

Henley Herald



www.henleyherald.blog — For the community, by the community — April 2026

"It's shows a government that leaves no room for corruption."

From Councillor Tony Dickinson
Excerpts from Mayor Peter Teixeira's executive summary on the Mayoral report 2025:
"Midvaal operates within the broader South African context, where macro-economic challenges such as crime, infrastructure decay and energy insecurity pose serious risks to local government performance. The high prevalence of electricity cable theft and the recurring impact of load shedding have cost the municipality millions in repairs. The cost of repairs and maintenance now exceeds R190 million annually, as we work tirelessly to keep basic services functioning despite ongoing strain on our infrastructure.

"The issue of illegal dumping remains a frustrating and costly challenge. Due to the

struggling economy, we are seeing a decline in our collection rate. While collections are not at the levels we have consistently maintained in previous years, we continue to do more with the resources we receive, ensuring that services to our residents are not compromised.

"Despite the numerous challenges we face as a municipality, we remain committed to serving our people with diligence and continue to serve as a beacon of good governance.

Midvaal Local Municipality is now a proud holder of eleven (12) consecutive clean audits. The municipality was audited on its Annual Financial Statements, Annual Performance Report and Compliance with Legislation. This audit outcome once again

affirms our commitment to strict financial management and discipline. It demonstrates that we are managing public funds effectively. It shows a government that leaves no room for corruption.

The Auditor-General also commended the municipality, noting that we are investing sufficiently in maintaining our infrastructure to ensure sustainable and uninterrupted service delivery across the Midvaal region. This achievement is no accident; it reflects our deliberate efforts not only to deliver quality services but also to stimulate local economic growth. We are committed to creating a conducive environment that attracts investment, recognising that well maintained infrastructure is a cornerstone of this goal. Midvaal continues to position itself as the investor destination of Gauteng, a region where economic growth translates into real opportunities

and jobs for our people. We are an institution that places a strong emphasis on accountability and transparency.

"One of our key mayoral commitments is listening to the people we serve. We give effect to this through ongoing public engagement processes, including the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Our public representatives are continuously on the ground, engaging directly with residents to understand the challenges they face. We have further strengthened this approach through the introduction of the Mayoral Imbizo, which is designed to reach communities in peripheral areas who may not ordinarily be able to attend formal meetings. We have also conducted several surveys to better understand residents' needs, experiences and expectations, and to assess the quality of the services we provide."



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HENLEY HERALD

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SEDIBENG U/18B JUNIORS STRIKE GOLD IN THRILLING NATIONAL FINAL

Sedibeng Bowls is immensely proud to celebrate the outstanding achievement of our Under-18B team, who secured the gold medal at the Bowls South Africa Junior National Championships held in Bloemfontein at the end of March. Competing against the country's best young talent, this remarkable team demonstrated resilience, skill, and composure well beyond their years.

The victorious team comprised Skip Nathan Wilkinson (Henley on Klip Bowling Club), Third Tanya Fourie (Sasolburg Bowling Club), Second Jessie Wilkinson (Henley on Klip Bowling Club), and Lead Barend Steyn Jnr (Vanderbijlpark Town Bowling Club). Their journey to gold was nothing short of impressive, winning five out of six sectional matches to advance to the knockout stages, where they continued their dominant form through the quarter-finals and semi-finals.

The final, which was live streamed on YouTube, delivered a spectacle that had supporters on the edge of their seats. The team burst out of the blocks with a commanding 5-0 lead on the opening end, but the match quickly turned into a tense contest as their opponents fought back to take the lead. Heading into the final end trailing 10-12, Sedibeng needed at least two

shots to stay alive—or three to claim victory. In a moment of brilliance and determination, the team delivered an incredible five-shot end to seal a dramatic 15-12 win and secure the championship title.

This achievement builds on an already impressive junior record. Playing together in the Under-15A team, Nathan Wilkinson, Tanya Fourie, Lewies Badenhorst, and Barend Steyn earned bronze medals at the same national championships in both 2023 and 2024—laying a strong foundation for their continued success at a higher level.

This triumph is even more special as it marks the first year competing at Under-18 level for Nathan, Jessie, and Barend, who have stepped up from the Under-15 ranks with exceptional maturity. Tanya and Jessie have also previously represented Sedibeng at the Bowls South Africa Mixed Pairs, further highlighting the depth of talent within our district.

On behalf of Sedibeng Bowls, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to these young champions. Your achievement is a testament to your hard work and dedication, and you have made your clubs and your district incredibly proud. The future of bowls in Sedibeng is undoubtedly bright.
— Lauren Coetzee, President, Sedibeng Bowls



from left to right (Skip) Nathan Wilkinson, (Second) Jessie Wilkinson, (Junior Convenor) Barend Steyn (SNR), (Lead) Barend Steyn (JNR), (Third) Tanya Fourie, Photo Courtesy: Sedibeng Bowls

Henley JKA Dojo Represents at Gauteng Championships

The 2026 Gauteng Karate Championships showcased the province's finest young talent, with local athletes excelling in both kata and kumite. Kata is the demonstration of choreographed patterns of movement, emphasizing precision, technique, and discipline, while kumite is the sparring aspect of karate, testing skill, speed, and strategy in competition.

All competitors who placed in the top eight earned their Gauteng colours and will proudly represent the province at the National Championships on 15-16 May 2026. Success at Nationals will open the door to the prestigious Indo Pacific Cup

(IPC) in Mauritius, taking place from 20-28 September 2026, where athletes will compete against the best from across the region.

Among the standout performances were:

- Juandré Dalziel (13) – Gold in Kata and Gold in Kumite
- Olwethu Nkabiti (10) – Gold in Kata and Bronze in Kumite
- Mpendulo Mahlangu (13) – Gold in Kata and Gold in Kumite
- Riley Peper (14) – Gold in Kata and Bronze in Kumite
- Alec Peper (11) – Friday: Gold in Kata, Silver in Kumite; Saturday: Bronze in Kata, Top

8 in Kumite (qualified)
• Kaelo Motlhamme (14) – Qualified in Kata and Silver in Kumite

These young athletes have not only brought pride to Gauteng but have also set their sights on representing South Africa on the international stage later this year. Their dedication, discipline, and determination embody the spirit of karate and inspire the next generation of martial artists.

Contact Tarien: 079 863 4831
Email: prinsloo01@gmail.com
Facebook: Henley JKA Karate (<https://www.facebook.com/HenleyJKA>).

Why Non-Valued Shower Enclosures Often Lead to Bigger Problems

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As specialists working with glass every day, we at Glass & Mirror Midvaal / Meyerton see the same situation far too often: * A homeowner chooses a non-valued shower enclosure to save money, only to face leaks, repairs, and safety issues shortly after installation.

What seems like a bargain at first can quickly turn into a costly and frustrating problem.

A shower enclosure might look like a simple structure, but it is one of the most used and most exposed parts of any bathroom. When the materials or installation are not up to standard, problems appear quickly, and they usually get worse over time.

Here's what every homeowner should understand before choosing a non-valued enclosure or attempting a DIY installation.

1. Weak Structure and Moving Parts That Fail

The most common issue with non-valued enclosures is that the structure simply isn't strong enough to handle daily use.

Corroding hardware:

Hinges, handles, and brackets made from low-grade metal rust quickly in humid bathrooms. Once corrosion begins, hinges can stiffen, loosen, or even break apart inside. When that happens, the door can suddenly fail — both inconvenient and dangerous.

Doors that sag or stick:

Thin frames and weak hinges lose their shape over time. As the structure bends or loosens, the door becomes misaligned. This leads to a door that drags, won't close properly, or needs to be lifted every time you use it.

Sliding doors that jam:

Non-valued sliding systems use basic tracks that collect dirt easily. Over time, the rollers jam, squeak, or jump off the track. Once the track is damaged, the entire system often needs to be replaced — and this can lead to glass breakage or sudden glass failure.

2. High Maintenance and Poor Appearance Over Time

A shower enclosure should stay clear, clean, and easy to maintain. Unfortunately, non-valued materials age quickly and require far more effort to keep looking decent.

Imported units also create another challenge: replacement parts are often difficult to source in South Africa.

Glass that becomes permanently cloudy:

Lower-quality glass usually has no protective coating. Hard water and soap scum bond to the surface, leaving a dull, etched appearance that no cleaner can remove.

Seals that crack and peel:

Rubber seals on non-valued units often yellow, shrink, or break down within a few years. When seals fail, leaks begin, and once water escapes, it can damage floors, cupboards, and walls.

More places for mold to grow:

Framed non-valued enclosures have many small gaps and grooves where water collects. These damp areas become ideal breeding grounds for mold and mildew, which can affect both

hygiene and health.

3. Safety and Installation Concerns

Safety is one of the most important reasons to choose a quality enclosure.

Thinner, more fragile glass:

While most enclosures use tempered glass, non-valued units often use the thinnest legal selection to sell at a "bargain" price. Thin glass is more likely to shatter from sudden temperature changes or accidental bumps.

Poor fitment:

Many bathrooms are not perfectly square. Off-the-shelf kits don't account for this, leading to gaps, leaks, and unstable installations. DIY installers often struggle to correct these issues, which can compromise both safety and durability.

The Real Cost of "Saving Money"

A non-valued enclosure may save money upfront, but leaks, repairs, and replacements can cost far more in the long run. Investing in a well-built enclosure and having it installed professionally ensures better safety, easier cleaning, and a bathroom that stays beautiful for years.

If you want an assessment of your shower space, we can help you plan a clear and practical blueprint tailored to your bathroom or shower system options:

- * Frameless
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What you need to know about Pediatric Physiotherapy

Pediatric physiotherapy still falls within our four years of university training and remains part of our scope of practice, the only difference is, this is more fun! With kiddies, we as

therapists get to behave as a kid again, and use toys and play therapy to achieve our goals.

Please note that sensory stimulation/integration falls

within Occupational therapy scope of practice, we can refer to an occupational therapist when the need presents. Any birth defects, disabilities or delays in gross motor development can be addressed through physiotherapy.

Remember we are first line practitioners, so if parents want to bring an infant/toddler/child in for physiotherapy, we do not need a doctor's referral. We perform full evaluations, from observing the natural movement and behavior, to assessing reflexes, muscle tone and strength, range of movement, developmental milestones, etc.

From our evaluation we can make recommendations and referrals to other health care professionals, and we can address the outcomes of the physical evaluation. No one ask during a job interview when did you start crawling or by when did you potty train? But did you know for instance, crawling assist with cognitive development which later plays a role in mathematics in school?

To most parents it seems like an achievement if their infant can walk before they could crawl, it is not necessarily wrong, but crawling is very necessary and need to happen within the first 1000 days of life. Muscle tone for instance, plays a role in how your child would sit at a desk and pay attention in class, hence the lower the muscle tone, the more slouching, leading to short attention span in class.

Early intervention is very important for the best possible

outcome and quality of life, not only for the infant/toddler/child, but also for the family. One of my favorite treatment interventions are chest physiotherapy, because there is instant results. Any infant/toddler/child with respiratory issues can be treated with nebulizing, percussions, vibrations, postural drainage, and with the infants/toddlers who cannot cough out secretions, we can suction. All treatment interventions need to be followed up with homework given to the parents – home exercise programme and advice, for the best possible outcome.

Again, please avoid Dr. Google when trying to apply therapy at home to avoid seeing a health care professional. We do not study for four years, attend continuous professional development courses (30 points per year), for nothing. We know where to place our hands on the patient's body, which muscles to stimulate and how to progress the intervention. Our hands are trained to sense/feel muscle contractions and what to do accordingly.

Remember RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) season will start soon, do not kiss babies that are not yours! Consult with a physiotherapist that can assist with the suctioning if a baby's nose is blocked and cannot feed. Parents, put aside your own insecurities and consult health care professionals sooner rather than later.

Your friendly neighborhood physio, Mari Greyling.

What started off as a love story became a gluten-free journey



Gluten Free PATISSERIE

From the Gluten Free Patisserie Shortly after our wedding Hannecke's health began to decline. After much investigation, a severe intolerance to wheat and gluten was revealed. Overnight the kitchen had to change. No more shared toasted sandwiches for lunch, or a quick pie for supper. No more English muffins from Woolies for breakfast or biscuits at tea. When the new mall

opened there was hope for more options, however only limited choices arrived and after one too many biscuits and bread that crumbled as we held them and tasted like cardboard, we had to do something.

Not one to give up easily though Nicholas set out to see what he could make. Speaking with Dr. Johanna Alkema (his mother-in-law) who also suffered from wheat intolerance, she graciously shared a gluten-free flour blend she developed over the years and he set to work. He started experimenting with flapjacks, lava cakes and pies. Inspired and equally determined, Hannecke also started making scones, ginger biscuits and loafs of fresh

bread.

Realizing that quality gluten free goods were in short supply, the idea of Gluten Free Patisserie was born. Having lived most of his life in the village, Nicholas was familiar with the various wonderful markets Henley is blessed with and we decided to set up shop there. The first of which was on the 5th of April where we also had a few raffles of free goodies and vouchers for our valued clients' next order. We will be sure to attend many more in Henley so keep an eye for our next announced market days and our small stall which will be sure to grow!

— Continued on Page 10



A New Chapter Begins: King's School Midvaal Opens Its Doors

From The King's School Midvaal January 2026 marked a milestone for education in our community with the official opening of King's School Midvaal, the newest member of the King's Education Group. Rooted in a vision of excellence and faith-driven learning, the school welcomed its very first Grade 1 and Grade 2 learners this year, beginning a journey that promises to grow steadily year by year.

With small class sizes limited to 20 students per class, King's School Midvaal ensures that every child receives the

individual attention they deserve. This intimate learning environment fosters not only academic growth but also the nurturing of character, creativity, and confidence. Teachers are able to know each child personally, guiding them through their early school years with care and encouragement. The school's leadership has set a clear path for growth: expanding annually, adding new grades as the children progress. This steady development reflects a commitment to building a strong foundation while maintaining the quality and care that families expect from the

King's Education Group. The vision is not simply to grow in numbers, but to grow in excellence, creating a school that will serve the Midvaal community for generations to come.

As part of the respected King's Education Group, King's School Midvaal benefits from shared resources, expertise, and a legacy of educational excellence. Parents can be assured that their children are part of a community that values both academic achievement and holistic development. The group's emphasis on faith, integrity, and service ensures that learners are not only prepared for academic success but also equipped to make a positive impact in the world around them.

Importantly, King's School Midvaal follows the CAPS curriculum (Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement), the national standard set by the Department of Basic Education. This ensures that learners receive a structured, high-quality education aligned with South Africa's academic requirements, while still benefiting from the

school's unique faith-centred and nurturing approach. By combining CAPS with small classes and dedicated teachers, the school offers both compliance and creativity—giving children the best of both worlds.

Enrolments are open, with space available for families seeking a school that combines high standards with a warm, faith-centred environment. With its limited class sizes, places are filling quickly, making early application essential for those who wish to join this exciting new journey. The opening of King's School Midvaal is more than just the launch of a new institution—it is the beginning of a legacy. A place where children will grow year by year, where families will find partnership and support, and where the Midvaal community will see the seeds of hope and learning flourish. The school stands as a beacon of opportunity, inviting parents and learners to be part of something new, something lasting, and something deeply rooted in values that matter.

Feel free to contact us on: 082 921 4666 or Whatsapp: 074 835 1739 Photo Courtesy: The King's School Midvaal

Henley on Klip Lions Club

The Henley on Klip Lions Club held our first eye clinic for the year on the 7th March at Meyerton Town Hall.

Eye Clinic provides free eye testing and glasses at a reduced rate to the community.

We had an overwhelming response and were able to serve over 80 people. A big thank you to the students from UJ that do

the testing, our Optometrist Lion Kelly who facilitates and the Lion members for volunteering their assistance.

Our next Eye Clinic is being held on the 2nd May at the Meyerton Town Hall.

We have also recently donated 4 benches to a local primary school as one of our projects as part of our WAM fund donation.

The school offers a feeding program to some of their learners in need. The new benches will allow for the learners to enjoy their lunch in a comfy and dignified environment.

We would once again like to thank the community for all your support. If you are interested in becoming a Lion, please get in touch with Chelsea: 0845330423





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Unlock Your Vitality: Discover the Power of Mindful Mobility in Henley on Klip



By Michelle Swart
Movement is more than just exercise; it is the fundamental language of our nervous system and the primary way we process our internal world. In our modern life, it is remarkably easy to fall into a state of physical and energetic "stagnation"—that heavy, stiff feeling that settles in after long hours of sitting, repetitive stress, or the weight of daily responsibilities. To combat this, a new series of Community Mobility Classes has launched at 5 Taplow Street, designed to help residents shake off the rust and rediscover their natural "Inner Flow."

Releasing Stagnation and Finding Flow

At the heart of these sessions is the concept of releasing stagnation. From a physiological perspective, stagnation often manifests as poor circulation, joint stiffness, and a "foggy" mind. When we stop moving dynamically, our tissues become dehydrated and our energy levels dip. By engaging in intentional, rhythmic movement, we stimulate the lymphatic system—the body's natural drainage—and encourage fresh blood flow to areas that have become dormant.

The Emotional Body: Moving Through What We Hold
However, stagnation isn't just physical. We often forget that the body is a storage vessel for our experiences. Stress, past tensions, and "stuck" emotions frequently manifest as physical armor—tight shoulders, a clenched jaw, or a heavy chest. If we don't move these energies through the body, they become part of our posture. These mobility classes focus on the "vibrational" side of health, using gentle movement to tap into these stored tensions. By

creating a safe space for the body to move without judgment, we

allow these old emotional patterns to surface and release. It is about shifting from a state of "holding" to a state of "allowing," letting the body exhale the stress it has been carrying for years.

The Science of Neuro-Stability What sets these classes apart is the focus on neuro-stability.

Most of us were taught that if a muscle feels tight, we should simply pull on it until it lets go. Modern neuroscience tells a different story: tightness is often a "brake" applied by the brain when it perceives a lack of stability or a potential threat. By practicing neuro-stability, we provide the nervous system with high-quality sensory input to prove the body is safe. When the brain feels secure, it naturally releases that protective tension. The result is not just temporary flexibility, but a lasting sense of coordination and ease. We aren't just stretching muscles; we are retraining the brain to move without "background noise."

Joining the Community

These classes are designed to be inclusive and accessible. Whether you are a senior looking to maintain independence, a busy professional needing to decompress, or someone recovering from minor aches, the movements are adaptable to all levels.

When: Every Wednesday and Friday at 9:00 AM.

Where: The Hall, at Henley River Retirement Village, 109 Ewelme Rd (new location, everyone welcome)

What to Bring: Wear comfortable clothing, and bring a yoga mat, a water bottle, and an open, curious mind.

About the Instructor
 These sessions are led by **Michelle Swart, owner of Curious Calm Massage Studio & Wellness Centre. With over 20 years of experience in the health industry, Michelle is passionate about helping the Henley community find balance through movement and neuro-stability.**

For more information or to book your spot, contact Michelle at 0664688098



Members from Voces Libres Chamber Choir with Argentine Trio, Saúl Zaks (conductor), Martín Palmeri (Composer), and Joaquín Benítez Kitegroski (bandoneón player)

From the Choir
The Voces Libres Chamber Choir participated in this year's Mzansi Conductors' Convention, held at Cape Town City Hall, as part of the opening performance. Voces Libres Chamber Choir were joined by the voices from Rhodes University Choir and University of Kwa-Zulu Natal



Moments captured during the performance of the Misa a Buenos Aires (Misatango) in Cape Town earlier this month, *photo courtesy: The Choir*

VOCES LIBRES CHAMBER CHOIR PERFORMS AT MZANZI CONDUCTORS' CONVENTION

Choir, as well as the string section of the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra. The opening performance featured a historic African debut of the Misa a Buenos Aires (Misatango), a work that combines elements of the traditional mass with Argentine tango, composed exactly 30 years ago.

The performance was led by the Argentine trio, conductor

Saúl Zaks, with the composer Martín

Palmeri present and accompanying on the piano, alongside Grammy Award-winning bandoneón player Joaquín Benítez Kitegroski.

The collaboration provided singers with the opportunity to perform the work under the original creator of the piece and an internationally recognised composer.

Eleven members of Voces Libres participated in the opening performance, which was attended by the Executive Mayor of Cape Town. The event brought together choirs and musicians from across South Africa and beyond. The convention took place during a period of extreme heat in Cape Town, increasing the demands of the performance environment.

Under the direction of Dr Christelle Engelbrecht, Voces Libres continues to expand as a dynamic force in the choral world, fostering both artistic excellence and a strong sense of community among its members.

More than just a performance, the experience marked a significant milestone for the choir, providing an opportunity to connect with global choral leaders, sharpen their skills, and proudly represent not only our community but also our country on the international stage.
For auditions to join Voces Libres Chamber Choir, contact: 071 951 5779.

PUBLIC NOTICE

27/03/2026



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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: 2026-2027 DRAFT Integrated Development Plan (IDP) BUDGET & TARIFFS

Notice is hereby given in terms of Chapter 4 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000 read with Section 22 of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, Act 56 of 2003, that the Midvaal Local Municipality has tabled the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) Budget, and Tariffs for the year 2026-2027 on 26 March 2026.

Any person who wishes to view the tabled IDP, and amended tariffs, may use the QR Codes below:

2026/2027 DRAFT BUDGET BREAKDOWN OF OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET

OPERATING REVENUE BUDGET PER SOURCE	R	%
Property Rates	440 448 203	20%
Electricity	775 706 003	34%
Waste Management	80 561 344	4%
Wastewater Management	79 441 786	4%
Water	354 055 714	16%
Operational Transfers Monetary	227 786 986	10%
Capital Transfers Monetary	115 231 511	5%
Fines, Penalties & Forfeits	61 979 615	3%
Interest	102 621 342	5%
Operational Revenue	17 857 616	1%
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	2 255 690 120	100%

CAPITAL BUDGET BY FUNDING SOURCE	R	%
Capital Leases	24 100 000	14%
Capital Operational Revenue	41 670 000	24%
Capital Monetary INEP	13 858 000	8%
Capital Monetary MIG	36 522 000	21%
Capital Monetary WSIG	45 403 000	27%
Capital Monetary Developers Contributions	3 000 000	2%
Capital Monetary DAC	5 400 000	3%
Functional Fire Rescue Grant	1 000 000	1%
TOTAL CAPITAL	170 953 000	100%

OPERATING EXPENDITURE BY CATEGORY	R	%
Salaries and Allowances	494 598 787	22%
Councillor Allowances	16 443 248	1%
Contracted Services	244 654 573	11%
Operational Cost	141 443 565	6%
Inventory	271 872 174	12%
Bulk Purchases	695 588 951	31%
Debt Impairment	200 615 537	9%
Depreciation	130 333 072	6%
Interest, transfers & subsidies	33 352 076	1%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	2 228 901 983	100%

RATES AND SERVICE	PROPOSED INCREASE
Refuse	7.50%
Sanitation	6.50%
Water	10.00%
Electricity	10.00%
Property Rates	6.5%
TOTAL CAPITAL	100%



Scan here to view the Draft budget & Tariffs

Scan here to view the Draft IDP



SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

PENSIONERS REBATE

- Residential property owners who are over 60 years of age, who are both permanent occupiers and the owners of the property. The aggregate household income should not exceed the maximum of 4 times old age SASSA grant per month (approximately R9 400 will receive a rebate of 100% of their property rates for the first R1 300 000 of their property value).
- Residential property owners who are over 60 years of age, who are both permanent occupiers and the owners of the property. The aggregate household income does not exceed the maximum of 5 times old age SASSA grant per month (approximately R11 700) will receive a rebate of 50% of their property rates for the first R1 300 000 of their property value (i.e., maximum of R1 000 000 after the first R300 000 residential reduction has been applied).
- Property owners with more than one property will not qualify for the rebate.
- Once the application for Pensioner rebate is approved, the outstanding debt will be written off as a once off benefit.

- Once indigent application is approved, the applicant will receive 6kL free water as well as 50kWh free electricity on prepaid meters.
- Free sanitation and refuse removal is applicable to registered indigents.
- Approved indigents with a property value not exceeding R1.5m will be exempted from property rates.
- Approved indigents with a property value exceeding R1.5m will only be exempted from property rates for a period not exceeding 12 months, only one application will be allowed.

POOR HOUSEHOLDS

- The aggregate household income does not exceed the maximum of 4 times old age SASSA grant per month (approximately R9 400) will receive a rebate of 50% of their property rates with a property value not exceeding R1.5m.
- Customers with a property value exceeding R1.5m whose aggregate household income does not exceed the maximum of 5 times old age pension per month (approximately R11 700) will receive a rebate of 25% of their property rates.
- Once poor household application is approved, the outstanding balance including handovers as at date of approval will be written off only once off.

INDIGENT SUBSIDY

- Any household earning less than three times maximum of old age SASSA grant (approximately R7 050) qualifies to be registered as an indigent.
- Must be the registered owner and reside there permanently.
- May not own more than one property.

Comments and input can be submitted to budget@midvaal.gov.za, idp@midvaal.gov.za, or My Midvaal App under survey tab. Physical submissions can be submitted to the libraries, Rates hall, or Office of the Speaker, no later than 08 May 2026.

Yours in service excellence.

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Naturally Debbie - When Food Stops Feeling Safe: A Growing Health Challenge – and a Natural Way Forward

By Debbie Firbank

Food has always been about more than nourishment. It is how we celebrate, connect, and show care. Around a shared table, meals bring comfort and a sense of belonging.

Yet for many people today, that experience is quietly changing. Instead of enjoyment, food has become a source of concern. Instead of connection, it can lead to withdrawal. Many individuals now avoid social gatherings, not because they do not want to be there, but because they are unsure what they will be able to eat or how their bodies might respond.

It is increasingly common to hear of people bringing their own meals, declining invitations, or feeling uncomfortable asking about ingredients. Over time, some begin to feel labelled as “difficult,” which can be both isolating and discouraging.

A Common Yet Often Misunderstood Concern
Food sensitivities are more widespread than many realise, affecting a significant portion of the population.

For most people, the signs begin subtly. Digestive discomfort such as bloating or cramping, skin flare-ups after meals, headaches, fatigue, brain fog, sinus congestion, or even joint aches may appear without a clear cause.

At first, these symptoms seem unrelated. But over time, patterns begin to emerge, and food often appears to be the trigger.

Naturally, people begin eliminating foods. Gluten is often the first to go, followed by dairy, eggs, nuts, and more. Yet despite these efforts, symptoms frequently persist. In some cases, they even worsen, leaving individuals with fewer and fewer “safe” foods.

The Missing Piece: A Body Under Strain
One of the most overlooked contributors to this growing

problem is the impact of modern, highly processed diets. Convenient, packaged foods may save time, but they often place strain on the body. Many contain additives and preservatives that can irritate the digestive system, while refined sugars and unhealthy fats may drive inflammation. At the same time, these foods are often lacking in the nutrients needed for repair and resilience. Over time, this can disrupt the delicate balance within the gut.

From a natural health perspective, the gut is far more than a digestive organ. It is a central point of communication between the immune system, the nervous system, and the rest of the body. When this system is supported, the body is adaptable and resilient. When it is overwhelmed, sensitivity can develop.

Looking at the Body, Not Just the Food
Rather than seeing food as the problem, it can be helpful to consider how the body is responding.

When the gut lining becomes compromised, substances that would normally be handled with ease may begin to trigger immune reactions. At the same time, imbalances in gut bacteria can increase inflammation.

The immune system, in its effort to protect, may begin to overreact to harmless foods. Ongoing stress can further heighten this response, keeping the nervous system in a state of alert and amplifying symptoms. In this state, the body is not failing. It is responding to an internal environment that needs support.

Why Avoidance Alone Is Not Enough
Removing trigger foods can offer temporary relief and may be necessary in the short term. However, it does not always address why the body has become sensitive in the first place.

Without supporting gut health, calming inflammation, and restoring balance, many people remain caught in a cycle of restriction. Over time, this can lead to nutritional gaps, anxiety around food, and a loss of enjoyment in eating.

A More Restorative Approach
A more supportive path focuses on rebuilding rather than restricting.

In ethnomedicine, the aim is to work with the body. This includes supporting the gut lining, restoring microbial balance, and helping regulate the immune and nervous systems so they can function more harmoniously. Plant medicine plays a valuable role in this process.

Soothing herbs such as slippery elm and marshmallow root have long been used to calm and protect the digestive tract. Bitter herbs can gently stimulate digestion, while others assist in reducing inflammation and supporting the body’s natural detoxification pathways. Medicinal mushrooms are also gaining recognition for their role in supporting immune balance and gut health. For example, Turkey Tail has been traditionally valued for its ability to support microbial diversity and help the immune system respond more appropriately rather than overreact.

In practice, carefully prepared extracts, such as full-spectrum or spagyric tinctures, are often used to preserve the broader range of beneficial compounds found within the plant, offering a more complete form of

support.

When combined with simple, whole, nutrient-dense foods, these approaches can help create the conditions needed for the body to repair and rebalance.

A Return to Ease and Variety
As the body begins to recover, something encouraging often happens.

Foods that once caused discomfort may gradually become easier to tolerate. Instead of a shrinking list of safe foods, many people begin to experience more variety and freedom in their diet.

This process takes time, but it offers a more sustainable and empowering outcome than long-term avoidance.

Reclaiming the Joy of Food
Food should not be a source of fear. It should nourish both the body and our connection with others.

By reducing reliance on processed foods and supporting the body with whole foods and thoughtfully selected natural remedies, many people are finding their way back to balance.

There is real hope for those who feel restricted or overwhelmed by food sensitivities. With the right support, the body can regain its resilience.

And in doing so, something beautifully simple is restored: The ability to sit at a table, share a meal, and feel at ease once again.

Find Breathe Natural Health at Bass Lake, 1 Sontnell Rd, Henley on Klip, Meyerton, 1961 .



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Dee's Kitchen: SHIRLEIGH'S CHICKEN CACCIATORE

Let us say farewell to summer and welcome in Autumn with comfort food such as my "American" sister Shirleigh Littler Andrews take on Italian-American Chicken Cacciatore with a few tweaks of my own. Shirleigh has brought up two strapping young sons on Staten Island, New York with her brave and handsome husband Jimmy, a New York fireman, involved in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack on New York, and found this particular dish to satisfy the ravenous appetites of her menfolk on some snowy winter evenings.

History of Chicken Cacciatore
Chicken Cacciatore, or "hunter-style chicken," originated in Italy, specifically in the rural areas of central and southern regions. The dish dates back to the Renaissance period, when hunters would prepare meals using ingredients they could find, like wild game, onions, bell peppers, tomatoes, and herbs. Over time, chicken became a popular substitute for game, and the recipe evolved.

Here's an updated recipe for Chicken Cacciatore:

Ingredients:

- 1.5 kg bone-in, skin-on chicken pieces (thighs, drumsticks,

wings)
- 5 slices streaky bacon, cubed
- 2 onions, chopped
- 3 bell peppers (mix of green, red, yellow), sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 can (400g) crushed Italian tomatoes
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 cup mushrooms, unchopped
- 1 punnet cherry tomatoes
- 2 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 cup chicken stock
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 cup Chianti or similar red wine
- 1/2 cup pitted green olives
- 2 tbsp capers, rinsed and drained
- Himalayan or kosher salt
- Ground black pepper
- Dash of red pepper flakes
- Lemon zest
- Fresh parsley, chopped
- Parmesan cheese, grated (optional)
- Flour, corn flour, Himalayan or kosher salt, and ground black pepper (optional)

Method:

1. Sauté bacon in skillet until crispy. Remove bacon, set aside. Coat chicken pieces with flour, salt, and pepper if preferred, or add directly to skillet to brown. Add to skillet and brown chicken pieces. Remove chicken, set aside.

2. Sauté onions, bell peppers, and garlic until tender. Season with salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes.

3. Add crushed tomatoes, tomato puree, thyme, and oregano. Stir. Add cherry tomatoes and mushrooms, crush tomatoes once softened.

4. Return chicken and bacon to skillet, add wine and chicken stock. Cover and simmer for 30-40 minutes or until chicken is cooked through.

Alternatively, pop skillet into a low oven for 15 minutes or into a slow-crock pot for an hour or more.

5. Stir in olives, capers, and lemon zest. Cook for a few minutes. Season to taste.

6. Allow dish to rest for 10 minutes. Serve hot, garnished with parsley and grated Parmesan cheese if preferred. Serve with either creamy polenta, pasta, fluffy rice, or just toasted crusty Italian ciabatta bread to mop up the flavoursome sauce

South African Wine Pairings

- Stellenbosch: Cape Point Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc 2022

- Paarl: Graham Beck



Sauvignon Blanc 2023

- Franschoek: La Petite

Provence Rosé 2022

- Robertson: Robertson Winery Merlot 2021

Footnote: Contact 083 4446411 for link to GARDEN to TABLE WhatsApp group for recipes for Creamy Polenta and grilled broccolini sides.

Image courtesy db creations

Gluten Free
PATISSERIE

Continued from Page 4
Not to fret though as we won't be only limiting ourselves to market days, once or twice a

week (depending on order numbers) we will also make deliveries in and around Henley so you can get your fill of gluten-free goodness through the week. Please contact the Whatsapp number for more information and what we can offer you.

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everyone. As we personally live in a household that must live with this new lifestyle, we are committed to ensure that all of our products meet the same standards we have in our own home so that everyone can enjoy the same delicious treats. We are both excited to start our journey here and look forward to engaging with the rest of the village.

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Star Boys Academy: Empowering Youth Through Football and Mentorship

Since its establishment in 2015, Star Boys Academy (SBA) has been making a meaningful impact in the community by using football as a platform to empower young people through sport, mentorship and personal development.

The community-based football development organisation is committed to nurturing disciplined, confident and responsible young leaders. Through structured football training, mentorship and life-skills development programs, the academy provides young people with positive opportunities that extend beyond the football field.

Star Boys Academy's vision is to build a generation of disciplined, healthy and

empowered youth through football development and mentorship. Its mission focuses on developing young people physically, mentally and socially while promoting positive values, leadership and teamwork. The academy offers a variety of programs designed to support the holistic development of young players. These include football training and skills development, participation in leagues and tournaments, life-skills and leadership workshops, as well as health and social awareness programs. Through these initiatives, the academy also works to discourage alcohol and drug abuse while promoting unity and community development.

Star Boys Academy follows a structured player development pathway starting from grassroots participation for children aged 6 to 10, progressing through foundation and youth development phases, and ultimately providing opportunities for elite development and exposure to professional football opportunities.

The academy is governed by a dedicated Management Committee responsible for leadership, governance and administration of its programs.

Star Boys Academy welcomes partnerships with businesses, organisations and community stakeholders

interested in supporting youth development through sport.

Sponsorship opportunities include equipment support, funding, mentorship programs and community partnerships.

Community members and parents interested in registering young players or supporting the academy are encouraged to get involved and help build a brighter future for the next generation.

CONTACT DETAILS: STAR BOYS ACADEMY – ABRAM BALOYI
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 Images courtesy Star Boys Academy

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The Whispered Dream: An Invitation to Wendy's Horse School

Or the one-off tourist trails. But right here in our community, I am opening a different way at Wendy's Horse School. I am hoping to give that dream back to those who thought their time had passed.

My own path to reaching my dream was forged through both joy and fire. As a child, I was blessed with "random" rides, where the only coaching I ever received was a shouted: "Hold onto the saddle if the horse goes faster!" Many falls did not erase my dream of one day being an equestrian.

I finally bought my own my first horse at twenty-five, and started having official lessons later, I found my way into the adrenaline-fueled world of competitive show jumping. I loved that life, but then came the

"real world"—the demands of raising a family and building a career as an industrial technical and architectural draftsman. Horses took a back seat to that real life. Then, a curveball, thanking the Lord for that curveball, it changed everything. An armed home invasion shook my world ("I and my family nearly died" was all I could think for weeks). This led me to consider what it meant to truly be alive. Mmm My passion was for the horse. It

is the horse.. so I walked away from a company job and financial security and I walked straight into the stable with a bubble of joy. I studied equine bodywork, horsemanship, and classical riding coaching. Entering the equine industry as a 40 year old I found that beautiful restorative energy in the presence of the horses and the people who owned and loved horses. The joy of this horse world was my portion for decades.

__ Continued Page 12.

In a small town like ours, we often define ourselves by the roles we play: the professional, the parent, the neighbor. Yet, for many of us, there is a dream identity tucked away—a dream of horses. Sad story "real life" pushed the dream aside. We were told that horse riding is a luxury for the wealthy, a technical sport for the young, or an expensive hobby requiring special equestrian gear, expensive boots, gloves and jodpurs. Traditional riding schools often reinforce this, focusing on arena and timed lessons, get on, ride, get off, go home.

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The Whispered Dream

Continued from Page 11
 However, now, at sixty-five, as I prepare for a knee replacement surgery, I am certain that the horse, the healer, should be available for those folk who had the dream of being in this world but never had the opportunity. They should be afforded it.

This school, Wendy's Adult Horse School, is my heart's

work, dedicated to the adults who spent their years raising children, navigating marriages, and climbing career ladders—those who now simply need a moment to breathe and receive.

You can forget the "silly expensive" equestrian kit. If you want to arrive in jeans and takkies or gumboots, crocs or even Temu red cowboy boots you are certainly welcome here. While I do teach the classical seat, I care far more about the

connection than the costume. Here, "Horse School" means true immersion. It is the art of the horse, the quiet focus of in-hand work, and the liberation of bareback riding.

Focus on the magic of teaching a word or sign language for the subtle trick. And revel in the release of muscle tension as a basic massage technique is applied. And melt into calm, peaceful moments as we tap into the "HeartMath" concepts, where the

bio-electric field produced by the horse's heart entrains to ours. I also teach the use of breathing techniques that steady the soul and lead the horse.

The herd of 5 horses and I are waiting for those who too, wish to walk into the stables and experience the love and fullness of the horse.

Thank you for reading my story and I hope it has inspired you to see your dream.

UBUNTU CAMP: Latest Scout Camp News

By Marlin Jantjies
The Ubuntu camp was hauled from the 13th to 15th of March 2026. I only got there on Saturday afternoon because I was playing in a school rugby match. When I got there, it looked like everyone was having so much fun. I asked one of the many scout helpers if they knew where my troop was so that I could go put my equipment down. Once I found where my troop was, I immediately started with the fun bases.

The first and best base, in my opinion, that I went to was the electronic base, which had three different games. My favourite game at this base was battle ships because I was able to use a walkie-talkie. They also

had a first aid, pioneering, shooting and giggering base. The next day after my troop did the giggering our arms were sore.

I learned how to start a fire using a magnifying glass, and I also learned how to tie so many new knots, the hardest one was a sheap shank I think there were a total of 35 patrols. Some patrols came all the way from Japan, Madagascar and Italy.

During the closing parade some of the patrols played drums and bagpipes. One of our patrol members also had the great privilege of being chosen to take the South African flag down during the closing parade. It was a great weekend, we learned a lot and had a great

time.

I think Scouts is an excellent organisation, and that is why I would recommend that any child joins to have fun and learn useful skills, especially if you want to compete on Survivor or any other survival contest.



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