

ANNEXURE A

Ne...xpose

Posted on October 8, 2011 by admin

www.outreach.co.za/blog/2011/10/knysna-keep

(His 2nd blog posted on www.outreach.co.za)

There are not many local people using the net as it could be used. Using the net as it should be used. So far I have only bumped into one. One who likes to be known as Wicked Mike. But unfortunately wicked, only in the sense of being obsessed, short sighted and self absorbed.

He claims to Love Knysna. But one has to question the sincerity of this statement since everything he touches on is negative. He appears to be driven by an anger which is understandable, up to a point. But only up to the point where everyone with whom he comes into contact with, who doesn't snap out the answers he wants to hear on the turn, is tarred and feathered as a liar, corrupt and incompetent. He has nothing to offer other than a stream of irrational and vitriolic criticism along with his rather sugary love of Knysna and his patronising concern for the masses on the other side of the colour divide. Who the hell does he think he is? Does he not understand anything?

He discounts anything and everything anyone is actually doing that is constructive with the excuse that

"we are talking about our lives, issues far greater than....."

And when pressed to spell out his grandiose plans for turning the tide, he starts getting nasty and personal. It's actually ironic Wicked Mike is as guilty, if not more so, than the DA Council officials whom he seeks to vilify simply because he has the time to waste theirs.

The truth of the matter is that Knysna Tourism pulled the plug on a workshop project he was running because it was not sustainable (read an irresponsible waste of resources). And instead of recognising this fact and trying to find ways of making himself useful and relevant, he believes he has every right to run around insulting everyone who fails to toe the line and do his bidding. He is a pocket Hitler if there ever was one. A manipulator of facts who is adept at twisting circumstances to suit. He is also a hungry sort with his eye firmly fixed on the public purse.

I do have project ideas but it's essential to have the municipality and political parties involved if they are to be truly effective. In our small town, that is where the money is.

Sadly all that the present ANC dominated Government has been able to achieve over the last decade or two is to foster a culture of dependency and entitlement. And Wicked Mike slips comfortably into this cesspit of moral bankruptcy keeping an anxious eye on the trough of plenty. Double speak is his weapon of choice and he has mastered the art of smoke and mirrors.

He counts the Justice and Equality Fund as a client. They pay him to run their web site and to promote the argument that it makes far more sense to challenge the DA administration in Plett (and the rest of the Province) in the courts of law than it does on the ground and in the streets where the ANC just keeps losing ground. And precisely where do you think they get their money from? From the general public? Not a damn my man. They are not saying and there is an odds on chance you are taking dirty money my friend. So don't start chirping about democratic principles, equality, justice, transparency and the freedom of speech. It's a lie, you know it and you are part of it.

Finally you are not the white messiah you seem to think you are. You are irrelevant and the only reason you are tolerated and accommodated is because you are being used. And before you start fanning out your tail feathers, go and spend some time amongst the gangs on the

Cape Flats. Time for you to wake up sunshine. One of these days you are going to sprout some irrelevant drivel about something you shouldn't and the bad guys will take you apart.

You are arrogant, naive and have absolutely nothing to offer. Instead of working so hard merely to make a prick of yourself why don't you try making yourself useful, making a real difference?

And yes that is a challenge which I doubt you have the backbone to accept.

Wicked what.....?

Posted on October 11, 2011 by admin

www.outreach.co.za/blog/2011/10/wicked-mike

I have been watching Wicked Mike ever since he started Knysna Keep. In fact it was some time before he started Knysna Keep that we first spoke. He is a writer, a communicator and these are the sort of people that interest me. But unfortunately he sees everything as a mirror image of himself and that amounts to nothing other than a wasted talent. An independent spirit? Maybe, but I don't think so. More like the blind spirit weighed down by phobia's such as arrogance, fear and paranoia.

Whatever his problems he started deleting my comments from his blog and I think its time to take him on. He is no different to those he criticises. And what gets up my nose is that he doesn't have any of the answers either. Nothing other than a mean, malignant mean spirit with ill intent. The other side of the coin. The dishonesty, the irony, the wasted time.

But this is what got me "banned"

You miss the point yet again. No Nidhi is not DA. She is just doing something constructive. Just as others are working successfully within the system doing the stuff that needs doing. No, this does not make them DA. But if you do love Knysna why are you not featuring the stuff that is working? Why are you trashing everyone and everything?

How can you simply dismiss these small successes? What is more important than progress and results? You confuse me.

Secondly my business has nothing to do with what we are talking about. Yes we are launching a writers competition, which we have discussed, and that is my way of doing that stuff you merely talk about. Just as Nidhi's Recycled Band competition is something you don't consider to be relevant to the current situation and something you have nothing to say about. There is no bitterness. Just disappointment in that you appear to be losing the plot and your activism is no more than a whole lot of vitriolic hot air.

So be it. Whose Wicked.....? Wicked Mike?

THE ALTERNATIVE

Posted on October 16, 2011 by admin

www.outreach.co.za/blog/2011/10/knysna-pr

Having decided to take Wicked Mike head-on I thought I would talk to the Knysna Municipality first. I spoke to Nozuko Mbatani in Communications and was referred through to Jacques Marais " at Knysna Tourism". So I left a message for him and when he returned my call, I started asking difficult questions. I did manage to get a few guarded answers but he was not comfortable and referred me on to Nicci Rousseau Schmidt " the owner of Knysna PR".

Wicked Mike has hit his mark. They all know him.

Some giggle, others put a plastic bucket on their heads and most just duck the question to pass you on to the next. So his message is getting through and no one quite knows how to respond. Nicci was no different. She has been targeted and is annoyed. And I suspect mostly because she has no way of addressing the problem. What they do not want to understand is that Wicked Mike is no different to the schoolyard bully. He is using the net to push a personal agenda. He has over stepped the mark. He is abusing the net, he is abusing the resource he has access to and what Nicci needs to recognise is that all she needs to do is to challenge him. He has no special skills other than a passion to waste as much time as he possibly can.

Mark: "Nicci as discussed, you guys and the municipality in particular, cannot afford to ignore Wicked Mike. He is all over Google and you are damned by the fact that there is no visible counter balance. I am not saying you have to engage him, nor do you have to answer his accusations directly. But you do need to be there. You need to be seen . You need to be seen to be precisely what he says you are not.

It's not difficult to do. I run a free online workshop where I show anyone who is interested how it can be done. No tenders, no committee's, just results everyone can see. I show them how to make themselves "useful", how to get seen and how to get used. Thereafter its a question of how to turn what they start into a micro-business. All of which could be turned into the beginnings of a cottage industry that could make a huge difference to many families in this area.

For example, we are launching a Writers Workshop where we are looking for people to write stuff about the Garden Route and Knysna. We will then promote this as a pool of skills and an internet marketing resource, to both local as well as international consultants looking for cost effective and well written content.

This with the objective of identifying one hundred local writers and of getting them to the point where each is earning a thousand US dollars a month. Writers working together with a common purpose, exploiting a global market and spending that money in the restaurants and shops, for paying school fees and if not why not their rates which are currently in arrears. Ask yourself what eight hundred thousand rand a month, every month will do for the local economy? And then ask whether its not worth a try? It costs nothing other than a bit of time which I and many others have to spare And it takes nothing more than a bit of imagination.

But to get back to Wicked Mike. If you let me have two or three people who are interested in learning how to become trainers that train the next set of trainers. We could easily drown out the rantings of what is merely a wicked troll, pushing him off the page and into cyber oblivion."

Nicci: "Thank you, I received your email – Friday was such a crazy day that I have not had time to reply. Will look at it in the morning, I have already discussed some ideas with my assistant, Jacques – maybe we can come for a session just to get a feel for what you do?"

Mark: "Nicci everything I do is done online. There is nothing to it really. What is important, is what one does with the time one has available. Have you had a look at Carlyle's site/sites? What I am trying to drum into him is that if he makes himself useful, if he gets seen, his sites will get used.

After that he can add value to the service he is providing and build a micro business for himself. The scripts we use are the free default Wordpress scripts. This is where Show Me also started and by the time I have finished with Carlyle he will have a totally new perspective of the net and what it can be made to do."

Nicci: "Yes, I've looked at it, and understand what you mean by useful information.

What I'd like to know is when you google Shaun van Eck, Wicked Mike's websites come up first – there are a lot of newer info out there, why is his sites still first? Because we do not tag the right words when we post in on e.g. Knysna Tourism's website? Or ShowMe e.g.?"

Mark: "Nicci its impossible to say exactly what Google is thinking but the easy answer is that Mike gets attention because he is garrulous and yes he uses his tags correctly. Google also puts a lot of store in small, genuinely useful sites. What you want, to add value to your shop window, is a network of small buzy, useful sites with targeted back links that point back to tourisms site. It's not difficult to do, it's also relatively inexpensive to set up and run and could have huge spin off's."

The Writer's Workshop

www.outreach.co.za/blog/2011/10/the-writers-workshop

Posted on October 23, 2011 by admin

We have had half a dozen very bubbly and enthusiastic replies so far and I have asked them to submit three short posts on different subjects as well as some pictures and a biography. Now we wait. In the meantime I have mailed this to Nicci Rousseau Schmidt asking her whether I need to contact Shaun van Eck at Knysna Tourism and whoever else at the Knysna Municipality and Knysna Local Council offices.

"Nicci we have launched our writers workshop. Any chance of getting you to join the programme http://askthelocals.co.za/writers_workshop/sponsors/ ? All it requires is a challenge which I will post on the site and then a small advert or two. If enough of us do it, we will flush out enough writers to give us the skills we need to promote their services and to start building a cottage industry brick by brick, drop by drop. This is how one uses the net constructively. This is how one counters the inane rumblings of trolls like Wicked Mike.

Can I contact Tourism and the Municipality? Or do I take them at their word and refer everything to you?"

Besides Martin Hatchuel, Wicked Mike is the only casual blogger I know but I am not going to waste any more time there. For what it's worth I have already spoken to him . That was over a long coffee saturated breakfast and before he accused me of being hypocritical and an armchair critic. That pissed me off. Besides which I don't like the friends he keeps. I don't see the point in engaging the political structures he is so wrapped up in. The ANC that has already failed the country and on the other side of the coin the DA and COPE neither of which have anything to offer other than more of the same.

So why bother?

MORAL IMPROPRIETY

Posted on October 28, 2011 by admin

www.outreach.co.za/blog/2011/10/copywriters-knysna

I am not sure when or how I first made contact with Wicked Mike. But it was a few years ago, soon after he arrived in town. I think I was looking for writers at the time. And he was licking his wounds after an Entertainment Blog he was working on, crashed and burned. He has skills, there is no question about that. And I subsequently comissioned him to write a couple of articles to see if we could build a working relationship. But that soon ran into attitude and I backed off. He got involved with Swing Cafe. He got uninvolved with Swing Cafe and was

running Garden Route Concerts.

Every now and again we would do coffee or a breakfast where I would discuss my ideas, the project I have been working on and the opportunities which I believe are available to writers on the net. I have tried to involve him, to work with him and we even got to the point where we almost started working on a site the Food Agency. But it wasn't to be. He is a control freak and is terrified of getting lost in the crowd.

After organising a disasterous concert over one of the Oyster Festivals, he managed to get his claws into Shaun van Eck at Knysna Tourism. He was organising and running workshops intended to equip participants to run and organise events. A project which was dumped at short notice apparantly because it was unsustainable. And this is where Wicked Mike lost it.

He turned on his mentor and friend overnight, snapping and snarling all the way to the Western Cape's Premier's office. So we did a couple of breakfasts once again, where I tried to get him to look at an alternative way to do things. A concept and idea that I have been working on for the last eight years. We agreed once again to set up a site for Knysna Copywriters but surprise, surprise he has once again decide that its in his personal interests to go it alone and repackage what are essentially my ideas, as his own. He has submitted a proposal to the local Knysna Municipality seeking funding for Junior Journalism training programme.

I accept that none of us has proprietary rights over what are nothing more than ideas. That ideas are for free. But I do consider his behaviour to be underhand, deceitful and given the fact that he has grievously insulted everyone in local government who has crossed his path, most inappropriate. **Wicked Mike is just another self centred and greedy parasite, intent on getting his snout into the trough and his sticky fingers into the public purse.**

No see, No do, No hear

Posted on November 14, 2011

www.outreach.co.za/blog/2011/11/wicked-mikes-blog

I nearly bumped into Wicked Mike, my arch nemesis, as he was padding down Gray. But he studiously managed to steer his way past what was a difficult moment by assuming the foetal position and adopting a no see, no do, no hear attitude. And I just couldn't resist a cheeky wave and gloat as I sailed past.

And its that attitude that defines everything.

Mike: "I'm unable to comprehend how the masses of poor (so far) can look down, from their nearby hills, at the thousands of large houses and cars without succumbing to debilitating depression or overwhelming anger?"

This man is dishonest. His anger has nothing to do with the plight of the masses. He is merely using them. Using their desperation to hide his lack of ability, his abuse of the skills he has and his belief that he is somehow entitled to share in the bounty and opportunities offered by the public purse. He has an education, he is a communicator and he has access to a global market. So why is this man so angry?

The answer is quite simple. He does not understand the need to share. He is so wrapped up in himself and his own insecurities he cannot open the doors, even for himself. All he has to offer is arrogance and when things do not go the way he wants he gets downright nasty and rude. The man has a great deal to say and offers nothing that is constructive and useful.

And my advice to him is to get off his backside, make him self useful and once he has proved that he has what it takes to change the course of things, then and only then does he earn the right to start telling others what they should do and think. Either lead by example or put a cork

in it.

And whilst we are on the subject.....

[He then writes a letter to Nicci, the then Public Relations officer for Knysna Tourism and manager of the Oyster Festival, asking her to sponsor his project, partly with the reasoning as "This is how I suggest we drown out the noise made by malcontents like Wicked Mike."]

Knysna PR – Nicci Rousseau Schmidt

Posted on December 2, 2011 by admin

www.outreach.co.za/blog/2011/12/knysna-pr-nicci-rousseau-schmidt

Nicci Rousseau Schmidt owns and runs Knysna PR assisted by Jacques Marais. They are represent Knysna Tourism, the Knysna Municipality and are responsible for organising the Oyster Festival....I think. They have an office at Tourism but have a flexible work routine.

Nicci has the overall responsibility for promoting Knysna and is the obvious starting point to promote the workshop concept.

"Hi Mark

I am happy to speak to the municipality and Tourism – are you thinking that they should sponsor a competition? How does that work – do they write a challenge as per the link? What costs will be involved?

Kind regards

Nicci Rousseau-Schmidt

Knysna PR"

"Nicci no costs or should I say minimal costs. I deliberately want to keep it as low key and cost effective as possible. We want to involve local businesses. And they are all very cost conscious at this stage. So yes, all that is required is a challenge that I will post on the site and a couple of small adverts challenging the writers to submit their work. I will then file the submissions by Sponsor and they can make awards according to the criteria they have set. If the writers also want to participate in the workshop as a "writer on call" I will need a regular biography as well as a second "public" biography if they want to write under a pseudonom.

If we can get enough sponsors to grow a big enough pool of content there are two things we might achieve. The first is to catch the eye of the large professional Internet Marketing companies and two much needed exposure as a town where businesses work together to promote not only their own interests but the fynbos, forests, rock pools and sea horses.

Hope it makes sense. This is how I suggest we drown out the noise made by malcontents like Wicked Mike. It can be made to work. But there has to be enough of us with reasons to make it work."

Mark

Knysna Tourism

Posted on October 13, 2012 by admin

www.outreach.co.za/blog/2012/10/knysna-tourism

The CEO of Knysna Tourism has been suspended by the Board pending a disciplinary hearing. No one knows what is going on other than the fact that they have already spent most of their budget. I have not had much to do with Tourism but from the little that I have, I thought they were at worst trying.

And now, its the vultures that are gathering. One in particular whom I am familiar with. An opportunist and fair weather friend of the worst sort who goes by the name of Wicked Mike. This is a man who threw a tantrum when Shaun van Eck took his sugar bowl away. He was offering "courses" at a cost to the ratepayers which had little or no real discernable value. He didn't understand this and all hell broke loose.

In desperation he turned to the DA soon after they assumed responsibility for the Knysna Municipality. And it didn't take long for him to turn on them and join the ranks of the malcontents whose sole purpose in life appears to be to frustrate service delivery in the Western Cape. This to discredit the DA for doing what nobody else has been able to do, which is to govern.

A man who has mastered the art of double speak, a useless person with a lot to say and nothing constructive to offer. An activist my foot! A scab with his eye firmly set on the public purse. One of lifes victims that will hopefully fall off the edge of the world he is trying to create.

Accusations & Acrimony

Posted on December 14, 2012 by admin

www.outreach.co.za/blog/2012/12/accusations-acrimony

Shaun van Eck has made many mistakes. He does not appear to understand this, let alone learn from the mistakes he has made. Be that as it may, he has worked hard for Knysna Tourism and it is sad to see that the village curs are in there and twisting the knife.

Mike (snippets): What isn't mentioned below is that Shaun also used up the R2 million surplus that Tourism had boasted about up until 2011. I have much more to say on this matter...blah....blah....blah.....Shaun van Eck screwed Knysna but he is not the only one deserving blame – the Tourism Board, local media (especially the Knysna-Plett Herald), Knysna Municipality and the DA have questions to answer too.

And there is another name, I know of, that is missing from that list. One of Shaun's most delibitating weaknesses was that he was an easy touch, that he placed far too much faith in bottom feeders. And what is ironic is that Wicked Mike only turned nasty after Shaun van Eck stopped the hand outs being made to fund a financially unsustainable project which he was running. Has he forgotten this? Or does he to have no shame?

We are all mute witnesses to a similar pantomime that will be unfolding this weekend and it's nice to know that wee Julius did not crack an invite. Similarly I do not like Wicked Mike, I do not like his dishonesty and moral bankruptcy. And whilst Shaun is also behaving badly I do not believe anyone is levelling accusations of corruption against him.

ANNEXURE B

<http://forum.gardenroute.com/showthread.php?2617-Knysna-Tourism-CEO-to-face-criminal-charges&p=14434#post14434>

Saturday, 22 December 2012, 14:16

Zeelie

Junior Member

Knysna Tourism CEO - to face criminal charges?

The last Action Ads of the year carried a vote of thanks to Shaun van Eck who was recently fired from the position he held as CEO of Knysna Tourism. This advert being placed by some of the members of the local Rastafarian community. And given the circumstances I would go as far as to say that is an action that takes moral courage and is something Shaun can be proud of. It speaks volumes when set against the relentless diatribe authored by the self styled Wicked Mike.

A bitter and twisted soul who has made a point in featuring a comment made on his blog calling for Shaun to face criminal charges.

I think KT should consider pressing for criminal charges. I have seen people go to prison for lesser "mismanagement". If not, this guy will just move on to another institution and cause mayhem. It's a pity local media like Algoa FM is playing this thing down. His influence on his friends there does not go unnoticed.

They are sticking the boot in despite the fact that Shaun's world has already crumbled around him. Who are they? What right do they have to vilify and crucify someone who has made mistakes but who has also worked hard in the best interests of both Knysna and the Garden Route?

Saturday, 22 December 2012, 21:21

Odd

Junior Member

Avoid him, ignore him. He is a good example, of what goes bad.

I have set up your signature. Rather concentrate on making yourself useful and contributing what you can where you can.

Sunday, 23 December 2012, 06:48

zeelie

Junior Member

Public forums should act as a moderating influence, to balance and inform. But like most things in life the web is open to manipulation and abuse.

Friday, 28 December 2012, 08:44

talktown

Senior Member

Shaun does not know when to quit which in itself vindicates the action taken by the Board. A good CEO should ultimately aim to work himself out of a job. And that is not what we have here. They all talk about whats in the best interests of Knysna. But sadly Knysna does not feature. It's a head banging session and is all about who is doing who.

Friday, 28 December 2012, 18:18

Odd

Junior Member

All the negative stuff is out there already. A quick Google search will spit it all out. What we need is some balance. Is there nothing positive, nothing constructive that we can throw out there to counter it?

Saturday, 29 December 2012, 22:16

Odd

Junior Member

I don't know if we can blame the politicians in this case. I think this is more about shrinking budgets, contracting economies and bad business decisions. And the damage is being done by a garrulous and opportunistic blogger with personal scores to settle.

Sunday, 30 December 2012, 11:52

zeelie

Junior Member

That's our Mike. Two years ago Shaun postponed a project he was running, which Tourism was funding and he went ballistic. He is very active on the net and consequently is very, very visible. But balanced and objective he is not. He is vindictive and is revelling in the fact that Shaun has been fired. This is wrong and should not be allowed to pass without challenge.

Friday, 04 January 2013, 10:04

zeelie

Junior Member

I can no longer question Wicked Mike. The public right to transparency and answers, only goes so far and no further. It's ironic. It's dishonest.

I want active citizens but not anonymous ones. Reveal who you are and how you are involved with Knysna. Let's understand your associations and underline your credibility.

I replied:

I am a retired businessman previously from Johannesburg. I am married with two children and have a house in Hunters Home. I am also a Christian. What more do you want from me? Would you like my ID number? Would you like to check whether I am a member of Yacht Club, play golf at Pezula and if I breakfast at Mario's?

But no. He is thick skinned and is digging his heels in

I'm in Hunter's Home. Share your identity, show me your other interests in Knysna (so i know that it's not only Shaun van Eck) and then you're welcome to pop by for tea.

Last edited by zeelie; Friday, 04 January 2013 at 23:09.

Sunday, 06 January 2013, 09:00

zeelie

Junior Member

After getting fired by Shaun van Eck two years ago Wicked Mike has relentlessly pursued the person he perceives to be prime evil. What he is doing is wrong. He is using the net to bully and vilify a man who has worked hard for Knysna and the Garden Route. And it is not so much the skills he has that makes it possible, it is the fact that most people just don't know how to fight back.

The net is a communication tool. When does that right to use become an abuse? And what can be done, should be done to moderate the damage caused?

Last edited by zeelie; Sunday, 06 January 2013 at 10:02.

zeelie
Junior Member

Martin Hatchuel, a local tourism consultant, posted this on Wicked Mikes site.

Secondly, when are you, Mike, going to get that I don't have an axe to grind for Shaun, but that I do want to know why YOU are grinding away as you are? You say you're doing it for the greater good.

Yeah, of course you are.

You, Mike, have set yourself up as the digger after truth. You're the one who has set yourself up as a journalist, this time. But I question your ethics as a journalist. You appear to me to be delighting in digging Shaun's grave. And all because he pulled the rug on one of your projects? You've admitted that, and now, I think, that's why you're going after him.

It's not nice.

I've been fired by clients before, Mike. And you were fired by Shaun. So man up: move on and do something more constructive.

Sorry, Mike, but I really dislike what YOU are doing.

I followed up with:

One of the questions I asked was whether Shaun did any "good" during his tenure at Tourism. And I think that there is at least one person who has stepped forward to confirm that he was not all bad. I am also very glad to see that you don't personally begrudge the Rastafarian Community the right they have to publically go on record thanking Shaun for the work he and Tourism have done to promote their interests. Because you can and do get nasty when you get your dander up.

The other point that I made, was that this is no big deal. That is based on the facts that are in the public domain. Are you saying that there is more to come? That you are privy to privileged information that says there is fraud and corruption involved? I sincerely hope so, because all we have to go on at the moment, are errors of judgement, lack of capacity and a reluctance to take instruction and guidance. Misdemeanours which have led to a confrontation with the Knysna Tourism Board. It's nothing more serious than a clash of ego's, internal politics and the breakdown of a working relationship. All perfectly normal in the course of business and nothing to get excited about

What have I got wrong? What do I not understand? What do you know, that I do not know?

This eliciting an invitation to tea which is merely a polite way of saying "no comment". My reply to Mike was:

My motive is quite simple. I am trying to understand why you see Shaun as public enemy number one. This is a labour dispute, nothing more. The local shakers and movers can offer you villains aplenty if you want to pursue bad guys. There is the paedophile, the swindler, the well heeled drug traffickers and why not the CEO of the Plett Chamber of Business? Shaun didn't get on with his boss. His boss has fired him and it's all being blown out of proportion.

Why?

You mention that you have been responsible for closing down the offices of crooks. Which crooks in particular? I have asked you this previously. Is Shaun a crook? Are there grounds to bring criminal charges against him? And finally what role did you play in this? You have made a lot of noise. Alienated and insulted a lot of people. But my understanding is that Greg Vogt is the one who is responsible for raising the difficult questions that have culminated in the shabby little mess that has unfolded.

I am a retired businessman previously from Johannesburg. I am married with two children and have a house in Hunters Home. I am also a Christian. What more do you want from me? Would you like my ID number? Would you like to check whether I am a member of Yacht Club, play golf at Pezula and if I breakfast at Mario's?

What does it matter who I am or where I breakfast? The questions are relevant. They are questions Shaun should be asking. They are questions anyone with a vested interest in what is going on should be asking? Wicked Mike is way out of line. He is featuring an anonymous comment suggesting the Knysna Tourism Board lays criminal charges and together with all the sly, mischievous innuendo's in his posts Wicked Mike has exceeded the bounds of decency.

Monday, 07 January 2013, 22:34

talktown

Senior Member

It's a tactic that is often used. It's known as an evil hook. Good guy, bad guy routine. He has three other sites and all he is doing is trying to attract as much attention as he can. Shaun van Eck is the bait. And whilst he is using Shaun, Wicked Mike will eventually walk into a wall. None of us have much to go on. The Tourism Board requested the members to give them the space they need to finalise the prescribed processes and I think most reasonable people understand this and are waiting for the disclosure of the facts at the end of it all.

I doubt many take Wicked Mike seriously. He is an opportunist and he has a personal agenda. That much is obvious.

Last edited by talktown; Yesterday at 07:21.

Yesterday, 09:00

Odd

Junior Member

I met Mike soon after he came to Knysna. He is talented. There is no doubt about that. But he is driven by self image and carries a huge chip on his shoulder. He is very good at criticising others achievements but lacks the confidence and ability to do anything himself. Don't stress. Knysna is a small town. He is not the first and certainly won't be the last.

Yesterday, 09:11

Knysna_Tourism

Junior Member

The Knysna Tourism Board have not and are not at present considering pressing criminal charges against Shaun van Eck. His dismissal is a direct result of his mismanagement of Knysna Tourism and Misconduct in terms of the South African Labour Law.

Knysna Tourism as an organisation has no affiliation with the blogger Wicked Mike, who has had no influence on the proceedings against Shaun van Eck.

As all Knysna Tourism Board members are appointed on a voluntary basis with no financial, political or social gain associated with serving the members of the organisation, rumours and assumptions that action against Shaun van Eck was taken to facilitate any form of personal gain for any Board member is untrue and unfounded.

The allegations leveled against the ex-CEO, as well as the evaluations and findings of the independent Chairperson of the disciplinary inquiry, have been forwarded to all Knysna Tourism members as well as the media.

The Garden Route – and Knysna – is as iconic and popular as it is because of the sum of its parts – not because of the assumed actions and involvement of one man. We can also confirm that the efficient and friendly staff at Knysna Tourism have been delivering a fantastic service to the public and other stakeholders throughout this trying time and are hard at work on making sure that 2013 and beyond will bring Knysna many successes. Let us continue to work together to ensure that Knysna remains the popular tourist destination that it is.

Knysna Tourism Board

Last edited by Knysna_Tourism; Yesterday at 09:14.

Yesterday, 09:22

HandMade

Thank you Knysna Tourism Board, this puts to rest this particular subject.

This forum will no longer entertain attempts to abuse the forum's exposure or vitriolic posts pertaining to the above subject matter.

G

WebMaster

<http://www.gardenroute.com>

Business & Travel Guide to Garden Route South Africa

So Zeelie opens a new thread at <http://forum.gardenroute.com/showthread.php?2628-Use-or-Abuse&p=14453#post14453>

Zeelie:

Tuesday, 08 January 2013, 10:44

[This forum will no longer entertain attempts to abuse the forum's exposure or vitriolic posts pertaining to the above subject matter.]

My apologies. No offence intended. I just believe that it is wrong to sit back and watch an individual being demonised in a very public way. I invited Knysna Tourism to comment and must thank them for making the effort to respond. But if this is construed to be abuse all I can do is to apologise once again.

Odd:

Thursday, 10 January

Conrad if you still feel that strongly about it, start up your own blog. You know what to do and how to do it and once you get started you will find that one doesn't have to focus on the negatives. Use this as an excuse to start opening doors. **[note that Odd, who is Mark, calls Zeelie by the name 'Conrad' – Conrad Zeelie was the pretender attacking me at www.KnysnaKeep.org]**

ANNEXURE D

At www.knysnaplettherald.com/news.aspx?id=42744:

Riverhorse says:

10/01/2013 10:56:47

What extraordinary gobbledygook! Ungrammatical, nonsensical, illogical... a Tourism Board that issues a press release that is this poorly drafted ought to be ashamed of itself.

conradzeelie says:

14/01/2013 22:35:28

I am concerned that a labour dispute has turned into a head banging session between two stubborn and uncompromising CEO's. More so by the fact that it would appear that Shaun van Eck is being victimised and treated unfairly.

Two years ago he terminated a project that was being funded by Tourism and run by a garrulous blogger who then went ballistic. And who has been hounding him relentlessly ever since. That blogger now works for Greg Vogt, he claims to have inside information and is publically calling for the Board to lay criminal charges against Shaun van Eck.

For one reason or another Greg Vogt does not understand that this is a serious conflict of interests and that it compromises the integrity of the Knysna Tourism Board. They must clarify their position in this regard. Is Greg Vogt the source of this information? Are there grounds for criminal charges or is this just another bullying tactic? Is it fair to fire a man who was well liked and respected and to then trash his professional reputation by failing to challenge mischievous and sensational gossip. If there is no justification for these claims both the Board and Greg Vogt have a responsibility to come out publically to refute the statements and to censure the individual concerned.

conradzeelie says:

15/01/2013 22:50:46

Wicked Mike has responded to my comment with a vitriolic attack on this paper. He has also accused me of posting lies about him and his association with the Tourism Board. This is not correct. What I said was that he works for Greg Vogt, a fact which was confirmed by Greg Vogt himself. What have I lied about? He goes on to accuse me of also posting numerous lies about him on Gardenroute.com .

I was asking questions, questions he doesn't like. I also demanded that the Tourism Board confirm whether there are grounds to press criminal charges against Shaun and if not to publically censure Wicked Mike for mischievous rumour mongering.

They in response to my invitation to comment mumbled something about not right now and the forum moderators summarily locked the thread.

KnysnaTourism says:

16/01/2013 11:03:27

We have already made it clear to Mr Zeelie that we have not and are not at present considering pressing criminal charges against Shaun van Eck. His dismissal is a direct result of his mismanagement of Knysna Tourism and misconduct in terms of South African Labour Law. Knysna Tourism as an organisation has no affiliation with the blogger Wicked Mike, who has had no influence on the proceedings against Shaun van Eck.

It is not the Board's place to sanction censures on third parties.

We have invited Mr Zeelie to meet with the Board to discuss any issues in a productive environment without resorting to flitting commentary on public forums, but Mr Zeelie has

chosen not to meet with us.

We have addressed all issues pertaining to this subject and reserve the right from further commenting on issues already spoken to.

Should Mr Zeelie find this response unsatisfactory, he is welcome to revisit our invitation to meet with us in person.

Knysna Tourism Board

wickedmike says:

16/01/2013 11:48:09

I also invited "Conrad Zeelie" to meet me a week ago. He turned me down. He is obviously fictitious. It will be interesting to see if KPH has the integrity to show who these people actually are (off the record is fine). After all, these 'commentators' are pushing a Shaun van Eck agenda and RIVERHORSE was quoted in one of KPH's articles (which means, according to their rules, they were suppose to verify identity).

Hell, it would not surprise me at all if one of these "people" were van Eck himself or, at the least, someone pushing his agenda. After all, this disinformation campaign is afoot elsewhere on the web too. It actually started on one of my blogs. then it went to GardenRoute.com. Now here. Maybe elsewhere too. Too coincidental as the CCMA case approaches.

I hope that the public use logic and remember what the charges are and, no matter the outcome, how much Knysna has lost. Remember why this course of action had to happen.

Be fantastic when this is behind and Knysna can look to the future (that includes KPH).

conradzeelie says:

16/01/2013 12:11:54

And as I have explained to Greg Vogt this is not about me or anything other than Wicked Mikes access to insider information. Is Greg Vogt the source? Am I right to assume that his reply to this post infers that there are grounds for criminal charges and that the Board reserve their rights in this regard?

Greg Vogt is fudging the issue and is being as obstructive as he is evasive. Dishonest? I for one think so. I also think Knysna Tourism are digging a huge hole for themselves.

conradzeelie says:

19/01/2013 07:59:54

It is interesting to note that Wicked Mike has removed the featured post calling for the Knysna Tourism Board to press for criminal charges to be laid against Shaun. This, I suspect, is as close as we are ever going to get to an admission that there is a questionable relationship between him and the Chairman of the Tourism Board. But that relationship exists. There is no denying it. It won't ever go away. Why then do the Board members not seem to understand that this could have a serious impact on the labour dispute as well as opening them up to an action for defamation? If there is no smoking gun which I doubt there is and I was serving on that Board, I would resign tomorrow.

Greg Vogt's response has been to contemptuously dismiss what is an obvious conflict of interests. An example of the sort of arrogance that also got Shaun fired in the first place. His contract was not terminated for the losses he incurred. He was fired for the manner in which he responded to the Boards intervention. It is a personality clash between an employer and an employee and the question we need to ask is whether it could not have been better handled? Why was it necessary to fire him with three months notice when his contract only had six months to go? This is the bit I do not understand.

How much is this action costing the Knysna Ratepayers? How much more is it going to cost? And for what? This is not a question of what is right or what is wrong. It's a personality thing and amounts to nothing more than gross stupidity.

Like it or not the Knysna Tourism Board was ultimately responsible for any and all the excesses

during Shaun's tenure. They must have been aware of the administrative short comings at Knysna Tourism and their tacit support of Shaun puts them in a position where they are party to and responsible for the mess he created. He worked for them. They paid him. They were responsible for the fact that Tourism was not adequately resourced and it is unfair to turn around and try to lay the blame on one man's shoulders when things start to go wrong. Lauren Waring, Michelle Wasserman and Esme Edge as members of Council were all well aware of the fact that there were administrative problems at Tourism. Why did it take so long for them to start asking those difficult questions?

And I think the point I am trying to make is that yes, mistakes have been made. But we are not going to solve them by playing the blame game. Shaun was very visible and very likeable. As far as I am aware he worked hard and did a fine job most of the time. Why can we not resolve this matter without lowering ourselves to the level of the gutter politics where people like Wicked Mike wallow?

talktown says:

20/01/2013 08:03:42

I attended the meeting called by Tourism at Ashmead and the one question I wanted to ask was why this issue has been allowed to spin out of control? The Board were at pains to stress that they had bent over backwards to accommodate Shaun. However in response to a question from the floor Greg Vogt confirmed that the offer they tabled was three months notice at a time Shaun's contract was coming up for review anyway. Was it really necessary? I am sorry but like a previous commentator, I still do not see the enormity of the charges. He is guilty of insubordination. There has been a breakdown in the employer/employee relationship. That much is obvious but everything else is a storm in a teacup. Isn't it ironic that Knysna has just experienced one of the best seasons in a long time? But of course that has nothing to do with the work Tourism has been doing these last three to four years.

talktown says:

24/01/2013 17:00:21

Rule one: keep your head down
Rule two: keep your mouth shut.

Ironically enough I am now corresponding with Yogesh Pama of Mosdell Pama and Cox. They have the dubious privilege of representing "the mouth". And I have been duly informed that I am to be sued for R100,000 for defaming his client, the Knysna Tourism Board and the manager of the Knysna Elephant Park.

tut tut.....

Wrong number sunshine. Wicked mistake there. But give it all you have got. It's about time someone spelt things out to you.

talktown says:

25/01/2013 18:34:03

Shaun and the Knysna Tourism Board have reached an agreement, the details of which are not going to be disclosed. Not what the lead troll wanted. No "more to come". Nothing more to discuss.

So what's next? More of the same?

It's difficult to understand their reasoning. But he now wants to sue me for statements I did not make. This despite the fact there are plenty I did actually make and where it is quite possible that I might have overdone it a bit. And if I have, I apologise sincerely, will edit, retract, withdraw and hell no I won't grovel as instructed. I think he will just have to settle for an insincere apology on a publication he has a problem with.

This all started on <http://www.outreach.co.za/blog/2011/10/knysna-keep/> and he does not want to let it go that easily.

talktown says:

26/01/2013 17:15:18

I was supposed to be showing Conrad Zeelie how to use the net, how to put it to work. To introduce him to the open source community and the opportunities that are to be found online. But there was one question I just couldn't answer.

He asked me what I meant by "sharing is caring". He asked me why, despite the visibility Wicked Mike has on the net, did so few people speak out and challenge him. These were questions I could not answer without tripping over my own two feet.

Sadly there was only one other person who stepped out of line and questioned Wicked Mike's right to twist that knife. To question the integrity of what he was trying to do. Shaun made mistakes. That much is obvious. But at the same time I have no doubt that part of the reason my wife's restaurant is still cooking is due to the fact that Tourism got some of the stuff they were doing right. And for that I give Shaun credit. I want him to know I regret the way this was allowed to get all bent out of shape and that Wicked Mike is going to listen to what I have to say even if it has to be said in court.

There is a common perception that locals expect you to fail, wait for you fail and want you to fail. How many times have you heard it? There is a nasty side to these small coastal communities. And Conrad was right when he said I could have and should have done more. And not being a Christian I don't have to turn the other cheek.