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PINELANDS COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

ISSUE 172 | May 2026



Biltong Quiche
Nina Timm



“Tri-for-Tails”
Kathy Leverton



On Being a Pinelander
Batandwa Ntsebeza



Helen Keller

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Max Schutte

About the cover:
See the article on pages 8 and 9 of this edition about Kathy Leverton raising funds for animal shelters. The cover image was taken from Constantiaberg during the 13 Peaks challenge.



Brown-hooded Kingfisher

The only kingfisher in the Southern African region with a striped head and breast. The male differs from the female in that the male has a black back, while the female has a brown back. A common resident in woodland and coastal forest, favouring river edges. Many are found in gardens. They have a varied diet, favouring insects, but will also eat geckos, small chameleons, skinks, young birds, snakes, fish, crabs and rodents. They nest in clay banks, excavating a horizontal tunnel where the eggs are laid about a metre from the entrance of the tunnel. The call is a whistled "Tyi-tu-tu-tu-tu".

John McFarlane, author of the regular Muse bird feature enjoys the company of garden birds at his home in Pinewood Village. John feels that the best place for a birdbath is a shady spot near a tree or bush. There will be less evaporation in the shade and will also give the birds an escape route in case of danger. To attract birds to the garden useful plants to have in the garden are: Wild dagga (*Leonotis Leonurus*), Salvias, Cape Honeysuckle and flowering aloes.



FROM THE ABSURD TO THE MUNDANE, AND SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN

If an editorial is meant to address the major current affairs of the day, then we all know what this one should be about. However, it is a situation in which wisdom and logic is altogether lacking and I don't have the fortitude to explain or even comment on it rationally. The best I can offer now is to borrow a witty song title from Taylor Swift and repurpose it as a parody to sum up the characters directing their absurd tragicomedy:

In my version, "Wi\$h Li\$t" would be about:

Let's just do any crazy stuff we want to and make lots of money from it, just because we can. Now, to the more mundane... a much calmer and more pleasant place to live. The turn of the season announced itself with a storm and wet, cold weather to re-acquaint us with winter. Time to start getting out those curry and hearty stew rib-sticker recipes... and let's not forget the warm sticky puddings to go with them. Hopefully though, we will get a few more mild days to enjoy some outdoor braais in summer attire before we retreat indoors around our fireplaces with our rugs and gloves.

And for something interesting between these two extremes, we await with some anticipation the new shopping options in both the Founders Quarter and Pinelands Village Centre (Checkers). These two developments are starting to take shape and with the Conradie shopping precinct progress apparently stalling, we look forward to the broadening of the offering for Pinelanders a bit closer to home.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

Max Schutte

Editor and Advertising
Max Schutte

Content Curator
Glynnis Schutte

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May

Saturday 2 May 2026

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"MARKET ON UNION" (09:00 to noon)

Join us and start your weekend with a tasty Saturday brunch while enjoying the warm fellowship and live music. Plus the customary stalls with plenty of eats and treats to take home. At 2 Union Avenue.

Call Joan on 082 810 1889.

Wednesday 6 May 2026:

HAPPY HOUR SOCIAL GROUP
09:30 - 11:00

Meet at the Pinelands Library activities hall and learn about Safe House, (a safe haven for women) and Storytelling. All welcome.

Call Santa 083 235 6730.

Wednesday 13 May 2026

PLANT SWAP 10:00 to 11:00

Calling all plant lovers to share plants, cuttings and seed packs, every second Wednesday at Pinelands Library.

Call Lauren/Deborah 021 814 1780.

Wednesday 20 May 2026

PAGE TURNERS BOOK CLUB 10:00 - 11:00

Come to the Pinelands Library committee room for a book talk with Fozea Fryddie and her book on education, *From the Kitchen to the Classroom and Beyond*.

RSVP Verna 021 814 1780.

Wednesday 27 May 2026

PINELANDS STAMP CIRCLE

Meet at 18:30 in the Activities Hall above the Pinelands Library. Guy M. will show something different - Cigarette Cards!

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

Wednesdays 2026 15:00 - 17:00

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Learn, practice and sharpen your chess skills and connect with others in a warm and welcoming space. All ages and levels welcome. RSVP Sonwabise 021 814 1780.

Fridays 2026 (see dates below)

HELEN KELLER SOCIETY BOOK ROOM
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 between 10:00 and noon.

Friday: 29 May; 26 June.

Call Bev Wroth on 021 531 5311.

Sunday 31 May 2026

CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC CHURCH
AUTUMN MARKET 10:00 to 14:00

Come and enjoy a wonderful community morning of delicious food, Father's Day gifts, new and pre-loved clothing, books, bespoke handmade items, toys, and much more. Bring your family & friends to the market in Woodside Drive for a relaxed morning of browsing, shopping, and community spirit. All welcome!

Saturdays 2026 09:00 to 13:00

BRIC-A-BRAC SALES FOR KAPS

Support the Karoo Animal Protection Society (KAPS) at the Pinelands Club. All donations of dog and cat food or warm pet bedding would be welcome.

For collection call Gloria 083 450 2782.

Saturdays 2026 10:30

FAMILY BONDING: STORIES & SMILES

Join us for Saturday story time and ignite your imagination with an engaging, fun-filled Saturday morning in the children's section. Call Lauren/Deborah 021 814 1780.

29 July to 2 August 2026

CENTENARY ART EXHIBIT
ST STEPHENS CHURCH

Calling all local Artists to exhibit work for sale at St Stephens Church in the Garden Chapel, Pinelands. Entry for artists: Adults R200 and R50 for Scholars.

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- ★ Improves listening skills
- ★ Encourages creativity
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Raising Children in the Age of Artificial Intelligence



By
Graham Sayer

Head:
Pinelands High School

Artificial intelligence is reshaping the digital world our children inhabit. From homework assistance to image generation, powerful AI tools are now part of everyday life. Our challenge is to help young people learn to use it wisely.

Artificial intelligence has moved from science fiction into the everyday lives of our children with astonishing speed. In just a few years, tools capable of generating essays, images and even videos in minutes or even seconds have become freely available to anyone with a smartphone.

For young people, these technologies can be fascinating and empowering. For parents and educators, they present both remarkable opportunities and serious challenges. The question facing us today is not whether children will encounter artificial intelligence, they already have. The real question is whether they will learn to use it responsibly and thoughtfully.

A Technology Moving Faster Than Society

One of the defining features of the current AI revolution is the speed at which it is unfolding. Technological capability is advancing far faster than society's ability to fully understand, regulate or manage its consequences.

This places adults in a difficult position. If we attempt to ignore AI, young people will inevitably discover and use it elsewhere, often without guidance or ethical frameworks. Yet if it is adopted uncritically, it risks weakening important human capacities such as independent thinking, judgement and perseverance.

Researchers increasingly warn about what is known as "cognitive offloading", the habit of outsourcing thinking tasks to digital tools rather than engaging in deeper reasoning ourselves.

Learning has never been effortless. It continues to require wrestling with ideas, making mistakes, revising one's thinking and gradually building intellectual stamina. If these processes are consistently replaced by automated systems, human cognition can begin to erode. AI can certainly assist learning, but it should never replace the thinking that learning is meant to develop.



When Technology Is Used to Harm

Artificial Intelligence has created some new avenues for digital harm among adolescents. AI tools can now generate highly realistic fake images (often called deepfakes) by placing someone's face onto another body or digitally altering photographs. These images are sometimes used in sextortion, a form of online abuse in which someone threatens to distribute humiliating or intimate images unless the victim complies with demands for money or further images. Disturbingly, the images do not even need to be real. Artificially generated images can still be used to threaten, humiliate and manipulate young people. The emotional consequences for victims can be severe, particularly when such material spreads rapidly through peer networks or social media.

There are also legal implications that many teenagers do not fully appreciate. Under South African law, the creation or distribution of sexually explicit images involving minors (including manipulated or fabricated images) may constitute a criminal offence. Because the age of criminal responsibility in South Africa is 14, young people can face serious legal consequences for actions they may initially perceive as jokes or pranks.

The Environmental Question

Another concern receiving increasing attention is the environmental impact of artificial intelligence. Large AI systems operate through enormous networks of data centres that consume significant amounts of electricity and water. Cooling systems required to prevent servers from overheating can use vast quantities of water each day, and the rapid expansion of AI infrastructure raises important questions about long-term sustainability. At the same time, it is important to keep a sense of proportion. Artificial intelligence is already embedded in many of the digital tools we use daily, from search engines and navigation apps to recommendation systems on streaming platforms. The real issue is therefore not whether society will live with AI, but how responsibly it will be developed and managed. Encouragingly, researchers and technology companies are working on ways to reduce its environmental footprint. These include more energy-efficient computer chips, improved cooling technologies, renewable powered data centres and smaller AI models that require far less computing power.

Why Young People Are Particularly Vulnerable

Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt offers useful insight into why adolescents may be particularly vulnerable to the dangers of emerging technologies. In *The Coddling of the American Mind*, Haidt argues that modern childhood has become overprotected in the physical world but underprotected in the digital world. Young people often encounter powerful online environments before they have developed the maturity or the secure sense of self needed to navigate them wisely. Artificial intelligence intensifies this problem. When powerful creative tools become available to adolescents whose judgement and impulse control are still developing, the potential for misuse increases, which in turn can produce significant social harm and even devastating life long consequences.

The Role of Parents

While schools and policymakers have important roles to play, the most powerful influence on young people remains the home. Many of the most serious online harms occur outside school hours, on personal devices and private messaging platforms where adult oversight is limited. Parents therefore play a critical role in helping children navigate the digital world safely. This includes maintaining open conversations about online behaviour, discussing respect and consent in digital interactions, setting reasonable boundaries around device use and encouraging children to seek help immediately if something online feels uncomfortable. Importantly, most online harm does not begin with obvious danger. It often starts with curiosity, casual conversation or gradual boundary-crossing. Young people who know they can speak openly with trusted adults are far more likely to seek help early.

A Shared Responsibility

Artificial intelligence will undoubtedly shape the world our children inherit. The challenge for families and communities is to approach it with wisdom rather than panic, and responsibility rather than denial. That means acknowledging the risks (social, psychological and environmental) while also recognising the potential benefits when the technology is used thoughtfully. Ultimately, the future impact of artificial intelligence will depend less on the machines themselves than on the judgement, character and responsibility of the humans who use them. ■

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COMMUNITY NEWS

CANNONS CREEK INDEPENDENT HIGH SCHOOL ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIPS

Cannons Creek Independent High School is proud to announce the recipients of its scholarships for Grade 8 – 2027. Well done to Eloise Marriott (Milnerton Primary), and Liam Pringle (Cannons Creek) who have been awarded the Academic and Music Scholarships respectively. Congratulations to both Eloise and Liam on this well-deserved achievement.

When asked why they should be awarded the scholarships, these were their replies:



"I am responsible and hard working. You can trust me to always do my best. I have leadership experience as I am a Head Girl. I am very academic and have received a merit every term in my Primary School career. I would hope to be an excellent representative of Cannons Creek." - Eloise



"I bring great forth great music not only in piano and drums, but I have a great sense of humour that I can bring to liven up the Music Department. I also have lots of additional experience of wind band and rock band playing in previous years and am keen to become more involved with ensembles. I love performing and learning pieces even with my slight reluctance to practise. Many of my family members are also musicians, giving me a great love of music." - Liam



PHPS Inter-schools gala

PINEHURST PRIMARY SCHOOL FIRST TERM SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

Pinehurst Primary School had a busy and exciting first term of sport. Attending and hosting a number of events during the course of the term, on top of their weekly league fixtures.

The summer sports programme also grew, with each of the cricket age groups fielding two teams for the first time in the school's history. Pinehurst also fielded three tennis teams in each age group for the first time. The annual inter-house gala was filled with friendly rivalries. A number of school records were broken at this event:

Girls u8A Crawl – Celia Sparks
Girls u9B Crawl – Haaniyah Razak
Girls u10B Crawl – Ghayaam Opperman
Boys u10 Butterfly – Jack Ready
Girls u9 Crawl Relay – Olympians

The Pinehurst Primary girls attended the Herschel Twilight Gala for the fourth year running. This is a prestigious event, bringing together the top girls swimming schools in the Cape Town area for an extremely competitive gala under the Herschel floodlights. PHPS girls acquitted themselves well, especially the u9 age group who placed 3rd in the event.

The Pinehurst annual inter-schools gala took place on 4 March 2026, hosting Pinelands North Primary, Camps Bay Primary, Milnerton Primary and The Grove Primary. Both Pinehurst A and B swimming teams competed in the gala, with a total of 96 Pinehurst swimmers representing the school on the day. The A team emerged as overall winners for the second year running, while the B team finished in 5th place.

On the athletics front Pinehurst competed in the inter-schools hosted by Jan Van Riebeeck Primary School for the first time this year. Pinehurst athletes did incredibly well competing against ten other schools, ending the event with 24 podium finishes and seven of their athletes qualifying to go to the Zonal Championships. At the Zonal Championships three Pinehurst athletes made the Central Zone team:



PHPS Interhouse swimming gala won by the Olympians



PHPS u13A vs Sweet Valley
Nicholas Redfern

Marius Cornelissen – 80m (u10)
Eli Clark – 1200m (u10)
Nicholas Redfern – Long Jump (u13)

Both the tennis and cricket codes had a busy term, with all of the Pinehurst teams competing in weekly fixtures. Their cricket teams also played a number of Saturday fixtures, allowing their cricketers to experience longer format cricket. In both tennis and cricket all of the teams showed remarkable growth through the term, managing to compete extremely well in their respective leagues.

After a successful summer season, Pinehurst can now shift their focus to winter sports codes, as they prepare for an exciting and busy winter season.



CANNONS CREEK MATRIC DANCE 2026

Cannons Creek Independent School held its Matric Dance at The Terrace Rooftop Venue in Salt River, on Saturday 18 April 2026. 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 for the trip to the venue, which was kept secret until they arrived. The Matrics of 2026 enjoyed an evening of dancing, fun, and making memories with friends.

CANNONS CREEK PUPILS EXCEL AT SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL SPACE SETTLEMENT DESIGN COMPETITION (ZASDC)



Alaya Kaplen

Congratulations to two Cannons Creek pupils: Alaya Kaplen (Grade 11) and Qaylah Omar (Grade 10, reserve) who have been selected out of more than 100 pupils to represent South Africa at the International Space Settlement Design Competition (ISSDC), at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida from 29 July - 3 August. This follows on from their exemplary performance at South Africa's first national space settlement design competition for High School pupils - the South African Space Design Competition (ZASDC) which aims to connect students to NASA-level engineering education. The national finals took place on 30-31 March, where Cannons Creek was fortunate enough to send a large group of pupils. They learnt about space travel and collaborated with others regarding the future of space exploration via real life scenarios.



Qaylah Omar

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Kathy Leverton

“MY TRI FOR TAILS”

I came up with the challenge to complete the Robben Island swim, the Cape Town Cycle Tour and the 13 Peaks within 30 days to raise funds for four animal rescues in South Africa. I chose Fallen Angels, Sidewalk Specials, Pit Pals and the Transkei Animal Welfare Initiative.

I had the idea of doing a triathlon around June 2025, but in August, I quietly mentioned it to a friend who excitedly said she also wanted to do the swim! By the end of the month I was signed up and the swim training started.

THE SWIM: 18 February 2026

For thirteen weeks from 1 November until the end of January, I followed an intense programme, swimming 3 - 4 times a week. Sea swims, the wetsuit, the nutrition, work. February became a waiting game, mostly for conditions to align. On the 17th, we got the green light and at 6 am the next morning we arrived at the boats in Granger Bay ready to take us to Robben Island. They are speedboats/dingies that transport us out and then stay with the swimmers until the end at Big Bay. On 18 February 2026 my own self-styled triathlon kicked off. Our group gathered on the rock, the whistle blew and we were off. I pushed off the rock on Robben

Island that marks the start of the Robben Island Crossing and kicked through kelp and around other swimmers to start the 7.5km swim to Bloubergstrand.

We disappeared into the mist surrounding Robben Island. The water was silver glass, and warm (14 - 16 degrees). Each pair of swimmers has a boat to guide them. Every half hour you “feed” – warm tea with your carbohydrate mix, a gel if you need it. After a chaotic first half hour, we settled, found our rhythm. It became meditation. Breathe, stroke, bubbles, boat, breathe...

Everything else silent. A large relaxed seal, flippers in the air, looked at us, then back to lazing. White jellyfish floated away beneath us. The mist lifted a little. The feeds went by quickly, and

soon we spotted our finish line. And then we were walking, or, in my buddy's case, running out the water. Months of training, 13 weeks of an intense programme, and in less than three hours it was over.

THE CYCLE: 8 March 2026

After a few days' rest, the training finally turned to the much neglected cycling. Two weeks to “train”. I managed to get a 70 km cycle in. The legs definitely lacked cycle stamina, but the overall fitness was there. 8 March arrived, relatively warm, but also thankfully, relatively wind-free, for Cape Town. My last cycle tour was in 2008. Ironically, with the least amount of training, 2026 was my fastest time with a sub-6 hour ride. I'm really not a cyclist! Thanks to being a hiking guide since 2013, and with months of swimming training the cross-training got me across the finish line, albeit feeling a little tired in the legs. Even though I still don't enjoy cycling, I will say it's more enjoyable when you can actually cycle! Of all my cycle tours, not only was this the fastest, but also the most pleasant.



Peak 1 - Lion's Head
Kathy with her dog Pondo



Robben Island Swim:
Finish with swim buddy
Heather Bougard



Cape Town
Cycle Tour



Image by event photographer

Peak 2 - Maclear's Beacon





*Above: Peak 5 - Klein Leeukoppie:
Kathy with supporters Richard Parker and Nick Mentoor*



*Above: Finish line! Peak 13 - Signal Hill:
Kathy with Bronwyn Leverton and Stephanie Ellis*

THE HIKE: 13 to 17 March 2026

My final task was to complete the 13 Peaks in four consecutive days. Tag 13 peaks in a specific order, entirely on foot: Lion's Head, Maclear's Beacon, Grootkop, Judas Peak, Klein Leeu Kop, Suther Peak, Chapman's Peak, Noordhoek Peak, Muizenberg Peak, Constantiaberg (see cover pic of this Muse), Klassenkop, Devil's Peak, Signal Hill. My 30 day limit was approaching, so only four days' rest. And a heat wave! I started on 13 March, with a high of 37°C. It was brutal! Despite an early start, the heat caught up with us and really slowed us down. Fourteen hours after starting, we finally finished Day 1 with four peaks tagged. On Day 2 we felt the previous day's effort, and with temperatures in the mid-30s, I realised I was not going to complete this in four days. I had hoped to tag four peaks on Day 2

but called it after three. With almost 60 km and seven peaks done, the rest of the challenge became easier over three days. The weather also finally started to cool down from the mid-30s to "just" 30°C on Day 3. I tagged peak 11 in clouds on Day 4 and started Day 5 with thunder and lightning! Around 2 pm on the 17th I ended where I started, the beacon on Signal Hill. 120 km walked, 7 500 m elevation climbed. I thought, being a hiking guide, this would be the easiest of the three challenges for me. It was by far the hardest! Thankfully, I had friends with me for most of the hiking, and I am incredibly grateful to them for giving up their time to keep me going. I had a community of people surrounding me, from the start of my training through to the finish at Signal Hill. Training partners, hiking buddies, personal taxis, a dog sitter,

cheerleaders on the sidelines and finish lines, and many, many messages of support and encouragement. And some calling me crazy. Maybe I am. I blame my mother.

THE WHY:

Community is what gets us through, now more than ever. And while there are many animal rescues out there, these four have either personally helped me when I've found a stray, or have helped animals in areas I love, or have rescued animals later adopted by friends. And they desperately need help. If you are able to donate to my cause, please visit www.backabuddy.co.za/campaign/my-tri-for-tails.

The challenge has also not been cheap for me to complete (the swim section alone costing over R6 000). If you feel so inclined to donate to help cover the costs, you can donate to FNB Account 62056318308. ■

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF CENTENARIAN LAURA SIMPKINS



It was with great excitement that the residents and staff of Kendrick House in Thornton as well as family and friends celebrated the 100th Birthday of Mrs Laura Simkins on Tuesday 24 March. Festivities included attendance by Piper James, Felicities Spiritual Dancers, the Mayor's office, the current District President of the Women's Auxiliary, Laura's immediate family and many, long standing friends. Clergy included Rev. Anthony Bethke and Rev Ross Southern. The good wishes were unanimous "Happy Birthday Laura, you are now a centenarian and we love you!" Sadly Laura passed away on Saturday 28 March, four days after celebrating her centenary birthday. Laura had been a resident of Kendrick House since August 2025, endearing herself

to everyone through her warmth and lively sense of humour. Laura was born in 1926 in Graaff-Reinet, the youngest of seven children. Her family later moved to Port Elizabeth and then to Cape Town. An enthusiastic student, she achieved the highest Standard 7 (Grade 9) English marks in the Union of South Africa. During the war years she served in the army as a telephone operator at Wynberg Military Hospital. After retiring Laura moved to Pinewood Village before relocating to Kendrick House. Laura had two children and was the proud grandmother of four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. A staunch member of the Methodist Church Laura served as a Sunday School teacher; Bible study leader; choir member; on various committees and was an active member and ex Branch President of the Thornton Branch of the Women's Auxiliary. It is fitting that she spent her twilight years in the place she once helped to support through years of dedicated fundraising. ■



150 ALUMNI AT PINELANDS HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATION DAY

The procession of 150 alumni entered the hall to the lively sounds of the Pinelands High School Marimba Band, followed by a proud moment for an extra special welcome given to four members of the Class of 1956, who returned for their 70th reunion - a first for Pinelands High!

The assembly started off with a rousing rendition of Paradise Road by the PHS Jazz Band and soloists Zara Atherton, Uzair Effendi and Lutholwethu Gxavu.

Principal and alumnus, Mr Graham Sayer (Class of 1996), welcomed the alumni, and then spoke about current social media challenges facing the school, while also

celebrating the excellent 2025 matric results. He shared a video presentation of the proposed new Maths and Arts Centre, set to replace the Princess Path Prefabs, giving both students and alumni an exciting glimpse of what lies ahead as fundraising continues.

Guest speakers Ms Winona Autagavaia (Class of 2016) and Mr Batandwa Ntsebeza (Class of 2006) delivered meaningful and inspiring addresses.

These were followed by a performance of Emlanjeni by the choir and soloists Lutholwethu Gxavu, Camagu Bangeni and Zamangwane Mhlungu.

Mr Sayer then introduced the 2026 Alumni Honour Award recipient, Mr Keith Helfet (Class of 1963). The assembly concluded with the traditional singing of the school song. Standing in the Kent Hall, united in song with alumni from across the generations, was a truly special moment! Afterwards, prefects led alumni on tours of the school, sparking many memories, while those who were celebrating milestone reunions continued their gatherings over the weekend.

(Keith Helfet featured in the March 2025 edition of the Muse. See previous editions at www.pinelandsdirectory.co.za.)

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PINELANDER

Batandwa Ntsebeza moved to Pinelands with his family in 1997. He attended Pinehurst Primary and Pinelands High School, where he cultivated his passion for soccer. He still dreams of great success for the national Bafana Bafana soccer team and how Pinelands could be part of that endeavour. Speaking at the recent Pinelands High School Celebration Day (formerly Founders Day), Batandwa described his powerful connection to Pinelands.



From left: Batandwa Ntsebeza (class of 2006); Winona Autagavaia (class of 2016), Graham Sayer (PHS Principal); Keith Helfet (class of 1963 and recipient of Alumni Honour Award).

“ Speaking at Founders’ Day at Pinelands High School recently offered me a moment to reflect on the values that shaped my upbringing in this community. Standing on the stage in the Kent Hall felt like a full-circle moment. It does not feel long ago that I was seated in that very same hall as a pupil at our valedictory assembly in 2006. To return nearly twenty years later, this time addressing learners, alumni, parents, and fellow Pinelanders, was both surreal and grounding. It served as a reminder of how enduring and powerful one’s connection to this community can be.

In my address, I reflected on three qualities that, in my view, define what it means to be a Pinelander: resilience, diversity, and a strong sense of community.

Resilience is something I first came to understand on the sports fields. It is built through challenge — in moments that

require discipline, consistency, and the ability to respond when things do not go as planned. Over time, resilience becomes less about reacting to difficulty and more about developing the steadiness to navigate it.

Diversity has long been one of Pinelands’ defining strengths. From the early 1990s, as South Africa itself underwent profound transformation, this community embraced change in ways that shaped the experiences of many young people who passed through its schools. It created an environment where difference was not simply acknowledged, but engaged, where learners could grow through exposure to perspectives beyond their own.

Sense of Community

And perhaps most significantly, there is the sense of community. There is something distinctive about the way Pinelanders

remain connected across generations, across professions, and across different parts of the country and the world. It is a community that continues to show up for itself, that takes pride in its shared spaces, and that understands the importance of investing in those who come next.

The qualities I’ve spoken about: resilience, diversity, and community, are what define being a Pinelander. They are values worth being proud of. And more than that, they are values worth sharing beyond this suburb. In many ways, Pinelands reflects what South Africa aspires to be.

We are not perfect, but collectively, there is a willingness to include, to grow, and to be the change we want to see in the world. If we continue to carry these values with us — wherever life takes us — then the legacy of this place will live on, not just in memory, but in action. ”

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Front from left:

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The house is not just an asset — and that's exactly the problem

We've lost count of how many divorce conversations reach the same emotional standoff: "I don't care what it takes, I'm keeping the family home." Sometimes the children are still young, and the argument is rooted in stability and schooling. But often the children have finished school, moved out, and started lives of their own. In those moments, the home stops being a line item on a balance sheet and becomes a symbol: of identity, belonging, and the life that was meant to continue.

Divorce is a grief process as much as it is a legal restructuring. But it is also our job to name the risk plainly: in many settlements, keeping the family home is the decision that quietly undermines the next decade of financial security and this is not because property is "bad", but because the wrong property, at the wrong time, with the wrong affordability profile, can become a financial trap.

Why the family home becomes the hill to die on

The emotional drivers are understandable. A home can represent continuity when everything else is changing. For some, it feels like the last remaining piece of control. For many spouses, particularly those who were not the primary earners, the home is also proof that their contribution mattered. Then there is fear of downsizing, of moving into a smaller space that feels like failure, of leaving familiar neighbours, or of stepping into a new life in a home that feels foreign. None of that makes the decision irrational. The problem is simply that emotion tends to focus on what the home meant, whereas a settlement should focus on what the home will cost.

Asset-rich, cash-poor

A primary residence is usually an illiquid, high-maintenance asset. It does not generate income, and it demands ongoing cash flow. We often see one spouse negotiate hard to keep the house, give up liquid investments or retirement assets to do so, and then discover that the monthly running costs are now funded from a single income — or from maintenance that may not be guaranteed forever. The house may look like 'security' on paper, but in practice,

it can become a monthly liquidity stressor.

The real costs are not just the bond

Besides the bond, it's important to bear in mind that a home has a long list of costs that need to be factored in: municipal rates and utilities, insurance, security, garden and pool maintenance, levies (if applicable), and general wear and tear. There are also high-cost items that tend to arrive at the worst possible time such as roofs, plumbing, damp, electrical work, geysers, boundary walls, paving, gutters, and appliances.

Too much house, too little life

Once children have left, many family homes are simply too large. Over time, the house begins to dictate decisions: you work longer to afford it, delay retirement contributions, avoid taking time off, postpone medical expenses, and cut back on experiences and flexibility — all to keep an asset that is not improving your quality of life in proportion to its cost.

The forced-sale risk

The most financially damaging outcome is not keeping the house, but keeping the house until you are forced to sell. A major repair hits, maintenance is delayed, the property shows poorly, and the sale happens under stress, often below market value and at an inopportune time. Many people also describe selling later as losing the home twice: first through divorce, and then through financial necessity.

When a client insists on keeping the home, we often ask a question that shifts the conversation from emotion to outcomes: If you keep the house, what are you giving up to afford it and are you comfortable paying that price for the next ten years? The true cost is what you stop funding: retirement contributions, emergency reserves, medical contingencies, children's support, and the freedom to make decisions without fear.

There are cases where keeping the family home is the right decision - but if it means being cashflow-poor, investment light and permanently anxious — it is a liability. In such cases, the more prudent choice is to release the property that anchored the old life and secure a home that fits the life ahead. ■



Grace Primary School

MUSIC AND COMMUNITY SHINE AT SUNSET CONCERT

Pinelands High School's recent Sunset Concert, held on 25 March 2026, was a wonderful celebration of music and community.

Families, students and guests gathered on the school's front lawns, enjoying picnics and a relaxed outdoor atmosphere as a range of talented young musicians took to the stage. The programme featured

performances by Pinehurst Primary, Pinelands North Primary, Grace Primary, Cannons Creek Independent School, Pinelands Primary and Pinelands High School.

This sold-out event was a wonderful reminder of the important role music plays in school life and in bringing communities together. Pinelands High School is grateful

to the staff, music teachers, students, volunteers and support teams whose hard work made this evening of togetherness possible. The Sunset Concert was a wonderful celebration of young talent and the strong sense of community that makes Pinelands so special.

Photos by Zeeshan Sykes and Cannons Creek



Cannons Creek School



Pinehurst Primary School



Pinelands High School



Pinelands Primary School



Pinelands High School



Pinelands North Primary School

BREAKING BARRIERS: SHONAQUIP VISITS PNPS



Shonaquip demonstrating various types of wheelchairs



On Monday, 13 April, Pinelands North Primary School had the privilege of welcoming Shonaquip, a pioneering non-profit organisation dedicated to advancing mobility and disability inclusion. The Shonaquip team used engaging interactive demonstrations, to encourage learners to look beyond the wheelchair and connect with the individual. The session guided learners to reflect on empathy, dignity and respect in their everyday interactions. Simple yet powerful messages stood out:

- speak directly to the person
- recognise a wheelchair as part of personal space
- always ask before offering assistance

These lessons equipped learners with greater confidence and understanding. A particularly proud moment for the PNPS community was the acknowledgement by Shonaquip of the school as an accessible and inclusive environment. The school's infrastructure was praised for supporting independence and ensuring that all who enter the school can move with dignity. The visit was a meaningful reminder of the importance of inclusion in action. At PNPS, every learner is valued and opportunities like these help to nurture a culture of understanding and belonging. True inclusion begins when we see the person first, listen with respect and act with kindness, because dignity is not given, it is recognised in every interaction.

HELEN KELLER SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

As part of the Helen Keller Society community outreach and occupational therapy programme, the Society runs a sponsored knitting and crocheting group for residents. The group offers social interaction, creativity, and a sense of purpose, while making handmade items for those less fortunate. They are looking for a volunteer to assist the group every second Wednesday from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm, as well as a few more volunteer knitters and crocheters to join this meaningful initiative. If you are interested, please email Glenis at volunteers@helenkeller.org.za.



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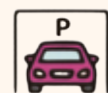
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By Nina Timm

Cook, teacher,
blogger and
author of *Easy
Cooking from
Nina's Kitchen* and
*Maklike Etes uit
Nina se Kombuis!*

Gluten-free Biltong Quiche

Makes one 23 cm quiche

For the crust

500 ml almond flour
125 ml finely grated Parmesan cheese
a pinch of cayenne pepper

1 egg

30 ml melted butter

For the filling

500 ml Full Fat Yogurt

250 ml strong cheddar cheese – grated

5 eggs

salt and pepper – just remember the
biltong and cheese are already salty

400 ml sliced beef biltong

1 large onion – chopped and caramelized
in a little butter

fresh herb of your choice

Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

For the crust

1. Place all the ingredients for the crust in a food processor and blitz until it just comes together.
2. Grease a loose bottom quiche pan and press the almond mixture into the pan.
3. Chill in the fridge for a few minutes.

For the filling

1. Mix all the ingredients, except the biltong and pour into the pastry case.
2. Scatter the caramelized onion and 1/2 of the biltong over the egg custard mixture.
3. Bake in a preheated oven to golden perfection.
4. Scatter the other half of the biltong on the quiche.
5. Serve with fresh rocket and a fresh tomato salad.



Is gluten-free for everyone?

What is gluten?

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley and rye. It is often used as a binding agent and is sometimes found as a hidden additive in many products such as soy sauce and ice-cream. Read product labels!

Who needs to follow a gluten-free diet?

Gluten-free diets are primary for people with gluten related disorders and are followed as a medical need and not as a choice. Excluding gluten from their diet reduces digestive symptoms such as stomach pain and bloating.

Some people who may not be gluten sensitive say that they feel better when eating a gluten-free diet, but the benefit could be due to cutting out food made from highly refined carbohydrates from the diet, such as biscuits and cakes. When opting for

healthy foods such as vegetables, fruit and lean protein it becomes easier to manage weight and sugar levels.

Are there risks to a gluten-free diet?

One needs to take care when eliminating gluten entirely from one's diet if it is not medically advised. Including whole grains (gluten) in one's diet has numerous benefits from the micro-nutrients, vitamin B, iron, magnesium and fibre – aiding in the control of blood sugar swings and managing cholesterol levels.

For those who follow a gluten-free diet fibre can be eaten in the form of beans, lentils, nuts, seeds and gluten-free whole grains. Other foods that are gluten-free are fruits and vegetables, eggs, fresh meat, fish and poultry, most dairy, white rice, buckwheat, corn, arrowroot and millet.

If you do not have a dietary requirement for gluten-free products, you can make this cheesy pastry.

Cheesy Pastry Ingredients

Place the following in your food processor or mix with your hands.:

200 ml flour

200 ml grated strong cheddar cheese

60 ml or 4 T soft butter

1 t dry mustard

Process until the dough comes together. Refrigerate until you are ready to make the quiche.

Use the pastry as per the almond flour pastry in the gluten-free recipe.



Welcome!

To Our New Pinelands Team



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50

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Sharon & Christo Van Rensburg

Sharon, deeply rooted in Pinelands, returned to the area after completing her journalism studies in the United Kingdom to raise her family in the community she knows so well. Inspired by her late father's passion for property, she has built an outstanding 35-year career in real estate, earning numerous awards and a respected reputation in the area.

Christo complements this with a strong educational and management background, along with a natural ability to connect with people. His proven track record and client-focused approach have made him a trusted name in the Pinelands neighbourhood.

With over 50 years of combined experience and an established presence in the community, Sharon and Christo bring a wealth of knowledge and professionalism. We are delighted to welcome them to the Lew Geffen Sotheby's International Realty family and look forward to their continued success in Pinelands.

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