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THURSDAY September 12, 2013 | ☎ 042 293 2973 | E-mail kougexp@media24.com | www.kougexpress.co.za

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First slack pack hiking trail for St Francis

ESTI STEWART

THE Chokka Trail, a new 58km slack packing route through the greater St Francis and a first for the area, is now open for bookings.

Ancient Khoisan fish traps, shell middens and a calamari tasting on day three are highlights of the route and a true celebration of tourism and heritage month.

St Francis Bay, Oyster Bay and Cape St Francis, the rugged coastline, a unique dune bypass system, a tidal river, protected fynbos, archaeological sites, wetlands and a visit to one of South Africa's few working small harbours, Port St Francis, are the ingredients that make up the Chokka Trail.

The four day/three night route will start at the St Francis Links, from where hikers will be transported to Oyster Bay for a warm up walk to Thysbaai, where the ancient fish traps are visible during low tide. Dinner will be served on the deck of Oyster Bay Beach Lodge.

On day two hikers will walk back to St Francis Bay via the Sand River, a dune bypass system and highway of rolling sand dunes with an amazing view over the Baviaanskloof Wilderness Area to the north. Shell middens can be found and at almost 19km, this is the lon-

gest section of the trail.

The Cape St Francis Resort is host for the second night, and will transport hikers to Mostertshoek the next morning. The shoreline of Cape St Francis and St Francis Bay is part of the Coastal Cradle of Mankind, and together with a variety of fynbos you have a chance to see Southern Right whales, dolphins, otters and small game like duiker and bushbuck. The SANCCOB Penguin Rehabilitation Centre at Seal Point is included in the trail and the highlight of the day a calamari tasting at Port St Francis, the only privately owned working harbour in South Africa.

After visiting a restored chokka boat, hikers will be transported to Brisan B&B on the Canals in time for a canal cruise before dinner.

The Chokka Trail finishes with an 11km walk from The Cove via the Kromme River and Sand River into the St Francis Links, where a network of secret trails awaits in the coastal thicket, alive with birds and caracal, bushbuck, bush pig and porcupine, mongoose and genet.

Individual day walks can also be arranged. More information including rates can be found on www.chokkatrail.co.za. The trail is closed from December 16 to January 7 each year.

Kleuters spog met troeteldiere



Wielie-Walke Kleuterskool in Humansdorp het Vrydag hul jaarlikse troeteldierdag by die skool gehou. Op die dag kan elke gr R-leerder hul troeteldier skool toe bring en vir hul maatjies meer oor hul beste vriend vertel. Hier is Caylin Young en haar hond Buffel. Vir nog foto's, besoek ons webtuiste www.kougexpress.co.za.

FOTO: MONIQUE BASSON