



Succulent Karoo

Chronicles

A Newsy Letter from Calitzdorp, South Africa
for Succulent Plant Enthusiasts Everywhere

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Symmetry in nature.

Crassula pyramidalis blooms are just emerging in the last week of June. We can find this small but beautiful plant on all of our local koppies (small hills), tucked into rock crevasses.

Upcoming Events in and near Calitzdorp

August 6-14 – Art on Track 2016.
Art competition and exhibition.

August 27-28 – Bloeiselfees (Blossom Festival) at De Krans Winery.

September 3 – Rooiberg Rendevous.
Road trip across the Rooiberg (Red Mountain) with a braai at the top

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Editors' Message

Winter has arrived in the Little Karoo. The farmers are pruning grape vines, apricot trees and olive trees. But in the veld the plants are quick to respond to winter rains with Aloe, *Albuca*, *Bulbine*, and *Crassula* all putting on floral displays. Bulbs are also sprouting and we'll soon see *freesia*, *iris*, *watsonia*, *nerine* and *lachenalia* blooms.

Buck and I, along with friends Alex and Judy, made an excursion early in June over the Swartberg Pass to the town of Prince Albert. We overnighted in the historic Swartberg Hotel and took in some of the sights, including Gaye's Guernsey Cheese Factory where we had a cheese tasting and loaded up with delicious gouda, parmesan and mozzarella cheese.

From Prince Albert we headed north to Beaufort-West and the Karoo National Park, where we stayed for two days. No hiking in the park because of the lions but we took a couple of game drives and saw lots of wildlife. Our last night in the park we decided to have a braai (barbeque) since the local Karoo lamb is famous. We had a feast on local produce (olives, cheese, boerwors, and freshly baked bread).

On the return trip we stopped again in Prince Albert to buy plants at a nursery operated by a couple who specialize in restoration of farmland that is being incorporated into national parks. We squeezed a few plants into our car and we'll be going back for more.

The Winter Festival was lots of fun and centered around eating and drinking (wine, of course). We attended all the events we could and had very busy four days. My favorite was dinner at the Calitzdorp Cellars held among the huge wine fermentation tanks in the cellar. The food and wine pairings were delicious, especially the wild mushroom soup paired with port!

Our local pub put on a games night recently and a good group of locals turned out for the fun. Buck and I received a Christmas gift of a bingo game (thank you Gail) and it was the popular choice. We were served a delicious pub dinner of knockwurst, sauerkraut, and warm potato salad. I think games night will become a regular event.

Buck and Yvonne Hemenway

CALITZDORP WINTER FESTIVAL



Everyone loves a parade. The local highschool marching band marched right down our street on the way to the festival grounds.



One way to get around at the Winter Festival.



A popular festival event is the karretjies racing. Local boys make a car from wire, attach a long steering handle and race around a track. Prizes are awarded for various categories.



Medieval night. Dinner and dancing at the old train station. The only cutlery provided was a knife.



Dining and drinking among the huge tanks holding thousands of gallons of 2016 vintage at Calitzdorp Cellars.



Dinner and wine pairing at Boplaas Cellars. L to R: celebrity chef Francois Ferreira, Jeanne Nel, owner Karl Nel, winemaker Margaux Nel and marketing director Rozanne Nel.



Judy Fick serving up soup, bread and cheese among the vineyards at Axe Hill Winery. Of course the food was just an excuse to taste the delicious wines offered by winemaker Mike Neeby.