

# Barking up right tree with 'braks'

Fundraising party to boost sterilisation group's efforts

**Dominique Herman**  
Features Writer

JOSIE Borain photographed the supermodel who reportedly wouldn't get out of bed for less than \$10 000. More recently, she trained her lens on another increasingly fashionable creature: the "brak" or, according to the Official Breed Standard of the Kennel Union of South Africa, the Africanis.

Much like Borain's former subject, the Africanis is of slender build, well muscled and "when in good condition, the ribs are just visible". And foisted unsuspectingly on prospective adoptive parents, tends to make them fall hopelessly in love.

Features writer for the Touchline stable of magazines, Justine Joseph, is a case in point.

Thula - she of the "squiffy ears" and hip bones that jutted out like "bent kebab skewers" - was thrust upon a protesting Joseph for a weekend's stay by her sister, Janna, whose friend of a friend had found Thula atop a rubbish heap in Dunoon township. When the weekend was up, Joseph refused to give her back.

Now the Josephs have joined the volunteer initiative African Tails - started by Yael Fialkov with hands-on rescuer Avryn Alter - whose mandate is to rescue and sterilise dogs in Joe Slovo and Dunoon townships.

African Tails started on a small-scale basis with a couple of sterilisations a week. But that's all about to change with a musical fundraising party planned for November 11 at Camps Bay hotspot Ignite, backed by local rock outfit heavies, Flat Stanley and The Rudimentals, with the supporting musical stylings of up-and-comer Blue African Skies.

Comedian Cokey Falkow will be master of ceremonies.

Joseph said the aim was to sterilise 500 dogs with the proceeds of ticket sales (one ticket is equivalent to the cost of a sterilisation).

According to the South African Vet Association, one unsterilised female dog can give rise to 4 000 dogs in a seven-year period and, in order to have an effect on the burgeoning dog population, as many sterilisations as possible need to occur in a short period.

"Once in a while, you get the chance to give something back to the universe with the sound you and your fellow bandmates have created," said Clyde Finlayson, manager of The Rudimentals.

"The sterilisation of animals



**AFRICANIS AND PROUD OF IT:** Five-month-old Bart, right, who was rescued by African Tails when he was three months old, pictured with Lola, also a rescued pup, in the soon-to-be released Josie Borain/Ed O'Riley 2008 calendar in aid of township animal welfare and rescue.

Picture: JOSIE BORAIN

in the township is a serious undertaking and it requires serious action on the part of the public. Please come and support this worthy cause."

The 2008 calendar featuring 12 rehabilitated, adopted dogs and puppies photographed by Borain and fellow Capetonian photographer Ed O'Riley, will soon go on sale for R100.

"The calendar really illustrates the fact that rescue dogs and Canis Africanis street specials are beautiful, characterful dogs (not "braks", as they were previously known). We're actually finding that many of our "adopters" are young and trendy types who might previously have gone for pure-bred pets.

"But they're nuts about their mixed-breed babies. From street dog to lap dog - it's a wonderful thing to see," Joseph said.

African Tails is registered with Heart of Healing, a corporate social investment management company and an incubator for groups that haven't yet registered as non-government organisations.

As a result, all of the funding for African Tails is administered through this organisation.

The African Tails concert is on November 11 at 7pm at Ignite in Camps Bay. Tickets are R100 or R170 (VIP) and are available at Computicket or at [www.heartofhealing.org.za](http://www.heartofhealing.org.za)

The 2008 calendar is R100 and will be available from African Tails, e-mail [contact@african-tails.co.za](mailto:contact@african-tails.co.za), or from selected Wordsworth book stores.

To adopt an African Tails dog, contact Reena Cotton at Sea Point Citivet at 021 434 1596.

[dominique.herman@inl.co.za](mailto:dominique.herman@inl.co.za)

# When 'free' isn't really free

CORPORATE memories are short, it seems, so it helps to hang on to your correspondence.

I get a great many complaints from consumers about bank fees.

Fees for having an overdraft facility whether it's used or not; fees for making a credit card payment by cheque; for checking balances - fees for everything.

Some months ago Denoon Sieg of Cape Town wrote to me about Standard Bank's lost card insurance fee which was optional until about four years ago, and then it was incorporated into the annual admin fee, thus becoming compulsory.

He took great exception to this, telling the bank that he had his own insurance cover for such loss, and he didn't appreciate being made to pay this fee.

"My first letter was written in January 2004," Sieg wrote.

"Despite reminders, I have never had any meaningful response. Finally, I just gave up. Perhaps you will have more success with this complaint."

So I raised the issue with Standard Bank.

Card division director Doug Walker said that while customers were previously charged for lost card insurance as an option, they had found this "a nuisance", and so lost card protection was offered as a "FREE value add that would be part of the annual fee."

"There is therefore no charge to the customer," he said.

The bank "self-insured" for losses suffered by their clients as a result of lost cards.

## CONSUMER WATCH



Wendy Knowler

Back I went to Sieg, who then had a good look through his old e-mails and found one he'd been sent by Standard Bank at the end of 2003 which contained a rather different set of facts.

The e-mail had been sent in response to Sieg's complaint that his annual card fee had jumped from R65 to R101.

It reminded him that the bank had introduced an annual card fee from January 2003, "in line with the practice followed by other credit card issuers", and that for his "convenience", that fee included lost card protection.

"The lost card protection is no longer optional but forms an integral part of the annual card fee," the four-year-old Standard Bank e-mail read.

It proved that the lost card protection was not a "free value add", Sieg said. "Nor is it correct for the Standard Bank spokesman to maintain that

there was no specific increase in the annual fee to include lost card insurance. I guess he has a short memory."

Back to Walker I went, pointing out that the old e-mail Sieg had found contradicted his contention that lost card protection was free.

This was his response: "We have checked our historical pricing guides and they confirm that in moving from 2002 to 2003, we incorporated the lost card protection into our 2003 annual fees. Therefore, it certainly contradicts any contention that this is a free value add."

Within the bank, Walker said, "the interpretation and positioning has always been that this means free. However this is not the case, even though subsequent pricing increases have not, of course, considered lost card protection as a reason for any increases".

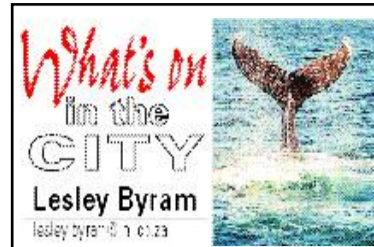
As for Sieg's original complaint that customers should have the option of having this protection or not, Walker said: "Our arrangement is that we provide our own cover and it is not our policy to provide our customers with the option of de-selection."

In other words, no reduction in your annual card fee will be considered.

How banks can continue to justify charging their customers annual card fees at all is an enduring mystery to me.

Oh, and if you get a letter from a financial institution that tells you a change is being implemented "for your convenience", the inconvenient truth is that it's probably going to cost you.

*Consumer Watch is published twice weekly. E-mail [consumer@knowler.co.za](mailto:consumer@knowler.co.za)*



**Elgin Valley Market**  
The Elgin Valley Market will be open from 9am to 3pm tomorrow, and Sunday, at Barn on Rockhaven Farm, Elgin. Enjoy an abundance of wholesome foods and fresh, home-grown produce, including apples, pears, honey, flowers and award-winning wines. Call 021 848 9838.

**Educational wine tasting**  
Manuka@Southeys in Somerset West will host a free educational wine tasting tomorrow, featuring wines from the Overgawu Wine Estate. A representative from the estate will be on hand from 11am to 2pm. Call 021 851 6060.

**Help feed a hungry child**  
Tomorrow is National Children's Day, so why not help feed a hungry child by supporting the Peninsula School Feeding Association, at their exhibition at Canal Walk tomorrow? For R205 you can feed a child on school days for a year. Call Peninsula School Feeding on 021 447 6020.

**Time to stretch your legs**  
Join the Friends of the Tyberg Hills for a three-hour walk tomorrow. Meet at 6.50 for 7am at the Welgemoed entrance to the nature reserve. E-mail Jurg at [jurgz@mweb.co.za](mailto:jurgz@mweb.co.za)

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## CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

**Background**  
The Independent Development Trust (IDT) is a schedule 2 public entity that was established in 1990.

Our sole mandate is to use our resources, without regard to race, sex, creed or ethnic origin, in ways which will best serve to promote the development of disadvantaged people of South Africa.

**Purpose**  
The IDT in its previous work in the LAGUNYA (Langa, Gugulethu, Nyanga) greater Athlone area with the Community Based Organisations (CBOs) has subsequently identified four CBOs to move forward with.

We are inviting service providers who have the ability to develop intervention plans for each of the selected CBOs and address the following:

- An assessment of each CBO's strengths and weaknesses including an understanding of the management and administrative systems
- A strategic plan that speaks to each CBO's vision and mission, aims and objectives, programmes, resources available and resources needed, and a three year plan for implementation and sustainability.
- A viable business plan and a sound funding proposal with relevant budget proposal

Interested service providers must visit the IDT website ([www.idt.org.za](http://www.idt.org.za)) for Terms of Reference and guidance for responding. You are requested to also download and fill in the Supplier Questionnaire from our website and attach all the attachments stipulated by the Supplier Questionnaire.

Proposals to reach the IDT Western Cape Office by no later than 12h00 on 15th November 2007.

For more information please contact Nandi Nyala at (021) 426 4588

## Corgis are top dogs at the Fido Film Awards

LONDON: Stephen Frears' film *The Queen* has won more than its fair share of top awards, so perhaps it should come as no surprise that even the dogs featured as the monarch's faithful companions have picked up a

gong. The corgis which played the Queen's pets, were the main winners at the Fido Film Awards, part of the British Film Institute's 51st London Film Festival. The corgis also won praise from actress Helen Mirren.

She said: "I know one should avoid acting with animals and children, but these little chaps were a pleasure to work with, and deserve all the plaudits for their fine performances." - The Independent

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