

Gary Player Invitational to support Wildlands Conservation Trust, Wings and Wishes

The Gary Player Invitational (GPI) charity golf event has announced that the KZN-based Wildlands Conservation Trust and Port Elizabeth based Wings and Wishes are the two beneficiaries for 2012.

The GPI, taking place from Thursday, 22 to Sunday, 25 November, is presented by Coca-Cola South Africa and hosted by nine-time Major winner Gary Player. The event format pairs major golf champions with Hollywood celebrities, chart-topping musicians and leading businessmen, to make a difference in the lives of South Africans in need - the event at Fairmont Zimbali Resort is part of the international GPI series which has raised over R400 million for charities across the globe.

The Player Foundation and Coca-Cola South Africa have nominated Wildlands Conservation Trust as a beneficiary for the second consecutive year, to support the NGO's work in recycling plastic and encouraging tree growing through community-based waste-preneurs and tree-preneurs. It is the first time that the GPI has linked with Wings and Wishes, a charity started in 2006 by staff at the Coca-Cola Sabco bottling company in Port Elizabeth to collect air miles to transport critically ill children to the Red Cross Children's Hospital in Cape Town.

"We are looking forward to another exciting event in KwaZulu-Natal to benefit the Wildlands Conservation Trust and Wings and Wishes," said Marc Player, Black Knight International's CEO. "2012 will be our 13th GPI event in South Africa and the support that it has received over the years has been truly incredible."

Funds to be shared equally

All funds raised over the four-day event are to be shared equally between the charities, with the outcome being largely tied to the tournament's annual black-tie auction on Friday, 23 November.

The tournament format has changed for 2012 to boost the charity fundraising element by doubling the number of businesspeople participating - the eight four-ball teams consist of a champion or tour professional, a celebrity and two business people.

The GPI will tee off at the Zimbali Country Club and the participant line-up includes Gary Player and former Ryder Cup captains Sam Torrance and Ian Woosnam, also a Major winner. Celebrities include soapie star Jack Wagner of the *Bold & Beautiful* fame, Westlife's Brian McFadden and red-headed supermodel and actress Angie Everhart, whose acting credits include the blockbuster *The Last Action Hero*, *3rd Rock From the Sun*, *Law and Order* and *Keeping Up With The Kardashians*.

"As golfers, we are in such a fortunate position to use our talent and craft to relieve the plight of those less fortunate in the world. I am delighted to return to South Africa and support the Gary Player Invitational and the charities it supports," said former Ryder Cup captain Ian Woosnam.

The Wildlands Conservation Trust is a non-profit organisation working to uplift local communities by establishing "green jobs" for the poor and unemployed. The vision is to restore the ecosystems that underwrite the welfare of these communities and that reduce our collective vulnerability to climate change.

The tournament is open to the public on Saturday, 24 and Sunday, 25 November. Tickets are R75 a day and available from Computicket. Entry for children under 18, accompanied by an adult, is free. The tournament starts at 10am on Saturday and at 9am on Sunday.

For more info, go to [www.garyplayerinvitational.com].

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>