



The **Villager**

Issue 3 • 2018

**Good food
habits for kids**

**New PBX
office number**

Excessive online use puts your immunity at risk



I am Peter Varrie
I am Irene Farm
Villages & Centurion
Golf Estate

Achieved sales
to the value of
R40million
over the past
eight months.



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Peter 082 457 7416
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012 644 8300
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PAM GOLDING
PROPERTIES

Contents

The Villager focuses on Irene Farm Villages. The magazine is delivered to the home of each resident on the Estate. The magazine is co-ordinated and published by Estates in Africa (Pty) Ltd on behalf of the Home Owners' Association of Irene Farm Villages. The opinions of workers and personnel of Estates in Africa (Pty) Ltd do not necessarily reflect those of the HOA of Irene Farm Villages.

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Cover photograph by Liezel van der Merwe



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PRINCIPAL SALES AGENT

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RENTALS

IRENE FARM VILLAGE

IMMACULATE HOME - CUL DE SAC WEB REF: 1027 R3.1 mill

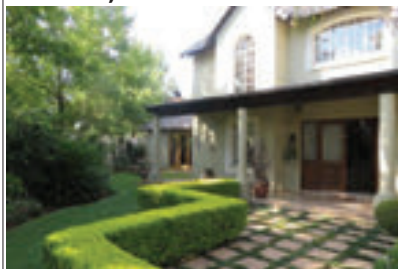


DUAL MANDATE

3 bedrooms, 2 full bathrooms, open plan kitchen, scullery, pantry, dining and TV room, lounge + fireplace, domestic quarters, DBL garage.

NINA 082 963 1994

SPACIOUS, COUNTRY STYLE HOME WEB REF: 1031 R3.3 mill neg



4 bedrooms, 2 bathroom, study, guest toilet, lounge, tv room, dining room, large entertainment room with built in braai as well as a built in bar. Neat garden and 2 garages.

NINA 082 963 1994

STUNNING HOME- EXCELLENT LOCATION! WEB REF: 1029 R4.25 mill



4 bedrooms, guest toilet, 2 bathrooms, stunning, french prov kitchen, tv room, dining room, lounge, study nook, d/q, pool and 2 x single garages. Park area next to and opposite this beautiful home.

NINA 082 963 1994

**HOUSES WANTED
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FOR RENT**

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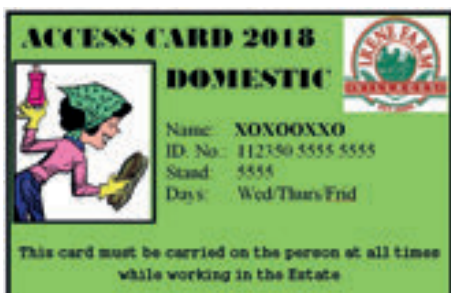
Dear Residents

The first quarter of the year has gone past in the twinkling of an eye. Suddenly, as one pauses to visit one's goals and objectives for the year, you realise, that it has become necessary to make early adjustments in the year. I had to remind myself to remain focus.

The Estate Office staff, with specific reference to Madeleine and Christine, have been working hard, dealing mainly with the registration of building contractors, household workers and residents for 2018.

Residents are reminded, that in conjunction with the HOA Board's decision, all Residents must re-register for 2018 by 31/3/2018.

The aim is to ensure that the HOA access control data base is properly updated. By now all the household workers must have been registered and carrying the new green 2018 access card. This card must always be carried on the person, when entering and exiting the Estate. Please ensure, that lost cards are reported immediately to the Estate Office. The Estate Management would like to express their thanks to all the residents for their support and co-operation with the registration of the household workers for 2018.



The real question, that comes to the fore from time to time, is what the real value of an estate like Irene Farm Villages is. In addressing this question, there are several factors, that could be considered.

One of these factors is to maintain a high level, happy and harmonious community living style, which per



At van Niekerk

se is defined as neighbourliness. From time to time, a dispute arises amongst neighbours. In such an instance, one must realise, that neighbourliness is attracted by three major roll players, namely the aggrieved party, the defending party and the arbitrating party, being the Estate Management.

The Estate Management receive many complaints of neighbours being rowdy, dogs barking incessantly, loud music, mowing the lawn on a Sunday morning at 7am, etc. Usually it is the Security, who will intervene firstly, followed by the Estate Management, that will address the matter with a formal e-mail (letter) of complaint. The first response from the defending neighbour, is to defend and to challenges the statement by the complainant. What makes the process sometimes difficult, is when the complainant wants to remain anonymous, which is understood. In such an instance, the defendant can only be requested to adhere to the HOA rules and regulations without support of evidence from the then silent complainant. These incidents tend to repeat itself again, because it was not resolved in the first instance.

It is however a more favourable case or situation to resolve, where the complaining neighbour is willing to engage the defending neighbour. This does not happen

often, but if it does happen, the incident is usually resolved between the two or more neighbours with neighbourliness being established between the neighbours, due to a mutual understanding, which is then created at that very moment with a longstanding character.

What is the reason for addressing this specific matter? Neighbourliness is a very important part of our Irene Farm Villages community. Neighbourliness has several attributes, namely knowledge, mutual respect, consideration, support, bonding, acknowledgement of living next door, acceptance without having a choice, etc. I am aware of two groups of neighbours, both staying in a cul de sac, who have a "street-braai" once or twice a year. It is noticeable how the qualities of neighbourliness have established itself amongst these neighbours. The estate has been developed with about 28 clusters of houses, which surrounds a park of its own. This is an ideal situation for neighbours to meet. Something that you can consider.

Another factor to consider, is the question of the tangible value of the Irene Farm Villages. There are several ways to measure this value. The one relates to the market value of the individual properties. It is my understanding from our accredited



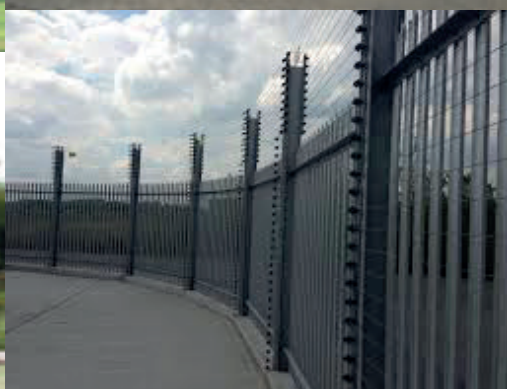
estate agents, that the Irene Farm Villages remains a highly sought after residential estate, where the properties reach its expected prices on selling.

The real value of the estate can also be measured by analysing the

internal development of individual properties. During 2017, the HOA's Aesthetic Sub-Committee ("ASC") was requested to review 54 building plans for additions and or alterations to existing houses. This represent about 8% property improvement growth over a year period, which is significant.



With the road construction underway at the corner of Nellmapius and Van Ryneveld Road, we were lucky to become the new owners of five (5) big aloes, which were donated to us by the construction company, Civilcon. The aloes were in the way of the new road construction. The aloes were planted in our parks.



A third factor that plays an important role, is a sound and health financial structure, which is eminent of Irene Farm Villages.

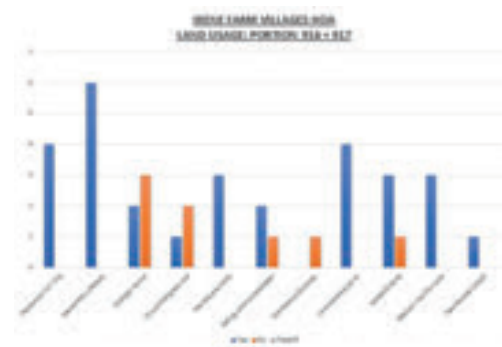
Lastly, to consider, is the day-to-day management of the estate. It is of importance, that the HOA's assets are always well managed, which include the proper maintenance of structures, for example the two gate houses, the 4,2km perimeter fence, the access control equipment and the 62 parks. If these structures are well maintained and manage, it will add value to the wealth of Irene Farm Villages.

Thirty (30) cycads were donated by residents, Dr Marthinus and Gail Horak to the HOA. We would like to thank Marthinus (as we all know him) and Gail for this special donation. The cycads were planted in the park, just North of the North (2nd) gate.



In the previous three issues of The Villager, the utilization of the 7,5-hectare land by the Home Owners' Association ("HOA") was mentioned, whilst in Issue 2/2018, we published in detail the comments, that were received from the Members. In summarising, the following notes:

- 24 Members submitted comments;
- 38 comments were made (some Members had more than one comment);
- The most wanted request was for the retirement life-style development, followed by the residential full title development;
- The most unwanted development was the storage facility, followed by the church or religious development;
- The above comments remain comments, mainly for discussion purposes;
- This matter will be tabled at the 2018 Annual General Meeting ("AGM") for further discussion and to mandate the HOA Board accordingly to the Members decision at the AGM.



The Infra-Structure Development Plan ("IDP") is progressing. The Tshwane City Council requested further information and plans, e.g. a revised site development plan ("SDP"), a dolomite risk management plan and audit report; and a storm water and sewer site plan. The professional team is working on these plans, which are expected to be finalised and ready for submission to the City Council during March 2018. Your attention is



SOUTH GATEHOUSE ARTIST IMPRESSION



PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT
AT IRENE FARM VILLAGES

drawn to the summary of the capital development projects published with the financial statement in this issue. The Bill of Quantities ("BOQ") has been drafted and once approved by the HOA Board, it will be made available to the Members. Members will also be notified, once the HOA goes out on tender for the construction work.

In the financial statements published in this issue, Members will notice the increase in outstanding levies, because of Members defaulting with the payment of their levy accounts. This is an ongoing concern to the Board. Special efforts are made by the Board, the Estate Management and in conjunction with Account Ability, to collect the outstanding levy account debts. In addressing this matter, the Board took the decision to, in addition to current efforts, suspend the bio-metric access of the Members whose levy accounts are outstanding. The aim of the Board is not to prevent defaulting Members from accessing the Estate, but to make these Members conscious of their duty towards the HOA, to pay their monthly levies and settle their outstanding levy accounts. Members, especially the defaulting Members, must take cognisance of the fact, that the HOA is dependent on the levy income, without which, the HOA cannot fulfil its monthly expense commitment. Once a defaulting Member's bio-metric access has been suspended, such Member will only have access

to the Estate via the main gate and by signing in at Security. The HOA Board makes an urgent appeal to all its Members to pay your levy account in time. If you have a financial difficulty to pay your levy account, you may approach the HOA with a settlement proposal.



In a paragraph above, reference was made of the management and proper maintenance of the assets of the HOA. A very good example is the "bakkie", used by the Estate Management to carry out the daily tasks. This Toyota diesel bakkie was purchased new in 2008 and after ten (10) years at 120 000km, is still running well and doing the work. We would like to thank Simon and Hennie for looking after the welfare of our bakkie.



The HOA Board approved the accreditation of the following eleven (11) estate agencies for the year 1/3/2018 to 28/2/2019. They all submitted their Fidelity Fund Certificates for 2018.



4th avenue properties

We are a mother and daughter team and have been independent since 2006, specialising in properties for sale and property to rent in Centurion & Pretoria East. Christa has been in the property industry since 1996 and Nadia since 2006. Nadia has a National Diploma in Property valuation and is currently studying for her LLB degree; Christa has her NQF5 in real estate.

We supervise maintenance, cleaning and painting jobs and ensure that your investment is in excellent condition. Our big rental portfolio is supported by Payprop, Property Management on steroids, every landlord gets a monthly statement for tax purposes and every tenant gets a monthly invoice. We will gladly assist you in selling and buying of properties and investments in Centurion and Pretoria East. Our friendly service and integrity is well known.

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Lenie Visag  & Liesl van Staden
083 259 5342 084 870 1465

Buy Sell - Real Estate Agents in Pretoria

BuySell is a residential, selling and renting

agency. Nina Antoniou, a qualified Principal Estate agent since 1997, started Buysell in 2003. We specialize in selling and renting, of residential property. We sell in the Irene area, namely Cornwall Hill Estate and Irene Farm Village. Our rentals cover Centurion and the East of Pretoria. Eunice Engelbrecht is our very reliable and hardworking rental agent. We endeavor to provide an honest



Estate News

and reliable service to all our clients. Please feel free to visit our office, Monday to Friday 9am-3pm where you will be met by our friendly receptionist.



Keller Williams Realty

We believe that the company we keep can contribute to our lives in untold ways. To help cement this understanding, we've formalized a belief system that guides how we treat each other and how we do business:

Belief System

Win-Win – Or no deal
Integrity – Do the right thing
Customers – Always come first
Commitment – In all things
Communication – seek first to understand
Creativity – Ideas before results
Teamwork – Together everyone achieves more
Trust – Begins with honesty
Success – Results through people

Leapfrog Property Group

Established as SA's first empowered estate agency in 2007, Leapfrog Property Group believes that real estate is always about people – not just our highly trained agents, but all of the buyers, sellers, landlords and tenants we serve.



Leapfrog places a high emphasis on continuous training, ensuring that our agents are expert advisors on the property market in their area. With 40 franchises around the country, Leapfrog has the property needs of South Africans covered.

We have an agent incentive structure that is unparalleled in the real estate industry. Additionally, our agents have the opportunity to acquire shares in the company based on their performance. Because we feel that the industry is lagging dramatically on the transformation front, we are serious about recruiting and developing the best agents

South Africa has to offer irrespective of race or gender.

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Pam Golding Properties

Built on family values and a culture of service excellence, Pam Golding Properties is recognised as Southern Africa's leading, independent real estate group, providing a full spectrum of services to local and global clients through a worldwide network of over 300 offices and more than 2 000 professional staff and agents.



RealNet Ultimate (Pty) Ltd

At RealNet we understand that our business is about fulfilling people's needs, dreams and aspirations. We believe that the essence of our business is people, wherefore our focus remains on our clients. Our objective is to provide service excellence to buyers and sellers in each and every real estate transaction, regardless of the circumstances.



About RM Realtors

We are an experienced company and have already been in the market for 12 years. Rental incomes for investors form an integral part of our service and we are in a position to help tenants and owners quickly and efficiently. The demand for rentals is increasing in the Pretoria/Centurion/Midrand and this bodes well for our industry. Our goal is to provide exceptional service to our clients and build good, solid and lasting relationships with our satisfied clients whilst improving our market share continuously.



Seeff

Seeff has been operating in Centurion since 1998. We have approximately 60 Agents



in Centurion doing Residential and Commercial Sales and Rentals. We have an on-going policy of ensuring that our Agents receive regular training to keep them abreast of Legislation changes as well as both Industry and Market changes from a local and national perspective.

Superior Realty

Superior Realty was accredited in Irene Farm Villages 5 years ago and its principal agent Jonathan Koen ensured rapid growth in the estate aiming to sell properties for the best possible price creating year on year growth for this award winning estate. Being a resident in IFV it's my top priority to ensure that the properties I market trade for a fair market value, thus increasing the average sale price for the entire estate. Get a professional and savvy property investor on your side when it comes to the marketing and sales. Call Jonathan today and let's get you the best price.



Walter Kolver

I was the Principal via the commercial properties via: an agency from 2005, and when they resigned in 2012, I started a new estate agency. From 2018 we have started a superior company which is in process as an Estate Agency Franchise. We specialize in cheaper commissions and have contacts with great transferring attorneys as well.



The new Estate Office PBX telecommunications system was approved by the Board and should have been installed during March 2018. Incoming callers will be prompted to select their choice of office or Security-assistance required, be it admin, contractors' access, operations, Security or the Estate Manager. We would like to receive your comments on any improvement of the system.



Regards.
Estate Management.

PS: Mahatma Gandhi once said:

"Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strength".



Willem Richter

Dear Residents

Thus far we have been lucky and have had no security breaches, whilst our surrounding areas and some of the other estates have reported hijackings and break-ins. The cameras are fully operational and are an excellent back up for the electric fence. The fence was switched off for a while to upgrade the licence and during this time the access to real time information proved to be an excellent back up.



**PLEASE NOTE
NEW NUMBERS**

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

24HR SECURITY GUARD ROOM:

012 662 3505 ext 3

24HR CONTROLLER:

082 947 7610

24HR SHIFT MANAGER:

082 838 7779

JOC: 079 528 1630

"We cannot change our past. We cannot change the fact that people act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude". Charles R. Swindoll

The new body cameras have been a positive effect and are enhancing the value to residents and our security officers alike. The second phase of training for the security officers commenced on 22 January 2018 with, the Shift Managers receiving management training thereafter. A complete training and re-training schedule is set up to ensure Irene Farm Villages have the best security officers.

This past month we had 10 (ten) dogs roaming the streets with only some of them tagged. This is a serious security risk as these dogs can cause a vehicle accident or children can be bitten. It also has an impact on the security as security officers are chasing dogs and taking them to the kennel. This interferes with their security duties and puts the estate at risk. Residents must please take note that roaming dogs carries a penalty of R500.00 per incident. To date we have been very lenient but due to the risks these penalties will be strictly enforced with immediate effect.

Again, we have had some kids entering empty residences without authorisation. This is also a serious transgression as they can be arrested by the SAPS, or could be seriously hurt by broken windows or lose building material. We urge residents to speak to their children to have a safe and crime free estate. Should we find groups of children roaming the streets, the security officers are instructed to stop and ask them their whereabouts and their stand numbers. These actions are not meant to inhibit the freedom of our children, rather ensures that residents and visitors enjoy the highest levels of security and peace of mind, whilst parents are familiar with the whereabouts of their children.

The risk assessment is still ongoing.

This will take a bit of time as there are quite some in-depth checking and verification to be done. We endeavour to have the report ready by end of January 2018 and once received we will update the residents with the outcome.

Some of our access control equipment has reached the end of their life cycles and we are in the process of obtaining quotes to replace the equipment. At the same time new technology will ensure that we are able to improve our entering and exiting process. This should also enhance and speed up our process at the gate for contractors, domestics, visitors and residents. This will in addition improve our security at the gates.

As we did last month, we published some rules and we will continue doing so just to keep everyone's memory fresh regarding the HOA rules. These are the rules as per HOA rule book.

4.3. DOMESTIC AND GARDEN WORKERS

4.3.1. All members shall ensure that their gardeners, domestic workers and/or their visitors do not cause any disturbance to others and ensure that their vehicles are not parked or worked on in the streets and/or the open spaces and do not pose any risk to security or safety on the Property.

4.3.2. All labourers or workers as defined in these rules, including gardeners, household and domestic workers, painters, tillers, fitters, au pairs, drivers, any employees and any contract workers on behalf of a member or tenant shall only be able to access the Property after a valid access card or permit was issued to such person by the Estate Management or designated Security Personnel. Such access card or permit must be carried always whilst

the holder thereof is on the Property and shall produce same upon the request thereof by any Director of the HOA Board, the Estate Management or the Security Personnel.

4.3.3. All workers, regardless whether a gardener, domestic worker, general labourer, painter, tiller, au pair or any kind of ad hoc worker shall access the HOA property only through one or more of the official security registration systems, after such worker has obtained access to the Property in accordance with Rule 4.3.2.

4.3.4. Members or tenants or any person(s) on behalf of a member or tenant are not allowed to provide a Click On-access code to any employee, worker or labourer to gain access onto the Property.

4.3.5. Members or tenants or any person(s) on behalf of a member or tenant are not allowed to drive any worker, employee or labourer into or out of the Property. All workers, employees or labourers shall access and exit the Property through the turnstiles.

4.3.6. No person shall be allowed to exit the Property with goods, without the written permission by the member or tenant of such goods. The Estate Management or the Security Personnel shall have the right to request proof of such written permission, before the person can exit.

It is important that when you stop the service of a Domestic, Gardener, Contractor or anyone else please inform the office immediately as we need to cancel their access. This is to prevent them from coming back in and steal, hurt or just roaming around waiting to do something illegal. If you fail to advise the office the transgression will carry a penalty of R5,000.00.

In closing, we had 25 garage doors not closed at night during the past month with the result, that we had to phone and request the owners to close the garage doors. Please ensure that garage doors are closed and downstairs windows are secured at night. One never knows whether someone has moved into the estate with ulterior motives.

I greet you for now until next month. Stay vigilant, safe and report suspicious activities immediately. Only you can help us make a difference.

Kind Regards,

Willem Richter

Assistant Estate Manager
083 274 8829.

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IRENE FARM VILLAGES HOME OWNERS' ASSOCIATION Summary Income Statement January 2018

	January 2018		Year to Date		YTD Variance	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Value	%
Operational Income						
Levy Income	992 116	992 116	10 913 280	10 913 276	4	0.0%
Other Income	73 520	27 000	829 211	714 582	114 629	16.0%
	1 065 636	1 019 116	11 742 490	11 627 858	114 632	1.0%
Operational Expenditure						
Professional /Administration	66 359	56 630	694 441	699 954	5 513	0.8%
Accounting and Auditing	34 980	34 980	447 213	445 780	(1 433)	-0.3%
Insurance, Legal and Admin	31 379	21 650	247 228	254 174	6 946	2.7%
General Office	3 859	13 900	181 513	183 745	2 232	1.2%
Office Administration	3 859	13 900	181 513	183 745	2 232	1.2%
Operational Expenses	270 098	182 414	2 057 605	2 094 049	36 444	1.7%
Municipal Charges	33 773	31 000	361 095	365 000	3 905	1.1%
General Operations	47 419	14 943	167 545	162 635	(4 910)	-3.0%
Salaries & Wages	188 906	136 471	1 528 966	1 566 414	37 448	2.4%
Security	546 425	562 579	5 658 618	6 090 680	432 062	7.1%
Security Operations	76 473	62 799	479 144	524 536	45 392	8.7%
CCTV Equipment Rental	105 500	105 500	105 500	527 500	422 000	80.0%
Guarding Services	364 452	394 280	5 073 974	5 038 644	(35 330)	-0.7%
Repairs & Maintenance	146 796	161 125	1 733 137	1 762 585	29 448	1.7%
Repairs & Maintenance	25 434	39 755	418 765	448 176	29 411	6.6%
Park Maintenance Contract	121 362	121 370	1 314 372	1 314 409	37	0.0%
	1 033 537	976 648	10 325 315	10 831 013	505 698	4.7%
Operating Profit / (Loss)	32 098	42 468	1 417 175	796 845		
Non-Recurring Revenue	4 475	0	176 481	31 091	145 390	467.6%
Non-Recurring Expenses	0	118 113	175 540	743 137	567 597	76.4%
Net Positive/ (Negative)	4 475	(118 113)	941	(712 046)	(422 207)	
Net Profit / (Loss)	36 573	(75 645)	1 418 116	84 799		

Irene Farm Village Home Owners Association - Project Income & Other

	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Value	%
Revenue						
Special Levies	202 731	204 297	2 275 001	2 244 410	30 591	1.4%
CSOS Levies	13 302	0	93 117	0	93 117	100.0%

*They always say time changes things, but
you actually have to change them yourself.*

Andy Warhol

Financials

IRENE FARM VILLAGES HOME OWNER ASSOCIATION

Summary Levy Statements – January 2018

	120+ Days	90 Days	60 Days	30 Days	Current	Total		Previous Month
Members paying via EFT	-	-	15 914	74 068	#####	42 780		176 309
Members paying via DO	-	-	-	-	2 027	2 027		-2 339
	-	-	15 914	74 068	#####	44 807		173 970
Debt Collection - AA (30/60 days)	7 244	23 144	19 141	23 939	24 896	98 364	7%	49 227
Debt Collection - JJR (90+ days)	132 826	7 891	7 960	8 030	15 122	171 829	12%	155 406
Debt Collection - L&B (90+ days)	103 225	24 762	24 997	25 399	26 715	205 098	15%	188 643
Debt Collection - Accounts > R200,000	726 406	48 475	14 796	14 926	7 990	812 593	57%	800 667
HOA Contact	145	2 767	4 065	4 057	7 799	18 833		19 416
Sold - Previous Owner Accounts	-	-	-	-6 230	-7 504	-13 734		-16 560
In Transfer	47 387	6 368	6 524	6 524	7 691	74 494		7 849
Estate Agent	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
Other	0	-	-1 250	3 247	-	1 997		-
	#####	#####	92 147	#####	37 533	#####	2.6%	#####

Of the 654 member accounts 179 accounts are overdue of which 22 has been handed over to the HOA's Attorneys for collection. The number of accounts with amounts due doubled during December 2017. We appeal to members to settle their outstanding levies. Overdue accounts are followed up by Account Ability, and in some instances the HOA Board. A few more accounts will be handed over the Estate's Attorney's for collection during February 2018.

Irene Farm Village Home Owners Association - Capital/ Development Projects

	Current stage	Current Status	Approved Budget	Actual Spend To Date	Available Budget
Infrastructure Development	Planning		10 332 764	608 344	9 724 420
Power Solution Project	Completed		2 010 879	2 010 879	-0
CCTV Project	Execute		775 447	226 192	549 254
Land Purchase Project	Complete		2 380 000	2 282 850	97 150
Total			15 499 089	5 128 265	10 370 824

Account Ability

Office Address:
Sovereign Drive,
Route 21
Corporate Park

Accounting Office Hours
8:00 to 13:00
Monday to Friday

Office Tel:
082 780 0059

Accounts Email:
accounts@aams.co.za

IFV Accounts:
Winnie Boshoff

Summary Income Statement by Account Ability



"YOUR TRUSTED PROPERTY PROFESSIONAL"

Léane Graaff Properties

NEW LISTING

R2,8 mil



Single storey home

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EXCESSIVE ONLINE USE PUTS YOUR IMMUNITY AT RISK

A new study hints that too much time online could put one's immunity in jeopardy, increasing the risk of colds and flu by 30%.

A recently released research study that was conducted by Swansea and Milan Universities found that those who spend in excess of four hours a day online for personal use (over and above work) reported more cold and flu symptoms than those who spend less time online. The study involved 500 men and women between the ages of 18 and 100.

With winter fast approaching, this is news you can use.

Mariska van Aswegen, spokesperson for Pharma Dynamics, says SA's 24.9 million internet users should take note.

"According to We are Social – an international social media and marketing agency – South Africans already spend an average of five hours a day online whether they're on a PC, laptop or tablet and on top of that an additional three hours could be spent surfing the net on their cell phones, which puts their immunity at even greater risk.

"Most internet addicts also have other bad habits that can suppress their immune system and make them more susceptible to infection. These include lack of sleep, eating too much junk food, not exercising enough, and



they tend to smoke and drink more alcohol compared to those who are less concerned about being connected 24/7," she remarks.

On top of that, the study found that those who are addicted to the internet may experience even more stress when being unplugged from the net, and that this cycle of stress and relief may lead to an increase in cortisol levels.

"Cortisol is the stress hormone released by the adrenal glands, which plays an important role in regulating the

immune system," says Van Aswegen. "If you're experiencing a lot of stress – in this case as a result of being disconnected from the web – your cortisol levels remain elevated, which can lead to more regular infections, such as colds and flu, chronic inflammation, allergies and even autoimmune diseases."

Excessive internet use by young people could also lead to withdrawal symptoms similar to substance abusers. A study conducted by the Department of Adult Psychiatry in Poland Medical University showed

that internet addiction was seen to be quite common among young people. Based on the study, every fourth child was addicted to the internet, which is concerning as children are still in their formative years.

"These days, access to the internet is mandatory in most schools and teachers expect learners to use the internet to do their research. This makes it important for parents to review their approach when it comes to educating children about technology and to limit their internet use, at least while they're at home.

"Screen time in general should be

restricted to an hour a day for children between the ages of 2 and 5, and no more than two hours a day for those aged between 5 and 18.

"It's easy for all of us to escape to the internet when we feel overwhelmed, stressed, depressed or lonely. It's the one thing that provides us with a constant, ever-changing source of entertainment, information and tools that are accessible through TVs, PCs, smart phones and tablets, but aside from increasing our risk of infection, too much time online can also lead to a host of other ills. These could include decreased productivity at work or at school, overspending when e-shopping or gambling for example, while excessive use of social

networking sites takes bonding time away from family or friends.

"It doesn't really matter if you use the internet to shop online, for social media, gaming, trading shares or work, it's the amount of time you spend online that makes you more susceptible to illness, and which we should guard against. How much time however differs from one individual to the next.

"One way to determine healthy vs unhealthy internet use is by a person's decision to interact online instead of in person or spending time online instead of dealing with important tasks

in life. If you start isolating yourself from friends or family to spend more time online or become defensive about how much time you spend on the net, you might have a problem and need to re-evaluate your screen time," says Van Aswegen.

In SA about 11.8 million people are considered to have active social media accounts and of them all South African internet users spend most of their time on WhatsApp, followed by Facebook.

(Source: Global Web Index)



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GIVE YOUR CHILDREN THE BUILDING BLOCKS THEY NEED TO FIND BALANCE

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Equipping our children to navigate through their world is one of the best gifts we can give them, and Marlinie Ramsamy, CEO of FranklinCovey South Africa, who believes that there are four key tools that will help them identify their best path, and stick to it, no matter what distractions they encounter: confidence, personal resilience, emotional intelligence, self-worth.

Confidence

Confidence comes from young people being able to ask themselves questions, identify answers, and to have the strength of character to act on those answers. This gives them the tools they need to identify the tasks, opportunities and obstacles ahead of them, and to plan a strategy to address them all. It also allows them to identify which events are part of their concern, giving them the confidence to choose what they

need to do, and not be distracted by what is not important.

Resilience

Resilience in children comes from them having confidence in themselves and in their personal space with their parents and families. They're confident that the future will be fine, and that their family institution provides a backstop for all their decisions. While much of this may be tacit in a

family, it's worth learning from bigger institutions – i.e. businesses – and taking the time to create a mission statement for the family, with every family member contributing. This ensures that everyone knows where they fit into the family, and what they need to do to support one another, in turn giving everyone the resilience that they will need to face daily challenges.

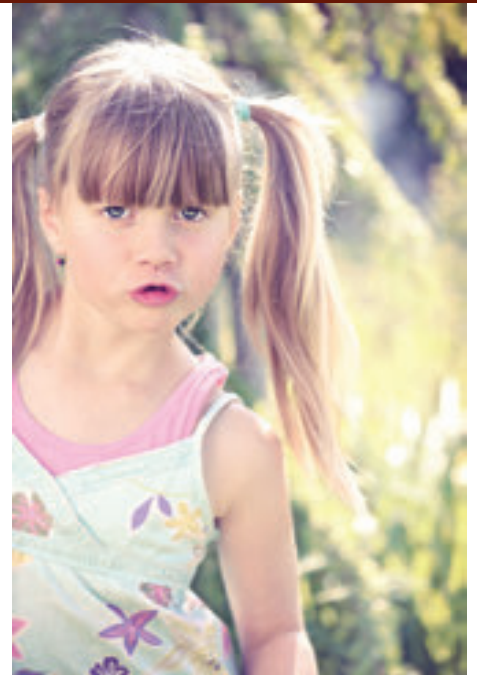
Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is being secure in the knowledge of who/whom you are and what you stand for – and it's not just children and teenagers that need to learn this skill! Parenting requires emotional flexibility and realising that the rules that we grew up with, such as children being seen and not heard, are no longer relevant. Our children have strong opinions that they need the space to vent – and should know how to do it with respect. A society – and a family – with a high level of emotional intelligence knows that everyone has the right to their opinion, but that they also must be cognizant of others' needs. Simply, they need to learn confidence and assertiveness, without being arrogant.

Self-worth

Self-worth is a state of mind, and not a competency. It includes being comfortable with what you look like and who you are, and it forms the basis of learning responsibility at every level. This could be for something as basic as understanding a timetable and packing bags accordingly, or it could be responsibility on a deeper level, relating to decisions made, friends chosen, and the nature of social interactions a young person chooses. It also extends to how they manage their time – or at least finding a sensible balance between academic, sporting and leisure activities.

These four tools are built in the principles of the 7 Habits of Happy Kids by Sean Covey and Stephen R Covey, which include: Be proactive



How do you open conversations about abstract life skills with children who respond best to tangible stimuli?

- Create an environment that is safe and open before you start the discussion.
- Maintain constant and open communication.
- Correct behaviour after each incident, rather than collecting a range of wrongs before addressing mistakes.
- Seek mentors or coaches that can help you.
- Use real life examples to illustrate what you're describing.
- Understand that children might not grasp the concept the first time you discuss it.
- Acknowledge and recognise the efforts they make to develop life skills.
- Support them in their dreams.
- Don't try to correct your own life mistakes by forcing lessons you should have learned, on them
- Separate the issue and the child – for example, say "I'm really upset when you behave this way," rather than "You have upset me because..."

– because you're in charge; Begin with the end in mind – have a plan; Put first things first - work first, then play; Think win-win – everyone needs to benefit; Seek first to

understand, then to be understood – listen before you talk; Synergise – because together is better; and Sharpen the saw – because balance feels best!

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GUIDE YOUR CHILD TO GOOD FOOD HABITS



What your child eats today will have a great impact on his or her health throughout their teenage years up to adulthood. Consuming a well-balanced diet helps children and teens grow, develop, and help with their self-esteem. Nutrition also plays a role in cognitive development, which also influences how they perform academically.

Good nutrition also helps preventing children and teens from becoming overweight or obese and developing chronic diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension, as well as dental cavities and nutritional deficiencies such as iron-deficiency anaemia.

The development of feeding skills, food habits and nutrition knowledge influences the cognitive development that takes place in a series of stages, each laying the ground work for the next. Unfortunately children don't know enough on their own to naturally choose to eat well.

Numerous influences, some more obvious than others, determine the food intake and habits of children. Habits, likes and dislikes are established in the early years and are carried through to adulthood. The major influences on

food intake in the developing years include family environment, social trends, the media and peer pressure.

It is therefore important to provide them with the right nutrition now and to guide

them so that they can learn at an early age what's necessary for good health. This will also help to set them up for a life of proper eating and nutrition, almost certainly helping them for the years to come.

Here are some tips on how to guide your child to have good food habits:

- Encourage your child to consume at least three balanced meals and two healthy snacks daily. This helps to control their blood sugar levels, which also helps to prevent them from wanting any non-nutritious foods.
- The most important meal for a child is breakfast. Starting the day with a nutritious, well-balanced meal allows them to concentrate and learn to their full potential.
- Pack your child's lunch for school, including foods from different food groups. Make sure to keep it fun and exciting by including a variety of colours, shapes and sizes.
- Always keep a variety of healthy snacks available such as fresh fruit, yoghurt, raw vegetables and whole grains.
- Encourage your child to try out new foods as well as foods with different textures. Prepare foods with different cooking methods, for example steam versus stir fry. This allows them to increase their

knowledge about different foods, also allowing them to increase the variety in their diet.

- Let your child participate in grocery shopping, meal planning, and meal preparation. These are great opportunities to teach them about good nutrition.
- Never use food as a reward or punishment. Children who are deprived of meals as punishment can tend to overeat when possible for fear of missing the next meal.
- Do not be overly restrictive with sweets and treats. You want your child to develop a healthy attitude towards them. It is great to teach them that moderation is the key.
- Discourage your children from snacking while watching television. People tend to ignore their hunger cues while watching television, leading to overeating.
- Encourage your child to be active. Let them discover physical activities that they find enjoyable.

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