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Shock as Knysna's ex-ANC Mayor Turns DA Blue

Posted on [May 29, 2014](#) by [Mike Hampton](#)



Eleanore Bouw-Spies, the ex-ANC Mayor of Knysna, has joined the DA and announced that she's running for the Ward 5 seat (Rheenendal to Brenton-on-Sea) in the forthcoming by-election after [Councillor Magda Williams \(DA\) died last month](#).

Elsewhere this may be considered as an April Fool's joke but as Winter approaches, it's just another day in the roller-coaster/steam-roller that is Knysna's politics wherein power makes no sense and the public has little input beyond biased, uneducated voting.

Eleanore Bouw-Spies was a councillor representing the ANC for 11 years. An action-packed, special council meeting in 2007 had her taking the Mayor's position after the Knysna Community Forum, represented by Elrick van Aswegen, switched their allegiance to the ANC and cost the DA the reins of power. Van Aswegen has since moved to COPE yet retained his vote for the ANC who was forced into the back-seat in 2011 when the DA won the town back.

Eleanore's switch to the DA poses awkward questions and the inconvenient topic "race matters no matter what".

When [analysing the impact that voting patterns in the recent general election would have on Knysna](#), i stated, with regards Rheenendal, that "despite alleged, unethical pressure by the ANC in the area, DA support is strong.... but finding a strong candidate won't be easy."

Eleanore Bouw-Spies is a strong candidate. She obviously has political experience and is a superb public speaker. But since not being mayor, she's had a topsy-turvy ride: estate agent for Pam Golding, manager of Vermont's Home for the Aged and now a teacher at Concordia High. That would seem unreliable on any resume unless it never mattered because she was biding time to get back into Council.



This photo appeared in the George Herald In 2012. It shows Eleanore Bouw with Alan Winde (DA minister), Richard Dawson (DA councillor) and Shaun van Eck (ex-Knysna Tourism CEO and then member of the DA Constituency)

It would seem so. She's a member of the Knysna Municipality's Audit Committee, the same committee which has done absolutely nothing to stop the Municipality's spending spree (the [Nissan Jukes](#), the council's office refurbishments and, especially, the [unsupervised spending of millions](#) that spiraled Knysna Tourism into the red). **Why she kept quiet begs the question, "Was she cosyng up to the DA."** It was even announced that she had been appointed as a Board member of Knysna Tourism but when i saw her, she said that she'd decided not to, half-joking that it was to stay off my blogging radar. That could also be interpreted as avoiding controversy whilst she prepared her election bid (which would've been sped up with the death of Magda Williams). With 2 DA members having recently quit the Board, it will be interesting to see if she steps back in.

How long has the DA and Eleonore been planning this move? Maybe since she lost her high-paying job and fell out of favour with the ANC. Reliably, i've known for a long time that her chances of a future within the ANC were non-existent. But she's kept herself in the limelight, appearing at high-profile functions such as the [Hilton Group's relaunch of Pezula](#).

When she announced an anti-crime movement in her home suburb of Hornlee, i offered her lunch where at i told her that the only reason why i believed she'd done so was because she was intending to run for office again. She admitted that she was considering running but led me to believe that she'd do so as an independent. I may not like the constant colour changing of politicians but i've also been the biggest advocator of independents in Knysna (though i'd prefer them to be community leaders who have not been previously tainted by politics). Thus, i was in a grey area but silently, more of me wanted to support her if she did.

Her anti-crime initiative went nowhere. She became involved in a social community upliftment group called [Leisure Unlimited](#) which, so far, seems to have gone nowhere too (i don't doubt the organisations honourable motives but it would seem that Eleanore has been a figurehead rather than an active founder).

Associations are supposition but notable that in 2012 the George Herald photographed her with Alan Winde (DA MEC), Richard Dawson (DA councillor) and Shaun van Eck (ex-Knysna Tourism CEO and then member of the DA Constituency). She even attended my Knysna First meeting in which i invited citizens and leaders to find common cause so as to work together. Not one person did so. The underlying reasoning for the attendance of some seemed to be to keep an eye on me... even to find out if i was running for office.

Read [Part 2 here](#).