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CONTENTS

Message from the President	2
Introducing the PMA and SAIMA	4
PMA and SAIMA National Executives	6
PMA Lions Club initiative	8
Simple websites for business operators	8
Security hints and tips	9
Moving ... in more ways than one	9
Q and A with Peter van Kets	10
Legend Golf and Safari Resort	12
The insurance imperative	14
Things to know before you cross the border	16
Did you say my couch is in Kenya?	18
The PMA rocks!	19
Packers, porters and loaders	21
PMA members' list	22



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PMA President's Report

I have pleasure in presenting my first report as President of the PMA

It has been a busy and challenging year. The global economic spiral made trading conditions difficult and, in many ways, very challenging.

Not only were we faced with a slow property market and deteriorating inbound and outbound business, we also faced difficulty increasing or stabilising our domestic business scenario.

Many of our member companies were forced to revisit their operational structures and parameters, with employment affected as a means of restructuring various operational infrastructures.

The positive that can be taken from all this is that most of us have been forced to go back to basic principles in terms of managing various expenses and applying a more hands-on approach in every department.

When I took on the challenge, there were a few goals I set out to accomplish:

- Establish a committee to deal with policy and issues of regulation;
- Work towards creating a more practical organisation, improving the support we provide to our members; and
- Address administration, standards and commitment to our organisation.

On behalf of the board, I wish to thank all the members who made submissions to us on important issues. The PMA Board members have spent many hours volunteering their time with one goal in mind: to strengthen our members and our association. It has been great to work with those on the board as well as the congress committee and organisers.

I wish to congratulate the organisers

for putting such a fantastic event together under very difficult conditions. To our sponsors, thank you for your generosity. Your interest, value and financial contributions in making this event possible is much appreciated. One of our goals as a board is to advocate and promote the benefits of the association on your behalf.

We have many challenges ahead of us that require the continued support of our members. The new year will bring new challenges.

It has been a pleasure to be your President, and I thank you for your support of the Professional Movers' Association of South Africa. I trust our congress will be a memorable one.

Mike Kitshoff
PMA National President

What is the PMA?



Previously known as the South African Furniture Removers and Warehousemen's Association (SAFWA), the Professional Movers' Association (PMA) was founded in 1959. Its original objective was to act as a voice for the industry, facilitating applications for transport permits and promoting shared return-load facilities among its members. Even though the permit system dissolved in 1991, the PMA still holds its position as a sturdy accreditation body by setting professional standards for the removal industry through its world-first Accredited Movers of South Africa (AMOSA) biennial audit programme – an independent auditing service that assists in measuring quality standards. AMOSA is geared to encourage continuous improvement in the industry by setting common and measurable standards to improve performance and customer service. The results? Clients and members are guaranteed superior service that is professional, timely and fair in practice and cost.

PMA is an interest group of the Road Freight Association (RFA).

What is SAIMA?



During the mid-1970s, the Professional Movers' Association (PMA) recognised the need to assist members in cross-border and intercontinental removals. As a result, the PMA established the South African International Movers' Association (SAIMA) as its international arm.

SAIMA is affiliated to the Federation of International Furniture Movers (FIDI), which is based in Brussels and is the only global network of international movers, featuring a total of 10 SAIMA members as its South African representatives. FIDI has an established quality audit certification programme, offering members the title of FIDI Accredited International Mover (FAIM) – the highest quality accolade in the industry. This status is subject to biennial evaluations by an international auditor. Those SAIMA members who are not FIDI-affiliated have to pursue the Accredited Movers of South Africa (AMOSA) programme, also audited on a biennial basis, in line with all other PMA members. They also have to lodge a substantial bank guarantee in favour of SAIMA, which will be called upon should the company fall into financial difficulties.

Being the only official intercontinental moving association has meant that FIDI's SAIMA members represent South Africa worldwide, and the FAIM-accredited companies guarantee top quality service for anyone planning to emigrate or immigrate. Clients also benefit from the fact that SAIMA membership is conditional upon prescribed standards and codes of ethics. SAIMA is also an interest group of the Road Freight Association (RFA).

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Professional Movers' Association (PMA) and South African International Movers' Association (SAIMA)

Please send me information about

☐

PMA membership

☐

SAIMA membership

Company:

.....

Company function: ☐ Domestic mover ☐ International mover ☐ Affiliate

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.....

Postal code:

Tel: Fax: Cell phone:

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Contact person: Job designation:

Once we have received this form, you will be notified of the procedure to receive PMA or SAIMA accreditation. Please fill in the form and fax it to 011 974 4903. Alternatively, contact Zeldria Smith on 011 974 4399.

Yellow Pages Mobile Application.

The Yellow Pages has taken a quantum leap by venturing into a new media space. In line with the rapid growth of cell phone usage in South Africa, the Yellow Pages has launched a mobile application. Our main objective is to offer mobile users easy access to information about our advertisers. This meant stepping into new frontiers and opening up a whole new mobile world with ample opportunities for both our users and advertisers.

The Yellow Pages mobile application has been a huge success, marking the trends in a space where our competitors seldom get right. In total there, has been over **187 000 downloads** of Yellow Pages mobile application from various application stores (i.e. Apple, Nokia, Blackberry, Microsoft and Android). Our mobile application generates over **400 000 page-views** per month. This marks a great achievement for us given the fact that our mobile application is only a few months old (launched in May last year).

One of the main driving forces behind the success of the Yellow Pages mobile application is the dynamic connection with users. It provides an easy to use interface with quick category searches and custom based search capabilities. It also offers integration into social (social media and twitter). This is critical for the young affluent and techno savvy market that we are targeting.

In addition to the Yellow Pages mobile application, we have also launched mobi sites. A mobi site is customized website designed specifically for accessing online information on a mobile device. The mobi site complements your main website and allows cell phone users a better browsing experience.



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PMA National Executive

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The boxing-day tradition is back!

It's now known as the Day of Goodwill, but Boxing Day, December 26, was so named because that's when the more fortunate took all the food left over from their over-catered Christmas Day celebrations, packed it in boxes and distributed it to those less fortunate ...

What to do with all that stuff when de-cluttering prior to moving house? We know exactly what you can do – pack it in boxes, and let your removal company take it away free of charge. A Lions Club member will be along to pick it up and redistribute it to those less fortunate. It's a win-win initiative that's already proving a roaring success

The Professional Movers Association (PMA) and Lions Club are helping two very different sets of individuals – and making a world of difference in those whose lives they touch.

Lions Club South Africa, which is in its 38th year of service, has 179 clubs spread throughout South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland. It is within this vast network that the PMA has embarked upon a joint venture to distribute goods to those less fortunate.

The idea was proposed in August 2011 by former PMA Chairman Mark van Heerden, and involves taking other people's unwanted goods and distributing them to those less fortunate.

It's a great and easy initiative which not only benefits those less fortunate but also makes the moving process easier, says Theo Nel, Pretoria South Lions Club project coordinator. "We're helping both ends of the spectrum – by helping people de-clutter their lives, their moves become a lot easier, and sometimes cheaper too."

The collection process is simple: members of the PMA ask clients to pack any unwanted items in boxes. The PMA companies then keep these boxes until a Lions Club member is able to fetch them for redistribution.

"The credibility of both the Lions Club and the PMA gives donors peace of mind knowing that their unwanted household items are being distributed to worthy causes and without much inconvenience to themselves," says Jannie Coetzee, president of Pretoria South Lions Club.

In March 2012, a PMA-affiliated company informed the Lions Club that it had received a consignment of goods. The consignment was then donated to Exodus Place of Safety. "It was so simple and so effective," says Nel. "The pastor was so grateful, and it was so satisfying

to see the look on his face when the boxes were unloaded."

Both the PMA and the Lions Club acknowledge that there are a few logistical kinks that need to be ironed out, but with their commitment to looking after the communities of South Africa, there's no mountain they won't climb. They're ready to move mountains – the more unwanted stuff they receive, the more they will move. So get packing, everyone!

- The PMA is South Africa's premier moving association, representing more than 90 top national movers and serving as an accreditation body setting standards for the entire removal industry.
- Lions Club International was founded in the United States in 1917 and has since spread all over the world, with branches in regions ranging from South America and Australia to Europe and southern Africa. It's a non-profit organisation dedicated to helping the unprivileged, poor, handicapped and destitute. Its motto is "We Serve" – and it certainly strives to do just that. ■

Simple websites for business operators

With the number of websites in South Africa growing at a rate of more than half a million businesses a year, it's a case of no website, no future for small and medium businesses. But there is hope!

Trudon, publisher of the Yellow Pages, has introduced a simple, quick and easy way for those without a web presence to get themselves seen and heard online – through MySites, a customisable business-applicable web space within the www.yellowpages.co.za domain.

This nifty solution allows business owners to create their own websites to suit their needs. MySites users can add content, upload pictures, post videos and choose options such as payment methods. They can also change layouts and colour schemes, and generally personalise the space to suit whatever

their business might require.

Trudon believes MySites presents an opportunity for those small and medium enterprises without websites to gain significantly increased visibility. With over 250 million searches on the Yellow Pages website a year, visibility won't be a problem.

The multi-platform MySites website can be accessed from any device with Internet access and has been optimised to rank high on all leading search engines; this is a key differentiator between an ordinary website and a MySites website.

"Enhancing online visibility is key to future customer gain and retention," says Stevens Masebe, senior manager of trade marketing at Trudon. "MySites offers this and more, and all at a low cost with a guaranteed number of potential customers." ■

Moving ... in more ways than one

The deaf are often ostracised because they cannot communicate freely – but one of the bigger international moving companies in the country says its deaf staff have become a valuable addition to the team.

The deaf are regarded by some as incompetent or unintelligent because of their impediment, and it's because of generalisations and misconceptions such as these that the deaf have a tough time being regarded as employable.

But there is a way for the business sector to change this right now, and bridging the divide that separates the deaf and the hearing can be very rewarding.

eDeaf, a deaf-owned company established to provide a holistic service to employers and deaf employees, provides a sensitivity programme aimed at deaf workers and their colleagues, supervisors and management. The interactive workshop delivers numerous benefits: participants learn about deaf culture and sign language, and everyone learns to understand each other a bit more and communicate better. The deaf have traditionally been dealt a harsh blow on the education front too, and eDeaf provides the hearing impaired with opportunities to improve their education.

THE PMA AND eDEAF

The Professional Movers' Association (PMA) supports any initiative aimed at creating a society that is as inclusive as possible and was encouraged when one of its member organisations became a supporter of the eDeaf initiative.

A company within the organisation had been reviewing its commitment to the community several years ago, when a consultant mentioned the possibility of creating opportunities for the deaf. "We entered into discussions with eDeaf, and arranged for the appointment of a number of deaf people," says company MD Peter Farmerey.

He admits that the company initially faced challenges integrating its new appointees into its operations. "However, we organised specialised training with a person recommended by eDeaf who was able to communicate in South African sign language," he says. "We have been very happy with our decision to embark on this initiative and have found that our deaf staff are loyal workers who make a valued contribution to the company."

Farmerey adds that customers have been very receptive to the use of deaf packers and loaders during their moves. "It would certainly help the deaf community if other companies embarked on the same course of action as ourselves." ■

Security hints and tips

You obviously can't keep yourself, your loved ones and your possessions under lock and key on moving day, but you can keep them as safe as possible if you know all the right moves ...

Moving can be a daunting task and requires careful planning and preparation. On moving day, homeowners should be especially cautious of all the strangers who will be in and out of their old and new properties. ADT Security has this advice for those planning a move:

- Speak to your moving company; find

out what time and how many of its employees you can expect at your home on moving day – they should be dressed in uniform.

- It's always a good idea to have one or two people you trust around to keep a watchful eye during the move. If you can't be there yourself, ask a family member or friend to be there when the movers arrive to pack up your belongings and another at your new home to oversee the off-loading of goods.

- Always keep rare and valuable items such as jewellery, cameras and important documents out of sight.
- Make sure that all boxes are properly packed and sealed to ensure safe transit of all your possessions. Also see that boxes are numbered and contents listed so that none go astray between properties.
- Make a point of introducing yourself to your neighbours on all sides, even those in the property behind yours. ■

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Q and A with Peter van Kets

I'm just an ordinary oke. So says Peter van Kets – the speaker who moved the movers at the PMA's 2011 conference. Fisherman, diver, champion body boarder, surfer, yachtsman, paddler, father, husband, this "ordinary oke" also does things like row across the Atlantic and race to the South Pole

Van Kets recently returned from the Scott-Amundsen Centenary race to the South Pole. He completed the race with friend and fellow adventurer Braam Malherbe. Seven teams started the 750 km race but only four finished. Twenty-five days into the race, at a bone-chilling minus 45° Celsius, Peter and Braam crossed the finish line with Team British Green. The British team and the South African team, aptly called 'Team Mission Possible', crossed the finish line in unison because the last half of the race had become a shared effort after one of the British team members broke his wrist and was unable to carry his own gear. His teammates, together with Braam and Peter, distributed the extra weight of Andrew Carnie's sleigh – adding an extra nine kilograms to their own loads.

The Scott-Amundsen race to the

South Pole is called the toughest race on earth for a reason. The members of Team Mission Possible had to force-feed themselves at times because of a loss of appetite – and with the altitude and severe weather, fighting exhaustion was an ongoing challenge. But Van Kets is home now and maintains that he's an average guy.

So we asked him some average questions ...

For your next adventure, you plan to circumnavigate the tropic of Capricorn – when do you leave?

Because of the Centenary Race to the Pole, I've had to re-look at the dates for the Capri-X expedition. I was meant to start it this year, but the last eight months of 2011 were taken up with all the organisation for the South Pole, and now that I'm back from the expedition, I have plenty of work to do. Braam and I will be

writing a book together, there are a host of media activities we're involved in and I'm also busy with motivational talks. So we're really busy. The new date for the start of Capri-X is January 2014.

Why did you choose this specific adventure?

There are few reasons. Firstly, I was fascinated with Mike Horn's expedition around the world on the equator. I followed him on his journey – albeit vicariously. This motivated me to look at doing something similar, and the Tropic of Capricorn idea was born. I will be following the Capricorn line of 23° South around the southern hemisphere, without the use of motors. The journey will take a year if all goes well. Secondly, I know that no-one has ever done it before – with no motors involved, that is – and this is a rare thing in the world of professional adventurers.

What is the motivation behind putting such mental and physical stress on yourself?

This is my dream and the fulfilment of the vision I have for my life. I know that if I am successful in reaching my dreams and living my vision, then everything I do, whether it's at work or at home, has a much greater chance of success. I know there are a lot of adventurers out there who say they have a greater reason than themselves for doing what they do and that it's all for charity or creating awareness of certain issues, but that simply isn't the case with me. If those professional adventurers looked at themselves honestly, there would be a different answer. I do also use my expeditions to raise funds for charities and create awareness of certain things, but firstly and honestly, if I look into my soul, I can say that the main reason is because it's really what I want to do.

I have accidentally become a professional adventurer – and so this is what I do. All the other things that come from it may be of massive importance, but they are secondary. The Race to the Pole was all about raising awareness of the critical state of our planet because of climate change. It is singularly the greatest challenge that we as humans will have to face in our lifetimes – and what are we doing about it?

Another point here is that – and I'm not sure why – I love pushing myself mentally and physically, and once I push through these expeditions I get to feel a great sense of achievement. This enables me to use the stories and lessons learned to motivate people from all walks of life, from corporate executives to school children. I know already that my stories have changed countless people's lives forever and this is a huge motivation for me.

What about the stress your family faces when you are gone?

That is a huge story in itself. My wife Kim and daughter Hannah, who's six years old, both really take a lot of strain when I am away. All of my expeditions so far have been quite high risk and I've often been

in situations that are very challenging, where I take massive physical and mental strain. They understand this, and I think for Kim especially, this is very hard. So as much as I am not sleeping, neither is she! When I'm away, Kim takes over Dad duties and they get into a routine. Then I get back, and all that routine changes and life gets back to "normal". I think it takes its toll on Kim.

Did you take an MP3 player with you when you did the solo Atlantic journey, or any other expeditions – and if so, what music do you listen to?

Yes, I had an iPod, but it was really difficult using it. I had it in a plastic bag hung around my neck and close to my body to keep warm. Batteries and iPods don't work in minus 45°C conditions, so I had to keep it warm. I used music as a motivation. We had three shifts of four hours, and I would only listen to music during the last shift.

The problem is that because you're not moving during the 15-minute break between shifts, you freeze. Literally. To take my two pairs of mitts off, then my two inner two pairs of gloves, then put my earphones in and select the music was close to impossible (nothing is impossible). I would end up with totally painful and frozen hands – even in such a short time.

Mostly, I was unable to get it together. My hands would be too cold even before I started, so it wasn't worth the risk. On the odd occasion that I did get it together, I would listen to Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Coldplay, REM and Juluka ... oh, and Roxy Music – Avalon.

Have you ever reached the point where you've said "My body cannot sustain this, my mind cannot sustain this"?

I have learned over the years of pushing some physical boundaries that we humans are incredibly well made, and that if I stay away from injuries such as breaking a leg, then my body can continue for forever – as long as I have enough food and water. There were a few times on the Pole Race when it looked like we might not make the cut-off, but this was only because



the race was shortened by six days, not because of the distance we needed to cover. On my solo row in 2009/10, I had such bad currents that I thought the Atlantic was going to hold me in its belly until I ran out of food.

Are you familiar with Aron Ralston, the climber who became trapped and cut his arm off? Have you ever been in a situation where it was "do or die"?

I am, and yes I have faced death on many occasions but not as brutal as his experience.

Your wife rowed, ran and cycled around South Africa – were you apprehensive?

Never apprehensive, but always alert for things that could go wrong. I was with her all the time and the experience we had on her 6 700 km expedition was phenomenal. We live in an incredible country with incredible people. The expedition restored a lot of our faith in South Africa.

Do you have any regrets?

Yes, I wish I had started living my dream earlier in life. I'm catching up at a rapid rate though. I'm also a firm believer in the phrase "things happen for a reason", so I'm very content with my life. I have been blessed! ■



What legends are made of

The Professional Movers' Association (PMA) made the decision to hold its 2012 conference at the Legend Golf and Safari Resort for several good reasons ...

Being within easy driving distance of Johannesburg and Pretoria was a good starting point. Add the ability to attend conference sessions in world-class facilities, view the Big Five in a malaria-free environment and dine in an amazing restaurant – all the boxes were being ticked.

The resort is situated on the Entabeni Safari Conservancy in the heart of the Waterberg, beneath the majestic Hanglip Mountain, and was voted Africa's Leading Tourism Development in 2009 by the World Travel Awards. It certainly seemed like the perfect gathering place.

Pete Richardson, director of sales and marketing for Legend Golf and Safari Resort, says: "The national and international conference market, while obviously affected by the state of the global economy, is still vibrant. We offer something different. By identifying a gap in the market in South Africa some years ago, we were able to create a world-class conferencing facility in the heart of the African bush.

"It allows us to offer delegates everything they would expect during working hours, from purpose-built conference centres and stunning accommodation to all the support services required for a productive event."

The Sofala Conference Centre nestled up against Hanglip Mountain has ample seating for over 200 delegates. This pavilion has been specifically designed for conferences and boasts all the facilities expected of a first-rate conferencing venue.

A large banqueting pavilion overlooking the Monomotapa-style Great Enclosure and Amphitheatre caters for gala events, dinners, special events, exhibitions and conference dining.

All event and banqueting requirements are handled by the resort's specialist teams. Delegates can expect a world of entertainment, designer décor and high-tech audio-visual, lighting and sound equipment.

The resort offers game drives and guided walks, and is home to the Big Five. Rhino and hippo sightings are common. The Waterberg Mountains are also home to the highest concentration of leopard in the world. Sightings of the big cat are common in the area. The resort itself boasts more than 50 mammal species, 300 plant species,

almost 400 bird species, and a wide variety of reptiles and amphibians. Nature lovers will delight in the diversity.

"Conservation is at the heart of all we do," says Richardson. "Our Wildlife and Cultural Centre is home to our white lion breeding programme and also to the world's first dedicated baby rhino orphanage. We have a 22 000-hectare green lung, our safari conservancy. Our waste and water management and recycling programmes ensure we

"Accessible only by helicopter, with the tee set 400 meters up on Hanglip Mountain, the extreme 19th is played to a green the shape of Africa."

protect and guard our environment – our most prized asset."

There are ample activities for the energetic – from tennis and soccer to netball, swimming, rugby and basketball. And then there is the legendary golf experience.

The resort's 18-hole Signature Golf Course was designed by the golfing greats of this century; each hole was designed by a professional player. A Par 72, it begins and ends with designs by South African golfing greats Trevor Immelman and Retief Goosen respectively. The course boasts wide



fairways and immaculate greens that meet the exacting standards of the US Golf Association.

But the real star of the resort is the Extreme 19th – a golfing experience that shouldn't be missed. Accessible only by helicopter, with the tee set 400 meters up on Hanglip Mountain, it's played to a green the shape of Africa. It takes 20 seconds for the ball to land. This is the longest Par 3 in the world and has been played by the likes of golfing legends Raphael Jacquelin and Padraig Harrington.

"Like many great ideas, it was inspired by a bottle of wine," says Richardson. "At a special meal on the mountain, one guest suggested hitting golf balls. The idea developed as the wine flowed. The rest, as they say, is history. Through vision, dedication and hard work, we seem to have created a global icon."

He adds: "And not just for the resort, but as an example of the many extreme experiences available in our country. As South African Tourism says in its global advertising campaigns, 'Leave Ordinary Behind' – which we think pretty much sums up this great country and how we approach the global market, but more importantly, the resort. There is nothing ordinary about Legend Golf and Safari Resort." ■



The insurance imperative

Moving is invariably stressful, especially if it's a long-distance move – but sound insurance planning and advice can give you peace of mind when you need it most

Household contents insurance doesn't automatically cover the insured items while in transit. Scary but true!

"People often take it for granted that their existing cover will be sufficient and don't take the additional insurance cover offered when moving," says Rian van Dyk, regional manager at leading insurance brokerage and risk solutions provider Aon South Africa. "Many perils exist. We always urge parties to take out insurance for household moves to cover all potential risks."

Van Dyk says goods-in-transit insurance must be arranged prior to the move – but not all insurers can extend household insurance to include the in-transit period: "This is a specialised cover, and it's essential to check with your broker well in advance."

In addition to employing the services of a reputable moving company with solid credentials, it's advisable to take the insurance cover offered by the moving company – if it is available. "This insurance is specifically designed to cover all the potential

risks that come with moving," says Van Dyk. "Besides the obvious perils, such as damage, the reality is that cases of theft and hijacking do happen. The importance of the correct insurance cover to include these perils cannot be over-emphasised."

The insurance premium offered by a moving company to a prospective client is based on factors such as the loss ratio of the moving company, the distance of the move, the nature of the goods, the value of the load, and the risk involved. The risk for a local move differs radically from that of an overseas move. The rates charged will differ based on the risk profile of the move, the removals company and the client's insured property values. When it comes to international moves, customers will pay the insurance premium upfront so any fluctuations in exchange rates will not have an effect.

"The insurance premium needs to be part of your relocation budget as payment needs to be made in full prior to the move – in line with legislated requirements," says Van Dyk.

He has advice for those who opt to take insurance offered by a removals

company: always check that it is compliant with the requirements of the Financial Advisory and Intermediary Services (FAIS) Act. This means the company is legally able to offer short-term insurance. "Ask for proof of the 'statutory notice' document which provides details of the insurance company through which the moving company has arranged the specific goods-in-transit insurance, and the office that can be contacted in the event of a claim," says Van Dyk. "This document should be readily available from any party offering insurance."

Unforeseen events – road conditions, accidents, hijacking, armed robberies, weather conditions, strikes and riots to name a few – can cause damage or result in non-delivery of your property. While the removals company may take great care with your goods, there are many risk factors beyond its control. A safe landing cannot be guaranteed.

A professional broker will play an invaluable role in helping you plan a safe and well-insured move that means all your possessions are covered during packing, en-route and at the time of delivery.

"When one considers the value of possessions accumulated over a lifetime, and the implications of a total or even partial loss, having a well-structured insurance programme in place for your move becomes a no-brainer," concludes Van Dyk. ■



Giving the gift of mobility

The Professional Movers' Association (PMA) has given the gift of mobility to two people who really need it. PMA President Mike Kitshoff wanted to use his position in the organisation to give something back to the community. Wheelchairs were decided upon, beneficiaries were selected, and on June 22, 2012, the handovers took place.

The first wheelchair was presented to a little girl who was born with severe mental and physical disabilities. Jemeen Karelse is growing up at Little Angels, a home for children with special needs. Now aged 10, and after various forms of therapy and lots of love, Jemeen is able to crawl but cannot walk. Carrying her can be tough on the staff, so when

the PMA presented Jemeen with a wheelchair, her carers were overjoyed – as was Jemeen herself, the wheelchair having given her the freedom to move around more independently. To round off a very happy day, the PMA also donated a much-needed computer to the Little Angels team.

The PMA then donated a second wheelchair – this time to Maggie Venter who has been living at Esperanza House since 2003. Maggie has severe osteoporosis and arthritis, which has made walking very difficult. Visiting her large family had become almost impossible. Maggie says that since she received her new

wheels, as she fondly calls them, her friends and family have been able to take her out and about a lot more easily.

Both organisations are heavily dependent on the public and private sectors for donations, so the PMA's support has been greatly appreciated. ■



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Things to know before you cross the border

If immigration has crossed your mind for whatever reason, there are things you should know before you make the leap

Immigration is never easy. There are many kinds of stresses involved in packing your whole life up and moving hundreds of kilometres. However, if you get all your ducks in a row before you make the move, it will be a lot less stressful and may become a whole lot more amazing.

Increasingly South Africa and other countries are looking for competent immigration lawyers, says Chris Watters, one of only three immigration specialists in South Africa. "Our networks are not great and it is very difficult to find attorneys who know what's going on," he says.

Immigration into Africa can be tricky; we tend to take the simple things for granted. In South Africa, books are seen as a common item, but in some parts of Africa they are a luxury. The Internet has put the world at our finger tips, but only recently have cables been laid into Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to allow for Internet access there.

Watters and his colleagues are looking to set up a coalition of lawyers in Africa to make the processes easier. He says systems are rather hit-and-miss and that the introduction of this attorney "force" will bring about a more organised, more structured cross-border moving process where lawyers will be able to share information.

And just when you think you live

in the most corrupt city in the world, think again. Attorneys from all sorts of countries say there is bribery and corruption everywhere. Watters had a personal experience with a family member who was deported from Kenya for not paying the right bribe.

The reason South Africans have such difficulty getting visas that will allow for residence, or even just visit visas, is that until a few years ago our green identification booklet system was completely open to abuse due to the fact that, during Apartheid, people weren't registering the births of their children. People were coming from all over Africa claiming to be South African, and were given ID books. Once in possession of a green ID book, they



could travel to other continents. The UK, Australia and the USA were not so keen on all these foreign nationals entering their countries.

The post 9/11 era has made it exceedingly hard to get into the UK. The country has placed strict visa restrictions on its borders. If a UK citizen wants a holiday in South Africa, all they need do is arrive at OR Tambo International Airport and Home Affairs, based at the airport, will grant them a 90-day permit to enter. But if a South African wants a holiday in the UK, a certain amount of money must be available in that person's bank

account, there must be proof of a return ticket – and you can expect to get frisked quite vigorously.

Another reason for these strict restrictions is that countries are assuming that every foreign national entering the country is taking the job of a local. This is only true in some cases. Recently, a Congolese car guard working in Boksburg was found to be qualified to teach high school mathematics. He is now employed at Sunward Park High School.

It was even rumoured that a few years ago the European Union and Australia were actively hunting through South Africa's refugee populations looking for

Other countries are not so lenient. A local family has been trying to reunite after the children finished their studies in the US and settled there. The parents applied for the visa that would allow them to live in the US with their children. They've been waiting for almost 10 years.

Work permits, travel visas, passports ... it can be headache-inducing, but generally embassies will give you a hand and tell you what information you might need. Speak to as many people as you can before you make the move. If you are immigrating because of work, the company you work for will generally get all your paperwork in order for you.

Don't, however, be fooled by immigration "experts", says Watters. Many of these people will take your money and give you fake documentation. When you arrive in the country of your choosing, you will be turned away – and may even be arrested for falsifying documents. What's worse, you will be prohibited from visiting that country again for four years unless you are able to make a good case for yourself at the Department of Home Affairs.

Home Affairs, despite allegations of bribery and corruption, has managed to get its systems into good working order. It used to take about six months to get a passport or identity book – now it takes about a month. Birth certificates used to take roughly seven months; this has been whittled down to about two weeks. So it's not all doom and gloom.

The Internet is a great tool – use it, and do as much research as possible before deciding if immigration is for you. There are other things to consider aside from just the legalities: where will you live, where will the kids go to school, does your education meet overseas education standards? There are many different things to take into consideration, but if you can navigate the web and make use of a phone book, you'll do just fine. ■



educated people. Some South Africans are making it as hard as possible for these people who have experienced genocide or political upheaval to live a normal life; some of these immigrants are better educated than local citizens, but have to work as car guards or cleaners.

Other countries have a totally different approach. Canada, for example, has programmes in place where young South African adults study two years of their degrees here in South Africa and the last two years in Canada. This programme is great because it allows the person's family to receive permanent residence as well, once their studies are completed.

Did you say my couch is in Kenya!

Choosing the wrong moving company can have disastrous consequences – but with the right information at hand, the moving process can be an easy one

Using a reputable moving company makes things easier, but trusting others with your possessions isn't easy; seeing your family heirlooms and flat screen TV being driven away in someone else's vehicle can be stressful. Anyone with a bakke can be a mover – but choosing your moving company should never be done in a casual manner.

South Africa has two main registered removal associations – the Professional Movers' Association (PMA), for domestic moves, and the South African International Movers' Association (SAIMA), for international moves. Membership isn't free, so you can be sure that the movers who belong to these associations take their work seriously.

Ask around – have any of your friends or family recently moved and had any pleasant or unpleasant experiences? The Internet, although a great place to find information, is known to harbour dodgy companies that set up authentic-looking operations that in fact have little substance behind them. Question whatever you see online before making a commitment. Real estate agents can be helpful when looking for reputable companies, so keep that in mind when you start looking.

It's advisable to shop around and get two or three quotes. Some companies might prey on the fact that you are new to the moving experience and bully you into paying an exorbitant rate, while others may offer "cheap" rates because they're going to give you a sub-standard service. It's seldom a good idea to go with the quick, cheap option without assessing the industry first.

Moving companies put quotes together using a variety of options. Some will charge by the weight of your goods – but ask for an estimator to give you an in-home assessment before signing a contract, or you could find yourself liable for additional charges.

Other companies will charge for the hours spent on the job. This allows for some savings if you can pack your household goods yourself – hundreds of websites offer handy hints for packing. Bear in mind, however, that many companies won't provide insurance if you pack your goods yourself.

It's also advisable to ask how many people will be assigned



to your move. Companies usually find that three is an ideal number as this allows for two people do most of the loading and unloading, and one to be in charge of the vehicle. This also means the person who stays with the vehicle is with your possessions at all times.

For the best results, choose and book your moving company well in advance. This will ensure that you get your first choice of service provider, and give you plenty of time to start clearing out and packing up. Donate old books and clothes to those in need. Try to use up whatever food and cleaning materials you can so they won't need to be moved or discarded. Recycle all old newspapers and magazines. The less you have to move – the better.

The most important thing is to anticipate any challenges that might arise. Have you let your moving company know about any stairs in your new home? What about trees or low hanging wires that could make truck access difficult or even impossible?

Some things cannot be replaced – deeds, wills, jewellery, art, photos, home movies; consider transporting anything you can't imagine losing separately in your own car, or in a safety deposit box if that's not possible.

Finally, it won't kill you to be kind. Have some hot coffee ready for the movers and bottles of water to keep them fresh and hydrated throughout the day. They might recall these kindnesses when carrying your priceless wingback chair or that irreplaceable bedroom suit. But don't micro-manage the team assigned to you – this is their job. ■

The PMA rocks!

Without the PMA, South Africa's removals industry simply wouldn't be the sophisticated business it is. The message is clear: the PMA rocks! But exactly what does this important organisation comprise? And what activities does it undertake during the year?

WHAT IS THE PMA?

The Professional Movers' Association of South Africa (PMA) is the premier association for more than 90 top national movers in this country. It offers a unique, comprehensive, countrywide moving network. The PMA has always served as an accreditation body by setting professional standards for the removals industry and offering its members and clients a guarantee of superior service, quality and peace of mind.

AMOSA STANDARDS

Being an accredited member of the PMA means removal companies conform to the newly introduced AMOSA Standards (Accredited Movers of South Africa). This body works to improve performance and customer service levels, sets common and measurable standards, is managed independently and audited by an accredited certification services organisation.

The world is changing and as an organisation the PMA understands the needs of its respected customers in terms of expectations, quality and security on both a

national and global basis. Due to its simplified multiple parameters AMOSA was introduced with the understanding that it would enhance and continuously improve the benchmarks of quality in the moving industry.

PMA BOARD AND EXECUTIVES

The PMA's National Executive Committee (NEC) consists of a panel of experienced removal specialists who interact with all accredited relocation companies that have the same interests and objectives at heart. The main purpose of the NEC – represented by elected chairpersons from each province in South Africa – is to remain objective, be impartial and fair and function with the support and input of all accredited companies and their respective customers to ensure very high standards at all times.

NETWORKING

Regional PMA meetings

These give all regional members the

opportunity to discuss industry-related issues and how to face any challenges they might have. Based on the quality of such meetings – and the input of each independent PMA member – some issues are taken to the NEC, where discussions and decision-making takes place at a higher level to ensure the association shows unity and enforces the same rulings countrywide.

Congress

In hosting its annual congress the PMA understands the purpose of ensuring interaction among its members, combined with all its valued sponsors. Each year hundreds of members and sponsors are inspired and motivated by the event. And hosting a congress is no small feat: once a location is chosen a small group forms a "local congress" ▶



committee" and serves as "hosts" for the event. Those individuals need to have varied gifts and skills and be able to communicate with all members and sponsors and willingly commit to the planning process.

A congress consists of a "package" that covers everything PMA members and sponsors need to know and includes recruiting specialists to assist with setting up events, speakers, tours and other special items. Although a congress consists of various business sessions – including discussions about relocation matters – it also ensures sufficient fun is included to guarantee both members and sponsors have enough laughter to release the pressures, frustrations and challenges they face daily.

Events

Apart from having the AMOSA standards in place – to ensure reliability, quality and efficiency is distributed at national level – the association has also created an internal competition among its members. Known as the PPL (Packer, Porter, Loader) competition, it was initiated to encourage bona fide regional members to take part with the healthy objective of measuring their standards against the same quality and level of other members.

Knowing this event is fun-filled, with lots of laughter, excitement and interaction, it's always a pleasure for spectators to note the level of seriousness, competitiveness and absolute concentration on the faces of all participants as they work to prove their individual skills. The NEC acknowledges the efforts being made by members and sets funds aside to encourage all regions to promote, market and advertise the PMA as

THE MOVERS' CHOICE to its valued customers.

Training provider list (just a few ...)

- Critical skills: Enigma Training and Services
- Dangerous goods: Enigma Training and Services
- Human resources: Small Enterprise Employers of South Africa (SEESA)
- Transport logistics: Centre for Logistics Excellence
- Packer, porters and loaders: Institute for People Development
- Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET): Skills for Life

event that they feel the support from a specific association member falls short of their expectations. In stating that, the PMA always represents fair and objective practices to ensure its code of conduct and business ethic is never questioned.

PMA/LIONS CLUB INTERNATIONAL JOINT VENTURE: "WE SERVE"!

Very recently the PMA joined hands with the Lions Club – a non-profit organisation dedicated to helping the underprivileged, poor, handicapped and destitute – to distribute donated goods to those in need.



LEGAL AND PUBLIC ADVICE

The PMA involves various industry experts to assist and guide its members about regulations, statutory laws and by-laws. More specifically, it refers to certain associations, such as the Road Freight Association (RFA), the Credit Providers Association (CPA) and the Road Freight Employers' Association (RFEA) – bodies that understand and are well informed about daily changes in terms of laws and applications that affect or influence members and the PMA's customer core. Customers also have the benefit of dealing with the Ombudsman in the

As an association it realised that when clients move from one home to another there are opportunities to collect unwanted items and re-distribute them to people less fortunate without too much inconvenience to the donor.

With the credibility of both the PMA and Lions Club International prospective donors will have additional comfort in knowing all goods donated will be channelled to deserving people and, hopefully, encourage them to "spring clean" their homes for worthy causes before moving. ■

I like to move it, move it!

Pickfords Removals Pretoria has taken top honours in the keenly-contested national finals of the PMA packer, porter, loader and removals foreman competition

Representing the Northern Province region in this year's packer, porter, loader and removals foreman competition ("PPL competition"), the team from Pickfords Removals in Pretoria fought off tough competition from regional team winners

the PMA to demonstrate to staff that their skills and hard work are recognised – and it's a great way for participants to learn from each other."

PMA President Mike Kitshoff says the competition confirms the quality of service that PMA member companies provide to corporate and private customers in

BEST PACKER

1st: Maria Rasile of Pickfords Removals, Pretoria, Northern Provinces

2nd: Xolani Mathenjwa of Magna-Thomson, KwaZulu-Natal

3rd: Caroline Nelson of Pickfords Removals, Eastern Cape



Left: Pickfords Removals, Pretoria (1st); Pickfords Removals, Port Elizabeth (2nd); and Pickfords Removals, Cape Town (3rd) all proved they have what it takes to finish on the podium. Right: Celebrations continued late into the night.

from around the country to take the title as "Best packer, porter, loader and removals foreman team" for 2012.

The finals, held at Crown Relocations in Modderfontein, Johannesburg, brought together the best relocation teams within the PMA to spend a day competing against each other. The teams were challenged with the tricky task of imitating a home relocation with specialised services such as packing, wrapping and supervising the entire move with the emphasis on quality and customer satisfaction. Teams were judged on, among others, their speed, efficiency, use of the correct tools and materials, manual handling and the neatness of the finished items.

The finals saw the expert teams unpacking furniture from palletised boxes, then manoeuvring the household effects carefully through narrow corridors and doorways, and finally loading them into other palletised boxes.

"We were thrilled with the standards demonstrated by the regional winners," says Martin Oosthuizen, vice-president of the PMA and organiser of the 2012 PPL competition. "The competition allows

South Africa. "All participants came in with a very positive attitude," he adds. "Nothing was too much or too difficult to create or assist with. A very special thanks to Graeme Logan and Zeldria Smith, who handled the logistical and practical challenges associated with the competition and were instrumental in making it a resounding success."

The judges, organisers and facilities were all well prepared, and no difficulties were encountered on the day. "Thanks must go to Ian Petty, Kobus Jacobs and Crown Relocations' staff for their outstanding facilities and support," says Kitshoff. "The manner in which they hosted all the teams was exceptional. The enthusiasm of the Pretoria branch of Pickfords Removals was incredible, with celebrations continuing late into the night."

BEST PORTER

1st: Elphus Magoro of Pickfords Removals, Pretoria, Northern Provinces

2nd: Patrick Haarhof of Pickfords Removals, Eastern Cape

3rd: Ricardo Beauzick of Pickfords Removals, Western Cape

BEST LOADER

1st: January Mtsweni of Pickfords Removals, Pretoria, Northern Provinces

2nd: Junior Sikholo of Pickfords Removals, Eastern Cape

3rd: Johnny Mokone of Stuttaford Van Lines, Free State and Northern Cape

BEST REMOVALS FOREMAN

1st: Albert Sandlana of Pickfords Removals, Eastern Cape

2nd: Sam Sono of Pickfords Removals, Pretoria, Northern Provinces

3rd: Mario Jones of Pickfords Removals, Western Cape

BEST TEAM

1st: Northern Provinces: Pickfords Removals, Pretoria

2nd: Eastern Cape: Pickfords Removals, Port Elizabeth

3rd: Western Cape: Pickfords Removals, Cape Town

The organisers extend their thanks to competition sponsors Servest Office Plants, Trudon, Shaft Packaging (Pty) Ltd, PETport, Blunote, Boxlee and Workforce Staffing for their support in making the day possible. ■



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