



Trails & Tribulations...

Hi all readers,

2008 hit us like a shot, in more ways than one. Talking to a lot of people after the first month of the year, everybody seems to be in agreement that the pace seems to be quicker; with some already stating that they feel they need a break already. That after 3-4 weeks. Well, I must agree. It is hectic out there.

So, we started with a bag, and then there was darkness. No, Koeberg did not blow up, but the immense amount of 'wet coal' has caused us serious problems! Please! Well, as outdoor enthusiasts, I am amazed how quickly we simply yank out the 'goodies' out of the ammo boxes, and light up, cool down and cook outdoors. No prob Bob, that's what we like. Our neighbours may think we are daft, but hey, we are surviving. However, spare a thought for the manufacturing sector. Having spent some time at Echo 4x4 the last few weeks, I witnessed the suffering of staff and management, who have a business to run and clients to satisfy, having to contend with the power outages. Shocking! Yes, only if the current runs!

So, the sales of generators (with an extreme diesel/petrol bill), 12V accessories and electricity saving ideas seem to be the norm. May we all slowly get used to it and do our bit to help save..please, as ex Minister Pik's headlines today says...we are becoming another Zim...heaven help us, but firstly, lets help ourselves.

The focus this year at our club level will be to support local trails and venues, as the petrol price keeps increasing. People also seem to be getting busier, so free time is an issue. Talking about free time, we see our crews heading off to Angola and Zimbabwe in the first half of the year, followed by a Mozambique or Namibia trip, and then finally a Luderitz to Walvis Bay trip with Uri Adventures later in the year. Our schedule sees us not doing anything on 3 weekends of the year, so I will look at filling that shortly!

Training will once again be key this year, and we have added some new courses to our portfolio. We also constantly work only with professionals in the field to bring you the reader, excellent training courses, at competitive prices. Feel free to participate.

So, the first month is down, and the year lies ahead. It will be a great one I believe. We will see what the industry regulation menu dishes up this year, as the market is waiting in anticipation. There will also be a strong drive this year I am told, whereby a representative body will be formed to represent the man in the street, who does not want to align himself with other structures currently available, so as to align themselves with an acceptable code of conduct OK, gain access to the accredited processes and abide by the pending regulation in our industry. Should be interesting?

Well, no long intro this month, with the newsletter already bursting at 50+ pages.

Yours in 4x4ing.
Alan Goodway (GP 1796)
Editor (voluntary!)

WWW.ECO4X4AFRICA.COM – Your Serengeti Specialists!

Herewith details regarding the planned tours for Africa proudly presented by www.eco4x4africa.com this year (2008)

2008

- Tour 1 - completed
- Tour 2 - Lesotho / Sani Pass – 10-16 February
- Tour 3 – West Coast Crayfish Tour - 3-9 March
- Tour 4 – Kalahari / Botswana – 21-30 March
- Tour 5 – Namibia – 31 March – 13 April
- Tour 6 – Lion Weekend Coligny – 18-20 April
- Tour 7 - Serengeti Tour - 4 May – 5 June
- Tour 8 – Namibia – Koakoland – 8-22 June
- Tour 9 - Serengeti Tour – 28 June – 27 July
- Tour 10 – Botswana / Moremi & Chobe - 2-14 August
- Tour 11 – Flower Tour West Coast – 16-24 August
- Tour 12 – Kariba Lake Houseboat – 5-15 September
- Tour 13 – Lake Malawi -14-21 September
- Tour 14 – Kalahari / Botswana – 27 September – 5 October
- Tour 15 – Lion Weekend Coligny – 31 October – 2 November
- Tour 16 – Switzerland Expedition – 9-23 November
- Tour 17 - Serengeti Tour: 2008 : 7 Dec – 7 Jan 2009

Tours include Self Drive, Catered, or in the luxury bus we have for specific tours. Contact us immediately for more information, you will not be disappointed.

Alex & Alta - 0825706010 or alex@eco4x4africa.com

January 2008

Calendar of Interesting Events

Herewith find events, as collected in the market place. By no means are any of these events necessarily linked to / supported by / associated with 4x4 Offroad Adventure Club, and they are being placed here as public service only. Errors and omissions reserved.

Date	Event	Venue
15-17 February	Beeld Holidaymakers Expo	Gallagher Estate, Midrand
4-6 March	Tyre Expo Africa	Sandton Convention Centre
21 March – 6 April	Rand Easter Show	NASREC
25-28 April	Womans Show	Sandton Convention Centre
26-28 April	Gauteng Motor Show	Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit
1-4 May	Toys for Boys	NASREC
9-11 May	Aim Shooter Show	NASREC
10-11 May	LA Sport Products in Action Show	Capital Park, Pretoria
13-16 May	NAMPO Show	Nampo Park, Bothaville, Free State
13- 16 June	Kyalami Outdoor Show	Kyalami Raceway
25-27 July	Bundu Expo	Tshwane Events Centre (Pretoria Showgrounds)
27 August – 7 September	Pretoria Show	Pretoria Showgrounds
29-31 August	Getaway Show	Coca Cola Dome, Northgate

Hit the Trail – NEWS, FEATURES and the REST...

LOAD SHARING NO MORE – KARIBA HAS A SOLUTION!!!!

Dear Kariba supporters,

OUR SOLUTION AND SMALL CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENERGY PROBLEM (adjusted accordingly)

Kariba Products continues to lead our field of expertise in technology, efficiency and quality not to mention value for money, resulting in our accreditation by the LPGSASA. Our brand is becoming a household name, due to the mentioned factors, and the future promises that the best of Kariba Products is yet to come. We have a number of exciting new products and great promotions lined up for 2008, all of which promise to healed wonderful results for all concerned.

With the current Eskom power outages being experienced country wide, and as we get to grips with the situation, we come to realize that at the end of the day, it is our responsibility to contribute towards the solutions of the energy crisis, whether we like it or not. We have further come to realize that this situation is going to continue for a long time to come. It may let up from time to time, but believe me, with the limited information that reaches our business at CDE Engineering where we manufacture electrical switchboards (at present mainly for emergency generator sets) and that is when power is available, word in the industry is that the worst is still to come.

Let us not ponder on the negative, but rather turn the situation into a positive one. We hereby introduce the **Kariba K2 Mobile Kitchen Cooker/Geysers**, as a potential solution towards an alternative power sources. No doubt, you are well aware of the attributes offered by our K2 model which provides a dual hot water and a cooking facility.

This goes a long way in offering households to provide the alternative source for preparing hot meals, washing dishes and clothing and providing a nice hot shower or even a bath at any time. Connected directly to the tap, the K2 delivers continuous hot water at a rate of 2.6 to 3 liters per minute (the same rate of water flow as produced by the 12V electrical turbo shower pump supplied). At a cost of approximately 70 cents, you can enjoy a 7 to 10 minute shower which currently cost you approximately R2-60 for the same service from Eskom power. The K2 is not only a piece of camping equipment, but realistically, a multi purpose appliance which can be used in every home, especially at this time as a back-up unit.

As an example of the effect the power outages had on a specific area, please take note of what happened in Boksburg last year when the Eskom sub-station burnt down in that area. The residents had no power supply for a period of two weeks. With our gas appliance, many families 'survived' this ordeal

So, what are you waiting for? Get down to your nearest stockist and ask for only 1 brand – Kariba!

SUBSCRIBE NOW OR FOREVER LOSE OUT!!!! FREE DOWNLOADS FOR LIFE
4X4 VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY ON THE WEB

"The Web" is changing the world - and 4x4 off-road junkies are moving along with it, their adventure horizons broadened by a new, wild world of information.

"There's more information than ever before available on the Internet today for off-road adventurers, and the best of it is here in our own country," says author/film-maker/map-maker and off-road adventure guru Andrew St Pierre White, whose newly expanded information website - 4xForum.com - is claimed as the first of its kind in the world.

The 4xForum site opened in 1996, became an overnight success, and has since gone through a series of extensive upgrades, every time packed with more information and ideas to satisfy the hunger of a growing audience of 4x4 enthusiasts. Today, says St Pierre White, it has an unparalleled storehouse of information - maps, adventure travel films and videos, how-to and where-to programmes. It's also evolved into a virtual travel accessory marketplace. And the marvel is that much of the information is virtually free.

St Pierre White explains how the new upgraded site works. "To begin with, site visitors can lap up hundreds of pages with thousands of topics without even having to register. The next level is to register and become a forum user, sharing your opinions on the forum. The third level is to subscribe. This is where a fee is charged.

A 4xforum.com subscriber has free access to:

- Video downloads of 4x4 and adventure travel video programs. There are already over 16 shows; over 10 hours and growing.
- Free PDF downloads of Southern Africa best range of maps for adventure travellers: InfoMaps. Already over 16 countries and regions.
- Travel tools including packing lists, conversion calculators and more to come.
- St.Pierre White's very latest 320-page, full colour 4x4 guide book, in PDF format.
- Close to half price on all DVDs, books and paper and GPS maps. One could easily save the cost of the subscription at a single sitting!

The address is www.4xforum.com. If you are interested in 4x4 or anything connected with it, take a look. Subscriptions are R230 for one year or R460 for a lifetime subscription. But even if you don't subscribe and take advantage of what strikes me as an excellent deal, there is so much info on the site, it could keep you out of your 4x4's driving seat for weeks and then send you into the wilderness for much, much longer.

HOW?

Log onto www.4xforum.com and hit the 'click here for more info' button.

LIVE A GREENER LIFE

Energy Efficiency - This article looks at the environmental impact of our energy consumption, some simple ways to use less of it, and the many positive benefits that can result

Home heating and cooling: 45 percent

In most households, heating and cooling accounts for the biggest single chunk of your energy bill. The good news is there are many ways to cut those costs. Choose energy-efficient furnaces or air conditioners that are the right size for your home. Properly insulate your home (especially the ceiling/attic), including the duct system. Contact your utility company (Eskom) for a free energy audit.

Programmable thermostats, and ceiling fans can also help lower your energy bill. A programmable thermostat, can cut heating and cooling costs as much as 20 percent when you use it to reduce the temperature 5 degrees at night and 10 degrees during the day when cooling (or raise it an equal amount when heating).

Hot water: 11 percent

Overall, water-heater technology hasn't changed much in recent years. There are, however, newer, instantaneous heating models (with no tank) that can save you annually in energy costs, although they cost more initially. Solar hot-water heaters are gaining popularity as an alternative for or supplement to conventional water-heating units.

Set your water heater to 120 degrees. It can save up to 10 percent in water-heating costs compared to a 140 degree setting. Wrap an insulation blanket around your hot water pipes and storage tank.

Replace a showerhead that is more than 10 years old with a low-flow model. It can save up to half the hot water used for showering.

Washers and dryers: 10 percent

New high-efficiency appliances are much better for the environment and your family finances. These tips can also help: Wash laundry in cold water, which can save up to R1000 a year. (According to Consumer Reports testers, cold water works well for all but a few types of stains).

Consider a front-loading washing machine if you're in the market for a new one. Consumer Reports tests show that the most efficient front-loading machines can cut water consumption by about 25 percent compared with the worst ones we tested.

Lighting: 7 percent

You can reduce lighting costs by 67 percent by using compact fluorescents instead of incandescent bulbs. They cost less than R10 each but can shed as much light as a 100-watt incandescent while using only about 25 watts and therefore take less energy to do more. Compact fluorescents also last 6 to 10 times longer than standard bulbs.

You can save even more by installing electronic photocell on-and-off switches and electric timers to turn lights off automatically when you don't need them. However, compact fluorescent bulbs do contain mercury and should be carefully disposed.

Refrigerators: 6 percent

Thanks to mandated minimum-efficiency standards, this former energy hog now has one of the daintiest energy appetites in the house. However, there are still ways to reduce its consumption:

Choose a top-freezer model (the most efficient) over a side-by-side model (the least efficient). Icemakers add to energy consumption and potentially to repair bills. Models with icemakers are the most repair-prone according to Consumer Reports surveys.

Household Electronics: 4 percent

Your TVs, DVD player, VCR, and all the rest each contribute to your household energy tab. Running a computer and a monitor 24 hours a day (and many people do) uses some 1,100 kilowatt hours annually. If electricity in your area costs 8 cents per kilowatt hour, for example, that translates to R8800 a year.

Putting them on sleep mode could save more than 80 percent of that expense and cut CO2 emissions by up to 1,250 kgs a year.

Dishwashers: 2 percent

New high-efficiency appliances are much better for the environment and your family finances. This tip can also help: Wash full loads in your dishwasher, skip the special cycles (like sanitize), and load the machine correctly (for example, heavily soiled items at the back and sides).

Miscellaneous: 15 percent

Products such as home-security systems, cell phones, PDAs, small wall-mounted vacuum cleaners, toys, and even those clocks built into so many appliances all consume energy.

AC power supplies (power cords with a bricklike appendage that convert AC power back to DC) used on all manner of devices consume a surprising amount of energy—more than 58 billion kilowatt-hours annually, much of that while the products they power are not even in use. That's equal to the annual output of 10 large power plants. It also translates into 40 million tons of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere each year, according to Ecos Consulting, an environmental consulting firm.

Increasingly, many products consume energy even when they're off. The standby power on many types of consumer electronics accounts for as much as 5 percent of total household energy consumption, or about 450 kilowatt hours per year.

Why it matters?

The little things add up. Few of us stop to think about the environmental impact when we turn on a light or launder a load of clothes. But with millions of other people doing the same thing, such simple actions have a surprisingly large cumulative impact.

Fossil fuels contribute to global warming. Much of the energy we use in our homes is created by burning carbon-based fuels, including oil, natural gas, coal, and biomass (derived from timber, agriculture, and food processing waste). That produces carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas. Greenhouse gases, whether spewing from exhaust pipes or power plants, trap heat near the Earth, resulting in the climate changes collectively referred to as global warming. Depending on where you live, you may have limited control over the type of energy you use in your home. You could however have more control than you realize over how much of it you use.

Fossil fuels are also a finite, non-renewable resource. Experts predict that we have 20 to 100 years before worldwide demand for petroleum will exhaust available supplies.

Brownouts (when electrical power is reduced) and blackouts (when electrical power fails) are becoming more frequent. That makes energy conservation increasingly important, especially during peak periods of demand. Electric power outages cost the nation R8 billion annually. A number of factors, including an aging infrastructure, and in many provinces, utility deregulation, have combined to make the national electric grid more vulnerable to breakdown. Individuals can make it better or worse by how much air conditioning/heaters and other appliances they use during periods of peak demand, such as heat waves.

Generating electricity produces more air pollution than any other industry. Some power-plant fuels burn more cleanly than others, resulting in lower emissions. Natural gas burns the cleanest, coal pollutes the most, and oil is somewhere in between. Coal-fired plants produce chemicals, such as sulfur dioxides and nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter (or fine particles) that cause smog and acid rain. This fine particulate matter mixes together with other chemicals and can exacerbate asthma and other respiratory diseases. Mercury is also released by coal-fired plants and goes into the air before settling into the soil and water.

Air pollution is also created at an earlier stage in the energy-production process, when fossil fuels are extracted from the earth and processed, such as at oil refineries.

Power plants produce other waste that must be disposed. Nuclear power plants generate extremely toxic waste that remains radioactive for tens of thousands of years. Conventional fossil-fuel powered plants (oil-, coal-, or natural-gas-burning plants) generate waste ash that

contains toxic chemicals and must be disposed of in specially designed landfills.

While wind and solar power generate little waste, the photovoltaic cells and batteries that may be part of a solar array can contain some toxic substances such as cadmium, which can be a problem if it ends up in a landfill.

Waterways and wildlife are also affected by power generation. Many power plants work by converting water into steam to run turbines. The removal of water from local streams, rivers, and lakes can have a harmful effect on fish and other aquatic life as can the discharge of used water that may be too hot or too cold.

Saving Power

With power supply problems around the country set to get worse when winter settles in, we have received some handy tips on saving electricity around the house from Eskom.

Here are some handy household tips:

- When boiling water, boil only as much as you need and don't fill the kettle with unnecessary water
- Replace light bulbs with energy saving bulbs
- Compare cooking times in a microwave with the stove, oven and steam cooker and choose the most economical source
- Switch off the dishwasher before it gets to the drying cycle and dry the dishes by hand
- Don't open and close the fridge unnecessarily
- Defrost food in the in the fridge and not the microwave oven
- Switch off the TV and radio if no one is watching or listening

- Switch off lights when no one is in the room
- Turn the geyser thermostat down to a lower temperature
- Shower rather than bath
- Shorten the time on the swimming pool pump
- Plan a braai or candlelight dinner

Part of this content was compiled by Eskom. For more information on how to save electricity visit http://www.eskom.co.za/live/content.php?Item_ID=274

ONE-STOP BORDER POST FOR MOZ

A ONE-STOP border post between Mpumalanga and Mozambique will be operational by mid-2009, according to Maputo Corridor Logistics Initiative (MCLI) COO, Barbara Mommen. It will cost around R600m to build and comprise separate facilities to process passengers, rail and commercial cargo traffic. Mommen said the implementation of the 24-hour joint one-stop border post in 2009 would go a long way towards addressing infrastructure, processing and congestion constraints. However customs documentation and processes would need to be harmonised before the one-stop border post could open, she said.

MATA MATA AND SENDELINGSDRIFT TOURIST ACCESS FACILITIES ARE OPENED TO PUBLIC

Presidents Thabo Mbeki, Festus Mogae of Botswana and Hifikepunye Pohambe of Namibia opened the Mata Mata tourist access facility (border post) in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park on 12 October 2007. This momentous step forward allows visitors to move between the three countries via shorter routes and is sure to spearhead development of tourism across the region.

Later in the same week the Ministers of Environment and Tourism and Home Affairs opened the Sendelingsdrift tourist access facility in the Ais Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park. This pontoon across the Orange River will facilitate the flow of tourist traffic through the region, negating the circuitous journey through Noordoewer.

ST LUCIA WETLAND PARK RENAMED

KwaZulu-Natal's Greater St Lucia Wetland Park has changed its name to iSamangaliso Wetland Park. This 22 000 hectare park includes Lake St Lucia, Charters Creek, False Bay, Fanie's Island, Sodwana Bay, Maphelane, Kosi Bay, Lake Sibaya, Cape Vidal and uMkhuze Game Reserves. Unfortunately, the park remains outside the Wild Card network for now, but it is hoped they will consider joining the Wild Card in the near future.

SUMMER IS HERE – BEWARE OF LIGHTNING

Lightning is one of the most beautiful displays in nature. It is also one of the most deadly natural phenomena known to man. With bolt temperatures hotter than the surface of the sun and shockwaves beaming out in all directions, lightning is a lesson in physical science and humility. Beyond its powerful beauty, lightning presents science with one of its greatest local mysteries: How does it work? It is common knowledge that lightning is generated in electrically charged storm systems, but the method of cloud charging still remains elusive.

The Great Mystery

In an electrical storm, the storm clouds are charged like giant capacitors in the sky. The upper portion of the cloud is positive and the lower portion is negative. How the cloud acquires this charge is still not agreed upon within the scientific community, but the following description provides one plausible explanation.

Capacitors - A capacitor is an electrical device that consists of two conductive surfaces separated by an insulating (dielectric) media. When a voltage is applied to the surfaces, energy is stored in the resulting electric field created by the charge separation of the surfaces. You can create a simple capacitor by separating two sheets of aluminum foil with a sheet of plastic wrap. The quality of the capacitor is controlled by the size of the two pieces of foil, the insulating quality of the plastic and the thickness of the plastic -- the closer the two pieces of foil, the better the capacitor. A good, large capacitor can easily store enough electricity to melt a screwdriver! A cloud acts like a huge capacitor. The top and bottom of the cloud are like the two pieces of foil. Huge amounts of electricity can be stored inside this cloud capacitor.

In the process of the water cycle, moisture can accumulate in the atmosphere. This accumulation is what we see as a cloud. Interestingly, clouds can contain millions upon millions of water droplets and ice suspended in the air. As the process of evaporation and condensation continues, these droplets encounter many collisions with other moisture that is in the process of condensing as it rises. Also, the rising moisture may collide with ice or sleet that is in the process of falling to the earth or located in the lower portion of the cloud. The importance of these collisions is that electrons are knocked off of the rising moisture, thus creating a charge separation.

The newly knocked-off electrons gather at the lower portion of the cloud, giving it a negative charge. The rising moisture that has just lost an electron carries a positive charge to the top of the cloud. Beyond the collisions, freezing plays an important role. As the rising moisture encounters colder temperatures in the upper cloud regions and begins to freeze, the frozen portion becomes negatively charged and the unfrozen droplets become positively charged. At this point, rising air currents have the ability to remove the positively charged droplets from the ice and carry them to the top of the cloud. The remaining frozen portion would likely fall to the lower portion of the cloud or continue on to the ground. Combining the collisions with the freezing, we can begin to

understand how a cloud may acquire the extreme charge separation that is required for a lightning stroke.

Exploding Air

Any time there is an electrical current, there is also heat associated with the current. Since there is an enormous amount of current in a lightning strike, there is also an enormous amount of heat. In fact, a bolt of lightning is hotter than the surface of the sun. This heat is the actual cause of the brilliant white-blue flash that we see.

When a leader and a streamer meet and the current flows (the strike), the air around the strike becomes extremely hot. So hot that it actually explodes because the heat causes the air to expand so rapidly. The explosion is soon followed by what we all know as thunder.

Thunder is the shockwave radiating away from the strike path. When the air heats up, it expands rapidly, creating a compression wave that propagates through the surrounding air. This compression wave manifests itself in the form of a sound wave. That does not mean that thunder is harmless. On the contrary, if you are close enough, you can feel the shockwave as it shakes the surroundings. Keep in mind that when a nuclear explosion occurs, typically the most destruction is caused by the energy of the rapidly moving shockwave. In fact, the shockwave that produces the thunder from a lightning strike can most certainly damage structures and people. This danger is more prominent when you are close to the strike, because the shockwave is stronger there and will dampen (decrease) with distance. Physics teaches us that sound travels much slower than light, so we see the flash before we hear the thunder. In air, sound travels roughly 1 mile every 4.5 seconds. Light travels at a blazing 186,000 miles per second.

Misconceptions

Rubber tires keep you safe in a car because they do not conduct electricity.

Nope. In strong electric fields, rubber tires actually become more conductive than insulating. The reason you are safe in a car is because the lightning will travel around the surface of the vehicle and then go to ground. This occurs because the vehicle acts like a Faraday cage. Michael Faraday, a British physicist, discovered that a metal cage would shield objects within the cage when a high potential discharge hit the cage. The metal, being a good conductor, would direct the current around the objects and discharge it safely to the ground. This process of shielding is widely used today to protect the electrostatic sensitive integrated circuits in the electronics world.

The tallest objects in a storm always get struck by lightning.

It's true that taller objects are closer to the clouds, but as discussed previously, lightning can strike the ground at a close distance to a tall object. Taller objects may have a higher possibility of a strike, but where lightning is concerned, the strike path is not predictable.

NDLOVU CAMP IN HLANE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK, SWAZILAND, REFURBISHED.

The refurbished Ndlovu camp will house one of the largest restaurants (100 seater) in the Lowveld area, ideally suited for weddings, corporate events and team building exercises. The restaurant has been built to maximise the spectacular view over the waterhole so you can relax and catch a glimpse of rhino while enjoying a cold sundowner.

A new shop and reception area is also now operational. This provides the ideal spot to choose your daily activity and find information about other Big Game Parks Reserves and offerings. Friendly staff are available at the front desk to assist you with checking in, enquiries and payments.

Host your function at Hlane Royal National Park, or get away for a few days with the family and relax in the wonderful Swazi bush. Their quiet season specials make it affordable as does being able to choose between self catering or the new restaurant facilities.

GPS SALES RISE OVER CHRISTMAS

Distributors say global positioning systems (GPS) sold well over Christmas. "Yes, the personal navigation device (PND) was as popular as hoped for," says Core Group TomTom product manager Francois Elzenga. "2008 will be even better." Jason Theunissen, executive director sales at Garmin distributor Avnic Trading, says: "There's no doubt that GPS was the number one gift choice this Christmas.

"If Santa's sleigh stopped on your roof you would have expected to see a Garmin nüvi clipped to the front of it. Garmin had excellent sales over the period, exceeding forecasts, and in spite of a rash of new entrants we are confident we maintained our strong position in the market," he adds.

Both Elzenga and Theunissen declined to release actual sales figures.

Content provider MapIT spokeswoman Lorraine Deane says: "Our map licence sales were as high as hoped for. Sales of our map licences from October to December exceeded 78 000. This was in line with our expectation."

Pre-Christmas research by World Wide Worx as well as Jump Shopping, the online shopping search site, indicated that GPS PNDs would be a popular gift. Jump MD Albert Bredenhann in December said the most popular search on the company's site was for GPS satellite navigation systems.

The sales results come despite concerns that a slew of interest rate hikes and the National Credit Act would put a dampener on consumer Christmas spending. Several retailers in the clothing, furniture and even building materials sectors have already reported disappointing holiday sales.

From ITWeb. January 2008

MAPPING THE WORLD, A STREET AT A TIME

By Glenn Chapman

Two companies are racing to map the world as the internet goes increasingly mobile with ever more sophisticated gadgets for people on the move. Netherlands-based Tele Atlas and US company Navteq crisscross countries around the world to gather information about what is where and how to drive there and the data they gather turns up in mapping services offered by Google, Yahoo, and Microsoft.

They do it using vans like the one above, which was on display at the recent Consumer Electronics show in Las Vegas, Nevada. It has eight rooftop cameras and a fisheye lens to record a 360-degree view, making note of traffic signs and speed limits, two laser sensors to make detailed scans of building facades and sizes, inclinometers to measure road angles and slopes - and a global positioning satellite unit to track its location to within a metre.

Greg Russo spent eight months alone on the road in the van. "I talk to myself a lot," he said. "People think I'm from another planet - it's not a low profile vehicle." Tele Atlas spokeswoman Erin Delaney said the company's global fleet had mapped more than 205 countries and territories.

Mapping companies augment information obtained from their specially-equipped fleets with data from satellites, public records, government agencies and anywhere else with reliable facts about roadways. Tele Atlas is now making three-dimensional digital recreations of the world's major cities.

Delaney said: "I'm sure the whole world will eventually be online in 3-D. "You'll never have to leave your house, although I think it's better if you do." Data compiled by the companies will merge with

innovations in mobile devices and software applications to offer drivers conveniences such as finding out nearby fuel prices or available parking spaces in real time.

Trucking companies already use information from mapping companies to determine the cheapest or fastest routes to destinations, taking into account how road slopes will affect fuel consumption. Navteq has more than 700 analysts collecting, verifying and updating more than 20-million kilometres of logged roadway from 72 countries.

Strange street signs noted by Navteq road warriors include "Nudity Not Prohibited" in the United States and "Irish Crossing" in Saudi Arabia. – AFP

MOZAMBIQUE- - A SPLENDID DESTINATION INDEED

With a coastline of approximately 2500 km, edged with palm-fringed beaches, Mozambique is one of the most alluring destinations in the world. This amazing country was a Portuguese colony until 1975 when it gained its independence. Thereafter, a civil war raged from 1977 to 1992 but the friendly hard working people have restored the country to former glory making it a captivating idyllic playground in the sun. With strong Arabic and Portuguese influences mixed into African culture, great seafood and breathtaking beauty, Mozambique is bound to capture your soul!

From the chaos and poverty in the 70's and 80's, **Maputo** is slowly recreating some of its former glory. With its vibrant markets and street cafés, this city is full of character and African charm and the perfect place to start your journey of this incredible country. From Maputo, travel north-east to **Inhambane**, a city with a fascinating mix of old-world Portuguese and Muslim cultures. Here, you can sail silently and peacefully in a traditional Dhow with its unmistakable triangular sail. The local islanders will take you on a memorable journey where you might even catch a glimpse of an elusive dugong, or witness one of Africa's marvels - the magnificent sunset. Pass through Vilanculous en-route to a gateway in the sun - **The Bazaruto Archipelago**. This group of 5 islands off the coast of Mozambique is widely considered to be the Pearl of the Indian Ocean. The area offers stunning coral pink beaches, world class deep sea fishing, scuba diving and snorkeling. In the 1970s the islands were declared a national park, with no roads, no shops and no major tourist attractions you are constantly surrounded by wall to wall natural beauty!

Regards, Vaness Mann - <http://www.africa-adventure.org/>

GEOCACHING AS A SPORT. INTERESTED?

Fall is a great time for a family outing. Consider the growing activity of geocaching for some adventure and excitement. The activity of finding a hidden cache is rapidly catching on with people from all walks of life - families, singles and groups looking for a new adventure.

There are 473,064 caches worldwide ranging in size from micro to large caches, each containing a logbook and pencil to record your name and comments, many with coins or other treasures that are fun to find and replace with your own. The geocaching vocabulary includes terms like muggle, micro, geocoins, spoiler and swag - to name a few. For example, if a cache has been mugged, this means the cache has been stolen by a non-geocacher.

To get started, visit www.geocaching.com and surf this site to get information on what is involved, answers to frequently asked questions and links to the equipment used in geocaching. The site is used by geocachers around the world to log their caches and to download the coordinates for caches they want to find. Membership is free. Caches can be searched by postal code, coordinates, country, key word, and username or waypoint name. Check out the different types of caches like traditional, multi-cache, letterbox, mystery, puzzle caches and virtual caches to name a few.

According to Chris Edley all you need to start is access to the Internet, a computer to download the coordinates from the website, a GPS (global positioning system) and a PDA (personal data assistant) if you want to download the coordinates of the cache to a paperless system. Chris is a research coordinator by day and a geocacher by night and on the weekends. He and his wife Helen started an online company based in Victoria (landsharkz.ca) dedicated to supplying caches and promoting geocaching worldwide.

He got into geocaching following a conversation over dinner with a friend who then took him on his first cache hunt. Since then he has been geocaching from Victoria to St. John's and points around the world. Chris describes geocaching as a high-tech combination of treasure hunting and orienteering. It is becoming so popular that a new member is being added every 30 seconds. He sees the technology getting more robust as cellphones add GPS and GPS units add more advanced features.

David Papp has been geocaching for a number of years with his family. David owns a local company specializing in network troubleshooting and network security and says geocaching is a great way to enjoy the great outdoors and have some family fun. His passion has taken him to international locations - he even found one of the rare treasures that were hidden upon the release of the movie "Planet of the Apes" known as an "ape cache." David knows how kids get excited about exploring new places and has taken his expertise and passion for geocaching to Scouts Canada. He believes that the technology will improve, producing a GPS radius smaller than three metres, rendering maps faster and including more waypoints.

David has some tips for doing your first cache search:

1. Choose a cache with a low difficulty rating
2. Choose a regular cache size rather than a micro size
3. Borrow a GPS rather than invest in one
4. Get a friend or experience geocacher to go out on your first trip
5. Look at the hints so you get some insights on how people hide their cache
6. Follow the steps so you are successful on your first geocache outing.

Another enthusiastic local geocacher is Dave Hughes, who by day is Chair of the NAIT Plumber program. Dave found out about geocaching while researching GPS units. He bought a GPS unit, took his daughter out to find their first cache and since then the family has been hooked. There are many social events where geocachers get together to compare notes and talk about their best caches and outings. He also advises new geocachers to ask someone with experience to join you on your first treasure hunt. Dave's experience has taken him geocaching in many countries and includes finding a cache in the Great Wall of China.

Good luck and have fun geocaching in the great outdoors!

Start by exploring some of the following sites:

Information sites:

- [Geocaching - The Official Global GPS Cache Hunt Site](#)
- [Geocaching Edmonton](#)
- [Geocaching FAQ](#)
- [BC Geocaching Association](#)
- [Landsharkz](#)
- [Geocacher University - Canada](#)

GPS units:

- [Garmin](#)
- [Magellan](#)

Geocaching supplies online:

- [GPS Central](#)
- [GPS City](#)

For the best prices on GARMIN GPS Units, send an email to 4buy4direct@mweb.co.za, specifying what product you are interested in.

There is currently a special running on Garmin Quest 1 (not the 2!). Only R5000 inc VAT. Email me quickly while the special lasts. Want more detail on the unit, look it up on www.garmin.co.za

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BIRDERS – THIS ONE IS FOR YOU!

The following birding and birding related events are being planned in the Limpopo Province this year in conjunction with the Greater Limpopo Birding Routes and Birdlife South Africa

The **Kruger Park Birding Weekend** on the **25th to the 27th of Jan. and the 1st to the 3rd of Feb**, these are organized by the West Rand Honorary Rangers for more info contact Wiggie at wiggie@mjvn.co.za

On the **1st to the 3rd of Feb.** there is the **Limpopo River Bird Count** being hosted by the Greater Limpopo Birding Route where a census of waterbirds will be done along the Limpopo River. This is fully booked but for information contact me ben@limpopobirding.com

On the **1st of March** the Greater Limpopo Birding Routes is planning a **workshop** to teach birders how to become involved in the new **atlassing project** run by BLSA and the ADU. This will be held in Polokwane and facilitated by Neil Smith from BLSA. It will be free, please join us and learn how to help make your birding outings scientifically significant, we need to get all or birds in Limpopo atlassed so that we can protect them effectively. For information and booking contact me ben@limpopobirding.com

On the **7th to the 9th** of March there is a birding weekend being hosted by **Bundox Bush Camp** in the Nylsvley area, for more information contact Ida at bundox@mweb.co.za

On **May the 1st to the 4th** is the Venda 4 x 4 Birding weekend, for more information and bookings contact Sue Anderson at travel@birdlife.org.za

From the **13th to the 16th** of June is the **Honorary Rangers Limpopo Regions Mapungubwe Birding Weekend**, for more information contact Charles Hardy at charles.hardy@bmwdealer.co.za

The **Marakele Birding Breakaway** is planned for the **31st of October to the 2nd of November** for more information and booking contact Ampie at ampie@thabanet.co.za

There Glendower Magoebaskloof Birds and Forests Festival is being held on the 14 to the 16th of November, for more information and booking contact Sue Anderson at travel@birdlife.org.za

Venetia Game Reserve is planning a birding weekend to hunt down the specials of the area and do some mammal spotting at the same time from **the 12th to the 16th of November** for more information contact Aldo at agred@netdial.co.za

Eden Routes has already held a well attended **Bird Identification** and is planning a second course **towards the end of May**. They are also holding a **Raptor Identification Course** in the Kruger Park from the **21st to the 24 of Feb**. For more information or bookings contact Joe on edenroutes@telkomsa.net

Ben de Boer
Project Manager
Greater Limpopo Birding Routes
Tel/fax: 015 276 1131
Cell: 083 294 1013
Website: www.limpopobirding.com or www.birdlife.org.za
E-mail : ben@limpopobirding.com or contactus@limpopobirding.com

Bird call ring tones on your cell phone!

Visit <http://www.birdlife.org.za> and look for ring tones under downloads for list of available calls. (Charged at R 10.00 per SMS – BirdLife proceeds go to bird conservation). SMS the keyword for the bird call you want to 38110 and the ring tone will be sent to your cell phone.

Visit WWW.4X4OFFROADCLUB.CO.ZA to gain access on the landing page to some great new birding trails under the Diamond Birdong Route label.

CAMPING IN KZN WILDLIFE AREAS

Green grass, friendly wildlife eating out of your hand, birds chirping, sleeping under a lovely sheet of midnight stars, communing with nature. Sleeping on mud, opportunistic wildlife stealing your food, bird droppings all over your stuff, sleeping with large biting bugs in the rain, cursing nature and whoever made you come on a camping trip.

The REAL answer probably lies somewhere between the two. Yes, camping is great outdoorsy fun, but you also can't forget that along with the outdoors comes unpredictability. If you don't plan your trip correctly, then you might accidentally end up with rain, huge bugs, or thieving animals. Fortunately KZN Wildlife has a whole range of camping opportunities to suit every taste. You can get away to the beach, escape to the mountains, take time out by the lakeside or retreat to the bushveld, there will always be a natural location to suit you.

And of course modern camping equipment takes most of the pain out of camping and whether you drag your home with you in the form of a caravan or erect a tent, you can be extremely comfortable and even watch satellite TV.

For those campers who like all the comforts of home, in a beautiful natural setting, our camp grounds offer sites with electricity and water as well as braai facilities. Mountain campsites like Mahai in Royal Natal National Park and Monks Cowl further south in the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park are really popular and offer top end camping. There are camp areas throughout the whole length of this World Heritage Site from electrified to mountain caves, campsites with cold showers and the bare minimum of facilities for the extremists. All this and Hiking too!

There are hundred of kilometres of hiking trail, through valleys and forests up to the 'Little Berg' and through steep narrow passes to the top of the escarpment. To wake at first light in the Upper Injisuthi Cave and watch the sun appear over KZN is an unforgettable experience. The wet and wild bunch will enjoy a waterside stand in one of our four major dams in the province. Campsites in Midmar, Wagendrift, Spioenkop and Chelmsford offer the full range of camping facilities and added to all the water sport activities is the additional benefit of game viewing and bird watching.

Camping in a game reserve is a 24 hour experience. During the day you can go on game walks and drives or relax in our excellent hides and let the animals come to you for wonderful photographic opportunities. Mkhuze, Ndumo, Ithala, Phongolo and Weenen all have excellent camping facilities. The range of wildlife is diverse and the bird lists impressive. As dusk falls the smells and sounds of Africa permeate the air. The evocative smell of the 'potato creeper', the chilling laugh of a hyaena seem so close when there is just a thin layer of canvas between you and the 'wilds'. The coast of KwaZulu-Natal, from Kosi Bay on the Mozambique border, to the Umtamvuna River at the start of the Wild Coast, offers so many camping opportunities there are almost too many to name.

Your tent shelters beneath a spreading Albizia and you can't wait to cast your lure into the backline and feel the first tentative tug on your line; long walks along sweeping beaches in the early morning and late afternoon to see what treasures the tide has brought in. Whether you are below the surface in the silent world of the southernmost coral reefs in the world, or bracing yourself in a ski boat as you launch through the breakers, KZN Wildlife has the perfect spot for your camping holiday on the beach. Wherever you choose to camp this summer holiday, our campsites will be scenic, comfortable, convenient and most of all affordable.

SNAKE COURSES

I run snake courses for the general public, outdoors people, field guides, farmers, snake keepers, doctors, vets, etc. In short, anybody that may come in contact with snakes or snakebite will benefit from these courses. These courses were researched and compiled after a number of people had approached me for information on snakebite and the handling of snakes. I have been catching snakes since 1965 and **work professionally** with venomous snakes as I extract venom for antivenom production. I keep about 400 snakes for this purpose.

My courses are **FGASA** (Field Guides Association of Southern Africa) approved as specialist courses. Those that pass will receive a certificate with the FGASA emblem on it. The Snake ID and Snakebite Treatment course is also registered with the **WITS CPD Office** and medical doctors that pass the test can claim 5 CPD points (Continued Professional Development).

The **Snake ID & Snakebite Treatment** course starts at 08h00 - 12h30. It covers the identification of the dangerous snake, the symptoms of snakebite, the first aid treatment, medical treatment and allergy recognition and treatment. There are 2 tea breaks and lunch is from 12h30 - 13h00, and from 13h00 - 14h00 everybody will be writing their test. Cost for this course is R650.00 VAT inclusive per person.

After this it is the **Venomous Snake Handling** course which starts at 14h00 - 17h00. Testing is practical handling under my supervision, and verbal questions and answers as we do handling. Cost for this course is R400.00 VAT inclusive per person. I also offer an additional **Black mamba handling** course for those people that may **have a need** to handle black mambas. This is done at an additional cost of R250.00 VAT inclusive per person, and runs from 17h15 to 18h30.

The next courses are scheduled for Saturday 26 January 2008. I can also offer courses for interested groups or companies, and then the courses can be run during office hours, provided the group size is 10 people or more.

Venue

African Reptiles and Venom is situated 8 km north from Fourways on the William Nicol extension, which becomes the R511. From the N1 (cement highway) take the William Nicol off ramp, and turn north away from Johannesburg. Pass Monte Casino on your right, pass the Fourways Mall on your left and go pass Indaba hotel on your left, cross 2 rivers the Jukskei river and the Diepsloot River. 900 meters after the second bridge, you will see a sign African Reptiles and Venom on your right hand. Turn in and park under the trees. The lectures are held in the lapa at the pool.

From Pretoria you will go towards Jo'burg and then take the R28/N12 towards Krugersdorp. Take the Hartebeespoort/Sandton off ramp. The off ramp makes a 180-degree bend. At the stop turn right towards Sandton. You will now be going pass the Diepsloot Squatter camp, on your right. From the stop where you turned right, you will travel for about 4 km. Look out for the sign on your left that reads "African Reptiles and Venom". Turn in and park under the trees.

Please let me know when you would like to attend.

Regards

AFRICAN REPTILES AND VENOM - Mike Perry

083 44 888 54 (cell)

0866973304 (fax)

mike@africanreptiles-venom.co.za

TATA RAISES ITS GAME WITH THE XENON

By Dave Abrahams

The first Tata released in South Africa - back in 2004 – was the Telcoline diesel bakkie. It was rough but very durable – a pure workhorse. As we said back then, they're not driven by the guys who buy them but by guys who work for the guys who buy them. Now there's a Tata bakkie for the boss, capable of working just as hard but more comfortable, with smarter styling, better build quality and a lot more features.

One thing it does have in common with the [Telcoline](#), however, is rock-bottom pricing. The Xenon is available at launch in only two variants, each a double cab with accommodation for five adults plus a one-ton payload in an 800-litre load box.

Prices:

4x2 – R169 995

4x4 - R194 995

Each is driven by a three-litre Dicor diesel engine, an uprated version of the venerable plodder familiar to South Africans in the [207Di](#) load-hauler, but with common-rail direct fuel-injection and mildly turbocharged to deliver a quoted 85kW at 3000rpm and 300Nm at 1800.

It's a straightforward four-cylinder lump, built like an anvil (it weighs 325kg without fluids!) and

unquestionably durable, but runs unexpectedly quietly and smoothly thanks to the sophisticated multi-squirt fuel injection pattern made possible by the common-rail system.

(A slightly more upmarket derivative with a newer, 2.2-litre turbodiesel that produces more power and comparable torque but at higher revs is expected later in 2008.) For now, the three-litre engine drives through a reasonably slick and very positive five-speed manual gearbox – with reverse rather surprisingly where you'd expect to find sixth. Both 4x2 and 4x4 models have limited-slip rear differentials but these are of dubious efficacy since (as on the Telcoline) they operate only at very low revs.

In the 4x4 version a simple roller wheel on the fascia allows you to change from rear-wheel to all-wheel drive at up to 65km/h, or you can stop and scroll one click further to engage 4x4 low range. Then, in the words of the warning sticker on the inside of the windscreen: "Do not march the vehicle until the 4L light on the instruments has stopped flickering." When it does – a matter of seconds – away you go; it's that simple.

Double-wishbone suspension

The Xenon has supple, double-wishbone front suspension with an anti-roll bar to stop it from getting soggy, and a live rear axle with no-nonsense leaf springs to support the aforementioned ton.

Without ballast, it's a little bouncy on rough ground but not uncontrollable; the suspension doesn't offer the articulation of dedicated bundu-bashers such as the Pajero, Land Cruiser and Discovery but the Xenon is nevertheless a surprisingly capable off-roader.

The major part of the launch drive was on Hein and Ronel Geldenhuys' farm Drie Provinsies, near Volksrust, so named because the borders of kwaZulu-Natal, the Free State and Mpumalanga meet there, 2253m up in the Langkrans mountains where the black eagles breed.

The track up to the crest is challenging in dry weather - but it had been raining non-stop for a week when we got there and even the dirt road up to the farmhouse was a bit of an adventure (the Paul Simon song "Slip-sliding away" comes to mind!).

The trail itself was gloriously muddy, peppered with sharp rocks to catch you unawares (I heard - and felt – some heavy thumps on the undercarriage of "my" Xenon) and ridiculously steep in places – gradient 4.5 to five – but all the Xenons made it to the top, seemingly without any ill effects. Only one got stuck on a nasty, steep muddy section; the driver backed off, got some momentum up and sailed through at the third attempt.

The Xenon coped effortlessly – and comfortably - with the high meadows, mountain streams and rough trails of the farm, which is really what it was built for, although I found the power-assisted steering very vague on all surfaces.

The accommodation is a major step up from the Telcoline but still distinctly low-rent; the one-piece fascia is solid but plasticky and the instrument binnacle (not a perfect fit) creaks annoyingly on bumpy ground. There's a huge gap around the glovebox lid and some of the small trim items on the Xenon I drove were loose, including (notably) the plastic cover on the steering wheel and the lining of the right A pillar.

The instrumentation is plain to the point of austerity (on the "need to know" principle) with the simplest possible graphics in white on grey, red needles and skinny chromed bezels – which actually makes them easy to read at a glance. The rest of the fascia is the same; the aircon controls are straightforward (and the air flow is very effective!), and the locally-fitted JVC radio/CD/MP3 player is a typical aftermarket unit, about as complex as a household kettle.

The front seats are adjustable only for reach and backrest angle but are both comfortable and supportive on rough going, while the rear bench seat has both a full-width squab *and* adequate legroom - features matched by only a select few double-cabs.

Power windows and mirror adjustment are standard, as are a tilt-adjustable steering column, brake load-sensing proportioning valve, remote central locking, front fog lights and 16" alloy rims. What you don't get are crash bags, anti-lock brakes or, for that matter, any electronic driver aids at all – which is one of the reasons it's so affordable.

Nevertheless, the Xenon is capable off-road, comfortable on, will work all week and then tow a boat or caravan to where the fun is at weekends with effortless ease if not blinding speed. Tata has pitched it as a dual-purpose bakkie, combining the best features of a workhorse and a family leisure vehicle; if you can overlook a few rough edges and omissions it just about fits the bill.

NAVIGATORS FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE ADVENTURES

Navigators specialises in informative and relaxed small-group touring. Whether you're a seasoned and well-travelled adventurer or new to the 4x4 lifestyle, join our guided self-drive tours to make new friends, discover exciting destinations in the company of like-minded enthusiasts, and experience the adventure and sense of accomplishment of confidently meeting the challenges of self-sufficient travel in Africa.

["Central Kalahari Game Reserve" – 10 Nights \(Khama Rhino to Rakops\)](#)

Tour Dates: 7 – 16 April 2008

[Koakoveld "Desert Elephants & Himba" - 14 Nights / 13 Days \(Windhoek to Twyfelfontein\)](#)

Tour Dates: 11 – 24 May 2008

Tour Dates: 8 – 21 June 2008

["Readers Tour" with Getaway Magazine to Zambia – 19 Nights \(Livingstone to Mfuwe\)](#)

Tour Dates: 1 – 18 August 2008

Dates: 1 – 9 February 2008

Following our 'Readers Tour' with Getaway Magazine to the Koakoveld in 2007, we have again joined forces with them to offer well-equipped travellers another unique adventure. Join Chris and Getaway photojournalist Jazz Kuschke on a tour to Zambia during August 2008. This carried and relaxed tour focuses on Kasanka National park, the Bangweulu Wetlands, North Luangwa and Luambe National park. The route includes Kundalila Falls, Lavushi Manda National Park, Kapishya Hot Springs and Shiwa Ng'andu, ending at Mfuwe near South Luangwa. Maximum of 6 vehicles only. Contact us soon to join this unforgettable adventure!

Visit our website at <http://www.navigators4wd.co.za> for our complete 2008 Tour Schedule, and to view or subscribe to our current Newsletter. For specific details and pricing on our safaris and expeditions, e-mail us at info@navigators4wd.co.za. Alternatively, contact Karen at our office on +27 (0) 21 689 1825 or Chris on mobile +27 (0) 83 675 3484.

(March 2007)

Hit the Trail ... / ... continues

WHERE IS KINGLSEY NOW?

Dear Alan

As you already know, Kingsley Holgate – legendary adventurer and humanitarian – is currently making his way through 33 countries around the Outside Edges of Africa on an adventure with a cause. The expedition is linked to the One Net One Life campaign in which thousands of long lasting World Health Organisation approved mosquito nets are being distributed to pregnant mothers and children under the age of five, as well as to a Right to Sight programme, in which spectacles are given to the poor sighted, and a Teaching on the Edge programme, handing out mobile libraries and writing materials to remote schools. Kingsley wrote to us from Dakar in Senegal, 17 countries in, 16 to go.

“We’ve been making our way up the coast of Mauritania where the Sahara meets the Atlantic, and to be blunt, it’s tough on man and machine. We’ve been plagued by loads of sandstorms and our Cappies has run out. But such is life on the edge.

We finally reached Dakar, Senegal, where, at a media function attended by the head of the malaria control programme and ministry of health officials we handed over a symbolic bale of nets to the local hospital. Ministry of Health officials endorsed our Scroll of Peace and Goodwill in support of malaria prevention and the lovely Thembi Majola, the South African Ambassador to Senegal, Cape Verde, Mauritania, Guinea Bissau and The Gambia, wrote these words in our expedition journal:

“To my fellow compatriots: your epic journey along the West Coast of Africa to bring awareness and to physically distribute treated mosquito nets to expectant mothers and mothers with babies up to five years is clearly a noble act; a very personal experience that has touched many people in a most direct, personal, life-saving way. I salute this noble expedition and want to express my deep respect and pride in the humanitarian work you are achieving at a great deal of personal cost. I wish you Godspeed on your journey, and am proud that you fly the South African flag, representing South African resilience, a caring spirit and a will to succeed. Hambani kahle!”

From Dakar the expedition will continue North up the beach to St Louis, the oldest French settlement in West Africa, where more life saving mosquito nets will be distributed in the vicinity of the Senegal River.

Until we can write again, many thanks for your support – we will keep you posted.

Trip stats to date:

200 days done; 165 to go
27 000kms travelled.
17 countries gone, 16 still to come
Millions of tyre revolutions... and even more potholes
100s of campfires and river crossings
Buckets of sweat
Loads of adventure

And, most importantly, tens of thousands of lives already saved and improved through this world-first humanitarian expedition!

CHANGES AT LEROO LA TAU

Leroo-La-Tau was recently sold to another company and they no longer want a campsite so it is closed. May I suggest that you might like to try the wild life department at +267 6861265, there is

a campsite called Khumaga campsite quite near to where Xwaraga campsite used to be.

Leroo-La-Tau is undergoing major renovations and they will be opening on the 1st June with a lovely up market Lodge with 12 chalets.

MOTOR INDUSTRY POSITIVE DESPITE SLOWER 2007

The South African motor industry recorded a 5.4% decline in new vehicle sales in 2007 compared to 2006's performance, concluding the year on 676 097 units. This is according to the annual results released by the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers (Naamsa) and Associated Motor Holdings (AMH) earlier.

Brand Pretorius, chairman of McCarthy Motor Holdings, believes that these results reflect the period of consolidation the industry currently finds itself in, following three years of significant growth.

"The passenger vehicle segment was the only part of the market that showed a decline on 2006's performance, decreasing by 9.7% to 434 633 units. This market segment is usually the most sensitive to any negative developments in the market such as a decline in business and consumer confidence, an increase in interest rates and the introduction of the National Credit Act in June 2007," said Pretorius.

"During 2007, a deterioration in vehicle affordability also occurred due to some price increases, lower trade-in prices and most significantly, the 2% increase in the prime lending rate. In addition, household debt as percentage of disposable income reached a record high of 77.4%, which made it difficult for consumers to get more credit."

To put these results into perspective, Pretorius said that the total sales of 676 097 achieved in 2007 still represented a 9,4% increase on 2005's performance and were more than double the size of the new vehicle market in 1999.

He highlighted that the actual sales for 2007 are somewhat understated, as several independent importers of Chinese vehicles are currently not reporting their sales to Naamsa. The sales achieved by these companies during 2007 are estimated at around 10 000 units, which would increase the industry's total sales during last year to 686 097 units.

Encouraging to note is the fact that the commercial vehicle segments all managed to better 2006's sales performance and reach a number of significant milestones.

Light Commercial Vehicles (LCV) sales broke through the 200 000 units barrier for the first time. Sales improved by 2,4% to reach 204 395 units at the end of December. The Medium Commercial Vehicle (MCV) segment concluded the year on a record 15 168 units, a 6,5% increase on the previous year's performance.

The 21 901 units sold in 2007 in the Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCV) segment, represent an increase of 16,3% on 2006's results and are an all-time record.

Pretorius attributes the record commercial vehicle sales to higher levels of business activity in line with GDP growth of more than 4%, as well as the significant investment in infrastructure development which resulted in higher levels of capital expenditure. "These segments flourished in an economic environment where an estimated GDP growth of 4.5% is expected for 2007," said Pretorius. "Sales were further boosted by the momentum achieved by the Taxi Recapitalisation programme and the continuing growth in road transport."

An interesting development over the last number of years has been the substantial decline in the

market shares of medium and large passenger vehicles, which has changed the composition of the car market significantly. In 2002, medium sized passenger vehicles made up 49.6% of the market but that decreased to 39.4% in 2007. Similarly, large passenger vehicles' market share declined from 7.1% to 5.1% over the same period.

Other segments like recreational vehicles performed better during the recent tough market conditions, gaining market share from a base of 12.4% in 2002, to 18.8% in 2007. The same applies to "sports and exotics", increasing their share from 0.6% to 1.1%. Small passenger vehicles made up 30.4% of the market in 2002, increasing their share to 39.6% in 2006, but losing ground in 2007 with a 35.6% slice of the cake.

Looking at the LCV segment, half ton bakkies increased their share from 21.1% in 2001, to 30.1% in 2007. On the other hand, one ton 4x2 bakkies lost ground since 2001 when it had a 58.1% market share, to its current stake of 44.6%.

The Taxi Recapitalisation programme assisted 10 to 16-seater mini-buses to increase their market share from 5.4% in 2002, to a record 9.7% at the end of 2007.

During 2007, for the first time ever, more fully imported passenger vehicles were sold than locally produced units. Back in 1998, only 12.6% of new cars sold were imported, in comparison to last year when foreign manufactured passenger vehicles made up 55.7% of the market.

ISSUED BY WILKEN COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

HELP REQUIRED ON EXCITING VENTURE

Hi Alan

I don't know if this will interest your readers. I received an email from Leo Fahey regarding their Zambezi Expedition 2008 starting towards the end of March. Its roughly 2 months. They are looking for ground support for the river expedition. . The information is temporarily located on my links page starting about half way down.

www.freewebs.com/luangwablondes/linkszambeziexpedition08.htm

I think they are going to need some experienced and equipped off-roaders for this, as this starts pretty much at the end of the rainy season and I can see where there might be some navigation issues.

Cheers

Robbie Becker

www.luangwablondes.com

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS JOIN TO TACKLE ROAD SAFETY HEAD ON

Tenneco, manufacturers of Monroe shock absorbers, has become a founder members of The Road Safety Foundation. The aim of The Road Safety Foundation is to partner with the private and public sector in an effort to reduce crashes and the resulting injuries and fatalities on South African roads. This will be done by implementing specific and measurable education and awareness programmes.

Megan Naiker, Tenneco Aftermarket Country Manager says, "Monroe has always had as its focus on Safety and 'Making the Road a Safer place.' Not only do we endorse this foundation and its work but we will also make every effort to highlight the dangers of worn shock absorbers and the importance of the role of shocks in the car's handling."

Philip Hull, co-director of the Road Safety Foundation, says, "There is an urgent need to identify and prioritise road safety issues and develop projects to address these issues." He says they will work with existing road safety entities (Arrive Alive, CARS, Drive Alive, GRSP, SADD, etc) to increase the impact of road safety activities as well as with international road safety role players in order to bring research and experience to South Africa.

Hull continues, "The challenge facing the road safety industry is enormous. There are no quick solutions and it will take long term, focused and sustainable activity to change the road safety situation in our country. It requires co-operation between educators, policy makers, law enforcers and engineers."

According to The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), road crashes are the second cause of fatalities in the under-18 age group. For this reason, road safety education and awareness programmes aimed at the youth will be a priority and include:

- Increasing the visibility of learners through reflective backpacks and belts.
- Educating teachers and parents – too many children are transported without the use of a child restraint or seatbelt.

Hull says, "Where a project will require the resource of multiple partners The Road Safety Foundation will coordinate the cooperation between the role-players to maximize the impact of the project. If our efforts save the live of even one person our hard work has been worthwhile.

South Africa – The shocking facts

- 15 393 fatalities in 2006 - up 8,9% from 2005
- 42% pedestrian fatality rate in 2006
- Approximately 800 000 crashes per year
- 3rd worst in the world per capita
- 22 people permanently disabled per day
- 2nd highest cause of accidental death in 0 – 18 year age group
- Estimated cost to the country – R43 billion
- Increased rate of mobilisation – 1 500 vehicles added per day
- Seatbelt utilisation –
- under 20% for drivers
- under 12% for front passengers
- Approximately 2% for rear passengers

Companies interested in becoming members of the Road Safety Foundation can contact:

Office No: (012) 369 6209

Petro Kruger: 083 386 6963

Philip Hull: 082 803 6363

NEWS FROM AFRICA BUSHCRAFT AND SURVIVAL ADVENTURES

Dear all,

We have had a wonderful and exciting year with three memorable adventures to the Congo River. We met such warm and lovely people full of the spirit of adventure. Those of you that were on the July tour to Angola will remember that it took us two days to travel from Lubango to Lobito, spending one night at the Police Station in Chongoroi. Well the roads have improved so rapidly that less than two months later on the August Cunene to Congo it took us only seven hours to travel the same stretch. We also found a beach camp near Soyo which made a huge difference. We have now introduced short tours of 11 days for 2008, they will be from Ruacana—Foz Cunene—Lubango—Cahama and back to Ruacana.

We have also included fishing safaris over a period of 13 days. An 18 days tour of Angola in Overlander trucks for those not so lucky to have their own 4X4 vehicle. Meals and camping equipment included.

Our short local tours are 'The Land of the Legends' (Soutpansberg, Venda) 2 and a half days. 'Roof of Africa' Lesotho (Sani Pass) 4 days. 'Mountain of the Mamba' (Entabeni Private Game Reserve) game viewing safari and educational experience, 4 days. 'Richtersveldt' 4 days, experience the vast solitude of mother nature. We are currently doing a recce in Namibia for putting two new tours on our calendar for 2008. One on the west coast of Namibia and a second in Kaudum and the beautiful Caprivi.

For those who would like to fish at either the Cuanza River Lodge or Flamingo Lodge we are able to cater for you also on our Fly-in Safaris which are 7 day packages all inclusive. Our first Angolan tour in 2008 is for the 4X4 Off Road club of Gauteng—Alan Goodway and his club members.

We have acquired a second vehicle now which needless to say has become the flagship of Africa Bushcraft and Survival Adventures, a land Cruiser Pickup fully rigged for safaris. Africa Bushcraft and Survival Adventures have teamed up with Herman Timmerman—the owner of L.A. Sport Centurion. They sell and fit 4X4 accessories to all vehicles, from bumper to bumper, tyres to roof racks. They also do pre-safari checks on vehicles and trailers, service winches and special modifications to suit the clients needs.

Service on vehicles and trailers is not a mechanical service but a 4X4 service:

- Check wiring on dual battery systems—(spare fuses and wire for bush repairs)
- Breather pipes on diffs
- Drain diff oil and replace with new (costly but effective)
- Tyres (valve caps, repair kits etc)
- Suspension check—rubbers, grease nipples ec.
- Bearings on trailers
- Check water tanks seals and leakages
- Weak points on roof racks

Contact: Tel: 012-6613916 / Cell: 0724898890 - If you need anything feel free to contact Herman.

Keep a watch for the January edition of the 'Getaway' magazine, if you remember Jazz Kushke the 'Getaway' journalist who went with us on the July tour to Angola will have his article published in that edition. It is due to be the shelf for sale towards the second half of December.

Our normal training sessions of 4X4 Survival and Advanced Bushcraft and Survival are still on the go and we will be presenting an Advanced Survival combined with Anti Poaching skills middle January 2008. We have a couple of young people that have just completed school joining us on this bush adventure.

We are also involved in tailor made tours for various overseas clients. If you have any special needs or requirements we are able to plan a tour to meet those needs. We would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a Blessed Christmas and a Happy and Peaceful New Year full of adventure and trouble 4 X 4 safaris.

Trusting that we will meet again on many an exciting tour. All the best from us,
Koos and Isobelle Moorcroft

SUV: SUPERFICIAL UTILITY VEHICLE

The past couple of years have seen a considerable growth in the SUV market and it is at a stage where motoring manufacturers will stand to lose a substantial amount if a SUV- type vehicle is not in their line-up. Even exotic cars such as Lamborghini have had a SUV type car built but it can almost be guaranteed that 90% of all the luxury SUV's built will never leave the concrete jungle and enter the natural jungle where they were originally designed to be used.

Ok so let's set the scene here, it's a Friday afternoon and "The guy" enters into the Porsche dealership, oozing power, money and respect. He wears an intimidating smile from ear to ear suggesting he has signed the deal of the century, now he wants to reap the benefits. He has noticed all the top officials driving around in their enormous 4x4's that intimidate all those below them. The salesman wonders in from the back bearing a big cheesy grin because he knows he can take "The guy" for a ride. "The guy" wants the top of the range Cayenne Turbo, it has more power than Eskom (that's not saying much), ridiculously sized wheels, dragster sized exhaust pipes and it comes free with an attitude that states you have fought and manipulated your way up the corporate ladder. The salesman then suggests all the extras that can be purchased and in the end "The guy" has spent a shade on 2 million Rand. Unfortunately not only will the car be transporting top executives it will also hold his status and a foot stumbling impression.

Now as we take a step back into reality lets analyse the situation. "The guy" has bought himself an immensely capable car that scores top marks in off and on-road capability but one can be assured this vehicle will only experience one side of the equation. This car will never venture off the beaten track into the wilderness, all the 4x4 kit that this machine is lugging around will never be engaged and the question is "why was this type of car bought in the first place?" The sad truth is that vehicles like this are bought purely for status.

One of the biggest culprits to this crime is Hummer, they are hideous to look at, awful cars to drive around town because one needs a petrol station every 10 km to guzzle up half of the Middle East, the driver needs two lanes to drive down to the road, one needs to take a course on how to park and you need to re-build your house in order to stow it away at night, but that does not matter because it was never built for a glitzy, artificial use. They were built to work and show their potential away from the tar with unnerving wheel articulation and purposeful approach and departure angles, totally unpractical to go shopping around Sandton. It is just plain logic to see that this car's function was not for town use! T

he only reason for its success is the fact that the car holds an important status that lures people who desire the American cult rapper look. The vehicle is an amazing piece of machinery but it is spoiled by the 2 inch thick chrome, 24 inch wheels, "Bling" rims and a monster sound system that adds to our potholes in the road with its vibrations. What use is all of this in the dirt? How will a lowered suspension and knife shaped spinners help in the transversing of rivers?

The latest also seems to be double cab's getting manicures. They look like Bruce Willis in high heels, which does not happen in reality. Vehicles originally designed to be work horses with back braking leaf spring suspensions are been used to carry suits and files. These cars are been used to parade around the streets showing off their goods and as long as you have the biggest sound system and blindingly shiny rims you are "The guy."

The question is now posed that it makes no sense to buy such a car because the driver is hauling around so much kit that will never be used. This results in higher fuel consumption, affect on performance and over all dynamics of the car. Cars such as Land Rover have solid undercarriages that weigh more than the moon and it is never used. Land Rover and other manufactures design their cars to be effective and capable off road so all the junk hanging below is for a reason, as for Jeep and the SRT 10 Cherokee my point is highly stressed. The car has less ground than a BMW and wheels with lower profiles than an escaped convict. So what is the reason for such an outrageous purchase? And again the dull repetitive answer is... status.

The most these cars will do is park on pavements drive through crater size potholes unique to the roads of Africa (which will probably bend the rims) because they cannot fit into conventional parking spaces. It is also tremendously un-flattering for a lady to fall 5 meters out a Range Rover especially when she is dressed to the nines. They are completely impractical around town and the days of true off roaders are slowly slipping away. The manufacturers are also to blame, the fact that they sell their cars with an option to buy 20 inch low profile tyres is not helping the situation.

SUV's like VW, Land Rover, Porsche, Toyota and others are feats of engineering marvels; the fact that a designer can get such a car to act similar to a road car with such negative dynamics is truly admirable. The designers do not even compromise off road ability but why then are they focusing on the off road ability of the vehicle when it is never used.

Ok let's move away from the negative aspect of my argument and look at the positive side. When you driving down the road one day and you see "The guy" in his Cayenne take a close inspection at the undercarriage and you will notice a shiny, un-spoilt working area. This will tell you the car does not even know what mud is and is probably in perfect condition. The interior of suede leather will have no defects from water or mud. The owners who take care of these cars have probably done a pretty reasonable job and you will probably find that you could pick up these cars for a good deal second hand knowing the car has never really been used, it makes you feel more comfortable with your purchase and it makes more sense taking it bundu bashing because it's not costing you more than your house. You could probably find a car that is comfortable, will last a long time and is decent off road in the next few years or so and it will make more sense to go out into the wild with it. And to top it all it will still hold a certain status if that's what you are looking for.

In the mean time when you visit your local 4x4 club take a good look around and see the types of vehicles there. You never know in five years time you could be the first person to take a Hummer or Range Rover into the bundu. Something "The guy" will never beat you to.

Bradley Jansen – Aspiring Motoring Journalist

NEWS FROM NAVIGATORS FOUR WHEEL DRIVE ADVENTURES

Hi, Alan

Can't believe another year's behind us! Last year was a busy touring year for us, with some new and exciting prospects in store for this year. Following the success of our 'Reader's Tour' with Getaway Magazine to the Kaokoveld during 2007, we are pleased to be doing another tour with them during August, this time up to Zambia (Kasanka National Park, Bangweulu Wetlands, Kapishya Hot Springs, Shiwa 'Ngandu, North Luangwa Game Reserve, Luambe National Park, etc.). This 19-night trip (Livingstone to Mfuwe area) has just been advertised in the latest Getaway, and promises to be a great tour!

All the best,
CHRIS
NAVIGATORS FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE ADVENTURES

FOURTH BLACK RHINO POPULATION RELEASED, FIRST COMMUNITY PARTNER

OUR fourth founder population of black rhino has just been released, this time onto community-owned land. Eleven black rhino are settling in at Somkhanda Game Reserve in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Somkhanda is the first community-owned land to become a partner in the Black Rhino Range Expansion Project.

Somkhanda Game Reserve is owned by the Gumbi community which successfully claimed five commercial game farms under the land restitution process. Rather than turn the whole area into settlement and farming, the community leaders decided to zone their land for economic sustainability. The zones include areas for conservation, development and commercial cattle farming.

WWF's Dr Jacques Flamand, leader of the Black Rhino Range Expansion Project, said empowering communities to become stakeholders is a priority in conservation, and Somkhanda is an example of where it is really starting to happen. iNkosi Zebelon Gumbi, head of the Gumbi royal family, explains: "When the land was gone, there were no opportunities. Now there are opportunities. There is work in security protecting animals from poachers. And there is work at the lodges. We have set aside some land for farming and settlement, and some for development projects which will boost the Gumbi economy. We are asking our people to think like business people. We are living in modern times. It is not just building a place and relying on cattle any more. Now we ask people to work and get money."

But conservation involves the heart as well as the head. Nathi Gumbi, Director of Somkhanda Game Reserve, says: "When the Gumbis were moved from their land, we had no choice. But thank God the white people who took our land also loved it. So our land is still beautiful. Now we have the land back and we shall also love it and look after it as our ancestors loved it." The Black Rhino Range Expansion Project aims to increase land available for black rhino conservation, thus reducing pressure on existing reserves and providing new territory in which the animals can rapidly increase in number.

The project is a partnership between WWF and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and is supported by the Mazda Wildlife Fund. The first three Project partner sites are Munyawana Game Reserve, Zululand Rhino Reserve and Pongola Game Reserve.

LOOKING PAST THIS YEAR'S RANKINGS: AUTOMOTIVE BRAND QUALITY OVER TIME

BRYANSTON – 'Most Improved Brand' for vehicle quality goes to Opel in Passenger Vehicle, Land Rover in Recreational Vehicle and Isuzu in Light Commercial Vehicle.

"There are many success stories when one starts looking at brand PP100 (problem per 100 vehicles overtime)," states Richard Rice, Automotive Client Services Director at Synovate. "As a whole, the passenger car market has more than halved its PP100 score since 1998. Light Commercial Vehicles and Recreational Vehicles have also shown a massive improvement which is testament to the enormous effort that has been put in by the manufacturers"

Synovate has been conducting research into vehicle quality since 1991 as part of the largest survey of vehicle owners in South Africa, incorporating more than 55 000 interviews on an annual basis. "Our experience with the manufacturers of motor vehicles in the last 17 years is that product quality is one of the highest items on the agenda and their efforts to improve are intense and ongoing which is of much benefit to the South African motorist", states Rice.

Improvements by Brand (Passenger Vehicles)

Problems per 100 Vehicles over time: Passenger Cars			
	1998	2005	2007
PC Average	230	140	109
Audi	110	112	103
BMW	127	104	60
Chevrolet		104	75
Chrysler		144	101
Fiat	297	208	190
Ford	212	156	124
Honda			80
Jaguar		135	68
Mazda	194	165	107
Mercedes Benz	139	104	70
MINI		129	99
Nissan	328	145	156
Opel	281	147	94
Peugeot		179	136
Renault		147	144
Toyota	219	103	77
Volvo		127	98
VW	276	195	176

© Synovate PP100 1998 - 2007

Opel has emerged as the most improved passenger car brand over time. From 281 problems per 100 vehicles (PP100) in 1998, Opel has whittled its problems down to only 94 PP100 in 2007 which means that it has improved on its quality by 67%.

Less than half of **BMW** drivers that had problems with their vehicles in 1998 still experience a fault with their vehicle. BMW has dropped from 127 PP100 in 1998 to 60 PP100 in 2007. From 104 PP100 and 109 PP100 in 2005 and 2006 respectively, BMW demonstrated a rapid and intense improvement yielding its low score of 60 PP100 last year. This implies that only every second BMW owner reports a problem with their vehicle. "Given the critical nature of the BMW owner, this is a laudable achievement and BMW has been recognised numerous times with the Synovate Gold Quality Awards in the segments in which it competes", says Rice.

Chevrolet, which has only been part of the study for 3 years, has already shown an improvement of 28%. Starting off with 104 PP100 in 2005, this score reached 75 PP100 last year. Rice comments, "Given that Chevrolet is a relatively new brand and that it has achieved a score of less

than 100 PP100, it is well set to challenge some of its rivals in the segments where it is represented.”

Another brand that has shown massive improvement is **Nissan**. Starting off with 328 problems in 1998, it has progressed remarkably well to only 156 PP100 in 2007. While their score has softly increased since then, 156 PP100 in 2007 is still a significant 52% upgrade in quality since 1998. “This is a significant improvement for a brand that has mostly focussed on its Light Commercial Vehicle offering over time. The current scores for passenger vehicles show the real improvement in its new models”, says Rice.

Toyota now stands at 77 PP100 across all its passenger car models, from a starting point of 219 PP100 in 1998. Toyota is one of the brands that have shown a consistent decrease without many real peaks throughout the years. 2006 brought about a slight increase to 124 PP100. “This was quickly brought down to 77 PP100 in 2007, however, and considering the breadth of models that Toyota has, this is a world class performance,” states Rice.

Honda’s performance has only been measured by Synovate for the past two years. In both 2006 and 2007, it has demonstrated excellent quality, with only 70 PP100 and 80 PP100 respectively.

In 1998, **Audi** had a problem count of 110 PP100 vehicles. In 2001, this jumped to 147 and by 2004, Audi managed to get this down to 86 PP100 again. The major movement for Audi came in 2004, when its score improved by 40% from 2003. “Audi now competes very favourably with the other luxury players both in local and imported products”, states Rice. “The segments where Audi competes are some of the most hard fought in terms of product quality, and to achieve a score of less than 100 problem per 100 vehicles is no mean feat.”

VW has shown a 36% improvement since 1998. Starting off at almost three problems per vehicle, VW now has a problem count of less than two per car sold, standing at a PP100 score of 176 in 2007.

“**Fiat** has always been extremely transparent in terms of what they are doing to improve product quality and their proportional improvement is clear evidence of their ongoing commitment to improving both their product quality and their value for money offering”, states Rice. After an increase in its PP100 in 1999, reaching 5 problems for each car sold, Fiat undertook a major drive to enhance the quality of their vehicles. In 2007, Fiat has managed to decrease their score to less than 2 problems per vehicle, yielding a 62% improvement in performance.

Renault, a relatively new entrant, returned a score of 147 problems per 100 in 2005 which moved to a higher count of 183 PP100 in 2006. However, in 2007, the score improved to an impressive 144 problems per 100 vehicles which is a dramatic improvement in a very short period of time.

Ford has shown an unflinching decrease in quality problems since 1998, where it started at 212 PP100. In 2001, it reached 173 PP100 and in 2007 sits at a very satisfactory 124 PP100 - its lowest score since being measured. “Although Ford has been criticised in the past, the current scores provide a clear indication of their ongoing commitment to quality and the public acknowledgement of this achievement”, states Rice.

Mazda shares the same commitment to a consistent decrease in quality problems. From 1998, Mazda has experienced a 45% improvement in vehicle quality. Its PP100 stands at a low 107 – below industry average – in the latest 2007 reading.

Although Synovate has only measured **Peugeot**’s quality count for the last 3 years, it has already witnessed a 24% improvement in product quality from Peugeot. Currently Peugeot as a brand

stands at 136 PP100. “With the majority of Peugeot’s products being sold to the very critical first or second time owner, this is an accolade to the French manufacturer,” states Rice.

Jaguar stands at a very impressive 68 PP100 – which means that 3 cars out of 10 sold by Jaguar are problem-free. “Considering the fact that we measure faults as small as squeaks and rattles, it is no small victory for a brand to achieve such great results,” says Rice.

Volvo has shown a marked 30% improvement from 2006 and a 54% improvement from its score of 149 PP100 in 2000. Says Rice, “With a problem count of less than 100 problems per 100 vehicles, this niche manufacturer has achieved a significant level of quality”.

Mercedes-Benz has exactly halved its problems since 1998. Its score has been below one problem per vehicle since 2001, with a minor hiccup in 2005 when its score increased to 104 PP100. In 2007, Mercedes-Benz’ achieved a score of a very low 70 PP100. “Mercedes-Benz has always enjoyed recognition for the quality it delivers and a score of 70 PP100 reinforces their position as being able to deliver the highest quality across a variety of products and segments,” says Rice.

MINI has also demonstrated a dramatic improvement since first being measured. From 238 PP100 in 2002, MINI now boasts a low 99 PP100. This has been achieved with one of the most critical customers in the South African market, the ‘Trendsetter’”, says Rice.

Chrysler’s major improvement came in 2003 with a drop of 66 PP100 to a low score of 107 PP100. While there have been some increases in quality problems in the years since, Chrysler has managed to get their score back down to 101 PP100 in 2007.

Improvements by Brand: Recreational Vehicle

Problems per 100 Vehicles over time: Recreational Vehicles			
	1998	2005	2007
RV Average	359	130	93
Audi			86
BMW		85	75
Chrysler		206	126
Ford			255
Jeep		206	125
Land Rover	752	197	103
Mercedes Benz		152	70
Mitsubishi	322	103	115
Nissan	279	132	118
Toyota		101	70
Volvo		88	63
Volkswagen		166	129

© Synovate, PP100: 1998 – 2007

Recreational Vehicles has displayed a significant improvement overall. This category's average PP100 has decreased from 359 in 1998 to 93 in 2007 – a 74% increase in vehicle quality. "Recreational Vehicles generally have a high problem count due to the fact that they are used for work and play alike" explains Rice. "The fact that the vehicles in this category have managed to bring down the average RV PP100 to less than one problem per vehicle is a massive accomplishment".

Land Rover has demonstrated the most significant movement within the category – an 86% drop in vehicle faults. "From 752 PP100 in 1998 to 103 PP100 in 2007, this is a significant achievement for this brand and shows how committed Land Rover has been to ensuring that its customers only get top quality vehicles," states Rice.

Over the past 3 years, **BMW** has seen a drop off of 10 PP100, from 85 PP100 in 2005 to 75 PP100 in 2007. Since 1998, BMW has shown an overall improvement of 41%.

Chrysler has shown a commitment to consistent improvement in quality since 1999. First measured at 222 PP100 in 1998, Chrysler's PP100 now sits at a very low 126 PP100.

In line with its performance in PC and LCV categories, **Toyota** has shown an ongoing increase in quality standards – 41% improvement since 2000. In 2007, Toyota's PP100 stands at only 70, meaning that out of 10 Toyota RVs sold, 3 of them will be completely free of faults.

Another noteworthy achievement in terms in this category is **Mitsubishi**, which has decreased its problem count by two thirds of its original count. From 322 PP100 in 1998, Mitsubishi has worked its way down to 115 PP100 in 2007.

Mercedes-Benz has demonstrated excellent quality in the RV segment and currently has the lowest PP100 score in the category, at 70 PP 100.

Improvements by Brand: Light Commercial Vehicles

Problems per 100 Vehicles over time: Light Commercial Vehicles			
	1998	2005	2007
LCV Average	286	176	121
Ford		214	171
Isuzu	333	184	81
Mazda		244	225
Mitsubishi	260	244	165
Nissan	243	138	119
Toyota	254	140	103
© Synovate, PP100: 1998 - 2007			

The LCV average has improved 58% since 1998, and **Isuzu** is the star performer in this category, which has decreased its problem count by 77% since 1998. Isuzu has consistently decreased its

problem count from more than 3 problems per vehicle to less than one per vehicle in 2007, the only LCV brand that can boast such a low problem count.

Toyota has also improved extraordinarily well, showing a drop off from 254 PP100 in 1998 to 103 PP100 in 2007. This has been achieved with the launch of the new Hilux and Toyota's focus on delivering a new product with high levels of quality with the first vehicles rolling off the line is an example of how the industry has changed," says Rice, "No longer do OEMs simply launch a vehicle and correct inherent problems over time but they focus on correcting these problems before the first vehicle hits the sales floor".

Nissan has experienced a 51% improvement in vehicle quality since 1998. The major movement for Nissan happened between 2003 and 2004, when a significant drop from 250 PP100 to 163 occurred. "This is despite the fact that Nissan are still producing the iconic 1400 bakkie as part of their LCV lineup and that their one-tonners are facing up to formidable rivals." says Rice

Ford has consistently decreased quality problems on its LCVs. While a peak in problems occurred in 2005 and 2007, their score was back down to 171 in 2007.

"Typically we give huge attention to the top and the bottom of the rankings every year and this is understandable given that we are working in a new car market," concludes Rice. "However, the effort and the achievements of the industry as a whole should not go unnoticed. Notwithstanding new technology and the arrival of new models and increasing imported vehicles, the South African motorist is enjoying the benefits of the self-critical and customer-focussed efforts of the South African manufacturers and distributors to deliver world class quality. We are certainly not playing catch-up when compared to international standards but we are, in many instances, leading the way."

This research is part of Synovate's Competitive Customer Satisfaction (CCSI) research which is the largest survey of its kind in the South African market. Part of this survey includes a Product Quality measurement, which is commonly known as PP100 or Problems per 100 Vehicles. Quite literally this survey measures the number of problems new car owners experience with their vehicles in the first few months of ownership. This means that in this survey, a lower score means a better result.

For the latest Quality Award results on Product Quality (published in October 2007), please go to www.synovate.com/southafrica.

More than 55 000 vehicle owners are interviewed each year and the survey has been extensively used by the manufacturers for more than thirteen years as the benchmark of vehicle quality. Not only is the study utilised by local manufacturers but the information is used by plants exporting vehicles in to South Africa.

GORONGOSA TRANSFORMATION

The Mozambican government intends to transform the Gorongosa National Park , in the central province of Sofala , into a southern African reference point, and a strong competitor to the other parks of the region.

OPEN Africa is launching a new route, the Rixile Bush to Beach Route , linking the game parks in Limpopo with the Mozambican coast. The route starts in Phalaborwa, through the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park and on to the Mozambican towns, Massingir, Chokwe and Bilene.

LUIWA PLAINS UPDATE

The holiday season is over and, for most, it is back to the grind of daily life in the big cities. For most adventurers though this is just a means to an end – to be able to get out into the wild places we all love and need for our sanity!

Liuwa management would like to thank all our visitors in the 2007 season. Every Dollar raised as a result has gone directly back into the running of the Park. By visiting us you have played a vital role in the revitalization of this great African Park. 2007 was a great year for the Park with some really exciting developments. Most noteworthy was the introduction of a herd of 49 Eland, once plentiful in this area. Wild Dog sightings are increasing with the most recent sighting being of 11 adults with 9 pups. This is surely a good sign of ecosystem health; we are all hoping that Liuwa can, once again, play a leading role in the conservation of these endangered carnivores.

Our 2007 tourist season was also a success, with an increase in numbers of visitors. More noteworthy though, is the fact that the average duration of stay increased indicating that most people are taking more time to discover some of the other features and activities that Liuwa has to offer. These include cultural visits, dancing, traditional fishing and traditional boat trips on the local rivers. Liuwa is a remote destination – it makes sense to maximize your time here after all the effort of getting here.

For the adventurous there are other routes opening up. There is now the option to leave the Park in the North via Lukulu to visit Parks such as West Lunga. Exciting too is the possibility of combining a trip to Liuwa with the exploration of the “new 4x4 frontier” – Angola.

2008 is looking to be a good year too. The annual revitalizing floods have begun, bringing new life to the Liuwa ecosystem. The Park will be opening mid May to early June, flood dependant. Please make sure that your bookings are done early, especially for the peak season from early October to mid December. If last year was anything to go by, 2008 is going to be a bumper tourism year!

We look forward to you joining us again in Liuwa Plain National Park.
The Liuwa management team!

Andrea Reid
Tourism Coordinator
Liuwa Plain National Park
Kalabo, Western Province
Zambia

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www.african-parks.org

WHAT WOULD LIFE BE WITHOUT DREAMS...?? TRANS-AFRICA 2008

2 - 3 months – 05 May to 02 August 2008

Masazane Expeditions have successfully completed four (4) trans-Africa expeditions from RSA to Europe with clients...!!! Another of these amazing expeditions is on offer again this year... We already have our minimum number of adventurers so the expedition will definitely be run... There is some more place if anyone is interested. Why not join us in our vehicle... we drive and you sit back and enjoy the scenery...

We have a few interested in doing a return expedition - basically mid-August to mid-November 2008. The return expedition will be a Cairo to Camp Africa so if you are interested please let us know immediately so that we can see if we have enough adventurers. Please note that due to

the various logistics self-drivers will be very difficult to accommodate on the south-bound expedition so people should consider joining us in our vehicles...!!

Complete self-sufficiency is the rule for this entire expedition due to the lack of ablution facilities, water and fuel. Please note that this is a participatory expedition where kitchen (cooking, etc.) duties will be shared!!

You know you want to join us... so go on...**JUST DO IT...!!**

FARMER TO TAKE LANDY ON ULTIMATE 4X4 TRIP

By Les Stephenson

Can you drive from Cape Town to New York? Well, yes, if you really want to - and provided you have enough money and equipment. An English farmer is about to show us how...

Yorkshireman Steve Burgess, 50, and partners Nicky Spinks and Simon Dedman will be involved in what they hope will be the first crossing of the Bering Strait between Russia and Canada by a land vehicle – others have tried, but failed, and not only because this happens to be 80km of salt water.

The ocean crossing will be but a tiny, tiny section of what will be a 50 000km journey from England to South America across four continents and more than 20 countries. Makes a 4x4 jaunt to the Kalahari seem a bit of a doddle, what! Some of the world's biggest automakers have tried it, as have famous millionaire explorers. This attempt will be backed by Cooper Tyre & Rubber Europe.

They'll be on the road today (January 29), going by ferry across to continental Europe then steadily head north and east through the winter chill of bare fields, mountains and the vast steppes of Russia to the Chukotka peninsula at the easternmost point of Russia. There the Landy will be fitted with floats and an engine-driven propeller assembly and driven into the sea for the 80km crossing to Alaska. It's already been tested on an English lake and on a crossing of the Irish Sea.

The Cape to Cape expedition will take in every imaginable landscape from the frozen wastes of Siberia to the tropical rain forests of South America. Snow tracks will be fitted in place of wheels to cross the frozen Siberian tundra. Ford and explorer Richard Creasey tried to cross the Bering Strait in 1993 but their vehicles sank. An effort by Fiat also foundered in 1996. The challenge also defeated Sir Ranulph Fiennes and British explorers Steve Brooks and Graham Stratford whose attempt was aborted in 2001 when their Snowbird 5 vehicle was damaged during an attempt to cross when the strait was frozen.

Once safely on Alaskan soil, Burgess and Spinks will replace the floats with standard wheels and Cooper Discoverer STT tyres and drive through Canada, North and South America, arriving at Cape Horn towards the end of 2008. They've spent seven years planning the trip.

"The main problems were finding sponsors and dealing with Russian bureaucracy," Burgess said. "We're doing something that's never been done so you can't just get a form and fill it out. "I needed permission from the army and the police to travel in the Far East. Most significantly, I needed permission to leave Russia in an amphibious vehicle – we're just going to drive off a beach!

"We chose the Cooper Discoverer STT tyres because we knew we needed a tyre with hard-core traction, durability and reliability in almost any condition." "Most of them will be over challenging terrain but we're confident." Oh yeah, how get to New York from Cape Town? Just drive up

Africa, cross the Suez canal by bridge and then also head north and east. Don't forget your floats and propeller...

See <http://www.capetocape.org.uk/>

Bhejane 4X4 Adventures

Bhejane 4X4 Adventures was formed with the vision of conducting guided self drive 4X4 trails into the remoter areas of Southern Africa. Our objective is to involve everyone in the ecological, historical, cultural, ornithological components of the areas we visit.

Depending on the destination, adventure tourism activities are integrated into the tour and include walking trails, photography, game tracking, bird watching, fishing, scuba diving and boating excursions. The tour dynamics allow you and your family to enjoy the trip from the privacy of your own vehicle, while ensuring your safety and comfort in the camaraderie of group participation.

All vehicles are issued with hand-held radios to facilitate communication between participants and expeditions are fully catered by a professional chef. The team's language skills enable us to share our knowledge in either English, Afrikaans, Zulu or Tswana.

For further information regarding the listed tours (see the website):

Contact: Frank: **044 535 9257** or **082 323 3561**

Dennis: **044 535 9257** or **082 572 4945**

Fax: **044 535 9257**

E mail: info@bhejane.com

Web: www.bhejane.com

(January 2008)

Industry Training (everybody welcome)

Training is offered by the professionals, for you, the professional. Offered by 4x4 Offroad Adventure Club, our training is executed by PROFESSIONALS in their area of expertise. We also strive to make it price competitive, so as to bring it to the layman, at an affordable rate. See our vast offering for 2008, below.

1. 4x4 Trail and Overland Guide Course

The first course of the year is running from 28 Feb to 2 March. Is anybody interested? I have 2-3 people who have approached me on this. It is worthwhile doing it from a legal perspective and if you are interested in getting involved in these type of activities in the future. Offered by Dave van Graan (a.k.a Chuck Norris SA). Want more details, drop me a line.

2. Snake Identification and Snake Bite Treatment Course

The first course has run for the year and was extremely well attended. This is a must do course, especially on the snake bite treatment side. 5 of us successfully completed the 'optional' test for a FGASA Accredited Certificate during January, and having postponed attendance for many years, I am sincerely glad I attended this now. Also presented by one of only 2 venom 'tappers' in SA, Mike, a true professional indeed. Request details for next course. Also offers a Snake handling course, post the first course and then the exciting BLACK MAMBA handling course.

3. Level 1 First Aid Certificate

This course covers the latest methods and practices in a 16 hour training session over 2 days, for the requisite Level 1 certification as required by Law. Again, presented by a professional training authority and a practical and fun Dr. Ricky, candidates learn the basics of the CPCR requirements, wound dressings and accident scene administration. A must do for moms with small kids, high school students (part of the national curriculum) and off-road and outdoor enthusiasts.

4. Bush Survival Course for Overlanders / 4x4ers

The course is presented on a bush farm called Lalapanzi, which is situated near Magaliesberg ± 107km from Midrand. The aim of the course is to teach survival skills to families planning 4X4 overland camping holiday trips in Africa. By participating in this course the family will gain confidence for a 4X4 overland trip that could have dire consequences in the event of a breakdown in a remote and desolate uninhabited area. The knowledge gained on the course will teach them how to deal with the situation.

These courses are scheduled over weekends thus enabling the family to become involved, and allowing a weekend camping at the bush farm campsite where facilities are available—self catering. The first course of this kind for this year will be presented over the weekend 16th—17th February 2008.

5. GPS Software Course

This course is presented by SA's Mr GPS, Kevin Bolton and deals with the PC Software aspect of your GPS environment. This includes Theory & Practical training in GPS Software Usage (Mapsource, T4A, Google Earth etc.). It is a 3 hour workshop, where candidates must bring their own GPS and Laptop / Notebook with software.

6. GPS Course

This course is also presented by SA's Mr GPS, Kevin Bolton and deals with the Theory & Practical training in GPS Technology & Usage covering: Satellite Navigation theory, Faults and error in the system and problem areas, Datums, Projections, Co-ordinate systems (Includes practical), GPS screens, GPS menus, Configuration of your GPS, Practical route (GoTo's, Routes and BackTrak), Etc. Includes 35 page manual & 1:50 000 map.

If you do not have a GPS one will be provided – please just indicate such, as we will help you out during the course.

7. Driver Training Courses

We are teaming up with one of the oldest and most professional driver training outfits in Gauteng and will be presenting the following training courses:

- Introduction to 4x4 Driving
- Advanced Offroad Driving
- Skid Control and Defensive Driving
- Mechanical Fault Finding

8. Bush Medical Course

It happens often that the 4x4 traveler / overlander is being confronted with the prospect of having to treat medical conditions and make decisions, far beyond their scope of experience and knowledge. This happens as a direct result of the areas that we find ourselves in. The remoteness of certain areas give us the feeling of adventure, but also place us in areas, where medical infrastructure and care is limited and sometimes non-existent. Minor medical problems have the potential to become very serious, if not managed correctly. On the other hand, one might be confronted to break up camp prematurely and head home.

Dr Neil (General Practitioner / Occupational Health Practitioner) has been presenting the BUSH MEDICINE COURSE for the past 5 years in the Western Cape, as well as in Gauteng. The course usually consists of two modules, each lasting a full day (roughly 6 - 8 hours depending on the group). It is very practical (you get to learn to suture lacerations and practice CPR on dummies). Due to time constraints, and the need to present such a course, it was decided to present the most important chapters over 1 day (8 hours), leaving the rest for self study. A certificate is provided to those attending. After completion, you should be able to initiate and manage most medical emergencies, as well as make the right decisions. The conditions are to be discussed, presented and highlighted.

9. Fire Fighting for Campers Course

The concept of this training session is twofold and aims to deal with the serious stuff and theory for the adults or driver, with a separate session for the moms and the kids – you can decide how you want to split it. The workshop will be dealt with by professional emergency services trained and qualified personnel.

The main lecture with accompanying handbook for notes. Explanations and demonstrations. Then it will be followed up by a practical session outside with firepans etc. The moms and kids will attend an enthusiastic and fun orientated practical lesson also by a professional, so they do not need sit through the lecture.

Each family subscribing will get 1 handbook only, included in the price.

10. Emergency Tyre Repair Course

This course / workshop will take place in Centurion later this year and hosted by a leading tyre dealership. Learn how to use that plastic tub of goodies you bought and have never used! A must do workshop for all offroaders.

Other courses will be presented as we go along. Watch the newsletter and direct mail shots for further details and the program once it has been released. Tell your friends. Send email to 4x4offroad@mweb.co.za

MASAZANE EXPEDITIONS

MASAZANE BREAKAWAYS – UP TO 8 DAYS:

An opportunity to unwind from the general mayhem in our lives, without having to dig deep into your leave, if at all...

CAMP AFRICA – THE BEST BREAKAWAY IN THE SOUTPANSBERG!!!

CAMP AFRICA HUTS AND CAMPSITE (LIMPOPO, RSA)

Now if driving too far is not your 'thing'... and you just want to mellow for a few days... why not join us at **Camp Africa**. **Camp Africa** is situated on the fringes of indigenous forest and has a beautiful view over Louis Trichardt. By road it is approximately 5 km from the centre of Louis Trichardt. **Camp Africa** has five (5) huts and many camping spots. Each hut is a 'family-unit' with two (2) single beds and a double bunker, i.e. four (4) beds. **Camp Africa** has a fully licensed bar and there is a kitchen area with two fireplaces and a double sink. The ablution block – each of the ladies and gents has a toilet, washbasin and two showers with hot water from a 4kW geyser. There is a large boma that holds a 'kuier-fireplace' so that the beautiful evenings of this region can be enjoyed. Of interest to children, will be the animal pen with rabbits, chickens, goats, geese, ducks, guinea fowl', etc. There is much else to see and hear... so bring the family anytime for a short break from the mayhem of city life...

Activities include the vehicle trail, birding, tree-spotting, hiking, cultural tours, historical tours, mountain biking, butterflies, moths... to name but a few...

We hope to hear from you and/or see you soon...

Dave (GP 0838) and Jacqui (GP 0773) van Graan

MASAZANE EXPEDITIONS

CAMP AFRICA

CK 1996 / 015766 / 23

PO Box 3357, Makhado, 0920, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA (RSA)

www.masazane.co.za

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April 2008

From the Tracks – Reader Feedback

NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK

Thanks for this Alan, it's good stuff. I am a shareholder in a small lodge on the banks of the Zambezi in Western Zambia. Goes by the name of Kabula Lodge.

Peter Morrow - Shareholder

Hi Alan,

I would like to congratulate you on the fantastic email that you regularly send out. You clearly have a passion for 4x4's and it is fantastic to see such a well coordinated effort in the industry. I look forward to receiving your next email.

Regards

Andrew Whitfield.

Melvill and Moon - Sales

Hi Alan

Thanks for the great read every month, it makes the day pass a little quicker.

Kind Regards,

Donovan Brink

Hi Alan

Thanking you for an outstanding way of communication through-out the year. Always looking forward to your mail. God Bless you and your family over this festive season.

Regards

Dawie Annandale

Hi Alan,

I would like to advise of the change of my e-mail, as I really appreciate getting your monthly newsletter and attend the open evenings. Thanks for the good info.

Riaan Wandrag

TRAINING COURSES FEEDBACK

Good morning,

I have been meaning to thank you for a **MAGIC Bush Medical** course. It was really excellent!! I now have the confidence to venture away with my first aid bag.

Have a GREAT weekend!

Kind regards,

Pierre Dave (GP 2315)

Hi Alan,

*I did the **Gps course** this weekend, and can I say, what an eye opener. You are correct in saying a must do course, I am ashamed that I have had the gps for almost a year without knowing about it and certainly navigation in general, Kevin is a great teacher, and knows a great deal on this subject, can see why they call him Mr GPS. I had a great time and learned a lot, now must keep practicing.*

Thanks to Kevin and to you and Charmaine(for the food), may you have a merry Christmas and happy new year to you and your families.

Greg Koch

Beste Alan

Baie dankie vir 'n fantastiese **noodhulpkursus**. Ek en Schalk het regtig baie baat by die kursus gevind. Baie dankie vir al jou moeite, ons het dit raak gesien en werklik waardeer!! Dra asseblief ook ons dank aan Dr Ricky oor. Ons het sy aanbiedingsstyl baie geniet en waardeer en baie daaruit geleer!!!

Nogmaals baie dankie en baie geluk met 'n baie suksesvolle kursus.

Ilse Mollett en Schalk Burger

READER FEEDBACK, TALES & STORIES

Hi Alan!

Firstly, season's greetings and I hope you have a GREAT festive season – I actually stay at work over December and enjoy the peace and quiet of Johannesburg as it USED to be..... and then go away in January! Hehehehehe

Anyway, with regard to your latest newsletter – I think you need to be aware that Daihatsu is NOT as consumer-friendly as they make themselves out to be.

I recently purchased the Daihatsu Terios 4x4 Automatic for my wife. Now the first problem is with the 'upgrade' package you mentioned – I tried and tried, but COULD NOT GET ONE OF THE DEALERS TO SUPPLY ME WITH THE UPRATED TERIOS! I eventually bought the standard Terios from Alberton Multi Franchise, and had leather seats, a bullbar, and a towbar fitted. I really DID try for the upgraded package but the answer was the same everywhere – despite several motoring publications telling me the package was out there somewhere, neither Alberton Daihatsu, nor Germiston Daihatsu (and they told me they checked with other dealers too) could (or would) supply.

The second problem I have with this car (which is a lovely vehicle, by the way) is that, in the rear luggage compartment, being a 4x4, you need to secure luggage from time to time. Now ALL the 4x4's I have driven, without exception, have had hooks for this in the luggage compartment. The Terios's carpet is actually cut to accommodate such hooks, but there ARE no hooks. I have tried, through their head office (Emma on (011)398-9180) to find such luggage hooks, to no avail. Emma put me in touch with a lady who is apparently the head of the accessories division for Daihatsu in South Africa, and this lady (I forget her name) then told me that there ARE no such hooks for the Terios, and I must find/make an alternative.

Oh, and the parts department... what a joke. I went in to get a light-bulb on the Monday morning, after I took delivery on the preceding Friday (the car was then, to me, 2 days old). At 8 o'clock (a.m.) there were only two (2) customers in the parts department – myself and a lady – and she was busy talking to one of the so-called assistants. Two other assistants were standing in the doorway talking about their weekend, and the parts manager was sitting at his desk, playing on his computer, and I stood waiting. And waiting. And waiting. Eventually, the workshop foreman came to me, asked me what I wanted, and went HIMSELF to find the bulb and give it to me.

It's a stunning vehicle, although essentially a soft-roader, but still very capable and very comfortable, and it makes a great family car too. But the lack of commitment to accessories and customer-service make one worry a tad about the integrity of the dealer principals.

Speaking of which – do yourself a favour and try to get hold of the DP at the Alberton Franchise of Daihatsu. It's easier to get hold of somebody in Ekurhuleni Metro accounts department at lunchtime on a Sunday. He NEVER returns calls, and NEVER answers his phone.

Not a good reference for what SHOULD be a top-selling product – all it needs is a commitment to service. But it seems that particularly Alberton Daihatsu has fallen prey to the disease that afflicts 99,9% of all South African companies: Lethargy and Apathy towards their customers. A terrible, terrible pity.

Regards,
Charles T. van Bergen

AFRICA BUSHCRAFT AND SURVIVAL ADVENTURES

ALL ITINERARIES, TOUR INFO, PHOTOS, COSTS CAN BE VIEWED ON www.africa-bushcraft.co.za

TOURS FOR 2008:

LAND OF THE LEGENDS

1st February—3rd February 2008

ROOF OF AFRICA

14th August—17 August 2008

ANGOLA FISHING SAFARI—13 DAYS

5th April 2008—18th April 2008

1st May 2008—14th May 2008

ANGOLA EXPEDITION—11 DAYS

24th March 2008—4th April 2008

2nd May 2008—13th May 2008

CUNENE TO CONGO RIVER—ANGOLA

13th July 2008—5th August 2008

27th August 2008—19th September 2008

MOUNTAIN OF THE MAMBA GAME VIEWING SAFARI

21st February 2008—24th February 2008

22nd May 2008—25th May 2008

27th September 2008—30th September 2008

SURVIVAL TRAINING—PRACTICAL SURVIVAL ADVENTURE

15th February 2008—17th February 2008

14th March 2008—16th March 2008

Advanced Survival Training available on Request.

We are flexible and can design the tour of your choice—try us. Our contact details:

KOOS MOORCROFT

DEAT REGISTRATION NO: GP2424

CATEGORY: ADVENTURE GUIDE

PROVINCE-S: NATIONAL

SPECIALITIES: PROFESSIONAL 4 X 4 TRAILS AND OVERLAND TOURS

CELL: 0825792796

ISOBELLE MOORCROFT

CELL: 0825612613

TEL/FAX: 012-6536725

E MAIL: kmoor@telkomsa.net

WEBSITE: www.africa-bushcraft.co.za

(January 2008)

Fresh from the Bush – New Products

RANCHO® JEEP WRANGLER JK SUSPENSION SYSTEMS INTRODUCED BY TJM PRODUCTS

Rancho Delivers Rockcrawler and Sport Options for New Jeep Design; Both Systems Easily Accommodate 35-in. Tires

The brand built on “no-compromise” off-road-proven suspensions is again at the forefront of the market two new application-engineered suspension systems for the 2007 Jeep Wrangler JK. The Rancho systems incorporate its legendary Jeep heritage and engineering excellence into each design.

Rancho’s first option for the Wrangler JK is the **Long-Arm Rockcrawler system** (p/n RS6508B), engineered for high articulation and increased ground clearance required in demanding off-road adventures. The Rockcrawler system includes an all-new, exclusive Rancho design: self-lubricating spherical composite rod-ends that deliver enhanced off-road performance and improved ride quality.

The Rancho Rockcrawler edition is compatible with optional competition grade coil springs for vehicles running at maximum GVW. The new Rancho system also includes a front and rear track bar relocation bracket and heavy duty, quick-disconnect front sway-bar end links to deliver a zero-bind steering envelope and a forged pitman arm that allows for optimal steering geometry and minimized bump steer.

Rancho’s second option for the new Jeep Wrangler JK is the new **Sport system** (p/n RS6507B). Designed for quick and easy installation, the Rancho Sport system offers a high-clearance drop bracket design that requires no cutting or welding during installation. This system also includes a front and rear track bar relocation bracket and a forged pitman arm. This system also is fully compatible with the competition-grade coil-springs.

For more information on the new Rancho Wrangler JK systems or other Rancho products, contact your local LA Sport Dealer <http://www.lasport.co.za/contact.htm>

CANVAS SEAT COVERS

We are a company that produces canvas products (seat covers, Bakkie mattresses etc.) for the 4x4 market and would like to bring our products to the attention of your club members. Steenberg canvas manufacture their own products which means better prices for club members. Our website address is www.steenbergcanvas.co.za

Contact us now, or see our great products at the first Enthusiast’s Meeting, next year.

Yours sincerely
Wynand Steenberg

NEW BOOK AND DVD ON BUSHVELD BIRDS

The Bushveld is one of the prime tourist destinations of South Africa, and frequented over week ends by thousands of people from Gauteng.

A welcome and handy addition to publications on the Bushveld, of which a copy should be in every 4 X 4, is the **Spotter’s Guide to Birds of the Bushveld** just released.

This 192 page full colour pocket guide describes all 468 resident and visiting birds to the Bushveld, and promises that even the novice can identify an unknown bird within 60 seconds. Apart from a full colour photograph of each bird, the book includes many innovative features such as the Shapefinder and Dueldex to assist with easy identification.

An electronic version of the book on DVD for computer is also available and includes the calls and sounds of more than 370 of the Bushveld birds. This part of the project was done in collaboration with the Sound Library of the Transvaal museum.

The book was written by prominent birders Saartjie Kidson and Herman van Niekerk, in collaboration with Warwick Tarboton, Jo Grosel and others. It has been fully endorsed by Birdlife South Africa and included by SASOL in its series of books on South African Birds. It is destined to become a collector's item as it is the first book in a series of South African regional bird guides.

The book and DVD is available in English and Afrikaans editions. This delightful little book is a must for every outdoor person. Contact 4buy4direct@mweb.co.za for pricing or purchase.

The Dusty Way – Club Trips, Reports & Feedbacks

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT – IRENE HOMES

The carol singing at Irene Homes was a very pleasurable event attended by approximately 250 guests and around 30 members from our club. We had the in house Irene Homes all girls choir entertaining us at the start of the evening followed by a professional choir which supported some of the most exceptional tenor and soprano voices I have heard in a long time.

We had an organist doing her bit with the first choir and all the other music was on a fully orchestrated backtrack which was supported by a decent sound system. It made it a real quality carols by candlelight evening.

The choirs entertained us throughout the evening whilst we sang along here and there using the song sheets they provided us. During all this we sat around, picnicked and relaxed on the lawns under the trees with the children running around having fun. The weather was perfect, one couldn't have asked for better.

The club donation was well received by Irene Homes and they indicated to me that it would most probably go towards doing something special for the orphaned children who won't be going home for Christmas. The general feeling I got from the club group was that it was most enjoyable and it certainly was.

I asked Natalie and Bret Orwin to take a whole lot of photos and forward copies to you for the website; they were the only ones there with a camera. Regards to you and your family and to all the other 4x4 families out there that could not make the carols by candlelight, we missed you all!

Jonathan and Jill Greengrass
Club Guides

*Thanks Jonathan, we enjoyed the afternoon / Evening.
Will send you some pics shortly.
The Orwins*

TULI BLOCK ADVENTURE

Our group was scheduled at the Petroport on the N1 at 4h45 on the morning of the 14 December, to leave for Tuli Block in Botswana. On our way to the meeting spot, we found that the N1 highway was closed to all traffic at the Rigel offramp, due to a fatal accident. One or two of the group were delayed because of this closure, but we got on the road by 5h30.

Mike Collinge had the route programmed into his GPS, and after taking the Modimolle offramp, dutifully followed the lady's instructions, and turned right. About a kilometer down the road, a call from Jonathan Greengrass came over the radio, "Why are we heading towards Marble Hall?". "Because that's the way the GPS is taking us – we have to turn left here", came the answer from Mike, as he turned left – into a gate marked TRESPASSERS WILL BE EATEN. So the whole convoy turned around, and went through Modimolle.

On the way to the border post, Lizette Swart, who had gone to Botswana the day prior on business, was SMS'ing us with info regarding the state of the two border posts closest to our campsite. Both borders had low level bridges that had to be crossed, and we were concerned about the level of the water. We were in telephonic contact with the border posts, and they assured us that both were open. We decided to use the Zanzibar border, as it would allow us a good photo opportunity as the vehicles crossed the Limpopo river.

The formalities on both sides took less than 30 minutes, without having any vehicle documents checked, or vehicle searches done.

We arrived at the Limpopo River Lodge at about 2pm, and while Mike completed the formalities at the reception, the rest of the convoy traveled the 5 kilometers to the campsite. After some deliberation about who would camp in which campsite, everyone settled in. The afternoon was a very hot, humid one, and most people just sat around.

That night, it seemed as if time flew past. By the time we had made our fires, cooked and eaten, it was past 10pm. Everyone collapsed into bed, exhausted after a long day, late night, and hot, humid conditions. As we retired, we were serenaded with a lullaby of hippo snorts and grunts, screaming baboons and hyena laughs, plus one or two suspiciously loud splashes from the river.

That night the heavens opened, and it rained buckets. A couple of tents needed the water removed from the awnings during the night, and Jonathan Greengrass was up a number of times checking the level of the river, as it ran just below the campsites.

Morning came, with the news that a number of campsites had had a stream running through them. None was as bad as Jack Romijn's campsite, however. His site was christened Jack's Pan, because of the amount of mud that was there.

After a leisurely breakfast, we headed off on a drive through the game farm. About a kilometer from the camp, we stopped, and walked through a dry river bed to the river. In the distance, we could see a herd of hippo wallowing in the water. As we watched, the hippos came closer, until they were right opposite us. There they put on a show, snorting, grunting and playing with the calves. There was a herd of 10 hippos that we could see right in front of us.

We stopped often, just to walk a couple of meters into the bush to see what was there. We saw rock lizards, velvet mites, locusts, mopane worms, locusts, small dung beetles as well part of an elephant skeleton. It is amazing what you can see if you walk around a bit. There was eland, kudu, bushbuck, warthog, scorpions, African Ground Squirrel, etc. to be seen. A large crocodile was spotted by Geert and Jonathan on separate occasions, patrolling the Limpopo, opposite our camp.

During our lunch stop, we walked around a water hole, and tried identifying the different spoor. We also saw tree frog spawn, which only a few in the group had ever seen before

As the afternoon wore on, the sky got darker and darker. As we turned for the campsite, which was about 10 km away, Lizette asked if we could go and see the Hollow Baobab, which we did. As rain was threatening, we hurried back to camp. The rain came in a drizzle, nothing like the previous night. Arrangements were made that after supper, we would congregate at the tented campsite, which was dubbed the "Country Club", for our communal get together and fireside chat. Shortly after 5pm, a group of 3 Toyota 4x4's arrived, and moved into the Country Club. No problem- the venue was changed to Johan's campsite, as it was the largest, and had enough space for 22 chairs around the fire.

Unfortunately, as the evening wore on, some uncalled for comments emanated from the Toyota group, which put a slight damper on the night. There was also umbrage taken from our side in that the Toyota group decided to take over one of the campsites that we had paid for, but decided not to use. But we are a family orientated club, and we didn't let a group of misguided's upset our evening. Thankfully they left the next morning.

The next day, the plan was to refill at a petrol station 10km from the campsite, and then drive on to the Tuli Game Reserve. Unfortunately that petrol station had closed down, and the closest petrol station in Botswana was 100 km away. We decided to go there to refuel, and then to do the Tuli GR. Whilst we were on the dirt road to the garage, we saw numerous signs of elephant-dung, broken branches, spoor. We had turned onto the tar road leading to the village where there was fuel, and we spotted elephant browsing in the distance. Everyone stopped to have a look. Even the locals climbed onto Jack's Musso to see the ellies.

Once we had refilled at Bobopong, a conference was called- do we return the same way, or do we go via the 4x4 route shown on the map. The consensus was that we go the 4x4 route, even though it was longer, and the road did not appear on the GPS. (Mike was still getting flak about "the GPS getting them lost").

Off we go, only to reach a town in the distance, which according to the map and GPS, wasn't there. So everyone had lunch whilst we figured out that we should turn at the previous town, and find our way from there. Upon asking directions, we were pointed onto a road which the local said was tarred all the way to Tuli. Upon hearing this, there were some exclamations of disappointment, but we pressed forward, only to find NO TAR. The road was in a good condition, but it was dirt all the way for about 120km.

We crossed a number of dry streams, and saw a massive cutaway caused by flood water. We were moving in front of a huge black cloud that seemed to following us. At times we were concerned that if it rained, we would be caught in a flash flood.

Eventually we were on the road that led from Tuli to our camp, and it had obviously been raining hard there. At times the road was very slippery, and you could feel the rear wheels wanting to overtake the front. We had to drive slowly due to the conditions of the road. A call came over the radio, "Lizette has tried to roll her car." The slippery conditions had caused her 4x4 to slide, and because of the treacherous mud, there was no chance of any control. Lizette's Pajero had done a neat 180° slide, and hit the wall of the road, debearing the right rear tyre. She managed to get the car on top of the camber of the road, so we could change tyres.

Because of the camber of the road, we couldn't get the jack under the car, so Johan used his hi-lift under the spare wheel to lift the car the 10cm needed to fit the car's jack under the jacking point. As we were doing all of this, normal cars came past, and we were anxious in case they slipped off of the steep camber into us. But we changed the tyre, and got on our way again.

(Landrover to the rescue- it made up for the joking around the campfire about using hi lift jack handles for spare Landrover side shafts). Lizette is now seriously contemplating giving skid pan lessons.

The trip back to camp was short, and everyone was glad to be back at camp before the rain came.

After supper, we had a communal gathering at the "country club", to discuss the day's events etc. Jonathon presented Mike with a special concoction, which he called "Marble Hol", as a straf dop for the GPS faux paix. Brian Magner and his wife sang us a specially written song, sung to the tune of "Some hearts will never die." This song had an element of each day's events built into it. Brian had had to rewrite the last verse, because, as he put it, "Lizette had to feature, after her escapade." And they did this whilst driving on the slippery road back to camp.

The next morning we ate a leisurely breakfast, packed, and left at 10am. We followed the quieter route to Pretoria, as we thought that with the ANC conference being on, and it being the end of a long weekend, the freeway would be very busy.

Whilst on the way back, a game of "question and answer" started over the radio. It is amazing how quickly the time goes by when you are entertained, and we learnt a lot of facts on the way. I am sure that Jonathan was on the Internet to get the questions he was asking!

Everyone arrived home safely after a long drive, but also after what I think was a relaxing weekend.

Mike Collinge (Club Guide)

Hi Mike,

We want to thank you for having guided us to such an idyllic place last weekend !! Camping in front of snorting hippos and loud baboons, and being serenaded without let-up by more birds than we can recognise, it was altogether a fitting closure to a splendid year of 4x4-ing.

So afterwards we and Janet and Brian went to Mapungubwe, along the R572 to Messina. We drove around on Monday (were once stopped by five elephants crossing in front of us), and visited the look-out spot above the confluence of the Shashe and Limpopo. They were both WIDE and FULL, to both horizons. Another visitor there said that ten days earlier he had still driven through the dry Limpopo bed to the guesthouse on the point of the confluence.

We also heard that at Pontdrift (20 km to the west) there is no bridge, not even a low water bridge or concreted strip, but there is a cable over the Limpopo that carries a 'cable car' with which people can cross - for a fee of something like 100 Pula. There is a border police post but no Customs. (This info might come in handy later).

We then stayed in Mopani Bush Lodge close by, privately run by Paul and Rosemary Hatty, assisted by Moira and Andrew Rae and local staff. Superb. Total relaxation. Tasteful luxury. Check out www.mopanebushlodge.co.za.

Our booked tour on Tuesday to the historic/archeologic sights in the center of the park fell through because both the northern and southern approach roads to these sights were washed away, and the tour is canceled until they fix it. We did not see the damage but it sounded as if they need big machinery to repair the road because they spoke of concrete driving strips (provided in steep places in the park) having disappeared into the depths along the road. So we drove around elsewhere in the park on our own till 15:30. In places it was flooded, muddy and

sodden with rain (not enough to challenge our cars), with lush tropical vegetation in a superb landscape. It was definitely worth a visit, especially now, when it was cool, wet and green.

We made a stop in Pietersburg to buy picture&text books on Tuli and Mapungubwe (recommended by Paul), made a stop at the UltraShell, and arrived home at 23:30.

We wish you, and everybody in the party, a prosperous and healthy 2008!

Geert & Kea de Vries

Hi Mike and All,

Attached some of the Magner Photos from our visit to Mapangubwe and the words of the "Ode to Mike and Tuli" song. We were apparently very lucky that both rivers were flowing strongly but were also unlucky that we couldn't visit the Heritage Site on top of the Mapangubwe hill due to road wash-aways. Can't win them all!!

Thanks to you Mike for all your hard work and to everyone for making it a very enjoyable adventure.

Brian & Janet Magner

Ode to Mike and the Tuli - (Sung to the tune of "Some Broken Hearts")

Chorus

Some broken vehicles never mend

Our memories never end

Some tears will never dry

Our 4 x 4's will never die

Pack our bags, push and stoot
Meet the mob at the Petro Poort
First thing we have to do
Is check the radio.....

On the road with the rest
Behind Mike and his GPS
Through 4 tollgates, heading north
We now sally forth.....

While we all tag along
Jonathan says "aren't we wrong?
Why go east when we know its west?"
Mike pipes up "It's the GPS!"

Set up camp, it hot as hell
Need to finish, we know darn well
A nice cold frosty with a foaming head?
Oh ?**! The freezer's dead!

Mapani worms, a snail or two
Lots of buck and elephant poo
Yarning Hippo's and noisy geese
When will the rain cease?.....

Hooray! Hooray! Elephant at last
Way in the distance a big brown arse!
To Babanong we hit the tar
Need diesel for the 4 x far's.....

Almost at camp, a Pajero lets loose
In the hands of a competent goose
Johan to the rescue with a high-lift jack
To get us all back.....

Hey, Mike, don't get narked
We love you lots and we think you're smart
Next tour we'll be right there
So pop around and share a beer!

KICK OFF BRAAI & 4x4 DAY

Eish, so we kicked off our first event, the Kick Off Braai with a bang. No, no accident, a thunderous 'klap' in the sky and then it rained. And it rained, rained, rained!. But, as I SMS'ed a canceling attendee – Africa ain't for Sissies, we arrived enforce. We pitched and we did our thing. And great, only 4 families did not pitch / cancelled! There were over 36 families in attendance! Where were you? We braaied, we had a brief meeting, we launched the 2008 program and some even drove the short trails.

A great day was had by all, and after a lengthy afternoon, we cleaned up and left for home. Thanks to Johan and Anne-Marie Ungerer for organising the day for us.

SNAKE IDENTIFICATION AND TREATMENT COURSE

Thank you ever so much for arranging the snake identification and treatment course with African Reptiles and Venom. The content is concise, relevant and delivered by an excellent lecturer. Mike Perry knows his subject back to front and it is clear that he loves what he does and thoroughly enjoys sharing his knowledge with those that want to learn. He keeps the topic interesting and the students on their toes! There was not a question he could not answer and the course did not end until Mike was satisfied none of us had any questions left.

My knowledge before attending the course was, at the very best, skimpy. I knew there were snakes out in the bush but that one rarely saw them and should you get bitten by one, you could die... My aim with attending the course was to firstly learn to identify the most common snakes and to learn which are really dangerous. With all the time I spent in the bush, I very rarely see snakes and when I do, I treat them with the greatest of respect as I have heard stories of snakes swallowing humans, crawling up into car engines, killing you through venom spat from 20 metres away, etc. etc.

In the morning we breezed through the identification section and I thought I would never remember which snake was which – but during the snake handling course (which to me was a great follow up on the morning as you now get to see the real thing), I was surprised that I recognized some of them and even took a stab at trying to remember which was cyto-toxic, neuro-toxic and hemo-toxic and how I would proceed with first aid should I be bitten by one.

Handling the snakes was initially a nerve-wrecking experience, but as we progressed, my confidence grew and I now at least know how to remove an unwanted visitor from my tent if necessary. I was amazed to see how speedily a boomslang can disappear into the foliage – and fascinated to learn that they hardly ever bite humans unless we try to catch them and they have to act in self-defense.

Then we came to the final snake of the afternoon to catch – the Black mamba! Mike thought I was joking when I asked if he did not have a nice tame brown house snake for me to practice on.... but I managed to catch the biggest snake I have ever seen (by the tail no less) and transfer it to another cage with the aid of a hook. I felt 10 feet tall. Well, maybe it was the mamba that was 10 feet long, but I felt invincible, though a little shaky. Then Mike told us that we now had to catch same Black Mamba, grab it behind the head and hold it up in our hands for a photo session. The snake suddenly doubled in size! My aching nerves...

However, we all bravely proceeded to practice on a rather tame piece of rope (it's the tamest snake Mike has, he says) and then moved on to the real thing, some with more finesse and less shaky hands than others. Not a task for the feint at heart and it took willpower to approach a hissing, rearing Black Mamba that holds you dead still in his gaze no matter which way you turn, instead of following your instinct to throw down the tongs and run for cover! Fortunately Mike was always close to step in when Black Mamba got out of hand (or rather out of hook).

Thank you again for an awesome experience.

Regards
Lizette Swart
Regional Sales Manager - Inland

IMPROVE YOUR DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE

We had a full house of 10 club members on this initial course - ***Beginners course - An introduction to taking better images.***

The focus was on learning how to use your camera, how to recognise light, understand composition basics and take better images, before fiddling with the various technical features. That comes later!. Aimed at the beginner photographer no matter how large or small your camera, this course introduced the basic principles of photography so that we can now head out with confidence to take better, more striking images with greater impact. Shem, our trainer critiqued our before and after shots,, showing the immense progress by us all.

We will be hosting another course soon, as well as the intermediate course for moving up the next level.

The Trading Post – Swop, Sell or Buy

FULLY KITTED TOYOTA DOUBLE CAB 4x4 – READY FOR AFRICAN SAFARI

Fully kitted 2004 Silver Toyotal Hilux 2.7 Petrol Double Cab 4x4, safari ready. 135 000 km's on clock. Full Service history from Toyota Agents (McCarthy). Normal features include Radio/CD, ABS, AC, EW

Sale includes:

- ARB Bullbar – standard high lift jack points
- 29 Mhz Aerial fitted to Bullbar
- IPF Spot Lights
- Clear Perspex stone guard on front lights and bonnet
- Branch breakers from bull bar to roofrack
- RV Centre side bars
- CD / Radio Combination

- GX300 29Mhz Radio fitted
- Dual Battery System including Battery
- Thomas engine mounted air pump
- Outback Centre Internal Roof Console
- 40l long range tank = +/-130l onboard
- High lift jack points fitted rear end
- Alu-Cab canopy, with recovery gear box and ability to load 3 high lid ammo boxes / 6 low lids in back plus remaining load space
- Exterior Work Light
- 2 x Interior Lights fitted
- 2 x 12v plugs points external to canopy
- Double Jerry can holder on canopy
- 2 gas bottle holders
- Front Runner packing system,
- 60l water tank
- Front Runner spare wheel bracket with spare wheel, new Firestone tyre
- 15" Firestone Tyres
- New Old Man Emu Suspension
- Front Runner Roof Rack
- Spare Wheel bracket on roof rack
- Safari Snorkel
- Seat Covers (Stingray)
- Front interior splash/dirt mats
- Fire extinguisher x 2 fitted
- Tow ball (Drop pin type) / Trailer Light connector
- Brad Harris type caravan / trailer charging plug

Can supply original colour coded bumper, black roll bar, stainless steel nudge bar and tarp cover.

The following will be removed:

- Winch will be removed
- Minus 40 Fridge Freezer (1990's model and still going strong!)
- Tracker Unit

Price: R206 000.00 not negotiable.....

REASON FOR SELLING: My kids are getting too big for the space in the rear of the double cab – need to get a wagon!!!! Contact Alan on 0826038321 / mwalangy@mweb.co.za

12V DC POWER UNIT & BATTERY CHARGER

I have a 12volt DC power unit & battery charger for a trailer unit from PBE Enterprises (that advertises in the ezine) that I would like to sale. Look at www.pbeproducts.co.za for more details.

Reason for selling: I replaced mine in Dec'07 with a larger unit that can have 2 deep cycle batteries in my off-road caravan as this unit that I am selling is the one only for the single battery in the trailer. It has a charger unit that also caters for solar panels. It has been serviced and checked that all is still ok by Pieter Barnard in Dec'07. It also includes the display panel. It is the one that was used in the old Brakhah caravans. Price R1,800

RIMS

I have also some (4) 265-75-16" trailer rims for sale and some spare tires that is still in reasonable condition. It was also on my brakhah caravan, but I replaced it with 15" pro-white rims to be the same as my cruiser. Price: make me an offer.

Contact
Adriaan
082-902-5520

PRADO FOR SALE

I am interested in selling my Prado and would appreciate it if you would forward the detail to your members:

1. 1998 Model
2. 3.4 Petrol
3. +- 310 000 Km
4. Off-road bumper (no winch)
5. New BFG tyres (+- 10 000 km) + new spare
6. OME suspension.
7. Very clean
8. Leather upholstery on driver seat might need attention.
9. R 110k or closest offer.

Francois on Cell – 083 324 0149

Flat Wheel – Light Relief

AN OPEN LETTER FROM A ZIMBABWEAN

What an incredible fuss you South Africans make about a few power cuts. I happened to lie down next to my battery-operated satellite radio for a nap this week after the season's only two hours of summer whacked me out. I heard the likeable David O'Sullivan sounding unlikable. Okay. He was in a rage, so angry he sounded as though he might burst an artery, or the membrane holding his brain in place. About Eskom. I couldn't believe my ears. As far as I can remember, in this past week there were only about six cuts, and none longer than five hours. Same thing at the pharmacy: moan, moan, moan. Then it struck me - for the first time in my life I had really useful knowledge. I do know about electricity cuts and what to do about them. I know about boilers, paraffin fridges, wicks and lighting the lamps by pumping them hard at 5.30pm.

Please, South African householders, unless you live on more than an acre, don't get a generator. There will be murder in the streets of Parkhurst, the Berea in Durban and Obs in Cape Town if home owners on tiny bits of land all have generators farting rhythmically through long days and dark nights. Even small generators use 1 litre of diesel per hour. And they get stolen easily unless cemented in and you need monster ones to do fridges and stoves. Leave generators to Raymond Ackerman and his ilk. First rule for survival: get a solar panel on the roof, which is connected to an especially large car battery in your house, which is then attached to an inverter, which in turn has a switch that lights up the world. This system keeps a TV, DSTV encoder, DVD player, mobile and laptop chargers going. And it costs nothing to run. The bigger the battery, the more lights. (Ditch desktop computers today.) It doesn't do fridges (more about fridges later) and it doesn't do electric stoves.

Go for gas. Mozambique has 300 years of gas, and the ANC government - even though it chose to do the arms deal instead of electricity - did put in a pipeline for gas from Mozambique. If you live in the older suburbs of Johannesburg phone up the angels (seriously) at eGoli Gas and they will look on the map to see if you have a gas pipe in your street. If you have, then get connected. Gas geysers also work at a fraction of the cost of electricity if you don't go for solar-heated water. Refrigerators are another thing altogether. If you keep the doors shut, a tall one will keep food from going off during a power cut of about 30 hours. A deep freeze lasts about 2,5 days if you don't open it. Longer than that and the food goes off. After all, you can shop daily in South Africa. Raymond Ackerman is going to keep the generators running.

Most Zimbabwe-owned supermarkets shut down during power cuts. Only foreign-connected ones such as Spar have generators, or those owned by Zanu PF chefs (political elite), as they get cheap fuel. You must conserve power. You have a chance to do this because you still do have commerce and industry. We lost our industry over the past few years, so that sector can't really help much. We have more or less given up mining. Except, except, and think about this: your mining houses can buy power with foreign currency directly from Cahora Bassa and pay in US dollars, as they are doing in Zimbabwe now. It is a bit more expensive than Eskom, but it keeps the platinum pouring out. We also don't have any robots left in our streets, and little traffic, so we don't have the kind of traffic jams I saw along Jan Smuts Avenue in Jo'burg on Thursday during a power cut.

We don't kill each other in fuel queues, and we don't have road rage as our roads are mostly gone. Nor do we kill each other in banks, even when there is no money there, or in supermarkets. Well, only very, very occasionally, and only once, over sugar and that was in Bulawayo, which is very far from town. So bear up, improvise and go get the solar, inverter, battery alternatives, and gas. And you will all survive until you have enough new power sources within eight years, so I hear, and you are not going to be nearly as short of foreign currency as Zim, so can import some power. **But Zimbabwe will recover sooner than South Africa, because our population is in Hillbrow!!**

A SIGN IN THE BANK LOBBY READS:

"Please note that this Bank is installing new drive-through ATMs enabling customers to withdraw cash without leaving their vehicles. Customers using this new facility are requested to use the procedures outlined below when accessing their accounts. After months of careful research, MALE & FEMALE procedures have been developed. Please follow the appropriate steps for your gender."

MALE PROCEDURE:

1. Drive up to the cash machine.
2. Put down your car window.
3. Insert card into machine and enter PIN.
4. Enter amount of cash required and withdraw.
5. Retrieve card, cash and receipt.
6. Put window up.
7. Drive off.

FEMALE PROCEDURE:

1. Drive up to cash machine.
2. Reverse and back up, pull forward, back up and so forth and repeat as many times as required to align car window with the ATM.
3. Set parking brake, put the window down.
4. Find handbag, remove all contents on to passenger seat to locate bank card.
5. Tell person on cell phone you will call them back and hang up .

6. Attempt to insert card into machine.
7. Open car door to allow easier access to machine due to its excessive distance from the car.
8. Insert card.
9. Re-insert card the right way with magnetic strip pointing the way the little picture indicates.
10. Dig through handbag and examine each receipt to see if PIN# is written there. Finally, search through phone book to find your PIN written on the inside of the back page.
11. Enter PIN into ATM.
12. Press cancel and re-enter correct PIN.
13. Enter amount of cash required.
14. Check makeup in rear view mirror.
15. Retrieve cash and receipt.
16. Empty handbag again to locate wallet and place cash inside.
17. Write debit amount in check register and place receipt in back of checkbook.
18. Re-check makeup.
19. Drive forward 2 feet.
20. Reverse back to cash machine.
21. Retrieve card.
22. Re-empty hand bag, locate card holder, and place card into the slot provided.
23. Give dirty look to irritated male driver waiting behind you.
24. Restart stalled engine and pull off.
25. Redial person on cell phone.
26. Drive for 2 to 3 miles.
27. Release Parking Brake.

10 CADDY CHIRPS FOR THE GOLFERS

- #10.. Golfer, "Think I'm going to drown myself in the lake."
Caddy, "Think you can keep your head down that long?"
- #9.. Golfer, "I'd move heaven and earth to break 100 on this course."
Caddy, "Try heaven, you've already moved most of the earth."
- #8.. Golfer, "Do you think my game is improving?"
Caddy, "Yes sir, you miss the ball much closer now."
- # 7.. Golfer, "Do you think I can get there with a 5 iron?"
Caddy, "Eventually."
- # 6.. Golfer, "You've got to be the worst caddy in the world."
Caddy, "I don't think so sir. That would be too much of a coincidence."
- # 5.. Golfer, "Please stop checking your watch all the time. It's too much of a distraction."
Caddy, "It's not a watch - it's a compass."
- # 4.. Golfer, "How do you like my game?"
Caddy, "Very good sir, but personally, I prefer golf."
- #3.. Golfer, "Do you think it's a sin to play on Sunday?"
Caddy, "The way you play, sir, it's a sin on any day."
- # 2.. Golfer, "This is the worst course I've ever played on."
Caddy, "This isn't the golf course. We left that an hour ago."
- # 1.. Golfer, "That can't be my ball, it's too old,"
Caddy, "It's been a long time since we teed off, sir."

Preferred Suppliers - Gauteng

If anyone has any good things to say about suppliers I would like to include them here. Lets support those who do a good job for the club. Similarly if anyone has had a bad experience lets share it and vote with our wallets by avoiding them.

1) ECHO ACCESSORIES 4x4 CENTRE – NEW STORE!

Visit Willie, Rochelle, Neil, Phillip or any one of the other professional representatives at the new Echo 4x4 Centre situated in the Route 21 Corporate Park, 9 Regency Avenue, Irene (off Nelmapius Drive (off the R21)).

Echo can supply you with all your 4x4 requirements from offroad trailers, quad bike trailers, Echo Chobe Campers, roof top and trailer top tents, full 4x4 fitment centre, custom products, 4x4 accessory shop, trailer rental and even more. Be sure to visit the new instore refreshment café.

Call 012 – 345 3333, Fax 012 345 3343 or email: echoacc@mweb.co.za. Web: www.echo4x4.co.za

2) 4x4 INSURANCE

Phillip Viljoen Insurance Brokers has a special deal for all 4x4 enthusiasts, if you tell him you saw this advert. Qualify for great discount. Contact leisuresure@webspeed.co.za or on 083 306 5657 / Fax (012) 542 3564.

Speak to Phillip (club member)

3) BOLTONS GPS WAREHOUSE / KEVIN BOLTON CONSULTANTS

For top deals, training and advice on GPS equipment contact Kevin (club member).

KJ BOLTON CONSULTANT cc

Contact Kevin @ 082 564 3639 or Marietjie 012-6549813

kevin@gpsconsultants.co.za / marietjie@gpsconsultants.co.za / www.gpsconsultants.co.za

4) FRONT RUNNER

Front Runner will offer any club member, on production of their club card, a 10% discount on the purchase of any Front Runner produced product.

Call Wayne Heath-Coombe (club member) now.

1 Forssman Close, Dytchley Road, Barbeque Downs, Kyalami

011 466 0155

www.frontrunner.co.za

5) 4x4 MEGAWORLD

10% on ALL products in their larger than ever warehouse. What an offer. From camping gear, 4x4 gear, outdoor gear, the lot!!!! Their warehouse is now bigger and better and definitely worth a visit.

Club members, as one of the few places that give is 10% on anything!, it is well worth the visit. Speak to any of their well trained staff!

Unit 5, Herman Road, Meadowdale (off Barbara Road)

011 454 2875

megaworld@oldmanemu.co.za

6) SAFARI CENTRE - NEW MEMBERSHIP CARD DEAL

5% discount when paying with a credit card & 10% discount for cash.

Products excluded for discount:

- * GPS's
- * Leatherman products
- * Any specials currently running
- * Magazines, books, maps

7) HONEYDEW TOYOTA & RV CENTRE

Contact Johan Kruger (club member) for all your Toyota and other accessories at their RV Centre. New Honeydew Toyota Showroom (opposite THE COCA COLA DOME) - refer http://www.honeydewtoyota.ix.co.za/lmg_upload_departments/3674_441636.gif for map. Address is Olievenhout Street, off Northumberland, which runs parallel with the N1 & the R28.

8) KEMPTON CARAVANS - KEMPTON PARK - CLUB MEMBER BENEFITS

The discount to the 4x4 community and members of our club is 10% off their listed prices. This will be on presentation of the club membership card. This shop has EVERYTHING. Customisation of tents etc. on site! Speak to Larry, Brian (both club members) or any of the staff in the shop.

09) OUTDOOR WAREHOUSE - CENTURION

The suppliers of a wide range of camping, climbing, paddling, hiking and 4x4 accessories and goods, this store is a worthwhile venue to spend some quality time in. Close to the high way (N1), off the John Voster turn off in Centurion. No discount offered, just good service!

10) GOING PLACES 4x4, CENTURION - CLUB MEMBER BENEFITS

14 Botha Avenue, Lyttleton. For your entire 4 x4 and camping needs. All members get 5% on presentation of club card. Contact Ron or Christo on (012) 664 7609

11) 4-BUY-4 DIRECT STORE - Mail Order Outlet

Special price for club members. Also able to provide 29Mhz Radios, VHF Radios, GPS's, Photographic Window Bags, SUUNTO Watches, Clothing, Solar Panels and plenty more at cost cutting prices...Give us a call – 4buy4direct@mweb.co.za

12) PB ENTERPRISES – HIGH QUALITY POWER SYSTEMS

Manufacturer of high quality Power Systems, Dual Battery Systems, Fully Equipped Battery Boxes, Power Converters & Chargers for Trailers & Caravans, Solar- and Generator Chargers! They can definitely help you with any electrical power needs for ANY 4x4 vehicle, Off-road Trailer or Caravan.

Talk to the owner, Pieter Barnard, and **receive 5% discount on any of their products by supplying a copy of this page, PLUS the 4x4 Offroad Adventure Club receive a 3% donation.** Just **print out THIS PAGE**, and give them a call. Let them do everything right, the first time. HAVE A LOOK AT OUR WEBSITE! www.pbeproducts.co.za

Contact: Pieter Barnard
Tel/Fax: 012 658 5538
Mobile: 083 749 0445
E-mail: pbemail@mweb.co.za



Supported by:

JANUARY 2008

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