

GARSCOM CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

AGM: 27 May 2019

Report Period: May 2018 – May 2019

This report will give an outline of the past year events more specifically the period May 2018 to May 2019.

I wish to pay tribute to all volunteers who participated and aspired to GarsCom's vision of an open, friendly, safe and involved community. Involvement of the community is growing steadily.

1. Board of directors:

Resignation: Nicolette Prinsloo resigned at the end of July 2018.

Active Directors:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| ➤ Chair | Carol van Niekerk |
| ➤ Vice Chair/Security | Herklaas Meyer |
| ➤ Finance/Communication | Venessa Roelofse |
| ➤ Environment | Phoebe Machere |

2. GarsCom Residents Association (GRA):

The GRA with its members are the heartbeat of what we are doing and we are proud to say that we are consistently experiencing a slow, but steady growth in our membership numbers. Currently there are about 450 contributing members. The GRA membership fees for a residential household are currently R120 per month and for a townhouse unit R50 per month.

3. Portfolios:

- **Finance.**

We were fortunate to have a very good financial year with an income growth of 13.5%. For this, we need to thank every contributing member and business in the community. This, together with a decrease of 10% in expenses, we are able to tackle an exciting new project for this financial year ending February 2020. We will provide more information about this project as it gets underway.

- **Social Projects:**

- Recognition evening.

This is where we say thank you to all GarsCom volunteers and financial sponsors for the maintenance of 22 cameras, a control room and making GarsCom the safest residential area in Pretoria.

Ronel Schwartz and her committee organized a very successful and enjoyable recognition evening on 18 May 2018. The following recognitions were handed out:

- GarsCommer of the year: Jolanda Horn
 - Whatsapp admin of the year: Jolanda Horn

- Unsung Hero of the year: Theo vd Westhuizen
- Business of the year: M-Studios
- Street of the year: Seeleeu street.

GarsCom Bazaar.

On 11 May 2019, Saninke Du Rand organized the first GarsCom Bazaar which replaced the previous Family Fun days. The venue changed from the Great Dane Park to the Bethel Chapel and it proved to be very successful both for the community as well as for Garscom.

GarsCom Potjiekos day.

The day provides an opportunity for Garscom residents to socialize, get to know each other and enjoy some traditional South African cooking... Yes "potjiekos"! All Garscom residents may enter a potjie, for a small fee, to compete for the "Garscom potjiekos trophy" and prizes. It is a wonderful day filled with excitement, exceptional cooking, some celebrity judges and musical entertainment.

Louis van Heerden is the project leader for the potjiekos day. He organized an enjoyable day where the National team was crowned champions for 2018.

• **Communication:**

Social Media.

All streets in GarsCom have Whatsapp groups that were started mainly for security reasons. However, other relevant matters are also communicated to the residents, like traffic problems, load shedding and other important community news. Every Whatsapp administrator decides whether a message that was sent from the main group is relevant for that street. This facility is available for all GarsCom residents. Some streets have started separate chat groups to communicate on a more social level.

The GarsCom face book is a very effective communication channel. The administrators at present are Shani Kotze, Wilna Barnard, Venessa Roelofse and Carol van Niekerk. This is a closed group and only residents of GarsCom are allowed to register. Thursdays is open for advertising.

Whatsapp pet group.

A group of pet lovers assisting with lost and found pets within the borders of GarsCom.

Weekly news.

All GarsCom resident Association members receive a weekly email with crime and community news. Tessa Moller, Anne Marie Schoeman and Laetitia Bottyan are volunteers who translate and proof read this letter each week. All GRA members receive this letter.

Entrance boards.

Louis and Danielle van Heerden change the two entrance boards every week. GarsCom events are advertised on these boards.

Monthly meetings.

GarsCom hosts a meeting in the Bethel Chapel every last Monday evening of every month from January to October. Attendance varies from 15 to 50 residents for a meeting. Different themes are addressed throughout the year.

Bi-Monthly printed newsletter.

We had no printed newsletters since July 2018. The directors decided to appoint Johanda Ebersohn to keep a diary of all events in GarsCom.

Website

The current website was designed by Ilana vd Merwe she also manages the web page..

List of suppliers in GarsCom.

One of the residents in Boerboel Street, Steven Mayer, developed excellent facility to advertise good, trustworthy businesses. Advertising is free and a service to GarsCom residents. On the web page there is also the facility to comment on the service you received from the advertiser on the list.

GarsCom Calendar.

Venessa Roelofse is the editor of the yearly Calendar. 1500 copies are printed and handed out to GarsCom residents. It is also a marketing tool for the rest of the year when new residents move into the area.

20 Years Commemorative book

This Commemorative Book is a way to celebrate the milestones in GarsCom over the past 20 years and to commemorate the event in print, creating a foundation for the next 20 years to come. This is for sure a highlight in the GarsCom history and Ilana van der Merwe was the artist and the editor. To Ilana and Venessa who assisted her all the way in this huge task a big thank you. The book was launched on 10th May on the GarsCom facebook.

• **Environment:**

Borders.

The past year we could not make progress on the neat and safe border because of the bi-laws that were being revised. The public was invited to participate and GarsCom also made a contribution and suggested a change in the bi-law to allow the advertising on the border walls for a neater and safer community.

Street clean up and Mandela day.

This inspiring initiative started to honour the legacy of Nelson Mandela. On the 21st of July 2018 Cathy Coetzee once again organized a team to help clean all GarsCom streets. A local gardener, Jan Phuti, is hired and sponsored by a few residents to assist in cleaning GarsCom main streets on a bi-weekly basis.

Garden friends

The objective of this group is to discuss gardening issues, to share green secrets, attend DIY workshops and of course make friends. Kobie Nel leads this group and an active whatsapp group keeps everybody informed on all activities. To date this group has grown into another proud initiative that makes GarsCom the community a true community.

Recycling

Venessa Roelofse is the contact person for this project. The previous service provider, Waste Group, cancelled the service and after lengthy discussions GarsCom asked Blu Swirl, to provide the service to our residents. There are also other possibilities being investigated to make use of informal recyclers but there are some logistic problems that must be solved.

Parks

Ongoing talks between GarsCom directors and Parks authorities to make the parks friendlier to use. The suggestions made by GarsCom are that we need to lock all gates at night. A notice board should be erected at the gates with open and closing times. A chess area is in the planning and will be done at the Great Dane park.

• **Security.**

Two way radios

A control and management system has been implemented to comply with ICASA requirements. Repairs and programming are managed by GarsCom. Only members of GarsCom are allowed to use radios on the GarsCom frequency. Reprogramming of all radios is planned for later this year.

Community patrols

There are about 100 individuals who volunteer their time, day and night, throughout the year, patrolling the streets of GarsCom, ten night teams and 1 day team. They are the eyes and ears of the community, reporting any suspicious activities and potential threats to the GarsCom Control Room.

The green light patrols consist of 11 teams, each managed by a team coordinator with each team having a scheduled two-hour shift to patrol the area using their own vehicles and fuel. Every patroller is equipped with a two-way radio, green light for the roof and a "GarsCom Patrols" magnetic sticker on the side of the vehicle.

Andre Vorster is the chair person of the patrols and Anthony Schaaf the vice Chair.

Control room

The control room serves as a central hub where all the cameras and radio communications are managed and monitored. Among many other benefits, the control room provides services such as emergency support, incident control, radio assistance, lookouts for potential threats, patrol coordination etc. whilst keeping detailed records of all occurrences.

We have 4 operators operating 24/7 in the control room. Pieter Kruger is the control room manager but he tendered his resignation at the beginning of the month of May and the Directors will appoint a new manager as soon as possible.

The control room operators in cooperation with the National patrol officers and the green light patrols is a primary contributing factor in combating crime in GarsCom.

Team building

Each year a team building day is hosted by GarsCom and National. The last two occasions were held at the office of National in Brooklyn. National provided lunch while GarsCom provided the tea time eats and snacks. . All the control room operators and the National patrol officers of the GarsCom shifts spent the day building better relationships. This is a valuable day aimed at building better personal and working relationships.

National Security and Fire

National Security and Fire is serious about the pro active model. We have two dedicated patrol cars in GarsCom managed by experienced and professional patrol officers. The GarsCom clients' alarms are monitored by a dedicated desk at National and National also provides a dedicated technician once a week at a lower call out fee. The GarsCom directors have regular monthly meetings with the National management at which all problems are addressed .

Domestic and gardener training.

Since 2005 GarsCom has been hosting domestic and gardener security training workshops. The workers receive training in basic self-defense and are provided with safety and security information to better protect themselves and the houses where they work. For the second year, National assisted us with training on how to extinguish a fire and other security tips. A GarsCom resident Elizabeth Nell assisted as in the past with self defense demonstrations.

A food packet is prepared for everyone who attends the course. They also receive a GarsCom calendar and a whistle. A database is kept of everyone who attends the course.

4. Acknowledgements:

Goodwill and commitment, to which no monetary value can be apportioned, are shown by the following persons:

- Firstly, a big thank you to the dedicated directors who walked the extra mile this past year and helped in the fulfilment of our dream of a friendly and safe community. The Bethel Chapel that is always available for GarsCom meetings and other occasions.
- Mr Reinhard van Wyk of Van Wyk & Vennote is the auditor for the GarsCom Residents Association, which he does on *pro bono* basis.
- Messrs. Anthony and Dub Boshoff of Property Shop who make their boardroom available for meetings.

- Mr Japie Havenga of Sasol who made space available for the GarsCom (JOC) Wendy house..
- Tessa Moller, Annemarie Schoeman and Laetitia Bottyan are responsible for translating the weekly news. They are also assisted by Phoebe and Jo for general proofreading and translations. Thank you for precise and faithful work.
- All the patrollers that volunteer to help keep our streets safe night and day and the patrol coordinators that make sure that their teams are informed and on the road for their shifts.
- All other volunteers who organize events and gatherings for the community.
- All street whatsapp administrators and back up administrators who make sure that all members of their streets receive the messages about security and other community news.
- Those community members who make sure that our streets are clean for financial contribution.
- There are many people who are always willing to make their knowledge, skills and time available to GarsCom and their fellow residents.

To all residents, GarsCom says a big thank you to all those who have contributed, financially or otherwise, to ensure that GarsCom is such a safe, open, friendly and involved community.

Many thanks to our Heavenly Father for His protection throughout the year and for granting us the grace of friendship. May that bond of friendship continue to bind the community of GarsCom together.

Carol van Niekerk 20 May 2019