out, also for how long, also let her know if they are not coming out. Reginah, at that weekly phone call, can let the beneficiary know what she needs for the house so that the beneficiary can bring out whatever is needed (washing powder, dishwashing liquid etc.)

(ii) **Absenteism** - if she needs to take days off, she needs to notify me beforehand so I can pass that information onto the relevant beneficiaries

Reginah signed the step 1: Verbal warning in the "Disciplinary Procedure for staff of Hamerkop Trust" document, that she understands what is expected of her, agrees on actions taken to ensure that what went wrong doesn't happen again

DOMESTIC THINGS

(i) The new microwave works well! It is very simple to use, with two control knobs, power and time, and a big button to open the microwave door.

(ii) With approval of the domestic sub-committee, I have bought two sets of six hanging knives, forks, spoons and teaspoons, a knife sharpener and two cotton dishcloths which we will bring to Hamerkop when we go out there again.

(iii) Michelle van der Wiel (Reon's mom) has donated a full 8 cup coffee machine to Hamerkop, which we have tested out, it is working well, so we will bring that out too.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE -. Noel Modes is coming out to Hamerkop this coming week to do various maintenance and repair jobs that need to be done.

MAINTENANCE – the fence between Visser & Hamerkop property on our Northern border is falling over locally. The new Building maintenance & development Committee needs to look at that.

NEIGHBOURS –we were interested to hear from Reginah that Joseph cooks for the new owner of the Sparkling Waters Hotel, prophet Shepherd Bushiri, and his security staff when he comes out.

Kind regards,

Karin Spottiswoode with input from Claudine Bennetts - Cell 072-595-6991, tel 011-674-2980