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the

muse

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PINELANDS COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

ISSUE 161 | May 2025



Saucy Chocolate Pudding
Heleen Meyer



Young Pinelanders
Gold Medal winners



The Richtersveld
Judith Gordon



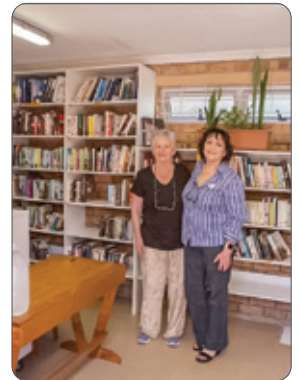
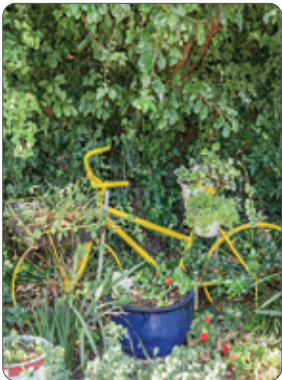
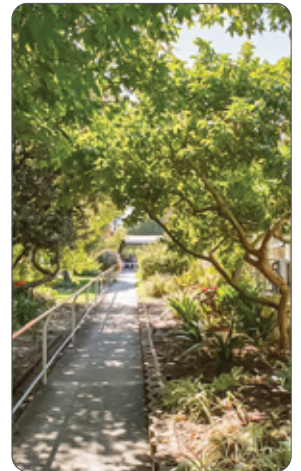
Helen Keller

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information meeting.

DATES FOR 2025

21 May • 18 Jun • 16 Jul
20 Aug • 17 Sep • 15 Oct • 19 Nov

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WELCOME



Max Schutte

About the cover:
A Kokerboom
and enormous red
rocks seen in the
Richtersveld.
See the travel article
by Judith Gordon
on page 8.



MAKING SENSE OF TWO CONFLICTING "TRUTHS"

Publication of the Muse magazine next month may be a little delayed as I recover from an eye operation to correct an issue in one eye. It has been quite an interesting and instructive time over the past month or two, watching how the brain manages to interpret and resolve conflicting information from two eyes. The affected eye, at the very centre of its vision, "sees" straight lines as curves and the picture seems to be centrally distorted as if pulled into a small black hole. Thankfully though, the other eye sees the "true" picture.

So what does the brain make of it when presented with two "truths"? Which one does it believe? The answer is... complicated. From what I have observed, it seems to run a few checks and balances before it settles on what is true. If I concentrate, I can sometimes watch the process play out when I focus on a new thing like a page in a magazine. I think my affected eye has always been the dominant eye. Apparently, like hands, eyesight usually has a dominant side. As a result, like the same hand always reaching out to catch a ball, the funky, false information is often presented to me first, as is, as that eye is the dominant, trusted one.

But then, some form of "reality check" kicks in. Some higher brain function, presumably drawing on years of experience and some reasoning determines that I am looking at lines of text which should: a) be straight and b) be readable, neither of which is currently true so a "problem flag" is raised. There then seems to be a process which blends the two sources in varying proportions until a believable picture emerges and the brain locks onto that version of reality until it is challenged by a new scene. This all plays out in a second and it takes a bit of close attention to catch it in the act.

It occurs to me that this has a lot in common with certain modern media, and dare I say, authorities and governments. We are presented with a barrage of information and "facts" from historically trusted and authoritative sources and the natural tendency is to take it in at face value. I think we are quickly learning that reality checks are more than ever an essential step to filter and moderate what we take into our beliefs. Like my dominant eye, the voices of discord get the biggest coverage. Be sure to also listen to the other quiet, calm side for the full picture.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

Max Schutte

**Editor and
Advertising**
Max Schutte

**Writer and
Photographer**
Glynnis Schutte

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The Muse reserves the right to select articles for inclusion and to make alterations to submitted contributions.

NEXT EDITION

162 • June 2025

Published: 3 June 2025

DEADLINES

Bookings: 19 May

Content: 23 May

John McFarlane, author of the regular Muse bird feature enjoys watching birds at his home at Pinewood Village and when he goes away to game reserves. Being retired gives him more time to enjoy his hobby. John has enjoyed a group leaders course in birding as well as a raptors course.



Mandy McKay
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WHO SHOULD COME: Parents/caregivers and babies / toddlers from birth to 4 years.

ACTIVITIES: A theme for each week
E.G. Stars - A song, nursery rhyme and craft aligned to the theme.

- ★ Helps develop language skills
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- ★ Encourages creativity
- ★ Builds relationships





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Saturday 3 May 2025

PINELANDS METHODIST CHURCH
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More crafters means it's no longer all "Home Grown". So although the name has changed, the goodies are the same - just more of them. Join us from 09:00-12:30 for Saturday brunch, browse the craft stalls and take home various eats and treats. Find us in the church hall at 2 Union Avenue.
Call Joan on 082 810 1889.

Wed 7 May 2025

HAPPY HOUR SOCIAL GROUP

Join in at the Pinelands Library Activities Hall from 9:30 to 11:00 for "Talking politics with Melanie Verwoerd". All welcome.

Wed 4 June 2025 The Happy Hour Social group meeting will be a presentation by *U Turn*. Same time, same place at Pinelands library. Call Santa at 083 235 6730.

Mon 19 May 2025

PAGE TURNERS BOOK CLUB

Come to the Pinelands Library Committee Room between 10:00 and 11:00 and meet Tony Park, international best-selling author of 21 novels set in Africa and two non-fiction biographies.

Rsvp: Verna 021 814 1780 or Lauren 021 814 1777.

Saturday 24 May 2025

PINELANDS CRAFT AND GIFT FAIR
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Wed 28 May 2025

PINELANDS STAMP CIRCLE

Meet at 18:30 in the Pinelands Library Activities Hall above the Pinelands Library. John Rycroft will show Modern RSA 1976-1978. Leigh H-B will provide a voluntary of his own choice.

Email Martin: m.tristan.crawford@gmail.com.

Fridays (see dates below)

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AND NURSERY OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The Helen Keller Society will open their book room and garden nursery for sales to the general public on the last Friday of every month from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. In the winter months (from June to September), call Bev Wroth on 021 531 5311 to confirm opening times.
Fridays: 30 May; 27 June; 25 July.

Saturday 31 May 2025

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VINTAGE MARKET

Join us at SASNEV from 09:00 am to 13:00 to shop pre-loved clothes, books etc and enjoy coffee, tea, pancakes and more!
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Saturdays 2025

FAMILY BONDING: STORIES AND SMILES

Come and enjoy Saturday Story-time by Ross Metcalfe, at 10:30 in the children's section of the Pinelands library.

Saturdays 2025 09:00 to 13:00

BRIC-A-BRAC SALES FOR KAPS

Visit Gloria at the Karoo Animal Protection Society (KAPS) bric-a-brac table at the Pinelands Club. All donations are welcome including dog and cat food or pet bedding.
For collection call Gloria t 083 450 2782.

Saturday 14 June 2025

PINELANDS BAPTIST CHURCH
DIVORCE CARE COURSE BEGINS

Meeting at 14, The Triangle, the course runs every Saturday for 13 weeks commencing 14th June at 10.00 am with snacks provided. Cost of snacks and manual will be R750 per person. Please do not let this put you off - funding is available where necessary. We look forward to hearing from anyone going through divorce or separation or even thinking about this. Let us know if you are interested in a Divorce Care for Kids course. Call Alan Minogue on 083 456 1196 or the church on 083 456 1196.

ADVERTISE YOUR EVENTS! [email muse@pinelandsdirectory.co.za](mailto:muse@pinelandsdirectory.co.za)

Send content for the June 2025 edition by 23 May 2025.

Publication will be 3 June 2025

R180 ensures placement in the calendar.

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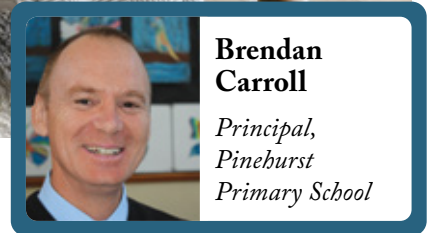


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THE MODERN CHILD

I often hear talk along the lines of: "Children these days..." or "The modern child is ...". What follows is almost certainly disparaging and negative. It would seem from these discussions, that the 'design' and 'model' of children being born currently have a different operating system to those produced a few hundred years ago.

Parents and society shape behaviour

But wait... people don't have pre-programmed operating systems like robots or cell phones. Rather than blaming the modern child for the behaviours we dislike, perhaps we should start by taking a critical look at the modern parent and the modern society 'programming them'. Whatever we allow – we teach. This is a simple but real principle in life. Children's behaviours are in a manner of speaking a litmus test to the acidity of a culture. This does not indemnify children from responsibility for their bad choices, actions and behaviours, but what are they being set up for?

Great lessons from the past

As far back as antiquity, the Greek philosopher Aristotle said: "Give me a child until he is seven and I will show you the man." Many therapists will most certainly agree with him based on their experience of helping people. King Solomon, wrote in the Proverbs: "Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it."

0-8 are the formative years

So much of who we are is shaped in the first years of our life. The formative years (early stages of childhood) are considered to

be between 0-8 years where we learn more quickly than at any other time in our lives. These are the years in which a child experiences rapid cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.

Children need guidance

Parents by and large train their children according to the values and norms of the culture and society in which they find themselves. Our western, modern culture frequently informs parents that they have no need to train their children. We are told to leave them to make their own choices according to their innate and sensory appetites. Many of our children are therefore bumbling along in their self-absorbed lives with little or no sense of absolutes, historical context or anchors in life. Once they come into contact with social organizations, they struggle as they are now expected to operate within communities with commonly expected behaviours.

Boundaries & perseverance are good

We feed our children diets which are highly refined, often full of sugar and artificial colourants. Pharmaceutical medication is believed to be the pathway or means to maintaining health. Sleep is not valued and routines such as bedtime are negotiable at best and non-existent at worst. Devices are modern day baby sitters or pacifiers. Entertainment is rapid, mostly electronic and thrown in byte sizes without requiring the need to engage or persevere.

Discomfort or boredom is viewed as undesirable and it is therefore acceptable to stop doing something if you are tired, and move on to your next fancy even if the

first activity is not complete. After all of this we then blame our children when they are irritable, ego-centric and fickle.

Doing the best that you can

Imagine if we could once again foster in our children an appreciation for beauty and art. Not just a narrow idea of art such as paintings, but doing whatever we do in life with excellence and as a beautiful expression of ourselves and our experiences. This could manifest in the way in which we garden, by playing music, crafts and skills such as woodworking and needle crafts, dance or literature. All of these things require time and space (sometimes hours of practice) as well as giving ourselves to community and to common good.

Connecting the past and the future

Imagine if we could once again foster in our children a sense of connectedness to their past and how they fit into the bigger story – that they aren't *the* story but only a piece of the bigger story. Like singing in a choir and realizing that you are not the soloist but yet you are an integral part of the bigger sound produced. To do these things it will require our families to connect with real people in real life doing real things. Imagine if we could appreciate the wisdom and road travelled by our grandparents and celebrate the road behind us as we navigate the road ahead of us.

Imagine... but this need not be an imaginary game of 'pretend – pretend'. We have the ability and power to make changes. We are after all the parents, the adults, the decision makers, who should train up the modern child in the way that they should go. ■

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PINELANDS HIGH SCHOOL WINS AWARD AS THE MOST SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL IN SOUTH AFRICA!

For over 30 years, Pinelands High School has made outdoor education a priority, organising field trips and camps that inspire environmental awareness. But the school wanted to do even more, leading to its participation in the Eco-Schools programme in 2016 and the Sustainable Schools programme in 2021. These initiatives have provided a structured approach to environmental education and action.

In March 2025, this ongoing commitment was recognised with the prestigious "Most Sustainable School in SA" award, honouring the comprehensive environmental efforts undertaken in 2024.

At Pinelands High School, sustainability is woven into the curriculum. Environmental themes are incorporated into subjects such as Economic Management Sciences, Life Orientation, and Consumer Studies. Assessments often reflect these priorities – for example: English papers on the climate crisis or Science Fair projects exploring

food waste solutions. In addition, staff development sessions focus on reducing plastic waste and linking school activities to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Notable contributions by staff are acknowledged through the school's "Happy Turtle Awards."

Student groups also play a significant role in fostering a culture of sustainability. The Eco-club holds environmental competitions, while the Photography Club captures the school's rich biodiversity. The Interact Society is actively involved in beach clean-ups and tree-planting projects. To further engage the community, the school hosts an Academic Lecture Series, bringing in experts to discuss topics including urban water systems and careers in veterinary science. Professor Annie Chimphango presented on sustainable chemical engineering during the most recent Academic Lecture.

Beyond classroom initiatives, the school's

Above: Grade 9 Natural Science Students learning about ecology in the Biodiversity Garden: Garren Sanderson-Smith, Yoannah Tshibusu, Ameera Gierdien, Sabine von Pressentin, Zach Roma and Ms Kate Jack.

biodiversity garden serves as a living laboratory. This space not only offers a serene connection to nature but also provides hands-on learning opportunities. Over 300 species have been documented on the iNaturalist platform, and the garden recently became part of the Fynbos Corridor Collaboration. A new Fynbos Restoration garden on the school grounds further underscores Pinelands High's dedication to preserving local ecosystems. At a time when our planet faces unprecedented environmental challenges, Pinelands High School sets an inspiring example of how education and action can shape a sustainable future. ■



Sugarbush Protea (Protea repens) found in the biodiversity garden.



Kate Jack (Sustainability Coordinator, PHS), with Lanah Murray (School Coordinator, Nature Connect) and Jocelyn Anderson (Manager, Sustainable Schools Programme) at the Awards Ceremony.



Cicking Stream Frog (Strongylopus grayii) photographed in the biodiversity garden.



**By
Sue Torr**
Director
Crue Invest

Wills, heirs and homes: Navigating property transfers after death

If you plan to bequeath immovable property in your Will, be mindful that the process can be complicated. As the owner of immovable property, it must transfer to another person upon your death, either through intestate succession or as stipulated in your Will. If you nominate an heir in your Will, your appointed executor will oversee transferring the property to the beneficiary's name. However, your marital regime may restrict your freedom to distribute immovable property, making it crucial to fully comprehend how your marital contract influences your property rights.

Married in community of Property

For instance, if you are married in community of property, only 50% of the joint estate is yours to bequeath. This means that your surviving spouse will remain a one-half share owner of the fixed property. Where you are married out of community of property with the accrual and intend to bequeath your property to a third party, bear in mind that your surviving spouse's claim for their share of the accrual could necessitate the sale of your fixed property, which may complicate matters.

Inheriting property

From a cost perspective, where fixed property is transferred to another person by way of inheritance – whether testate or intestate – no transfer duty is payable, and SARS will issue a transfer duty exemption certificate upon application by the transferring attorneys. However, keep in mind that your deceased estate remains responsible for the conveyancing costs, Deeds Office fees, rates and levy clearance certificates.

The need for conveyancing attorneys

Transferring property from a deceased estate is complex, requiring careful handling by your executor, who typically outsources this to conveyancing attorneys. As an asset in your estate, your property must be reflected in the Liquidation and Distribution (L&D) Account, and no transfer of fixed property can proceed before the L&D Account has undergone public inspection and approval by the Master. Further, the conveyancing attorneys must lodge special documentation at the Deeds Office demonstrating rightful heirship and compliance with Section 42(1) of the Administration of Estates Act.

What happens to the home loan?

If your property carries a home loan and appropriate bond cover is in place, your executor will utilise the life cover proceeds to settle the bond, allowing your heir to inherit an unencumbered property. Without such cover, your executor may need to liquidate other estate assets to repay the bond, as debt settlement is a priority in estate administration. If your heir is intent on taking ownership of the property, they can apply to take over the existing home loan, although they will need to meet the bank's qualifying criteria in order to do so. If your beneficiary is not in a position to take over the home loan or chooses not to, your executor may sell the property out of the estate at market value. In such circumstances, your executor is responsible for signing the Offer to Purchase and all other transfer documents. Further, the transferring attorney must obtain a certificate from the Master verifying that they have no objections to the transfer.

Laws around minors and fixed property

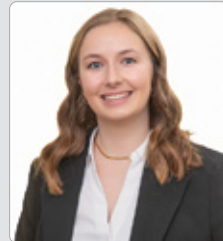
Additional complexities can arise if your heir is a minor and no testamentary trust has been established in your Will. Since minors (under 18) cannot legally own property, the executor must seek permission from the Master to sell or manage it on the minor's behalf. Without a trust, the minor's legal guardian will be responsible for administering the property until the child reaches adulthood. However, the guardian faces certain limitations in this regard, notably requiring the Master's consent to sell the property, contingent on proving it serves the minor's best interests. Where the fixed property is left to your minor in a testamentary trust, the trustees will be responsible for administering the property on behalf of your minor children, and this is generally speaking a much more favourable method of leaving fixed property to minors.

Diligent planning is essential

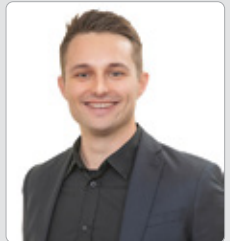
To facilitate a seamless transfer of property upon your death, regularly update your Will and maintain current records of home loans, bond cover, municipal accounts, utility bills, and title deeds. Diligent planning in bequeathing immovable property can safeguard your intentions, mitigate disputes, and streamline estate administration for your beneficiaries. ■

OUR ADVISORY TEAM

Crue Invest's advisory team includes 7 Certified Financial Planners® and an expert healthcare advisor. Together, our team of specialists is able to provide world class, independent advice on investment management, local and offshore investing, estate and tax planning, risk protection, business succession, medical aid & gap cover.



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THE RICHTERSVELD

by Judith Gordon



“Sometimes you just want to get away, the further the better. Sometimes peace and quiet just isn’t enough – you want a wild place, desolate and slightly eerie. You want a place only disturbed by the wind, where the only change is cloud formation in a vast sky. You want a place where the mind is filled only with curiosity, wonderment, and the stimulating, creative energy of otherworldliness.”

Douwé and Liesl Vlok: Karoo Heuningland

Petroglyphs were chipped into the black dolomite rocks thousands of years ago, portraying geometric patterns with grids, dots and spirals or animals such as giraffe and antelope.



There are not many access roads to the Park. We met Conrad in Port Nolloth, then drove via Alexander Bay inland along the river to Sendelingsdrif where there is a small somewhat precarious-looking ferry to the Namibian side. After our stay at Tatasberg we meandered across the Park, passing Helskloof and exiting in the south. We bade fond farewells to Conrad and Floors at Port Nolloth from where, next day, we returned to Cape Town. ■



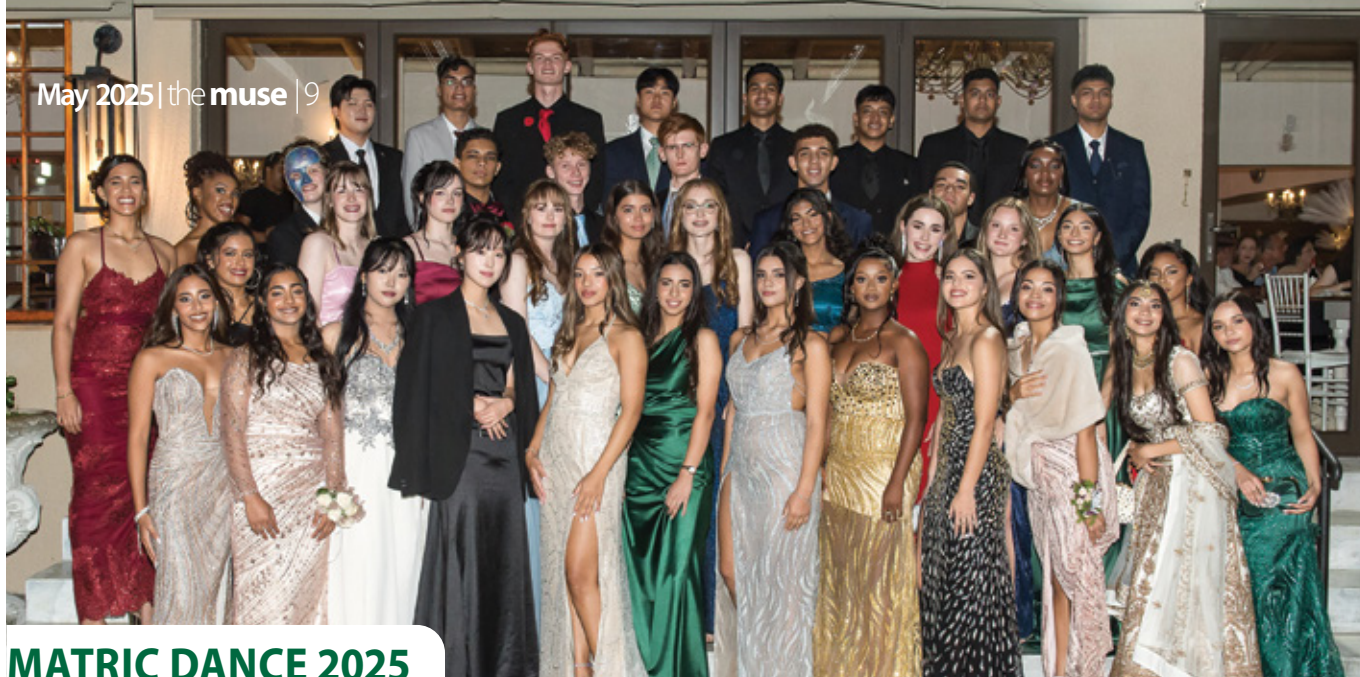
Two Fat Ladies were two friends who travelled through Britain on a motorcycle, with registration N88TFL, to use their considerable skills in cooking. In our case, there were not two but four of us who set off to explore the !Ai-!Ais/Richtersveld Trans Frontier National Park, established in 2003 and straddling the Orange River across Namibia and the north west of the Northern Cape.

Unlike the Two Fat Ladies, we travelled not on a motorcycle but in a vehicle driven by our knowledgeable and perceptive guide, Conrad. Our cook was Floors who had earlier cooked on fishing trawlers and could rival the ladies for delicious food! Sitting in the front seat with Driver Conrad was the most comfortable place, but we imposed a strict roster meaning that we moved round every so often, dreading our turn as the middle one of the three on the back seat (narrow for us). Floors travelled in the rear with the food, reclining on a comfortable bed made of our thick coats, brought because we had been warned that it could be cold.

Our main stop was at the Tatasberg Camp, just a few basic huts at the base of a rocky hill next to the Orange River. On the way there, the wheels of our vehicle started to spin in some white sand, making progress forward impossible. We all got out and Conrad and Floors, undeterred, set about solving the problem, obviously not unusual to them.

In 2007, the Park, 160 000 hectares, made its way onto UNESCO’s World Heritage List as the only arid biodiversity hotspot on earth. The population, mainly of Nama people, is extremely sparse with less than one person per square kilometre (Hong Kong has 6 747). The land is austere, forbidding and awe-inspiring, one of the jagged peaks aptly named Mount Terror. Although not all technically a desert, its miles of sand with the only road being a dry river bed surrounded by bare blue-black mountains, give the traveller the feeling that these empty unknown spaces harbour some of earth’s darkest secrets.

We were there in spring, so we were treated to displays of tiny blooms, many of them yellow. Conrad is a lover of this corner of Africa, and he gave us fascinating descriptions of how the plants have adapted to the harsh conditions. The best-known large examples are the Halfmens and the Kokerboom (Quiver Tree): it is concerning that so many of these have died recently. *Stapelia* in various colours are colloquially known as smelly starfish flowers because of their odour of putrefying flesh which lures insects to buzz around and pollinate them. Conrad’s fatherly affinity for and detailed knowledge of all the plants, especially tiny ones, enriched our observations. Impressive rock formations abound. One is known as the Hand of God, the depressions in the rock making the shape of a hand.



MATRIC DANCE 2025

Cannons Creek Independent School held its Matric Dance at Suikerbossie Restaurant and Estate, on Saturday 12 April 2025. Parents and school pupils joined for the arrival of the Matrics in a spectacular

fashion, which was followed by a cocktail function at the school before the main event began. Matrics were ushered onto a bus which took them to the venue, which was kept secret until they arrived.

The theme was a Masquerade Ball. The Matrics of 2025 enjoyed an evening of dancing, fun, and making memories with friends. Seen above are the Matrics of 2025, excluding dates, in their finery.

CANNONS CREEK INDEPENDENT HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Cannons Creek Independent High School is proud to announce the recipients of its scholarships for Grade 8 – 2026. Well done to Alistair Baker (Cannons Creek), and Olivia Middleton (Grace Primary) who have been awarded the Academic, and Music Scholarships respectively. Congratulations to both Alistair and Olivia on this well-deserved achievement.



TESTIMONIALS

"Anthony McCarthy recently assisted me in selling my house. I am writing to commend him (unsolicited) for the exceptional standard, quality and professional service that my family and I received from him during this process. Anthony's special communication skills combined with his ethical approach to his work makes him a wonderful asset to Rawson. He was always willing to help, assist and advise. It was indeed a great pleasure to work with him."

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PINELANDS CID: BUILDING A SAFER, CLEANER, AND MORE CONNECTED COMMUNITY



The Pinelands Community Improvement District (CID) has been hard at work this past month, delivering tangible results across public safety, social development, and environmental maintenance.

Here's a look at the highlights from March 2025 and what residents can expect in the weeks ahead.

ENHANCING PUBLIC SAFETY

Camera Network: Safety remains a top priority for the Pinelands CID team who were instrumental in the arrest of five suspects in March and where the advanced camera network proved useful in four of these cases. Phase 1 of the camera installation is now complete with new cameras scheduled for key locations near Forest Place, the canal and Jan Smuts Drive. Residents have welcomed the increased security along with the improved safety provided by the addition of two bicycle patrollers along the canal.

Law enforcement: Joint traffic operations by law enforcement and the CID resulted in 210 traffic fines and 14 taxis being impounded on March 24th near Old Mutual. CID officers also addressed illegal parking and other by-law infringements.

Environmental safety: The CID team cleared overgrown foliage along Jan Smuts Drive, a known hotspot for informal structures and illegal dumping, improving cleanliness and visibility. In collaboration with Councillor Riad Davids (Ward 53) and the City contractor, repainting the traffic lines at the Pinelands Library parking area has begun.



PROMOTING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Caring for vulnerable members of the community is a core CID value. This month the social development team found placements at shelters for six individuals and work continues with ongoing engagement with rough sleepers and bin scratchers, some from neighbouring communities, to work on potential intervention programmes aimed at addressing homelessness and social distress in the area.



WELCOME TO DR MARIETTA HOPLEY, THE NEW SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND PR AND MARKETING PORTFOLIO DIRECTOR FOR THE PINELANDS CID

Dr Hopley brings a wealth of experience from the non-profit sector, where she supports a range of causes and communities. Her passion is evident for making a tangible difference in the lives of both our community and those less fortunate. Dr Hopley is a specialist in conflict management, mediation and ethics and is an accomplished PR professional. She will be spearheading the Social Development and PR and Marketing Portfolios to strengthen communication, engagement and social upliftment across the community.



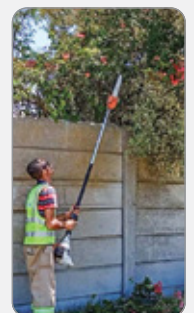
As a Pinelands Resident of 27 years, Dr Hopley has a deep understanding of the unique dynamics of our suburb and its people. We look forward to her positive contributions as she leads these vital portfolios forward.

"A GREENER, CLEANER PINELANDS"

Environmental stewardship is another key pillar of the CID's mission. Recognising the importance of clear navigation and pride in public spaces, the CID has reached out to the sub council office to address concerns about street and park signage. Additionally residents can look forward to planned environment upgrades at Forest Place, Coronation Park, Field Close and East Way — projects aimed at enhancing both the beauty and utility of open spaces. A design concept plan has been developed for the Garden of Remembrance and an official call for quotations will be published soon.

In preparation for the winter rainy season the CID has coordinated with relevant departments to align work and has already tackled blocked drains to prevent flooding. Other environmental efforts by the CID

have been the launching of a graffiti removal campaign, informative training sessions re the Polyphagous Shot-Hole Borer Beetle, and the replacement of dead trees, ensuring vibrant green spaces.



LOOKING FORWARD

The Pinelands CID's comprehensive approach, combining safety, social care, and environmental responsibility, continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of residents. In the coming month, expect continued camera installations, progress on the Garden

of Remembrance, visible environmental upgrades, and ongoing collaboration with law enforcement and social partners. Residents are encouraged to stay engaged, report issues, and participate in community initiatives. Together with the CID, we can ensure that Pinelands remains a safe, clean, and connected place to call home.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
OR TO GET INVOLVED**

Visit the Website: www.pinelandscid.co.za

Call the CID Office: 078 840 3366

Emergency Number: 087 183 5999 OR WhatsApp: 084 276 7140

PINELANDS HIGH SCHOOL DUO WIN GOLD AT PRESTIGIOUS SCIENCE COMPETITION IN CHINA

Two Grade 12 students from Pinelands High School, Adam Gibbon and Christopher Collier-Reed, recently won Gold medals while representing South Africa at the Beijing Youth Science Creation Competition (BYSCC) held in China at the end of March 2025.

Their participation in this internationally renowned competition, hosted by the University of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, provided them with the opportunity to present their research alongside some of the brightest young minds in science and technology. The duo earned their spot at BYSCC after securing Gold medals at the Eskom Expo International Science Fair (ISF) for their Agricultural Sciences research project.

Innovating for a Sustainable Future

Adam and Christopher's project, *Flies to the Rescue: Innovating Food Waste Management Using Black Soldier Fly Larvae*, addresses the pressing global issue of food waste. Their innovative approach uses Black Soldier Fly (BSF) larvae to efficiently decompose organic waste, producing valuable by-products. Their research demonstrates a scalable and eco-friendly solution that can be implemented in both small-scale urban environments and large-scale industrial waste management operations. By aligning with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, their work has the potential to stimulate economic growth and significantly reduce environmental harm.

Motivated by the staggering statistic that around 40% of South Africa's landfill space is occupied by unnecessary food waste—which decomposes slowly and emits harmful greenhouse gases—Christopher and Adam explored the remarkable capabilities of black soldier fly larvae. Unlike common houseflies, black soldier flies are harmless, do not spread diseases, and their larvae are exceptionally efficient at breaking down food waste, consuming up to twice their weight daily and reducing waste volume by up to 85% within days. This process yields nutrient-rich compost, ideal for revitalising soil, and high-protein biomass suitable as animal feed.

Christopher explained, "Our goal was to demonstrate how this practical solution could significantly reduce environmental harm from food waste, while simultaneously creating economic opportunities through its by-products." Adam added, "Most people think of flies as pests, but these larvae offer

an extraordinary solution to a trillion-dollar global issue." Their research spanned more than a year, involving preliminary tests and many comprehensive experiments to optimise the solution for various applications. Their work underscored the potential of sustainable food waste management to become part of a profitable circular economy.

Reflecting on their experience at BYSCC, Christopher and Adam expressed immense gratitude and excitement. "Competing in China was incredible," said Christopher. "Interacting with students from around the globe and experiencing diverse cultures first-hand made this more than just a science competition—it was truly eye-opening." Adam echoed these sentiments, noting, "The calibre of the competition and the innovative ideas presented were inspiring. Visiting landmarks like The Temple of Heaven and enjoying authentic cuisine, especially the Peking duck pancakes, made the experience unforgettable." Looking forward, Christopher intends to pursue Mechanical Engineering, eager to apply the research skills he gained during the project. Adam plans to study in either the Sciences or Commerce fields, hoping to continue exploring opportunities related to their research.

Both students gratefully acknowledged the invaluable support from Eskom Expo for Young Scientists and their science teachers at Pinelands High School.

Principal's Comment

"We are very proud of Adam Gibbon and Christopher Collier-Reed for winning Gold at the Beijing Youth Science Creation Competition. Their success is the result of months of hard work, careful research, and a real commitment to solving a pressing global issue – how we manage food waste. Their project, using Black Soldier Fly larvae for sustainable waste decomposition, is innovative and impactful.

It's been inspiring to see Adam and Christopher grow through this process. They've demonstrated resilience when experiments didn't go to plan and maintained focus over an extended period. Their reflections on the experience – about staying disciplined and not giving up, convey a valuable message for us all, particularly their peers.

Winning such a prestigious international award is a significant achievement, but



Proud medal winners:

Adam Gibbon and Christopher Collier-Reed

equally impressive is their thoughtful and grounded approach. Their genuine pride in participating and humble surprise at their victory make this achievement even more special.

At Pinelands High School, we emphasise not only academic success but also curiosity, collaboration, and problem-solving. Adam and Christopher exemplify these qualities exceptionally well, reminding us of the powerful impact young people can make when they apply their knowledge to real-world challenges.

Congratulations to both students. We are delighted for you and deeply grateful for the integrity and enthusiasm with which you represented our school and country."

Graham Sayer,

Principal Pinelands High School. ■



CANNONS CREEK CELEBRATES BOOKS!

At Cannons Creek Independent Primary School, Book Week is always a highlight. A love of reading is fostered in the classroom and the lovely library - a favourite space for many of its pupils. Book Week was celebrated early this year, from 24 to 27 March, where the importance of reading while having FUN was emphasised. During the week, the bell was rung at random times during the day to signal the start of DEAR - Drop Everything And Read. For five minutes, the entire school stopped

what they were doing and read books. The excitement was palpable! Bargain Books held a book sale in the Theatre on 25 and 26 March. "It is heart-warming to see that with all the modern technology about, our children still love reading books," said Mrs Chandra Harris, Grade 2 Teacher. On Wednesday, the children and staff came to school dressed up as a character from *Where's Wally?* and paraded around the school, so that everyone could admire the variety of characters present. Following

the parade, the Cool2Care leaders took their groups on a scavenger hunt around the school looking for 'Wally'. Inside and outside, they searched, until all 20 'Wallys' had been found!

The school's annual *Hooked on Books* show was energetic and a big hit with the pupils. *Hooked on Books* brings books to life by dramatising book trailers from modern-day children's books, to get children hooked on books! The final event of Book Week was *Torch Thursday* where pupils created blanket forts and enjoyed some time reading their books.

Grade 1-6 pupils and staff dressed to the *Where's Wally?* theme.



Where's Wally? characters - Woof the dog, Odlaw, Wizard Whitebeard, Wenda, and Wally



Grade 4 pupils enjoying the time during DEAR to read their books during class



Grade 4 Teacher Mrs Lisa Gopal standing outside her in-theme decorated classroom door



Grade 6 girls spotted in the library, finding the characters in the book that inspired the dressup



Grade 5 pupil during the scavenger hunt to find the 'Wallys' hidden around the school



Grade 6 pupil during the scavenger hunt

PNPS INAUGURAL SCIENCE AND CODING FAIR



The Pinelands North Primary School Inaugural Science and Coding Fair was a tremendous success! Over 100 pupils participated, showcasing their creativity, curiosity, and impressive skills. From innovative coding projects and informative how-to videos to mind-blowing science experiments and creative inventions, there was no shortage of talent on display. The event was filled with excitement as families gathered to support the young scientists and coders. It was a proud moment for everyone involved and a wonderful celebration of learning, imagination, and community.

As a school, PNPS takes pride in having teachers who inspire a passion for STEM. Special thanks go to the creative and talented educators, as well as the coding and robotics team, who brought the event to life!

By Tamsin Carelse



PNPS KASKAR DERBY FUNDRAISER: A DAY OF FUN, COMPETITION, & COMMUNITY SUPPORT!

The PNPS Kaskar Derby fundraising event brought together parents, teachers, and pupils for an exciting and fun-filled race day! The races were full of energy, and the competition was fierce, with prizes up for grabs for those who raised the most funds. All the funds raised during this event will go towards upgrading the PNPS sports facilities, helping to create an even better environment for the school athletes and pupils to thrive. Thanks go to the Sports Department for organizing such an incredible event and making it all possible!



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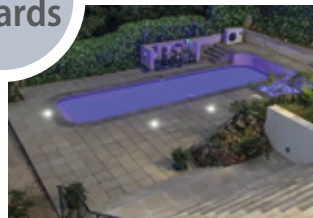
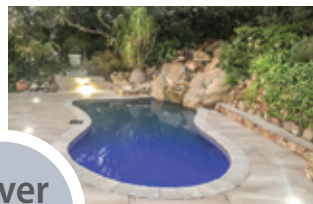
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By **Heleen Meyer**

Pinelands resident,
foodie and author of
Food from the Heart,
and
Make five/Maak vyf.

Saucy chocolate pudding with nuts and coffee

Serves 6 to 8

Sauce

375 ml (1½ cups) boiling water
125 ml (½ cup) strong black filter coffee
180 ml (¾ cup) soft brown sugar
30 ml (2 tbsp) good-quality cocoa
5 ml (1 tsp) vanilla essence

Batter

125 ml (½ cup) raw unsalted nuts
60 ml (4 tbsp) butter
125 ml (½ cup) white sugar
1 extra large egg
5 ml (1 tsp) vanilla essence
250 ml (1 cup) cake flour
15 ml (1 tbsp) baking powder
25 ml (5 tsp) good-quality cocoa
150 ml milk
50 g dark chocolate, coarsely chopped and extra for garnish

1. Preheat the oven to 180 °C. Lightly grease a 2.5 litre round, deep, oven-proof dish or 6-8 large ramekins or bowls (about 125 ml-250 ml in volume) with butter.
2. **Sauce:** Place all the ingredients in a small saucepan and heat over a medium temperature, while stirring until the sugar dissolves. Keep the sauce warm.
3. Meanwhile, place the nuts on a baking tray and roast for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Take care as these can burn easily. Remove from the oven, cool and roughly chop. Set aside.
4. **Batter:** Beat butter & sugar together in a bowl with an electric beater until creamy. Beat in the egg and vanilla until smooth.
5. Sieve the dry ingredients into a separate mixing bowl. Beat the flour mixture into the batter mixture alternating with the milk until well mixed. Stir in the chopped chocolate and most of the nuts. Keep some nuts aside for garnish.
6. Pour the warm sauce into the greased oven dish or ramekins. Spoon the batter over and bake the large pudding for 40-45 minutes or until a skewer or toothpick comes out clean. Bake the individual puddings for just 20 minutes or until done. Remember the sauce will make the skewer look 'dirty' but just make sure the batter is baked through.
7. Garnish with the extra chocolate and remaining nuts. Serve immediately as is, or with a scoop of ice-cream.



Portrait and food shot: Adel Ferreira
Food image: courtesy of LiG Magazine

Comforting chocolate pudding

Who can say no to a warm baked chocolate pudding on a cold winter's day? Tucking into the crusty layer and reaching the warm, gooey chocolate sauce in this pudding, is absolute heaven. This is a well-known winter pudding, that I added a few twists to.

Chocolate, nuts (such as macadamia and almonds) and coffee are a winning combination and that's what makes this dessert just a little different. The sauce in some versions of this pudding can be overly sweet, so I use much less sugar and add coffee to bring out a deeper flavour and comforting aroma. Coffee perfectly balances the sweetness of the sauce and is so good with chocolate.

Remember to use good-quality coffee, cocoa and chocolate for the best

flavour. I prefer to use an espresso, but a good-quality instant coffee will also work if that's all you have available.

If you have never made this all-time winter favourite, here are a few notes. The method may seem strange, as the sauce is poured into the oven dish or individual ramekins first. Then the batter is spooned on top, and this creates that beautiful sauce underneath the soft, spongy cake during the baking process. When testing the baked dessert, remember that the sauce may make the skewer or cake tester seem 'wet', so just make sure that the cake part is indeed baked through.

Spoil your loved ones with a comforting bowlful soon!

PS: this would make a perfect dessert for Mother's Day.

Cooking Demonstration

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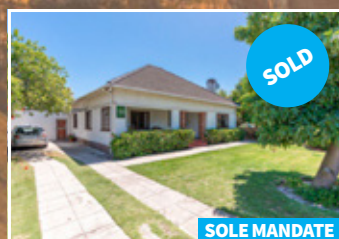
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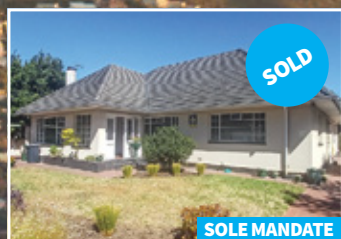
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