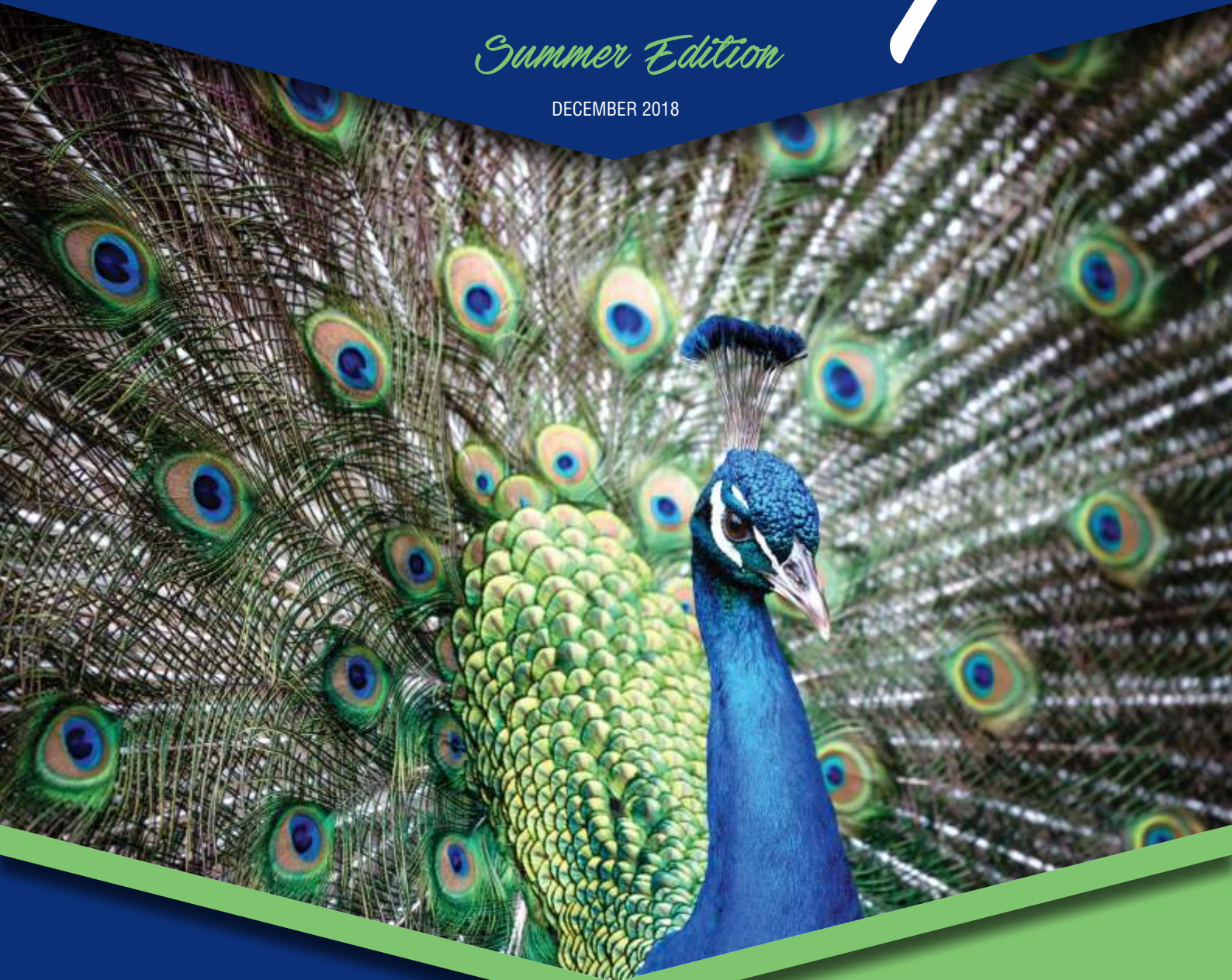




Mobility

Summer Edition

DECEMBER 2018



N3TC Customer Careline
0800 N3 HELP
0800 63 4357



@N3Route



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www.n3tc.co.za

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Cover photo: N3 Gateway/N3TC Photo Competition 2018: Nature Category Runner Up by Bebhinn Spoors - "Fine Feathers"

Welcome

Photo by Stephen Pryke

As the sun sets on another year and many of you embark on your travels along the N3 Toll Route to- and from the coast, we invite you to journey with us. We urge you, above all, to take into consideration the critically important role you play in keeping everyone safe on the roads this festive season.

This summer edition is filled with many interesting articles, giving you insight into our world. We will take a look at some of our projects that were in the news this year; current road construction and maintenance taking place; road safety this festive season; people and places; and what to do while you are out and about this festive season.

In particular, N3TC is proud to be associated with wildlife photographer Daniel Dolpire's newly published book, *The Sentinels: Cranes of South Africa* which features a collection of captivating and awe-inspiring photographs of our national bird, the Blue Crane, as well as the two other species found in the country, the Grey Crowned and Wattled Cranes.



N3 Gateway/N3TC Photo Competition 2018
Category "Landscape" Winner
Leon Heyes - Winter moods

Welcome

You can access many more of our publications and audio visuals on the N3TC Journals website (www.n3tcjournals.co.za) to gain insight into the various socio-economic development initiatives along this Corridor and an in-depth view of some of our partners who work towards uplifting the communities along our wonderful Route.

As always, our Twitter feed, @N3Route, provides updates relating to route obstructions, weather conditions, traffic incidents, and other pertinent N3 Toll Route information. We highly recommend this service to stay informed during your #N3Journey. Keep your mobile device charged while you travel, so that it is available for emergencies, but please do not talk, text, or tweet while you drive. Let passengers do the talking; or stop at one of the many locations along the Route to stretch your legs and use your phone. Social media enthusiasts can also follow N3TC on our Facebook page, @N3Route, and on Instagram, n3route, where we share our 'more than a road' experiences.

A particularly new addition to our communication channels is the N3 Gateway App which we are excited to introduce to South Africans and visitors alike this December. Features of this app include true stories about the places and landmarks you're driving past, useful traffic updates, and great holiday information, with a few surprises to boot. Be sure to download the new app once you have read the article found within these pages.

In addition, we value the opportunity to engage with our customers, so please feel free to contact our 24/7 Helpline – 0800 N3 Help (0800 63 4357) – which offers you peace of mind that there is always someone you can contact should you need assistance during a breakdown, crash, or to obtain route-specific information to ease your travel plans.

As always, your safety takes priority along the N3 Toll Route. Law enforcement officials and emergency medical personnel are on full alert to help ensure that you reach your destination safely. We urge you to comply with the officials and drive within the speed limit.

Finally, we wish you a pleasant and carefree holiday. May you enjoy your time with loved-ones and return refreshed and ready to tackle 2019.

Thank you for travelling the N3 Toll Route.

Neil Tolmie

In the News



N3 Gateway/N3TC Photo Competition 2018
Category "Scholar" Winner
Claudi Lourens - French Lavendar



THE SENTINELS

**The Sentinels
– strikingly
beautiful
imagery
paying
homage to
South Africa's
Cranes**

The N3TC is immensely proud to be associated with wildlife photographer Daniel Dolpire's newly published book, *The Sentinels: Cranes of South Africa*. It features a collection of captivating and awe-inspiring photographs of our national bird, the Blue Crane, as well as the two other species found in the country, the Grey Crowned and Wattled Cranes. The evocative photographs are complimented by the wise words of ornithologist Dave Allan, who has spent four decades committed to the study and protection of our birdlife.

The importance of protecting South Africa's cranes is also what inspired Dolpire to do the book. "The significance of the title of this book, *The Sentinels*, is that cranes are indicator species for the threatened habitats they live in – habitats that, if protected and restored, are vital for the water resources upon which all life, including human, depends," he says.

The project began late in September 2013 with Dolpire's visit to farms and wetlands in KwaZulu-Natal's Underberg area to get an idea of what lay in store for him. Over

the next nearly five years, he would undertake many sojourns around the Drakensberg and Midlands, as well as further afield to Mpumalanga and the Western, Northern and Eastern Cape.

Dolpire quickly realised the habits of cranes made them difficult to capture with his camera. "The best time to photograph wildlife is in the early morning and late afternoon. So photographing cranes at roost sites always presented a problem as the birds would typically fly off before the sun was up and come in to roost after the sun had set! I often had to rise long before dawn and finished after sunset," he says.

He also had to become an expert in getting near the birds without disturbing them. "They do not let you get up close. When you stop your vehicle they are typically at a distance of





between 75 and 100 metres, but by the time you have the camera ready they have moved 200 metres away.” Dolpire resorted to using aids such as portable hides and “chick mom” costumes, and even took pictures while hiding underneath camouflage nets.

It was worth it. In the words of Dr Andrew Jenkins, writing in the magazine *African Birdlife*: “Every worthwhile photograph of Blue, Grey Crowned and Wattled Cranes has now been taken – in every possible pose and context ... For me, this book is a striking example of what conservation-driven photography should be about. It may look like just another glossy coffee-table publication, but it is so much more. The images virtually browbeat their audience into seeing the fundamental beauty of



What is an indicator species?

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, it is “a species whose status provides information on the overall condition of the ecosystem and of other species in that ecosystem. They reflect the quality and changes in environmental conditions as well as aspects of community composition.”

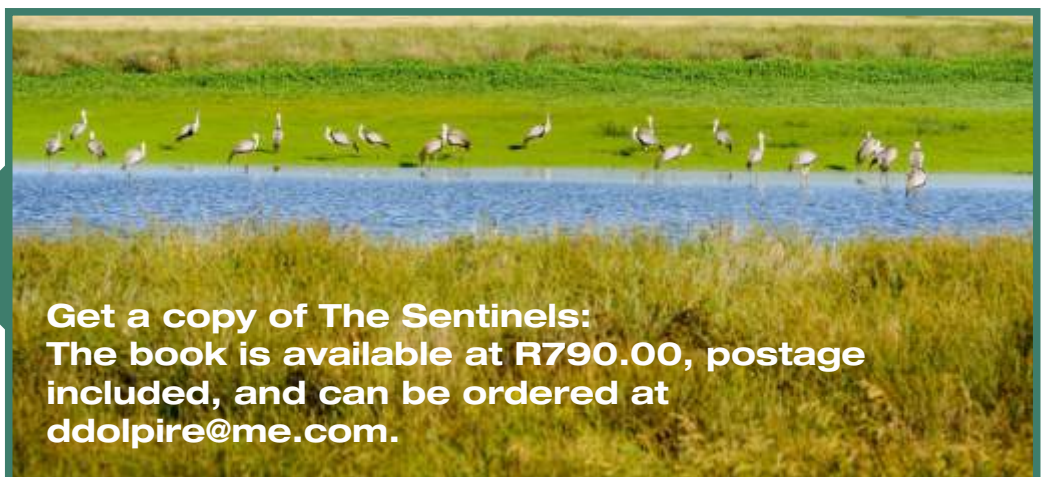
An indicator species has a response to stress or any disturbance that can be measured, and thus serves as a barometer to assess how a specific ecosystem is faring and how human activity is impacting on it.

South African examples include the African penguin, which can raise the warning flag on ocean pollution and overfishing, and cranes, which tell us about the health of wetlands.

cranes, loving their seductive aura, understanding their tender fragility and caring about their oh-so-tenuous future. And as we all know, caring is the critical difference between knowledge and action.”

Says Dolpire: “This has been an amazing personal journey. At every step of the way, it has been a huge privilege to be part of an important conservation initiative. I hope *The Sentinels*, through its images and words, will inspire and bring readers into the world of cranes, their habitats and the challenges for sustainability and conservation.”

He also thanked N3TC for its unflagging support. “N3TC is a remarkable company, one that sets an example of how to make a difference to both the people and the environment in the ambit within which it operates. I am grateful to N3TC, the first and largest donor to *The Sentinels* project and an organisation that embodies commerce and modernity co-existing with nature and people.”



Get a copy of *The Sentinels*:
The book is available at R790.00, postage included, and can be ordered at ddolpire@me.com.



ABOUT CRANE CONSERVATION



Photo by Daniel Dolpire

Crane support is a feather in N3TC's cap

N3TC supports crane conservation in many ways, providing funding to several important initiatives in KwaZulu-Natal. One of these is the KZN Crane Foundation (KZNCF) Education programme, which reaches out to under-resourced schools in the Midlands region.

In the classroom, specially trained KZNCF education officers use Crane stories to teach the children life lessons about values such as faithfulness, courage and loyalty. The learners are exposed to new and exciting ideas about the need for conservation and the protection of Cranes and their natural habitats.

Says project champion Sandy Stewart: "N3TC's funding is helping us raise future ambassadors for the environment. In this way we are helping to shape children's perceptions and behaviour towards the environment and nature and changing their lives for the better."

The Cranes in the Classroom project also ensures the personal and professional growth of the education officers by providing mentoring and other developmental support.



Another focus of N3TC funding is the KZNCF's Wattled Crane Research and Recovery programme, in partnership with the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife. The objective is to rear these critically endangered birds from hatching and release them into the wild. They are monitored through trackers, which enable researchers to better

understand the movements of flocks and the integration of the reared chicks into the flocks.

“N3TC is especially proud of its association with the KZNCF and we believe this programme will make a significant impact on the beleaguered Wattled Crane population in the years ahead,” says Con Roux, commercial manager of N3TC.

Closely related to this programme is the EWT Drakensberg Crane Project, which targets land owners to become partners in the protection of Crane habitats on their farms. This engagement has resulted in the formal, long-term protection of more than 25 000ha of wetlands and grasslands, with a further nearly 5 000ha due to be formally proclaimed as protected areas in the coming year.

N3TC's funding for this project supports a dedicated team of field officers who work with farmers, as well as EcoRangers who spread the conservation message to schools and communities.



SINGAKWENZA



**From tiny
classrooms in
small villages
to the vibrant
capital of the
United States**

**—
Singakwenza
continues to
captivate**

In November, Singakwenza, KwaZulu-Natal's award-winning Early Childhood Development (ECD) Organisation, had the honour of sending its director, Julie Hay, to Washington DC where she attended and presented at the world's largest ECD Conference.

With more than 9 000 international delegates, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Annual Conference is the world's signature ECD event. This year the annual NAEYC Conference was held in Washington DC and Julie Hay was there to share Singakwenza's journey with the esteemed international audience.

“I have wanted to attend the conference for a number of years, but knew that I would need to get sponsorship to go. In January I applied to be a speaker for one of the sessions, and was advised in July that I had been selected. I was so grateful to Emirates Airline Foundation for agreeing to sponsor my flights to this opportunity of a lifetime,” says Julie Hay, still beaming with excitement from her recent trip.

At the conference, Hay gave a presentation on “Maximising Resources” and challenged the delegates to come up with what they thought was the greatest resource they had in their classroom.

“I asked them what they couldn't do without and what was the first resource they would save if the classroom was on fire. A number of items were named, and then I invited them to consider whether perhaps **THEY** were actually the greatest resource in their classroom. Without an invested, skilled and caring educator in the classroom, resources become redundant, irrespective of how much they cost. However, with the right teacher, all resources, including those made from recycling, become tools of exploring, developing and learning.”

Hay then shared the Singakwenza-experience with the practitioners.

“I explained to them how we work with almost



no resources, but how, through our early childhood development and training programme, educators obtain the skills to provide the children in their care with numerous purposeful play activities every day. The delegates were amazed to see how many resources they could make from household packaging that is usually thrown away,” says Hay.

Delegates had the opportunity to make a ball using plastic bread bags and a netlon vegetable bag, and tried out a number of activities with it. “Their feedback was tremendously positive, including a newfound appreciation of the fact that an investment in oneself as an educator is a better investment than the expensive toys that were available at the Expo.”

Hay was able to attend a number of sessions on the days she wasn't presenting, and says she enjoyed the exposure to a variety of acclaimed speakers who gave her many new ideas that will further enrich Singakwenza's programme.

“I had wanted to find out how a second language was introduced in a classroom environment that was predominantly single language-based. A person's brain is at its most receptive to learning languages in the early years and a child can learn up to four languages before the age of 4! However, in South Africa, most of our children are not exposed to the language they will write their Matric in until they are in Primary School. This makes studying in the second language so much harder for them.

My primary focus at the conference was to find what methods various preschools had used and which were most recommended to introduce a young child to a second language. We will be asking some of our crèches to try one of these methods next year.

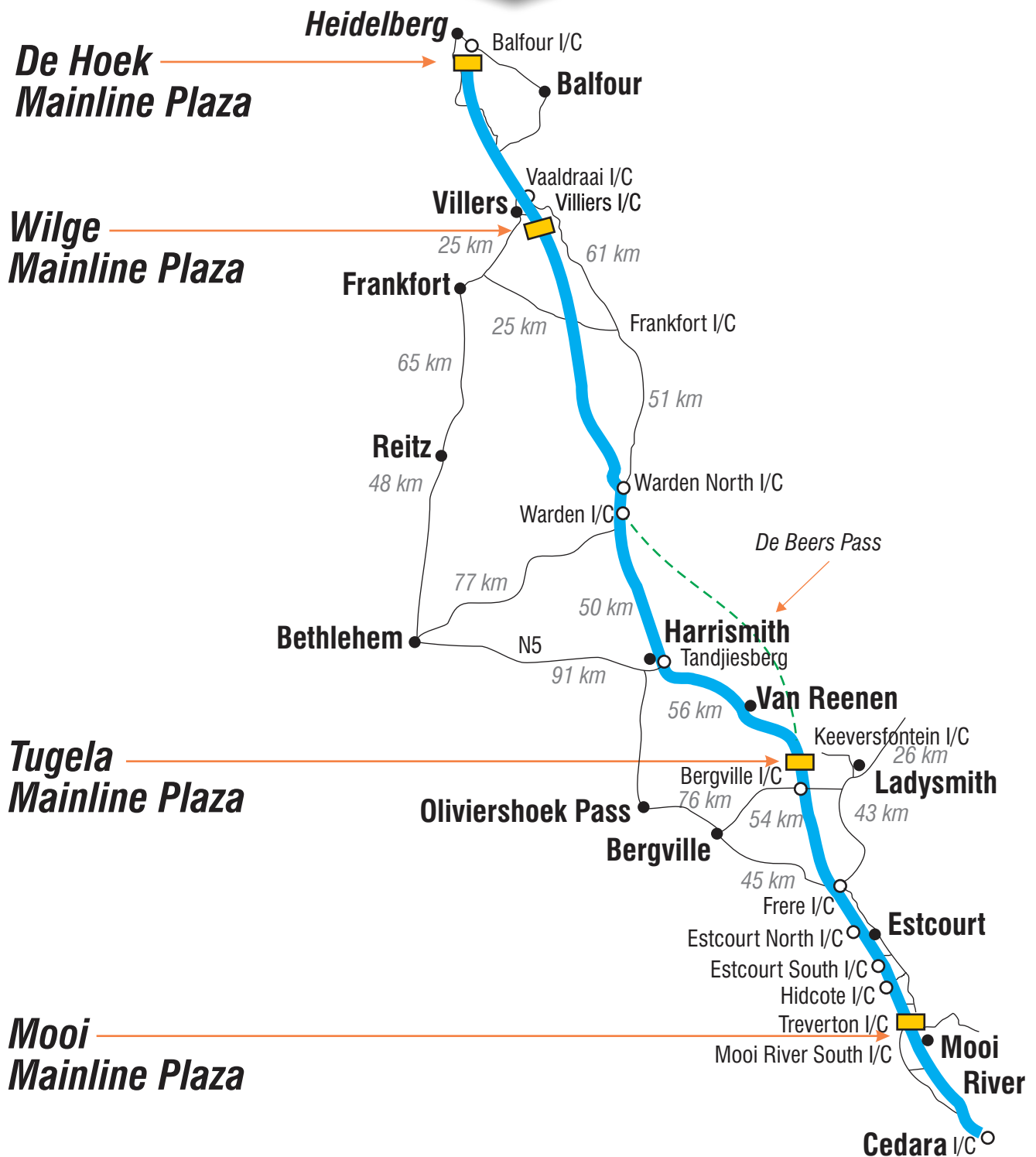
It was an incredibly beneficial experience and I am truly grateful for this opportunity,” ends Hay.



Rhian Allvin, CEO of NAEYC, welcomes the 500 foreign delegates to their annual event at a special cocktail party.

About a Road

ROUTE MAP



ROAD CONSTRUCTION



**No
construction
on the N3
Toll Route
this summer
holiday**

With roads having a limited lifespan it requires on-going maintenance, regular rehabilitation and reconstruction to ensure high mobility and safety standards are consistently met.

On the N3 Toll Route, the N3 Toll Concession (N3TC) follows a tightly managed maintenance and rehabilitation programme, which is aimed at achieving a fine balance between optimal traffic flow and regular upkeep of its road infrastructure.

“We are keenly aware that the N3 Route is a primary national artery connecting South Africa's landlocked provinces to the Durban Port in KwaZulu-Natal. Managing this strategic corridor between Heidelberg in Gauteng and Cedara in KwaZulu-Natal bring a myriad of challenges which the company's team of experts tries to mitigate to the best of their ability,” explains N3TC's commercial manager, Con Roux. “Our ultimate aim is to provide safe passage on a world-class road.”

Given that the December holiday season is always one of the busiest periods on South Africa's roads, the N3TC plans its programmes in advance to ensure minimum disruption to traffic during peak traffic periods.

Thus, the company will cease all construction work from 14 December 2018 to 8 January 2019. Only essential maintenance work will be carried out, should it be required.



Van Reenen's Pass Rehabilitation Project

Come the new year, the N3TC will continue with the Van Reenen's Pass rehabilitation project which started in November and is expected to take 22 months to completion. Work will be done on all north- and southbound traffic lanes, but will be undertaken in sections of approximately two-kilometres long with only a single lane being closed to traffic at a time. Truck lanes will be reconstructed and the other lanes will be repaired and receive a new asphalt surface.

“Although every effort will be made to limit traffic disruption and congestion, roads users will most definitely experience some delays whilst the project is underway,” says Roux. “These delays may be compounded by poor weather or when other emergency situations arise.” Van Reenen's Pass winds through undulating terrain and at 1768m above sea level it is often prone to extreme weather conditions.

“We appeal to road users to bear with us whilst the essential rehabilitation work is being carried out. Please be patient, and give consideration to your own and fellow travellers' safety, but especially also to the safety of construction workers, who are very vulnerable whilst performing their jobs,” reiterates Roux.

Roux reminded road users that travel speed limits are lowered in construction zones – as a safety measure – and requested them to adhere to these revised limits.

Essential N3 Toll Route information can be obtained from N3TC's 24-hour Helpline on 0800 63 4357 or by following the N3TC on Twitter: @N3Route.

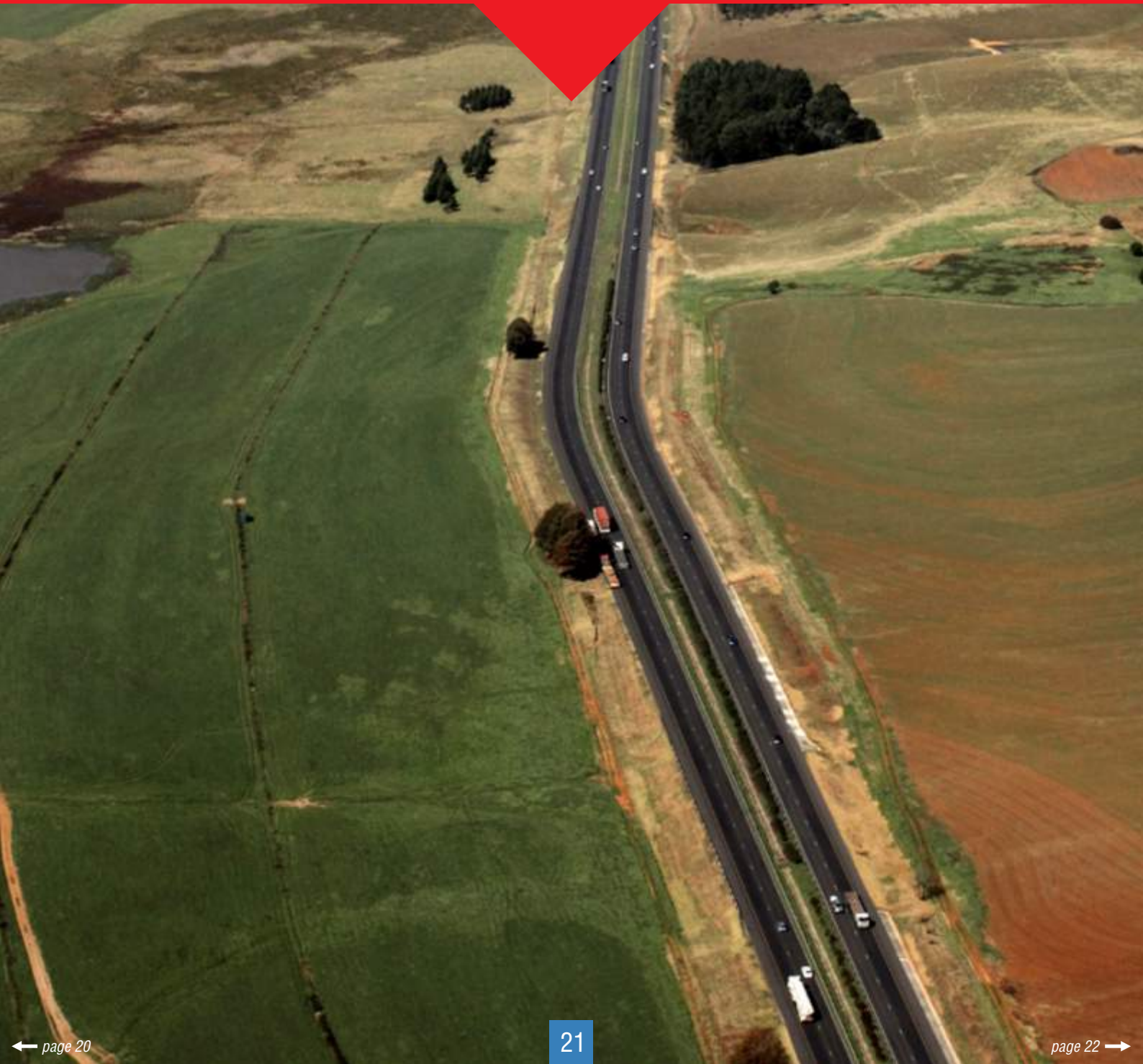


Nelson's Kop, Van Reen - photo by Stephen Pryke

Road Safety



FOCUS ON ROAD SAFETY



No place for complacency when it comes to road safety

Complacency is one of the most damaging risks to good intentions and attempts to prevent and reduce road traffic injuries, crash traumas and fatalities. To combat driver inertia requires one to constantly guard against the trap of falling into bad habits with all their associated blind spots.

Globally, it is estimated that road trauma can become one of the top five leading causes of death by 2030.

“We cannot afford to become complacent,” says Praveen Sunderlall, N3TC's roads incident manager.

Complacency renders you vulnerable and it lowers your concentration and attention span. You become less focused, less decisive, and more reactive than proactive in your actions – on the road, this state of mind can be extremely detrimental. “Too often driving simply becomes a means to an end; a way of getting from point A to B. But, little slips, tiny misjudgments, taking chances and cutting corners can quickly become lifelong regrets,” continues Sunderlall.

Higher traffic volumes during the peak holiday season exposes drivers to greater risks

This summer – do the right thing – and refresh your focus and commitment to road safety. N3TC, together with our road safety-, law enforcement and emergency medical services partners, are ready to help you do just this.

Visible policing and the deployment of emergency rescue- and medical services



have improved significantly along the Route from Gauteng, through Mpumalanga, the Free State to KwaZulu-Natal, and during this holiday season, road users can expect more of the following on the N3 Route:

Traffic check points and active law enforcement

Multi-disciplinary and intersectoral teams will be on duty at various points along the Route to perform regular driver fitness and vehicle roadworthiness tests as well as to ensure public transport and dangerous goods compliance. Law enforcement officers have indicated that they will place an emphasis on strategic speed enforcement programmes, including corridor speed timing enforcements.

Furthermore, road users can also expect active seatbelt enforcement. “In numerous countries around the world, including South Africa, it has been proven that a fastened seat belt is one of the simplest measures to help decrease road fatalities,” says Sunderlall. “There really is no compelling reason for drivers and their passengers not to be strapped in.”

Emergency satellite stations along the Route

N3TC's patrol and road incident management teams, emergency medical and rescue services, including fire departments, State and private ambulance services, the SA Police Service, provincial and municipal traffic officers and community workers will be stationed at key strategic points along the Route to render quick assistance in the event of any emergencies. Aero-medical support teams will provide additional back-up as necessary and advanced life support to the teams on the ground.

Drug and alcohol screening

Driving intoxicated – under the influence of mind-altering substances (whether legal or illegal) such as alcohol, marijuana or even prescription drugs – remains a

worrying trend which requires ongoing interventions and decisive action. Apart from the obvious law enforcement mechanisms in place to regulate this type of criminality, society will also have to take collaborative actions and a more progressive stance against perpetrators who willfully put themselves and others in danger.

Pedestrian safety operations

“It is not uncommon to note that pedestrians, especially when intoxicated, try to beat vehicles coming at them at high speeds by



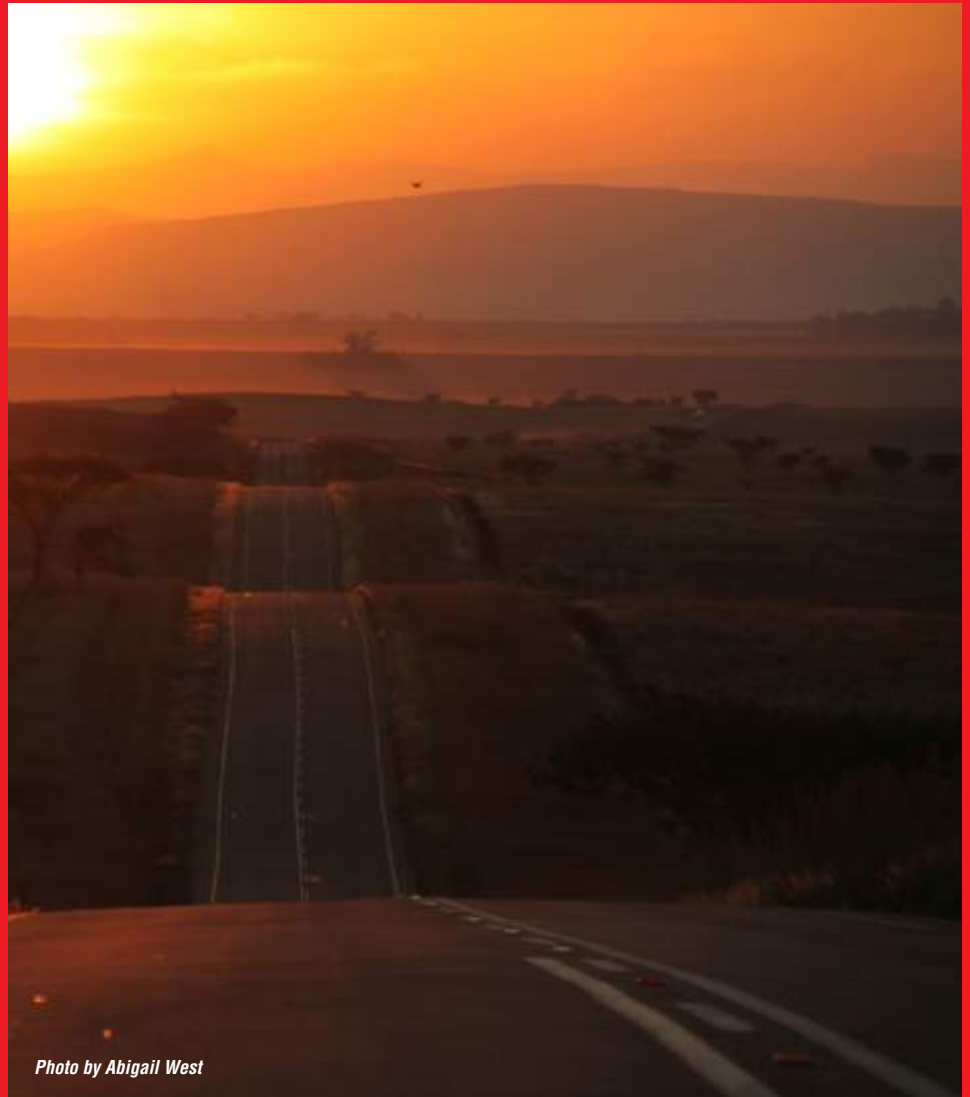


Photo by Abigail West

crossing highways. It is a sad and undisputed fact, that the pedestrian almost always comes second on impact,” explains Sunderlall. “It is simply not a risk worth taking.” N3TC, together with its partners, will monitor pedestrian activity at typical hot spots in the regions of Heidelberg, Villiers, Harrismith, Estcourt, Mooi Plaza/Mooi River, Tweedie and Merrievale to discourage unsafe behavior.

Active use of information and communication technologies

The rapid development of information and social media technologies and platforms now make it possible to share relevant road traffic and safety news updates far quicker to a much wider audience. N3TC continues to embrace new technology as well as tried and tested methods to engage with its users. “We continue to see the benefits of real-time information sharing and how better-informed drivers are generally safer drivers,” continues Sunderlall. “Therefore, we encourage our customers to not only heed all the warning signs on the road, but to also talk to us on Twitter or Facebook, and to make use of our 24-hour N3TC Helpline for regular route and traffic updates. This season, N3TC is adding a further information platform to its communication stable. The new N3 Gateway Radio app has just been launched. Read more about this exciting development on page 34.

SAFETY STATS



Traffic and crash data provide numerous safety clues

The N3 Toll Route is one of the busiest roads in South Africa. Tens of thousands of heavy vehicles move up and down the N3 Route daily - they constitute more than 30% of traffic on the N3 Toll Route and carry on average of 58-million tons of freight along this corridor per annum. Daily commuters and leisure travelers also make use of this route which traverses four provinces, namely Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Free State and KwaZulu-Natal. At peak times, traffic volumes can increase to well over 2 000 vehicles per hour.

N3TC monitors traffic patterns, all incidents and crashes along the N3 Toll Route on an on-going basis. Once collated, analysed and interpreted this data gives concrete evidence to traffic patterns, contributory factors to crashes and any other road safety shortfalls.

Crash data for the first ten months of 2018 (Jan – Oct) revealed the following:

Human error remains the highest contributory factor to crashes. Out of a total of 350 heavy vehicle crashes during this period, 300 were caused by human error; and for light motor vehicles 282 out of 402 crashes were listed as having been caused by human error.

Although weather conditions do play a role in overall safety, it is interesting to note that 77,5% of accidents occurred in clear weather, compared 13,0% having occurred in rain and 5,7% in overcast conditions.

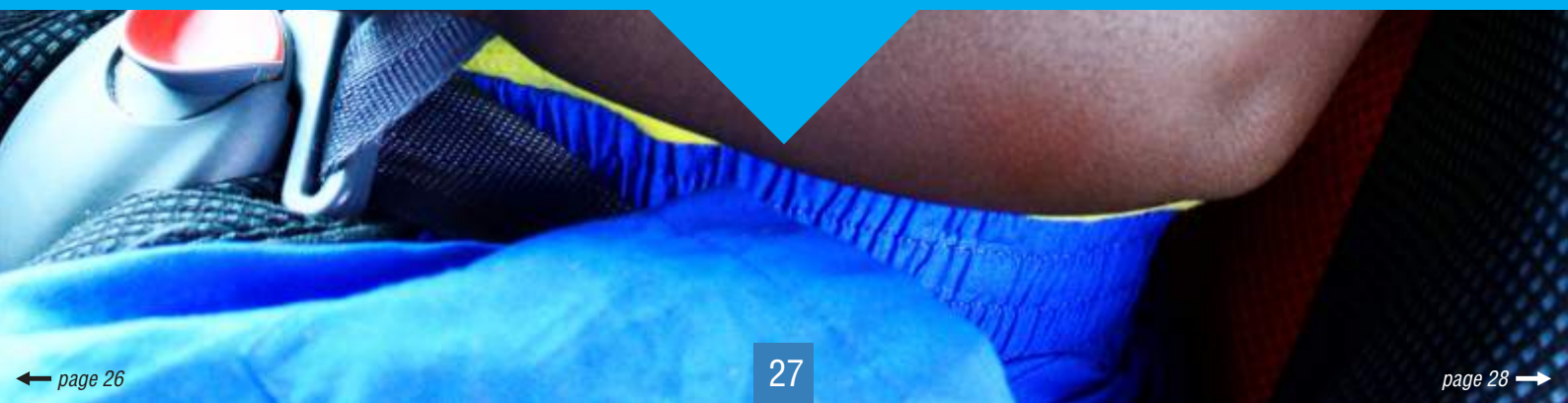
The main types of crashes recorded include:

- **Vehicles leaving the road (23,6% of crashes)**
- **Vehicles rolling (19,4% of crashes)**
- **Head/Tail collisions – moving vehicles (16,1%)**
- **Damage at toll plazas (12.7% of crashes)**
- **Side Swipes (10,9% of crashes)**
- **Multiple pile ups (4.2% of crashes)**

All of the above types of crashes can, in some way, be linked to driver negligence (speed, ignoring road signs, not keeping the correct following distance, etc) and/or a general lack of concentration. “It would not be difficult to bring the number of these types of crashes down, but it will require a committed effort from drivers to adhere to the rules of the road, to drive more defensively and not to become complacent,” says N3TC's transport engineer, Miles le Roux.



CHILD RESTRAINTS



Children's car seats are not luxuries – it's necessities

Wheel Well's Peggie Marsh knows that the cost of car seats for babies is what prevents many parents buying them. Her organisation runs a countrywide scheme in which parents can donate their used car seats at any Renault dealership convenient to them. These seats are cleaned and checked for any defects, and distributed to parents who cannot afford to buy them. For more information, visit www.wheelwell.co.za.



On average, four children lose their lives in vehicles in South Africa every day – and this number goes up during holiday periods. Statistics from the Road Traffic Management Corporation show 259 children under the age of 14 died over the previous December/January festive season.

The vast majority of these deaths could have been prevented if the children were in car seats and the seats were correctly used. But, as with other road safety measures, South Africans blithely ignore this life-saving habit, and only 7% of our children are transported in restraints specially designed for them.

Normal vehicle seat belts are designed for adults at least 1.5 metres tall. Most children will reach that height only when they're 10 or 11 years old. Below that age, children are more vulnerable than adults to injuries or death during a crash – even if they are wearing seat belts.

Car seats for children are specially designed to prevent them being flung out of a vehicle during a crash. The seats also help their bodies to “ride down” the forces of a crash in relative safety. And their designs are improving all the time, says Peggie Marsh, founder of the non-profit organisation Wheel Well, which campaigns for better road safety for children.

“They are very effective in keeping babies, toddlers and children safe during a crash,” she says. “And they have other advantages: the children sleep much more comfortably and they're far less likely to distract the driver, all of which makes for a safer journey.”

Even then, says Praveen Sunderlall, N3TC's road incident manager, the biggest factor to keeping children unharmed is to drive safely – and to reduce speed when you have them in the car. “Since speed is the factor that determines the severity of the crash, you must slow down when you are driving with children in the vehicle,” he says. “It reduces your risk of a crash and gives you more time to react and respond safely.”

Parents must not think a so-called safe vehicle will keep the occupants safe. Even in a vehicle with the highest safety rating, you need to use your seat belt and car seats for children. The laws of motion still apply. **Car seats must also be appropriate, correctly installed, and adjusted to function optimally.**



ROAD SIGNS

**Pay
attention –
Road signs
are
strategically
placed to
guide you
along the
way**

When emergency situations arise, where crash scenes are being attended to, or when road maintenance and construction work are being done, lane restrictions may be put in place along sections of the N3 Toll Route.

Lane closures are clearly marked with temporary road signs warning motorists to slow down and be extra cautious. There may also be flagmen on the road to draw attention and warn motorists.

But, despite clearly visible road and traffic signs, it often remains a challenge to get drivers to heed these warnings.

“Roadwork zones are hazardous areas for motorists and road workers, and the number of injuries and fatalities in these zones remain high,” explains N3TC's transport engineer, Miles le Roux. “Perhaps if motorists clearly understand the reasoning behind certain signs at specific intervals, they will grasp the necessity of obeying them.

“Road signs are not chosen arbitrarily – each one is there to alert drivers to dangerous conditions ahead and that they need to take extra care. It enables drivers to anticipate and react to the unexpected, lessening the danger to themselves, their passengers as well as the road workers.”

Look out for yellow signs and act timeously

The yellow background of these warning signs indicate that they are temporary and distinguish them from regular or permanent warning signs, which have a white background. The most important ones to look out for are signs indicating the nature of the roadworks ahead, such as which lane is being restricted, and those warning that drivers should immediately begin to reduce their speed.

Slow down

The need to reduce speed to safely navigate a lane restriction cannot be overemphasised. According to Arrive Alive, speeding is the number one cause of death and injury in highway construction zones. “If the sign indicates slowing down to 100km/h or 60km/h, do it,” says le Roux. “These speed limits are based on research and experience, and they are always reasonable and realistic.”



Plan to merge properly

Take note of which lane will cease to be operational and plan accordingly. “Drivers must not drive up to the merging zone at speed and then try to force themselves into the unrestricted lane,” emphasises le Roux. “Nobody should act selfishly so merge early, where it is still safe to do so, and give other drivers an opportunity to do so as well.”



Do not overtake

In some instances, there may be a restriction on overtaking even if two lanes are still open. It could apply to either passenger vehicles or trucks, or both, and is meant to limit reckless driving in hazardous conditions.



Other potential signs

These act as an extra warning or supply information such as the length of the roadworks zone.



“On the road, heeding these warnings are the best way to pre-empt what may be coming up ahead and to steer clear of any danger,” says le Roux.



SETTING OF SPEED LIMITS NO THUMB SUCK

Road users regularly traveling the N3 Toll Route will be familiar with various speed limits applying along sections of the Route. In some areas you may be free to travel at 120km/h, whilst in others the maximum speed limit is restricted to 80 or 60km/h.

“The setting of speed limits is an onerous process and is set out by the National Department of Transport. It involves analysis of the road's geometry, including the engineering design speed. Vehicle tests are conducted to establish the actual speed profile (or operating speed) in a particular section. Thus, it may often occur that speed profiles may vary in different directions along the same section of a road,” explains Miles le Roux of the N3TC.

Before determining the speed limit, some of the following factors are considered:

- Road type – for example whether it is a freeway, street or residential road
- Land use – whether it is an urban or rural area
- Intersections and access roads – how many there are and where they are located
- Parking and load bays – such as at schools, hospitals, shopping centres, etc.
- Sight distances
- Crash data
- Current operating speeds
- Prevailing weather conditions – typically in areas prone to high winds, fog and mist, rain and/or snow

Once an extensive analysis has been completed and all information collated, a recommendation is made to the Department of Transport who then provides a ruling regarding the maximum speed limit.

Don't get caught. Keep an eye out for the varying speed limits.

TYRE SAFETY



Tread carefully with your tyres

Human error is by far the major cause of motor vehicle crashes on South Africa's roads, but unroadworthy vehicles contribute their fair share too. Overwhelmingly, these vehicles have worn tyres or tyres that are incorrectly inflated, with tyre failure the result.

Smooth tyres

Tyres that are smooth have a dramatically weaker grip on the road as speed increases, especially in wet conditions, when it can be reduced to just 10% at 120km/h. This makes handling and controlling the vehicle more difficult, and also means the driver needs a longer braking distance to bring the vehicle to a stop.

Smooth tyres do not displace enough water on the road, and with the summer rains upon us, safe navigation in wet conditions is a must. In addition, smooth tyres can cause blowouts, which can have catastrophic consequences at speed.

In South Africa, the law states that a tyre's thread should be clearly visible and at least 1mm deep across the tyre's entire width and its full circumference. Experts say 1.6mm – or more – is better and safer. The canvas cord or steel belting must not be visible, and the side walls must not have deep cuts, lumps or bulges.

Incorrect tyre pressure

Over- and underinflated tyres take their toll both on your safety and budget.

If tyre pressure is too low, too much of the tyre's surface area touches the road. This increases friction and can cause the tyre to overheat, which can lead to premature wear, tread separation and blowouts. Underinflated tyres also have increased rolling resistance, which means the engine must work harder for the vehicle to move and gain speed, costing you more in fuel.

Overinflated tyres are more prone to punctures, which can cause blowouts, and it also makes for a bumpier ride. When overinflated, tyres are far more prone to being damaged when hitting potholes.

Uneven tyre pressure decreases your vehicle's traction in wet conditions and may influence its braking ability, so ensure your front and back tyres are correctly inflated according to your vehicle's specifications.

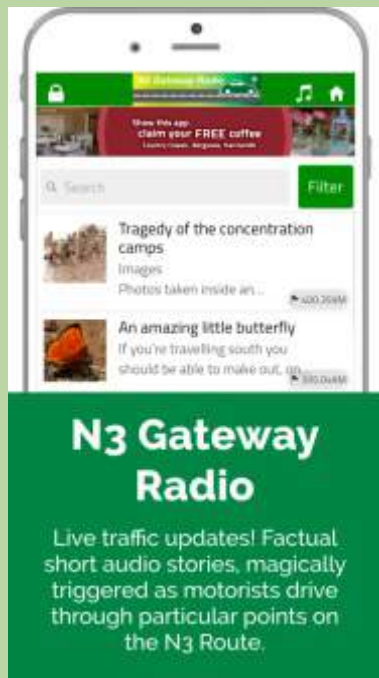
Check your tyres at least once a month – and before every long journey. Not only can it prevent you from becoming a crash statistic, it will also help you avoid unnecessary and potentially unsafe stops next to the road to change flat or burst tyres.





N3 GATEWAY RADIO APP

Introducing a world first – N3 Gateway Radio



This December holiday travellers on the N3 can experience something that has never been done anywhere in the world: streaming radio that knows where you are at any particular time and place. And that gives you great information wherever you are.

Astonishing, true stories about the places and landmarks you're driving past, useful traffic updates and great holiday information. And a few surprises to boot.

N3 Gateway Radio is the brainchild of author Peter Delmar, who wrote *The N3 Book* (sponsored by N3TC) which sold almost 10 000 copies. Now, a lot of the brilliant content in Peter's book is available, free of charge, to users of the N3TC Toll Route.

Here's how you can get this marvellous travelling companion on the N3 Route.



Go to your Android or Apple store and download the N3 Gateway Radio app. You can listen to your favourite radio station all the way between Gauteng and Durban. Or listen to your own music. N3 Gateway Radio only interrupts whatever you choose to listen to when it has something interesting – or useful – to say. Data costs are minimal but the experience is sublime!

By getting and installing the N3 Gateway Radio app you can expect:

- Lekker location-relevant audio stories about the places you're driving past, triggered magically by your location
- All narrated by the likes of ProVerb, David O'Sullivan, Ashley Hayden and others
- Real-time traffic and safety updates
- Pop-up giveaways, discounts and competitions
- Brilliant ideas on where to get off and explore the amazing places surrounding the N3 Toll Route

It's radio. Just really cool radio reinvented.

www.highwayapps.com

@N3GatewayRadio

Oh, and did we mention that it's free? And brilliant? Get it now.

PEAK TRAFFIC



Prepare for peak traffic conditions

N3TC expects the following peak periods this Festive Season:

- Southbound (towards KwaZulu-Natal) – Friday, 14 December between 10h00 and 22h00
- Southbound (towards KwaZulu-Natal) – Saturday and Sunday, 15 and 16 December between 06h00 and 15h00
- Southbound (towards KwaZulu-Natal) – Friday, 21 December between 10h00 and 20h00
- Southbound (towards KwaZulu-Natal) – Saturday, Sunday and Monday 22, 23 and 24 December between 06h00 and 15h00
- North and Southbound – Friday to Monday, 28 – 31 December between 06h00 and 15h00
- Northbound (towards Gauteng) – Wednesday, 02 January between 10h00 and 22h00
- Northbound (towards Gauteng) – Friday and Saturday, 04 – 05 January between 10h00 and 18h00
- Northbound (towards Gauteng) – Sunday, 06 January between 10h00 and 22h00

Plan ahead - N3 Route Control Centre on standby to provide 24/7 traffic alerts

Before leaving home, motorists are advised to obtain the latest road conditions for the N3 Toll Route to help them avoid unexpected problems on their journeys. Motorists can contact the 24-hour N3TC Helpline on 0800 63 4357 (0800 N3 HELP) or talk to N3TC on Twitter @N3Route.

Should you experience any difficulties, along the N3 Toll Route, help can be accessed by contacting the Route Control Centre. Any of N3TC's six Route Patrol Teams will be dispatched to assist you. These highly trained teams of emergency specialists are geared to provide help at crash scenes and vehicle breakdowns. They also provide basic emergency medical care, assist with fire-fighting, remove hazardous objects from the road and provide regular route patrols to ensure conditions along the N3 Toll Route remain as safe as possible.

N3TC wishes everyone traveling on the roads, particularly the N3 Toll Route, over the holiday season safe travels and an enjoyable, well-earned holiday.

People and Places



Photo by Stephen Pryke

DRAK ADVENTURE WEEKEND

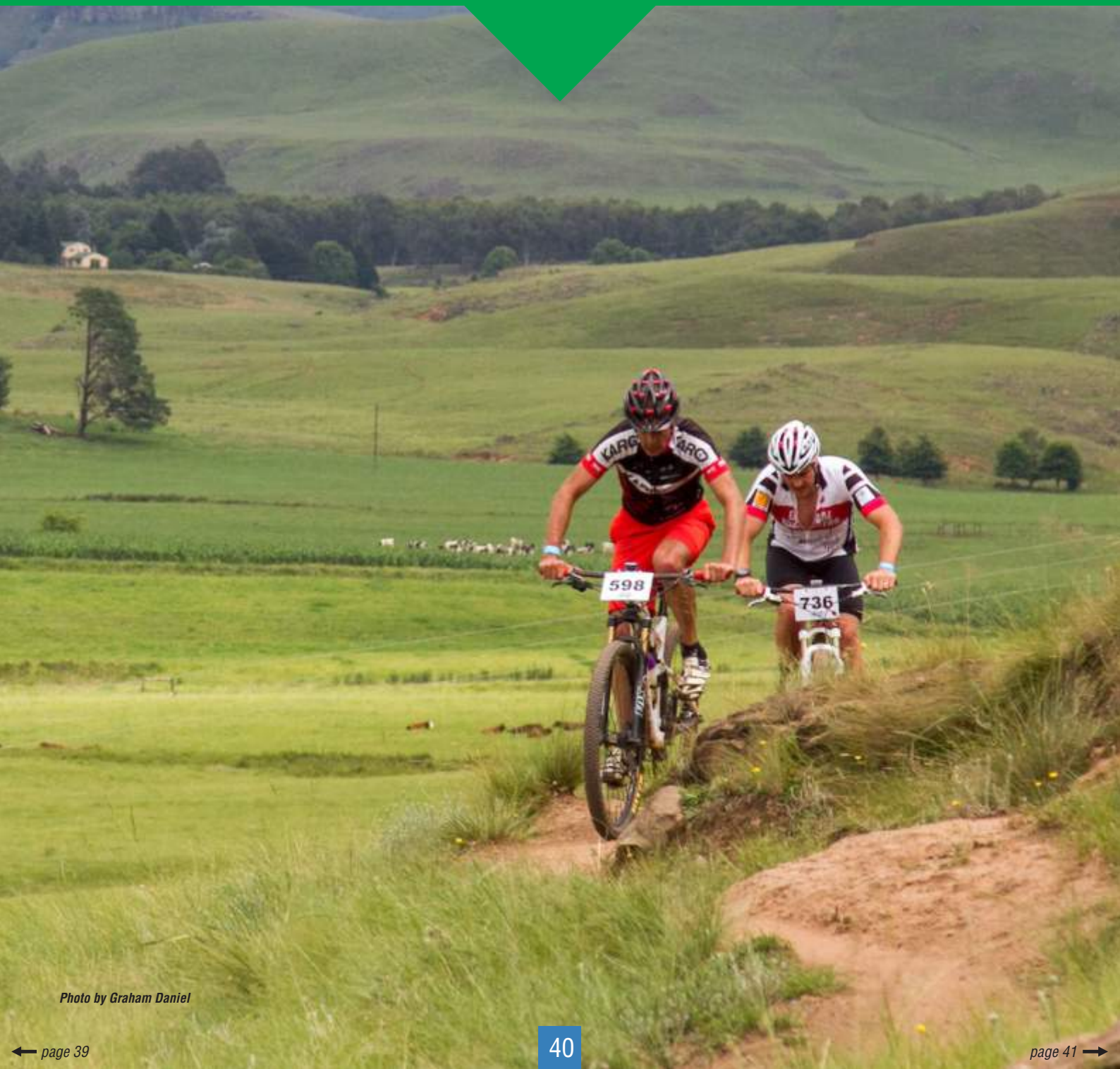


Photo by Graham Daniel

**DRAK
ADVENTURE
WEEKEND**

**The Drak
Adventure
Weekend
hits the
sweet spot
and pulls in
even larger
crowds**

The small towns of Underberg and Himeville in the foothills of the Southern Drakensberg are preparing to welcome hundreds of visitors during one of the premier canoeing events in South Africa, the annual N3TC Drak Challenge, in partnership with FNB.

Every year since 1994, enthusiastic canoeists have converged on Underberg to enjoy the clean water, exciting rapids and serene flats of the uMzimkhulu River. The scenic beauty of the region proved popular with their families as well, and it became clear that the N3TC Drak Challenge weekend could be expanded to include more events. As a result, races for mountain bikers and trail runners were added in recent years, and it is now known as the FNB Drak Adventure Weekend.



“We’re delighted that the canoe race has branched out to become a spectacular sporting weekend,” says Con Roux, commercial manager of the N3TC.

“Combined with the Euro Steel Drak Descent for mountain bikers and the GWK Run



the Rivers trail runs, the weekend now really offers something for every sporting enthusiast. And, of course, it means a bigger economic injection for the Underberg community and region as a whole.”

Roux says the three events during the weekend will continue to base their plans around community involvement.

“For example, the organising club for the canoe race, Canyon Kayak Club, channel the proceeds from the races to local schools and organisations such as the Round Table and Pevensey Place, a home for adults with cerebral palsy in Underberg.”

Lloyd Riggien, chairman of the N3TC Drak Challenge, points out that the canoe race also contributes to maintaining the health of the uMzimkhulu River.

“We are continually fighting a war with the black wattle infestation in the valley,” he says. “Every year, we commission professional tree fellers to remove alien vegetation in a section of the river. Over the years we have spent around R600 000 fighting the black wattle, and it feels like we're getting on top of that problem now. It has also created a successful side industry in firewood.”

On the Saturday afternoon, the community will join the paddlers, runners and cyclists for the second edition of the FNB Drak Music Experience at the Underberg Country Club. On stage will be the ever popular Parlotones, firm crowd favourite Rubber DUC, and the rising star from Durban, Majozi.

The FNB Drak Adventure weekend takes place on Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 January 2019. For more information visit www.drakchallenge.co.za.





PROFILE FEATURE

Qaphela Dlamini breaks down barriers with his indomitable spirit

This wheelchair-bound teacher has risen from humble beginnings to excel in the classroom and on the sports field. In the process he has changed his community's perceptions of what a person with a disability can achieve – and he plans to spread the word even further.

Qaphela Dlamini lost the use of his legs when he was just four years old. Living in rural Nyezane in the Loskop area near Estcourt, KwaZulu-Natal, he accepted the fact that he would not be going to school. But a social worker told his family about KwaZamokuhle School for Physically Disabled Children, and he joined the Grade 1 class in 1995. He proved to be an excellent pupil, always finishing near the top of his class, and mastered wheelchair basketball, among other sports.

In Grade 8 Dlamini moved to the mainstream school in the area, Amahlubi Secondary. Though finding accommodation nearby made getting to school easier, he still faced many challenges negotiating the dirt roads with his wheelchair. "My white shirt was often splattered with mud," says Dlamini. "Many times I got stuck and people passing by had to help me." His

proficiency in sport continued and in Grade 11 he became captain of the KwaZulu-Natal provincial wheelchair basketball team under-23s.

After matric Dlamini went back home because he could not afford to study further. When one of the teachers at KwaZamokuhle retired, he was offered a temporary post to replace her and grabbed the opportunity. Then in 2009 he was offered a

contract to play wheelchair basketball full time for the Discovery Eagles Club in Johannesburg, but opted for a teaching degree at the University of Zululand instead. "My middle name is Professor, so I decided I must live up to that," says Dlamini. He graduated in 2013, the first person in his family to get a degree. It silenced his critics in the community, who for years had whispered about a curse on his family because of his disability.

Dlamini is now teaching maths and computer science full time at KwaZamokuhle, and also coaches sport. On weekends, he invites able-bodied youngsters from the surrounding community to come to the school and play with his learners. "They have fun, ask many questions and soon understand that you cannot get a disability by touching someone. I am proud that in this area no one discriminates against disabled people anymore," says Dlamini.

With an N3TC bursary, he has enrolled for his master's degree and plans to join the Department of Basic Education to "ensure better decisions are made at that level".

"No one can say they understand the issues unless they are disabled. I must use my skills to make South African education better for all learners," he says.



UNDERBERG MASTERY UNIT



The Underberg Primary Mastery Unit opens doors to the future

The early development and education of children have long been recognised as having a direct effect on the adults they will become. It is all about maximising their future wellbeing, and N3TC is proud to contribute to this vital intervention through the Underberg Primary School Mastery Unit community project.

The project involves many aspects associated with early childhood development, including the learning of language, life skills and emotional intelligence. But it also addresses the academic needs of children with learning difficulties and special needs, or those who just need extra support. They are attended to in small groups, which ensures no one is left behind. As a result, whole communities benefit as their children gain important skills and confidence to tackle the future.

“The goals of the project are to provide support, resources and training for the development of English literacy skills and special needs education within the rural schools of our community,” says Sheryl Taylor, the project champion. “In so doing, we aim to build strong bonds of trust and dependability as we strive towards providing growth opportunities for all.”

The project is facilitated by Underberg Primary School interns, who attend many training courses run by outside professionals, commercial groups or members of

the Mastery training team. Caregivers at the Family Literacy Project and teachers in the schools in which the Mastery unit functions also receive training.

“This extensive base of new information and skills then filters through to the broader community, which is empowered by this newly acquired knowledge,” says Taylor. “We have noted a marked improvement in the command of oral English and English reading, which grows confidence, improves communication and results in an overall feeling of positivity.”





PROFILE FEATURE

Terrence Khawula flourishes with enterprising flair

Local entrepreneur Terrence Khawula knows how to put the Underberg's status as a hub for exceptional festivals and events to good advantage; and as tourism activities in the district evolve, he keeps adding to his services.

Khawula's ties to special events in Underberg go back to 1990, when he decided to sell firewood at the annual Splashy Fen music festival to make some money. Weeks before the festival, the schoolboy spent every spare moment cutting and bundling invasive wattle to hawk at the campgrounds. It was his first taste of large festival crowds, and it sparked an enterprising spirit – and a love of live music.

Over the next few years Khawula became an expert on the Splashy scene. After matric he joined Berg Protection and became the festival's security manager, a position he held for five years. Then followed time spent in Johannesburg, but he found life too fast for his taste and missed home. “Here in Underberg people care about me and I am able to make a real contribution to my community,” says Khawula.

In 2009, he applied to become a traffic enforcement officer in the local municipality. His experience of people from all walks of life and his local knowledge meant the job was a perfect fit. So too was his marriage to his childhood sweetheart, Patricia, who could add her own experience of Splashy Fen to be Khawula's business partner while he mans roadblocks and educates drivers.

Patricia ran a vetkoek stall at Splashy and together the couple observed that good cleaning services were lacking. Needless to say, they started a cleaning company and these days they employ 35 people part time. Recycling is a large part of the clean-up, with bottles, cans, plastic and cardboard going to the local recycling centre. "I am trying to train people's minds that we can make a living from

recycling," says Khawula. Next, he wants to tackle food waste, turning it into compost.

Khawula is always thinking of ways to capitalise on events in the Underberg to create jobs and change lives in his community. He and Patricia have started Pat Loos, which provides portable toilets and septic tank desludging for events. It also supplies crews to erect tents and clean up at Sani2C, the N3TC Drak Challenge and the Glencairn Trail Run.

Khawula is a truly homegrown Underberg champion who never fails to spot an opportunity. "Like everyone here, I love events and festivals because they bring so many people who spend their money here in our town," he says, probably already thinking of his next plan.



Out and About

N3 Gateway/N3TC Photo Competition 2018
Category "Altered and Abstract" Winner
Susan van Zuilekom - Sunset horses



Out and About
Discover, explore and re-energize on the

N3 Gateway!

Stay, Play, Shop and Eat Local

between Pretoria and Durban, Lesotho and KwaZulu-Natal Battlefields





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EXPLORE THE SOUTHERN DRAK

Photo by Stephen Pryke

Explore the Southern Drakensberg with N3 Gateway



The N3TC DRAK Challenge will soon be drawing the crowds to the Southern Drakensberg. Here are some ideas for visitors who want to explore more than the uMzimkhulu River while they're here.

Sweet Escape

Enjoy a homemade ice-cream experience at **Giant's Cup Cafe and Crafts** ([Giants Cup Cafe](#)) on the Sani Pass road, 50m from Sani Lodge Backpackers. Rated "Very Good" on TripAdvisor, it is worth the treat before or after braving Sani Pass.

Stretch your legs

Take an easy walk to **Pillar Cave**, which is accessible from Garden Castle Nature Reserve. The 3km route there allows wonderful opportunities to dip in the river, as well as incredible views of majestic Rhino Peak. The cave is large with ample space to enjoy a picnic or a sleepover. Overnighters need to book with Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife beforehand.



Another great hike is the moderately difficult one to the **Khanti Bushmen paintings**, locally known as the "Marching Men". It takes a few hours to walk the 7km to this beautiful rock art, but downhill is much quicker.

How about a venue that offers both exercise and relaxation? At **The Olde Duck** ([The Old Duck](#)) on the Drakensberg Gardens road, you can do hiking or mountain biking, or just enjoy coffee and a meal. For the kids there are dollhouses and jungle gyms to keep them entertained. Soak up the magnificent views of the mountains, enjoy a lazy breakfast or lunch, or snooze under a tree while the kids explore the animal farm.

Giddy-up horsey

Exploring the bountiful nature and mountain scenery on horseback is one of the best workouts you can have without too much cardio effort. **Dragons Landing Horse Trails** ([Dragons Landing Horse Trails](#)) offer owner-guided rides, so you are assured of optimal safety and personal care on your day in the VIP saddle.

Brush up on your history

The **Himeville Fort and Museum** ([Himeville Museum](#)) is open Tuesday to Sundays and offers a wide and interesting range of exhibits. From fossils and San rock art to the life of the early settlers and the Anglo-Boer War, each room offers a fascinating insight into the history of South Africa.



Need accommodation?

Visit www.n3gateway.com for a list of delightful places to stay in the Southern Drakensberg. There is something for every need and budget.

The Southern Drakensberg is a year-round destination, and we asked our N3 Gateway followers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram which season they prefer and why. Here are some of their comments:

Bronwyn Prinsloo: *"My favourite season to visit would definitely be **summer** – a hot summer's day – hiking up trails – drinking the fresh spring water and even having a picnic out in the open under a shady tree – looking at the breathtaking views that the Drakensberg has to offer – to end off with thunderstorms in the evening with the one you love and a glass of red wine. What could beat that?"*

Stacey Ellis-Clarke: *"**Winter** without a doubt! While our gorgeous Southern Drakensberg is beautiful all year round, winter is when she really shines. Crystal clear skies, lakes like glass and air so clean you want to bottle it! Log fires and snuggling, unbeatable sunsets and family. Winter is the best season to enjoy the unrivalled beauty of the Drakensberg."*

Marlini Naidoo: *"**Spring** is perfect for the Berg. Crisp clean spring air and cool breezes with the fragrance of flowers and the sounds of birds chirping and butterflies fluttering. A wonderful time to go horse riding, zip lining, quad biking and river rafting. Great to spend time with family having picnics or hiking and mountain climbing taking in the picturesque beauty of nature in the Berg and ending the days all relaxed."*

Candice Piek: *"I love the Southern Drakensberg ... My favourite season to visit has to be **autumn** ... I love the changes in the trees, the colours are amazing, reds, oranges and yellows. It's not too hot and not too cold and those amazing clear autumn days are the best to go exploring..."*

Are you keen to learn more about the Southern Drakensberg and the magical experiences you can enjoy here with your family? Visit www.n3gateway.com to discover its secrets, or get some inspiration by following the Southern Drakensberg Tourism Association's Instagram @southerndrak.



BIRDING

Photo by desdesignsdot

So many birds, so many choices

“Wow, what makes that sound?” asked a friend visiting from foreign shores one evening. “The distinctive call was that of the African Fish Eagle, which most South Africans will be able to identify without much hesitation,” Lori Voss, marketing manager of the N3 Gateway, begins her story.

“But that made me wonder, would you be able to identify the call of a Drakensberg Rockjumper? It's far less impressive, but I like the idea of casually being able to name this striking little fellow that's endemic to the Southern Drakensberg region. It satisfies the birder in me,” she continues.

There are many opportunities to learn more about our feathered friends, their plumage, calls and habitats by joining one of the several tours available in this part of KwaZulu-Natal. For example, registered guide Stuart McLean of **Birds and Beyond** will take you into the mistbelt forests in search of the Cape Parrot, or head up Sani Pass with him to find the Fairy Flycatcher. Weighing only 6g, this small bird is worth its weight in ... a teaspoon of sugar!

Or, if you prefer your own company and want to catch a glimpse of the Acacia Pied Barbet, head to **Albert Falls Dam**. You will be able to view this endemic lover of grassland without a guide on a 4km bird trail, so be sure to bring your bird book.



Photos by desdesignsdot



So many birds, so many choices

With the natural biomes of the Blue and Wattled Cranes practically destroyed by the 1990s, a group of concerned conservationists wanted to start a specialised group for these birds' conservation in the foothills of the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg mountains. The aim was to understand their decline, educate landowners and communities on the need to preserve them and their natural habitats, and boost the population. These days, you can visit the **Hlatikulu Crane and Wetland Sanctuary** near Giant's Castle to educate yourself on the plight of the cranes and the rehabilitation that is taking place.

Should you wish to get further involved in crane research, make contact with the **KwaZulu-Natal Crane Foundation**. The organisation uses volunteers' assistance during certain periods of the year. But be warned: you will need to dress up as a crane, be fit and endure all types of weather while tracking young cranes!

Moving closer to Van Reenen, you can visit the **Ingula Pumped Storage Scheme**, which is surrounded by 8 000ha of nature reserve straddling both KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State. The 300 bird species that have been recorded here include four of South Africa's critically endangered species: the White-winged Flufftail, Wattled Crane, Rudd's Lark and Eurasian Bittern. The reserve is also home to the threatened Oribi. Head to the Eskom Ingula Visitor Centre to learn more about the conservation of bird habitats taking place in the reserve in partnership with Eskom, BirdLife SA and the Middelpunt Wetland Trust.

A visit to the **Falcon Ridge Bird of Prey Sanctuary** in the Champagne Valley in Central Drakensberg and the **African Bird of Prey Sanctuary** in Lion Park Road outside Pietermaritzburg will entertain your little ones and encourage them to become conservation minded too.



Photos by desdesignsdot



2019 EVENTS DIARY

Don't miss out. Make a note of these upcoming events now.

19 – 20 January	N3TC Drak Challenge
9 – 10 February	Midmar Mile - the world's largest open water swim
16 – 17 February	Dusi Canoe Marathon
22 – 23 February	Clarens Beer Festival
2 – 3 March	Vintage Tractor Fair
29 – 31 March	Royal Drak MTB
29 – 7 April	The Rand Show
6 – 7 April	TransDrak
19 – 23 April	Splashy Fen
26 April – 4 May	joBerg2c Cycle Tour
Supporters of the joBerg2c cyclists supporters are advised to register for the N3TC drOp'ngo2c tour now. Visit the Supporters page on http://www.joberg2c.co.za or email isabelp@n3tc.co.za .	
9 May	SA Tourism Indaba
17 – 18 May	Giant's Cup Trail Run
24 May – 2 June	The Royal Show
26 May	Cars in the Park
6 July	The Durban July
9 June	Comrades Marathon
14 July	1000 Paws Walk
19 – 30 July	Sardine Run
13 – 15 September	Hilton Arts Festival
29 September	Meals On Wheels Cycle Race
4 – 13 October	Macufe Festival

ROUTE HELP CENTRE

N3TC's one stop travel hub

Located just off the N3 Toll Route at Harrismith's Bergview Complex, the N3TC Route Help Centre is a source of excellent travel advice and the perfect place to stop and stretch your legs.

There is no better way to plan a holiday suited to your needs other than to rely on the N3TC Route Help Centre. With the assistance of the centre's personnel, you will not miss out on any of the many delights this region has to offer. "We are ready to advise you on new destinations and a myriad of travel adventures waiting to be experienced throughout the N3 Gateway region from Pretoria to the Valley of a Thousand Hills, traversing Kwa-Zulu Natal, Free State, Mpumalanga and Gauteng," says the centre's manager, Isabel Potgieter.



For brochures, maps, assistance and travel advice contact the **N3TC Route Help Centre on 058 623 0860** or e-mail isabelp@n3tc.co.za.

December 2018 Office Hours:

1 – 15 Dec	08h00 – 16h30
17 Dec	10h00 – 15h00
18, 20 – 22 Dec	08h00 – 16h30
19 Dec	08h00 – 11h30
24 Dec – 02 Jan 2019	Closed

Find us here:

GPS Coordinates: S 28° 15' 20.9" / E 29° 07' 00.7"

Warden Street, Bergview Complex, Harrismith

Stay in touch

N3TC Customer Careline

0800 N3 HELP

0800 63 4357



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