

# ***Friends of Golden Harvest Park***

## ***Newsletter***

Issue No 5

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### **Maple Drive**

There have been numerous break-ins of complexes bordering Maple Drive and the perpetrators are often seen either coming from or heading into the Park. To improve the security of the Park's boundary with Maple Drive a proposal to incorporate the dirt road section of Maple Drive into the Park has been put forward. The section of the dirt road by the Main Gate will be blocked off with a palisade fence as will the start of the dirt road by La Junta complex. In addition the wire fencing along Maple Drive down to Maple Row complex will be replaced with more robust palisade fencing. We were recently told the process was approved and well advanced but this does not seem to be the case; we are loath to estimate when this will be implemented but still hope it could be done this year.

### **Main Gate**

As a result of our communications, City Parks has been instructed by Councillor Bittkau to introduce guards for access control at the Main Gate and to lock the Main Gate from 1800 to 0600. We cannot say when guards will be brought in but we will continue to monitor the situation closely.

### **Maintenance**

We have given City Parks a comprehensive list of all outstanding maintenance issues and have been promised a full progress report in a month's time. This work includes the clearing of reeds and vegetation from the two dam weirs and along the spruit from the Upper Dam right through to Sunrise Estate.

### **New City Parks Personnel**

After a period of instability a new permanent Zonal Manager for Region C, Mr David Maluleke, has been appointed together with a new Stakeholder Liaison Manager, Mr Molefe Seale. We have already held a meeting with David and Molefe and look forward to building a close working relationship with them.

### **Water Quality of the Dam**

FGHP, together with WESSA (Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa), met with an aquatic specialist from City Parks on 7<sup>th</sup> May to discuss ways to improve the water quality of the dams and streams in the Park. Their recommendation is that invasive alien trees should be removed; they take thousands of litres of water a day from the system and make the ground infertile for indigenous trees.

### **Invasive Alien Trees**

On 14th May FGHP, together with WESSA, met with Working for Water - a section within DWAF (Department of Water Affairs & Forestry) that works to remove alien invasive trees – a brief survey of the Park was conducted. Monika O'Leary, a local resident experienced in these matters, assisted FGHP in a more detailed review of the tree situation; her advice and recommendations are being used to produce a proposal to DWAF and WESSA for the removal of alien invaders such as poplar, black wattle, eucalyptus, syringa and bugweed and replacing them with indigenous trees. We are working on a strategy for the future of the park, its improvement and regeneration and welcome all suggestions and ideas. More details will follow in our next newsletter.

### **Feeding the Geese**

We have been advised by various experts, including City Park's aquatic specialist and WESSA, that we should not be feeding the geese. The majority of geese are not indigenous to the region and their faeces are adding to the pollution of the Dam, the high number of geese are destroying the banks, which should be covered with natural vegetation. By feeding the geese we are artificially increasing their population to the detriment of other birds. However, we recognise that we cannot simply stop feeding them and will continue to do so until we can arrange a satisfactory long-term solution.

### **Visit by Wits Bird Club**

Wits Bird Club is planning a visit to the Park on Wednesday 3 October to conduct a bird count. More details will follow as they become available.

### **Mountain Biking**

We are looking for keen cyclists and mountain biking clubs who can help us with a proposal we want to put to City Parks to create a mountain biking trail on the western side of the Park. Please contact Heather Nice on 011 791 7921 or email [fghp@absamail.co.za](mailto:fghp@absamail.co.za) if you can help.

### **Website**

Check out our webpage under the website of [www.footprint.co.za](http://www.footprint.co.za).

### **Committee of the Friends of Golden Harvest Park**

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Committee: Leon Bradley, Chairperson; Heather Nice, Treasurer & Secretary;  
Sally Zimmer; Shelley Salmon; Iris Bruens