

Nyari NEWS

DRAFT v2.8

January 2015



Little Sparrowhawk born & raised in Nyari

Photo Courtesy of Dr Neal Aggarwal



Greater Egret

Photo Courtesy of Dr Neal Aggarwal

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A new look newsletter

Welcome to a new look newsletter. We've decided to give it a try and see if there will be more readers if we have a more fancy document and also to try and drive our members towards our Facebook pages and our website.

This newsletter is produced by the NRWS ICT Department and includes content from our meetings and deliberations in the main committee as well as from various parts of the internet. We are inviting any members who would like to see something published in this newsletter to type out such items and send them to dr.neal.aggarwal@gmail.com for consideration and inclusion in upcoming newsletters. If you send photographs/images please make sure that you hold the rights to these and state the name you'd like to see appear when we caption and attribute them to you.

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Estate finances are in good shape. Reserves currently stand at enough to give us a six month breathing period if we were to lose all income. More importantly these reserves serve to cushion all our members against a catastrophe made made or of natures doing

Estate Finances

Estate finances are in good shape and we have reserves to enable the estate to run for at least six months if all payments were suddenly to stop. That is why we maintain a reserve. The money we have in reserve is held in a fixed deposit, which, even though we have to pay taxes on it's gains, grows and keeps members' money working while it sits in reserve.

We are looking at beefing up the guards co-operative holdings with a view to being able to help them sort out legal cases, like

the one we recently had to help them fight, out of their own funds should the need arise. The Co-op holdings at present only amount to approximately KSh. 170,000. Any court case would of course consume much more than that.

Kirit Patel and Geoffrey Naituli continue to maintain the accounts in exemplary condition with our office manager Karanja entering the data into our accounting system. Within a few months we will once again be sending off these figures to our auditors to have them



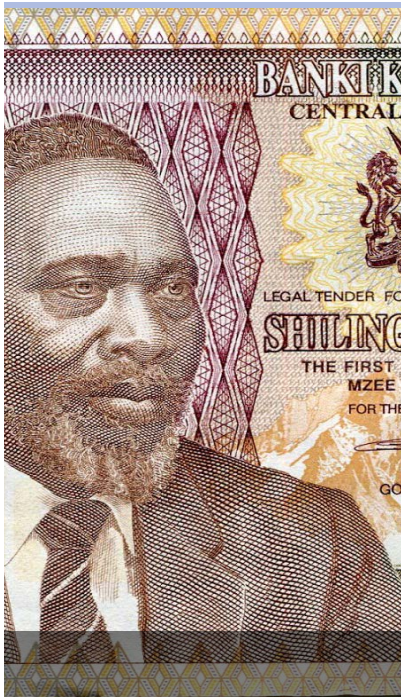
look over our handywork to approve it for final presentation at the Annual General Meeting and then to adopt it into the running of NRWS.

There are still a few members who freebie off the goodwill of others and we ask that you don't do this but do bring your dues up to current. If you are a resident that knows of such members we request that you approach them and let them know that the security we enjoy in Nyari (Nyari is considered the safest estate to live in in Nairobi), the street lighting, the internet access, the roads, the environment and much, much more all comes about as a result of the harambee effort of all members whose contributions are put to good effect through the committee.

Nyari subs are among the lowest of all

resident associations in Nairobi North. Other estates tie their dues to water supply provision and 'force' their members to pay up that way. We do no such thing. Our members contribute to Nyari in the spirit of voluntary self governance. The Government is not going to provide the essentials that we need to live a good, comfortable life. We have to do it for ourselves. And we like it that way. Other neighbouring resident associations charge subs as much as 5 times what Nyari charges and yet we can provide comparable services for less than \$50 a month! So do bear this in mind and

SUPPORT NYARI!!



Finances at a glance

What we need money for:

- 1 PRIMARY USE is security. 34 guards wages, radio network, police post, emergency response vehicle
- 2 MAINTENANCE - repairing roads, replacing light posts and light fittings, cleaning drains, paint the police posts, auditing etc
- 3 IMPROVING THE ESTATE - tree planting, installing gates and barriers, numbering houses, installing CCTV.
- 4 DEALING WITH LEGAL ISSUES - land disputes, court cases, stopping illegal constructions

Nyari Committee

CHAIRMAN	- Mr Rahmat Ghassmi +254 733 783 305
VICE CHAIR	- Mr Richard Kariuki +254 721 549 449
SECRETARY	- Ms Salima Tejani + 254 733 786 161

HEADS OF SUB-COMMITTEES

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ENVIRONMENT	- Ms Kirti Patel +254 733 646 868
LANDS & UTILITIES	- Ms Jane Babasa-Nzibo +254 722 525 427
MAINTENANCE	- Mr Manraj Matharu +254 722 866 369
YOUTH	- Mr Paul Opondo +254 722 644 995
SOCIAL	- Ms Maleeha Ali +254 787 402 012
ICT	- Dr Neal Aggarwal +254 733 788 501



Environmental Matters

The Chairman, Mr Ghassmi, who lives at the top end of the lake where there is a small lake that feeds into the main lake has reported that he has removed close to two lorry loads worth of silt that has been trickling into the small

lake over the past two months alone. He has continually removed this silt all these years that he has lived here and worries that if not removed the small lake will disappear completely once it fills up.

The small lake is an integral part of the Nyari Lakes ecosystem. Wetlands are now understood to be crucial parts of our environment that must be looked after with maximum vigilance. In the past we have had to

Our lakes -- yes there's more than one -- need very careful attention and eternal vigilance. The slightest slip and we'll have a Nairobi Dam catastrophe right here in Nyari. Nairobi Dam is now completely covered with water hyacinth to the extent that you can walk across the dam without sinking in at all! The image at right is a recent photograph of Nairobi Dam. This [Death of Nairobi Dam blog post](#) is truly scary.

fend off developers that wanted to drain the main Nyari lake to make way for apartments and more recently when a developer downstream of the lake built almost on top of the outflow river. Nyari has a title deed for the main lake that is held by a group of Nyari appointed trustees the entire Nyari membership being entrusted, through it's various committees, to look after the resource. Nyari lake is a man made dam and as such is not subject to the usual laws

governing riparian zones. Therefore we are responsible for managing it ourselves and for making sure we don't destroy it. All the houses on the main lake have their beacons below water level so the main lake is also part of the plots and each house on the lake owns a small part of it! The security risks from living by a body of water now well handled we must turn our attention to looking after the ecosystem that is the lake. Remember how Dr Aggarwal was



Hyacinth choking Nairobi Dam

Public Domain Photo



Hyacinth choking a lake in Japan

Public Domain Photo



Hyacinth choking Lake Victoria

Public Domain Photo

shot and left for dead in his house in 1999? Those thugs came from the water side of his property which was not fenced at the time his being one of the few houses in Nyari then.

How could we 'lose' the lakes? Actually - it could happen very easily. Here are some example scenarios. Let's say a house starts to discharge effluent (it's overflowing septic tank) into the lake. Within a few days to weeks the water in the lake will become [enriched with nutrients](#) from the decay of the effluent that will be building up in the water. That nutrient rich medium will then support algal blooms. Those blooms in turn will place demands on the water oxygen and other levels. Starvation of oxygen will occur which will lead to death of other organisms such as the millions of microbes, crustaceans and the hundreds of fish, crayfish, snails and crabs that lived together in harmony while the rich medium was held in check. The 'death' of the water would then lead to putrefaction -- rotting. The lake would become smelly, develop strange colours and this might even progress to a putrid water source that no one can live near. There is the possibility that the area could be declared unsuitable for human habitation, made into a disaster zone and all of us forced to leave to live elsewhere. Has this happened before elsewhere?

Here is another scenario that has unfolded right here in Nairobi: Imagine a well-intentioned person bringing in a nice looking floating plant with lovely small purple flowers, from his weekend holiday in Lake Naivasha. The plant - [water hyacinth](#). Hyacinth grows, like all living systems, on an [exponentially](#) described curve. What does this mean? Bear with me -- a little simple math is needed here for you to really, really appreciate what exponential growth is. Suppose you have one shilling and it's Monday morning. Now advance the time to Tuesday and double what you have. That means you now have TWO shillings. Again advance the time to Wednesday and double what you have -- FOUR shillings. Thursday, EIGHT shillings and so

on. Now before you look at the answer on the next line stop and think and answer this ... when do you think you'll have ONE THOUSAND (1,000) shillings?

Most people are shocked by the answer ... NEXT WEEK WEDNESDAY!

Yes that's correct - go try it out for yourself. 8 - Thursday, 16 - Friday, 32 - Saturday, 64 - Sunday, 128 - Monday, 256 - Tuesday, 512 Wednesday, 1024 - Thursday. So sometime on Wednesday you passed the 1000 mark!

That's what happens with [exponential growth](#) and water hyacinth follows almost exactly that same progression doubling it's mass every 24 hours. Carry on the progression and in 30 days, starting with just ONE single plant on day ONE, you have -- wait for it -- 1 BILLION plants! So in one month our lake would be overrun. This happened to Nairobi Dam (near Wilson Airport) and we've never been able to recover from this. That is what, coupled with sewerage being dumped into the dam from the slum dwellers on the margins, made the hyacinth grow even faster. Today you can drive your car over the dam and even walk over it easily. So could this happen to our dams? Ofcourse it can. Let's think about this carefully and renew our vigilance every day that we live close to such beautiful water bodies.



Clearing a path through water hyacinth.
Lake Victoria, May 2014

So message is:

**DO NOT INTRODUCED ANY PLANT OR
ANIMAL INTO THE LAKE UNDER ANY
CIRCUMSTANCES. THE CONSEQUENCES
COULD BE DIRE!**

Hyacinth choking Lake Victoria

Public Domain Photo

Nyari Fun Day



*Family Fun day was held on 30th
November 2014 at Good News grounds.
55 resident families (150 people)
attended*



More pictures can be dowloaded
from:
[Facebook](#)

A Picture Gallery

Gathering

The Social Subcommittee is busy working on a venue for the Nyari party. These social get-togethers are an important facet of living in Nyari but few make an effort to attend and it is always the same few people that do attend. This has been very demoralizing for the Nyari committee to the extent that abandonment of future social gatherings is a very real possibility. As such the Social subcommittee is moving towards paid dinner/dance parties and the next venue and date will be announced in due course.

Maintenance

The road repair that you've been watching over the past weeks has brought many of our roads back to past glory. 2.2 million shillings was spent in the extensive repairs which are as yet to be completed. To complete we're going to need another million shillings. Members were very kind in making an extra donation, by way of a road levy of KSh. 10,000/-. To complete we are going to need an additional million shillings (there's the major part of Ibis Drive still to be done).

Surprisingly and a little dissappointingly some members approached our office manager offering to make their 10k contribution payment on condition that their personal slip roads to their houses be completed first before the main thoroughfares. To tarmac these slip roads in total will cost many millions of shillings and is just not possible with Nyari's current budget constraints.

On a happier note, a member cabro tiled her entire slip road at her own cost and another member followed suit. We commend these members greatly. Not only have they made their personal lives a lot nicer and smoother (pun intended!) but they've also helped beautify Nyari for all of us.

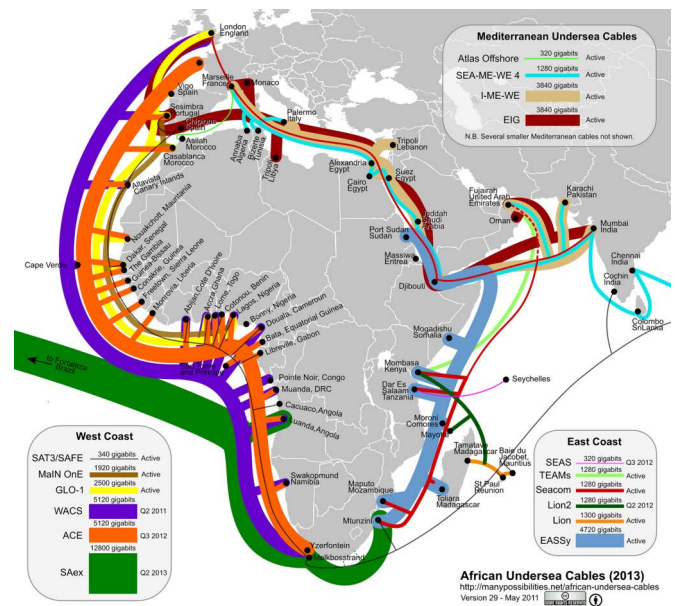


ICT

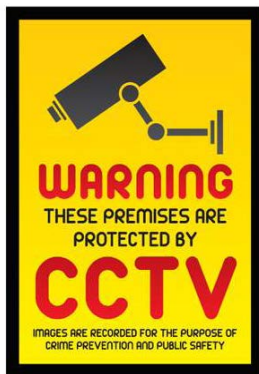
Internet Access in Nyari

Jamii Telecom (JTL) continues to impress. In terms of raw speed no one else seems to be able to beat them. Zuku impresses in their triple pay offer and if you need telephony and television then currently Zuku's offering is better than JTL's. However we have had many reports from members complaining about Zuku speeds dropping off at peak hours which seem to be the evenings from 5pm to 10pm - a time when many want to relax and surf the internet or to answer their personal emails.

For some triple play is not a necessity, raw internet speeds being more important. Several families only watch YouTube videos for their entertainment while others want the raw speed for their work. There are software developers residing within Nyari for whom 10MBps is critically important. These users appreciate JTL's dedicated individual account service. JTL speeds do not drop no matter what time of day it is and are truly as advertised -- a 10MBps line gives you 10MBps in both directions up and down.



CCTV



To date our security oriented CCTV network has been on the internet system that JTL setup across Nyari. This was done so as to have access to the cameras given to certain members to monitor in their spare time. To date it does not appear that the members given this access are able to do much monitoring. There is a monthly charge for this service as it is connected to the internet through JTL. It has been decided that considering the lack of usage of the monitoring facility as well as the monthly charge it would be more prudent to switch to a dedicated CCTV system based on a fibreoptic cable laid specially for this. This will necessitate a one-off payment to the installer for the purchase of the fibre and the labour required to install it. Once this is done there will be no recurring monthly expense. All this of course depends on the cost to install the system quotes for which thus far have been far beyond our reach.

Nyari on the net

Did you know we have Nyari Facebook, Twitter and Wordpress blog pages which you can find by clicking on the links below right. The Facebook page sees a lot of activity as all our members postings also appear on it. This gives you a way to see what your fellow Nyari members are up to and to figure out if there might be synergies between you and them. The internet is such a rich place today that you really MUST make full use of it. Now that we have high speed internet access in Nyari (via Zuku and JTL) you can access this tremendously rich source of information any time day or night.



Did you know that we have full time, degree level students in Nyari that are studying for their US, Swiss and UK degrees?

find out more from [Acacia Aggarwal](#)

Member Profile

Acacia Aggarwal - A Taekwondo Champion

Date of Birth: July 25th, 1993.
Tel (mobile): +254 735 860 644
e-mail: acacia.aggarwal@gmail.com
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/acacia.aggarwal>

Acacia first began learning Taekwondo when she was in kindergarten at the age of 5. She is now 21 years old and on the Kenya Olympic Taekwondo team hoping to take part in the Rio De Janeiro Games in 2016. She has won 'a ton' of gold medals on her way to this level of expertise, is the national champion in her weight category and can often be seen training in Nyari running up THE HILL to exhaustion. Acacia is a coach now who is providing training to all ages even to some very young children of Nyari members. Her motto: "Start them out young in the sport and it will be a part of them for the rest of their lives."

Acacia scores a kick to the head - Kenya Open 2013



Acacia received her 1st Kyu Red Belt (Pre-black) in December 2011 her Black Belt in November 2011 and her Black Belt 1st Dan in April 2013

Staff Profile

Phinas Karanja - A Stalwart Pillar of Nyari



Karanja is familiar to all of us. He has been our Nyari office manager for a number of years. He was born and raised at Kangema constituency, Murang'a County and attended Muguru Primary School sitting his 'O' levels at Kangema High School in 2005. He acquired a Certificate in Disaster & Crisis Management, a Diploma in computer Servicing & Maintenance and a Diploma in Business Management. He is currently pursuing a degree in Business Administration & Management (Finance Option) at St. Paul University.

Karanja was introduced to Nyari Estate by the late Mr. Patel father-in-law of Mr. Kirit Patel our treasurer.

Karanja says his greatest aspiration is to work closely with the Nyari Estate Committee to gain knowledge and experience in the management skills one needs to be able to provide quality service. His motto is to safeguard and promote Nyari Residents' interest and to keep Nyari the most well managed and secure estate within Nairobi.

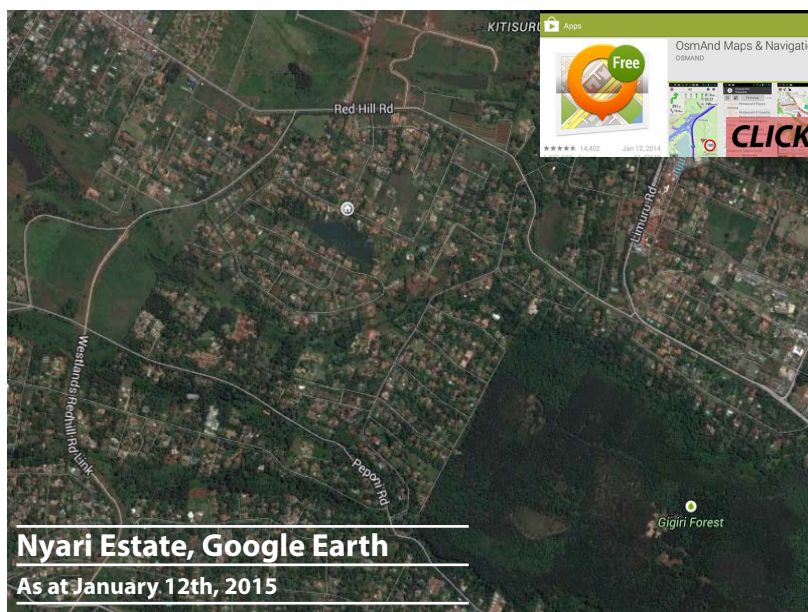
Request for info

We request members to send us profiles of themselves for inclusion in future newsletters. By providing a small bio about yourself (as you can see above it's only 200 words or so) and a photo you'd like included you give us the chance to get to know you a little better and, who knows, perhaps leverage your skills for the good of Nyari and us all?

Fun Stuff

Several years ago [our resident GIS expert, Dr Aggarwal, mapped](#) out Nyari using a hand-held GPS receiver and walking all the roads carefully and painstakingly marking all the interesting waypoints. Today that map is available for free (as are all his National Park maps) on [Open Street Map](#).

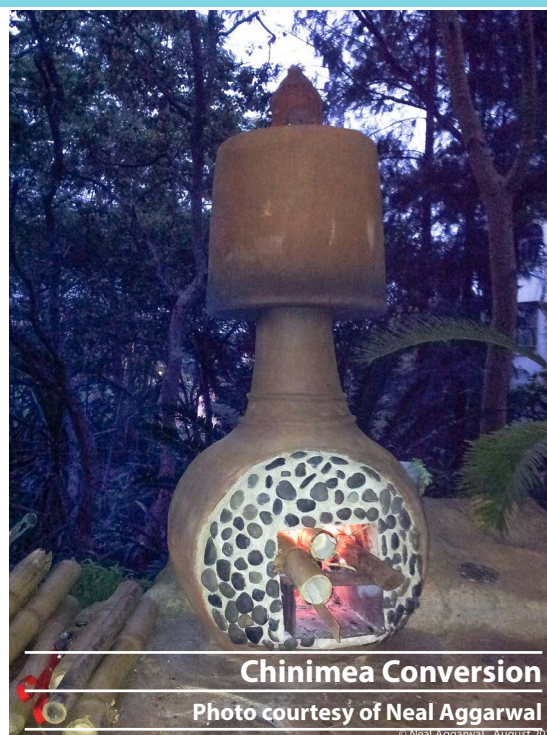
It's great fun to download these onto your smartphone and then go for a walk in Nyari and see how the icon on your phone shows exactly where you are at all times. Dr Aggarwal recommends the free Android App OSMAND+ which you can get from the [Google Play store](#) or [MotionX](#) which you can get for the iPhone from the iTunes store (\$0.99).



If enough of you do this maybe we can try some geocaching games within Nyari?

Member Project

Ami & Neal Aggarwal converted their chiminea heater into a rocket mass heater. Their [photographs are on facebook](#). This heater now burns all evening on a small load of deadfall twigs and some dry bamboo. The Aggarwals have never bought any firewood in 19 years of living on their acre plot in Nyari. They have 26 acacia trees on their plot and those trees have supplied ALL the firewood all through the cold months in Nyari. Temperatures in Nyari can get down into the 9 or 10°C region so this heater is much loved. The mass of concrete was designed to hold as much heat as possible. It's actual mass is about 80Kg and after the fire goes out that mass can keep all around it cozy for 4 to 5 hours!



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