

# Sunrise On Africa's Peaks

SoapKidz: Registration Number: 2006/008482/08; P.O.Box 12486 Queenswood 0121



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## A word from one of our sponsors.....

Received an email from Karen, better known as Noeksie, stating that she is going white water rafting after doing the Otter, as well as some other pretty hair raising adventures. Next email she was telling me that she was off to Malawi, sent me her whole itinerary if anybody was interested in going. Thereafter it was a trip to the Drakensberg.

I will admit, I was extremely envious of her - not only being able to travel all over the place but also for being so adventurous. I have subsequently discovered that she is also extremely gutsy and has a heart of gold and, better yet, this heart of gold is sitting in the right place.

Karen met Tilly on the Otter Trail. Tilly is a house mother for the Abraham Kriel Children's Home in Langlaagte. Now most people that I have met, who have listened to the stories about the children from the various children's homes, always want to do something about it.

Granted some of them do, but the majority of us just think about it but that is as far as it goes. Karen, on the other hand, jumps in feet first. Doesn't do the normal thing like 'adopt' a child or two for the weekend and maybe the holidays. No! Not her! She decides that she is going to give them the opportunity to spend time outdoors and so she takes them orienteering, hiking - or is it bundu bashing and camping in the mountains. She doles out black plastic bags and gets them to clean the environment while learning something about it as well.

Karen, I take my hat off to you. What you have done is extremely gutsy.

Karen calls the children her Soap Kidz - "Sunrise on Africa's Peak" kidz, and as you will see from the reports below she has taken them on various outings.

Prior to each outing, frantic calls and emails are sent out looking for volunteers to help keep an eye on the children - not because they misbehave, children never misbehave, they just chance their luck, so if you feel like doing something different one weekend, let Karen know. She is always looking for volunteers.

Aileen Pienaar  
[www.outdooradventures.co.za](http://www.outdooradventures.co.za)

## Windy Brow: Sunday 17 April 2005 by Noeksie

The weather report predicted a 60% chance of rain. A spectacular sunrise was therefore not expected but the mist we encountered driving to Hartebeespoortdam made me extremely nervous. Luckily Nicolene was driving and it only took two calls to find Rob's place. (That was now besides the 10 calls I made to him the previous day)

Thanks to Rob it was a breeze finding Abraham Kriel home in Johannesburg. There was exactly 2 seconds of silence after stopping the bus in front of Huis Piek and Huis De Beer before we were surrounded by loads of kids and a smiling Tilly informing us that we've won the jackpot! Instead of taking 7 kids we are now taking 19!

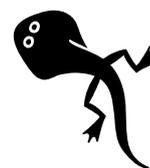
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My reaction? I immediately needed some water and by the time I got back all the kids were already inside the bus chatting. Rob started the bus, Nicolene handed out bird books and I organised extra sweets for the additional 8 kids. first on our list.

Driving to Windy Brow Ricky and Donovan kept the kids occupied while Nicolene and I discussed possible improvements. Our catering was the first on our list.

After filling the water bottles we started our hike. We saw some giraffes, zebras and warthogs. Some of the kids needed to be carried part of the way and some of them just wanted a free ride on our backs but Nicolene put a stop to that immediately.

Once at the watering hole they were all fascinated by the tadpoles and apparently some of the tadpoles decided to emigrate to Huis Piek.



After the morning hike some of the kids played volleyball, some of them did the braai thingy while the others braved the cold swimming pool water. A lot of attention was also given to trying to get hold of one of the binoculars available - and to hold onto it for more than two minutes. Unfortunately there were only 2 binoculars that had to be shared between 24 people so except for the lesser spotter yellow weaver, no other bird was identified.

*Our Braaier*



Once the tummies were filled with boerewors rolls, the group split into three groups:



*Some of the SOAPKIDZ hiked to the day camp for a rest*

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**Rob drove to the day camp with all of our budding future bus drivers**



**And some decided they just have to go for a longer hike before getting the rest of the group at the day camp.**

Once back from the hike it took a while to get everyone in the bus but pretty soon we were on our way to Johannesburg. This time the only people responsible for noise pollution were me, Rob and Nicolene - planning our next outing. The rest of the group were fast asleep in the back.

We dropped the kids off at 6 o'clock and after loads of hugs and a promise to take them to the mountains soon, we returned home. Dead tired but satisfied. Although there was no sunrise on an African peak this time, a Magaliesberg sunrise is being organised for the kids.



**The Windy Brow Soap Team**

The place was tidied up by the SOAPKIDZ and only 3 bags were needed for the litter. Well done



## The Soap Kidz at Stirrup Glen 7 May 2005 by Francois Neethling alias The Blind Guy



We were at Oom Koos's farm very early and I wondered if the kidz would enjoy the day with the animals and everything else. When I was a youngster, the farm was always something to look forward to. I was always fascinated by the plants, insects and animals in nature.

Young boys have a special connection with nature but...it's Sunday morning and not all kids enjoy waking up early. Today it is computer games, smoking and other mischief on their brains so I had my doubts.

What a pleasant surprise when the kombi stopped. Noeksie had to keep her wits about her with 11 kidz asking questions simultaneously.



**Moses with the Rambo binocs**

Then it was our turn to surprise the kidz and I wish I could have captured it on camera. Noeksie bought some binoculars - camouflaged Rambo gadgets with compasses the works. The faces were something to appreciate. It was like giving a boy his first pen-knife.

It took a while to restore order before moving to the horses because they had to first look at everything through the binoculars. Two of the boys were too scared to get close to the horses but that changed promptly when Oom Koos, who was sitting in his chair behind them shouted in his usual loud manner.

SIPOOOOOOOO!!!!!! (Sipho is his assistant). Terrified they rushed to the horses, eyes wide and ready to be picked up. Yes, if one's not used to Oom Koos calling Sipo, it can be quite frightening. The commando was on its way - the bubbling



**The kidz and crew enjoying nature - and the blind guy is leading the horse**

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young fellows had the binoculars ready and were pointing towards the birds and antelope in the field. The SOAP Crew's fitness was tested when the horses were going too slowly according to them. Where else on this planet do you see a blind guy leading an excited boy on a trotting horse through rough terrain?

The best of all was when they spotted an animal and they started to shout "Quick - run faster - they're getting away". It just made me grateful for the things I can still do. There are so many people out there that can't even move.

Back at the stables the kidz were given some apples to feed the horses. Some of them were reluctant in the beginning but after they saw the horses enjoying the apples, they overcame their fear. And then it was time to visit the bush pigs. Binoculars in the one hand and food in the other they fed the pigs and Bessie, the hand raised wildebeest. Trompie, the warthog who loves chocolates received some special attention as well.

After the kidz had something to eat, they discovered Oom Koos's go-cart. It only had three wheels but they loved it and they pushed each other in the road while we sat and watched, speculating amongst the dust when the first aid kit was going to be needed. At two it was time to find all the binoculars and to say good buy to 11 very tired boys who had an exciting day in the nature.



*Some of the SOAPKIDZ enjoying life*

**It takes so little to make kidz happy. But I look around me (not that I can see much) and I see all the hatred, violence and child molestation. Why, why, why do we want to do this to our future leaders?**

**Piece, happiness and joy begin at home. The next time you walk pass a street kid, don't just look away. Smile and greet him - it's the least you can do and you might just brighten up his day — Francois**



*Cois - the unstoppable guy*

**A big thank you to Cois** for writing the report and for being such a big inspiration to us all. He has 2% eyesight left and will be blind soon - but he is unstoppable. There is nothing he can't or won't do. He started rock climbing recently so mountaineers, if you find him in the mountains and he doesn't greet you it's because he can't see you, but he did help with deweeding the Dome Pools - Cois, it's a privilege to know you — Noeksie

## Magalies madness 21/22 May 2005 by Steph Vlietstra

It all started when a rather mad woman called Karen aka Noeksie sent me an e-mail giving me a brief outlining of her weekends to come for the next three years. (This might be a slight exaggeration, maybe the next three weeks.)

I looked though it and I came across a trip to the Magaliesberg with the kids from the Abraham Kriel home in Johannesburg. It looked like it could be fun and I was very keen to get away for the weekend with some kids and forget about myself and life in Joburg for a bit!

I arrived at the Hartbeespoort High school twenty minutes late due to the extra twenty minutes sleep I had! (Sorry Marie I have to rub it in!). We waited another half an hour when 14 expectant faces and whole lot of noise showed up! 17 boys piled out of a 9 man kombi, I sat watching as more and more kids kept out. Just when I thought everyone was out more would come out.

We drove to Rob's house to drop off my car and to have a lemon throwing competition. Shue, boys are very busy. I kept thinking if it was little girls how quite and serene they would have been. Quite happy to sit and chat about hair, makeup and boyfriends - all the important things in life!

Next it was off to Junods farm to set up camp and of course to play another round of lemons... as the lemon throwing competition was later called! Everything seemed to run very smoothly as everyone got busy making lunches and setting up camp for the night ahead!

Once everything was done we all piled back into the bus to drive to Mooi Nooi for a walk and some swimming. Just about everyone had a pair of binoculars or at least had one between two.

The walk itself was lovely and I was impressed how brave everyone was. All the boys had a quick dip, some a rather long dip, Hein definitely showed a bit of a dare devil attitude and Johannes was the first to brave the cold waters.

We walked a bit further to a nice spot for our lunch. Hein displayed some very sophisticated taste when he showed everyone the nuances of fine dining with his display of Sushi eating. Such a display of fine dining was hugely impressive and a further couple of boys followed suite! Donavon was very keen to show his valor by jumping from an 18 meter cliff into the still waters below. Everyone was hugely impressed!



*Catching Sushi*

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With full tummies and happy hearts everyone made way back to the car only to have an even further surprise, a long black slide. No one could resist this and we all kept going over and over. The next battle was trying to get Marie back to the bus. Once she had discovered the slide she went a record breaking 3 times! - Some children!

Once everyone's adrenaline gland was sufficed it was time to head back for dinner. With the exception of a stop at the spar to get meat for the adults!

Dinner was a somewhat laborious affair, eventually everyone ate and then it was up into the lemon orchard for some "play". Stalk the lantern proved hugely successful and it was a well deserved Michel who finally managed to seize the lantern with out being spotted, as well as becoming R15 richer! Afterwards the guys told me that they were going to play lemons! Since I had already had a string of bad luck, with my fingers being slammed in the bus door and flying lemons hitting me in the face. It was mutual decision that I should stay out of this one.



Some of the younger ones had already gone to bed and about an hour later everyone came back and settled down for the night.

Everyone seemed to sleep quite well and in the morning we awoke to the sound of happy excited voices. Getting up and getting going seemed to be an other laborious affair. I was amazed to find how difficult is to get 14 kids and 7 adults ready for a little stroll in the Magalies !

After what seemed like a day everyone was ready and eager to do the last hike! By this stage quite a few pairs of shoes had gone AWOL and poor George walked around the whole morning with one shoe and the other nothing but a distant memory! 5 members of the Contingent did the mission barefoot while the shoed members carried the unshoed members for difficult bits of the walk! A real team effort.

Would you believe it Rob had one more adrenaline rush waiting for us. A bum slide into a rather cold pond. "Rather cold" being the operative word. Once again everyone was keen to give it a bash. I made up on this ride for only going a measly lame once on the slide the day before. Once again squeals of delight and excited voices filled the air!



Lunch was eaten rather quickly as Jonathon had a plain to catch back to Whales and everyone seemed to have had their fill of fun. It was a wonderful weekend – definitely go down as one of my best! The boys were fantastic!



I would like to say a special Thanks to Noeksie for organizing everything – you truly are amazing!  
Thanks to Marie for keeping such a happy medium between everyone!  
Thanks to Rob for the bus and for organizing all the cool spots and the fun hikes.  
Thanks Nicoleen for coming, Hein was particularly excited about you coming!  
Donovan, Johnathon and Ricky – you guys are great. You really have my respect!  
Thanks to the kids who without them none of this would have happened—Steph Vlietstra



*The Magaliesberg SOAP Team*

11 bags of litter  
were cleared by  
the SOAPKIDZ  
and we think that  
is a very good  
achievement



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## A special word from Richard the housefather.....

"Wow" what can we say another successful trip and did the boys enjoy themselves, the stories they told us afterwards , fishing swimming at waterfalls, naartjie throwing ,camping and just fun and fun and fun and more fun makes me jealous that I did not go with.

Once again our hats off to you and the group tis is what memories are made of and it will last for the rest of there lives, our rewards we do not always get them on earth or even feel unappreciated at times, but know this, the LORD said if you do it for the lest of these you are doing it for me—Richard Malan

## I would like to thank the following people

**Jacana and Windy Brow** for your generosity. You have opened a new world to the kidz

**Rob:**You were sent straight from heaven. Thanks for your bus, your great sense of humour and your patients. You have made it all possible

**Andre:** Thanks for setting your plans aside to come and help at a moment's notice. You were great with the kids.

**Nicolene:** You have a special way with the kids.

**Ricky and Donovan:** You are doing a fantastic job with the kids

**Ingrid:** For the cute sweet packets you made for the kids.

**Dave:** Once again for the camera.

**Francois** – for writing the report and for being such a big inspiration to us all.

**Oom Koos** – who said the Abraham Kriel home's kidz are always welcome on his farm

**Dalene, Antoinette, Steph, Marie** – the SOAP CREW for all the help

**My friends**—who sponsored the gloves, beanies, binoculars and sleeping mattresses and last but not least

**The SOAP kidz** for reminding us that a broken car can bring hours of joy — **Noeksie**



Just a very big thank you  
to some of our sponsors  
and other people for mak-  
ing our SOAPKIDZ dreams  
a reality.



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