



The Villager

March • 2026



SAVE THE DATES FOR MARCH

Feeling Peckish

– Feeding the birds in your garden

Choosing the right pet for Estate living

Chicken Curry and Malva Pudding



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The Villager focuses on Irene Farm Villages. The magazine is distributed digitally to each resident on the estate. The magazine is co-ordinated and published by Estates in Africa (Pty) Ltd trading as EIA Publishing, on behalf of the Home Owners Association of Irene Farm Villages. The opinions of contributors and personnel of Estates in Africa (Pty) Ltd do not necessarily reflect those of the HOA of Irene Farm Villages.

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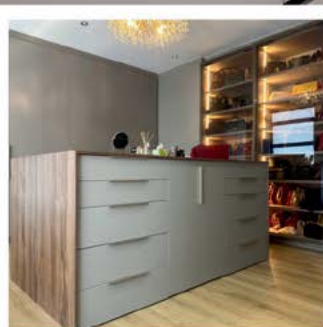
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Photo by Trav Wade on Unsplash

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Dear Residents,

As the seasons begin to shift and the crisp touch of autumn settles in, we are reminded that change is in the air. Early mornings and late evenings have grown noticeably cooler, bringing with them the promise of a new season. With only three weeks to go until a well-deserved school holiday, anticipation is building — especially for our children, who are eagerly counting down the days.

**Garden of the month
- A Vibrant Display
of Proteas and
Leucospermum**



This month's Garden of the Month is a beautiful example of classic formal design and dedicated care. Neatly pruned hedges create clean lines and structure, perfectly framing the manicured lawn that adds a lush, welcoming feel to the space. The balance of green and soft grey foliage provides a calm, elegant backdrop, while vibrant red salvia plants burst through with a striking flash of colour. The overall effect is both refined and inviting – a testament to consistent maintenance and thoughtful planting.

Congratulations to the owner for setting such a high standard and contributing to the beauty of our community.



Anna-Mart Steyn

**SAVE THE DATES
FOR MARCH**



**Saturday 21 March
2026**

**Snake demonstration and
educational talk**

**Time: 08:00 - 09:30 at Post Office
Park**

Snake demonstration and educational talk. Led by reptile expert and the curator of Rooihuiskraal Snake Park, Henke Marais.

With over 35 years of experience working with reptiles of all kinds (including venomous snakes), Henke brings his extensive knowledge and a collection of indigenous venomous and non-venomous snakes to Irene farm villages.

The presentation aims to better educate guests about the importance of snakes in the ecosystem, dispel myths, and briefly discuss basic first aid for snake bites in a safe, controlled environment.

At the end of the +1.5 hour presentation, guests get an opportunity to handle a non-venomous snake.

Henkes' unique charm, sense of humour, and vast knowledge of the natural world will ensure that the morning is informative and loads of fun!

We hope to see you there!

**Saturday 28 March 2026
Pam Golding - Easter Egg Hunt
Venue: Post Boxes
Time: 9:00 – 10:30**

Quality coffee and hot cross buns will be available for Mom and Dad.



Spotted thick-knee, seen within the estate. Those large eyes help with their nocturnal habits.

FEELING PECKISH

BY BRADDEN "HIKING" STEVENS

While your wildlife gardens and wild areas within the estate will naturally provide food sources for a multitude of bird species (including frugivores, insectivores, seedeaters, and generalists), we can give them a helping hand with supplementary feeding.



seedeaters/generalists (e.g. doves, robins, thrushes) and frugivores (e.g. Grey go away birds, barbets).

Insects such as mealworms can also occasionally be put out, attracting a host of insectivores.

Before delving into the world of manmade bird feeders, I think it's important to reiterate that we are supplementing a wild animal's diet.

The purpose is to contribute to the healthy diets of these animals. Overfeeding and making use of unsuitable feeds (such as white bread, which most birds are unable to digest and contains few nutrients) may lead to bird health issues (including an increased transmission of diseases), changes in behaviour, and/or permanent reliance on people for food, affecting population sizes and species distribution (Birdlife SA 2019).

Bird feeders and how best to make use of them

Tubes - perhaps the most seen feeder in the suburban garden. These structures are typically made of plastic; they have a detachable lid into which fine bird seed can be poured and small ports out of which small birds (expect to attract a variety of finches, Bronze mannikins, weavers, and many other seedeaters) feed out of.

Small ports allow smaller birds to feed, excluding larger species such as doves, which will often outcompete smaller species. Inevitably, smaller birds will mess with seeds, allowing larger species to feed on the ground below.

Platforms - often homemade, a simple stable plank of wood raised off the ground or hung from a tree will suffice.

A variety of seeds (larger bird feeds and/or ground maize), fruits/vegetables (nails can be inserted, to secure them) are placed on the platform, attracting a variety of larger



Female Red-headed finch (left) with a female Southern masked weaver feeding her young on a platform feeder in the estate.

Suet feeders are generally wire cages into which suet balls (readily available to purchase and made by rendering animal fat and combining with seeds/grains/nuts/dried fruits and/or mealworms) are placed. Suet is high in fat/protein and ideal to attract insectivores and generalist feeders (e.g. Woodpeckers, Fork-tailed drongos, Barbets), especially in winter when natural food sources are scarcer.

Nectar feeders - A simple bottle, with a small hole at the bottom, filled with sugar water (Birdlife SA suggests using a 10-20% sugar/water solution).

Nectar feeders not only provide for nectar specialists, such as Sunbirds, but also provide an energizing snack for many others on the highveld, including Dark-capped bulbuls, Southern masked weavers, Cape white eyes, and Red-faced mousebirds.



Bluebush (*Diospyros lycoides*) in fruit at a park within the estate. Ripe fruit (dark red in colour) is readily eaten by many birds (including Barbets, Mouse birds, and Pied starlings), as well as mammals, including humans.

Important factors to consider when installing feeder(s): Location, location, location!

Ideally, feeders should be hung 1.5-2m off the ground, near trees and/or shrubs (2-4m away)/or in a relatively quiet area.

Dense foliage is a great hideout for potential bird predators, and feeders may not be readily seen by birds, leading to infrequent/no use.

Dead standing trees should be left as is and/or additional perches installed. They naturally provide shelter and food for many species, such as insects, thereby attracting insectivores like Woodpeckers and making excellent secondary perches for birds approaching a feeder.

Ever noticed how birds will often land on a tree/structure some distance away from a feeder, then drop lower down and nearer onto a tree/shrub, before flying and landing on a feeder?

This is an example of birds using secondary perches. Feeding stations are hereby enhanced, improving the birds' sense of security (they've had the opportunity to have a good look around for predators), providing a spot for birds to sing territorially, reducing competition (some birds will sit on secondary perches and wait for an opening at a feeder), and providing people with additional photo opportunities.

Timing

In general, birds are most active between 06:00 and 09:00 and again at 16:00 and 18:00. In hotter summer months, more activity can be expected in the cooler mornings. In comparison, afternoon activity increases in the colder winter months.

Consistency is key. Birds are very capable of learning and will often frequent the same feeders at around the same time of day, year after year.

I find it incredible to think that the humble Southern masked weaver can live up to 10-15 years old in the wild. Over time, you may be assisting the very same individuals and start to recognize them!

Conclusion:

There are already many feeders within the estate's parks, and management urges all to make use of them. You are welcome to fill them with the appropriate food and sit back to enjoy!

With 1 in 8 bird species (some 1400 species) threatened with extinction worldwide (Birdlife International, 2025), isn't it about time we give them a helping hand, or claw rather?

Garden rubble removal service – expression of interest

The Estate Management is conducting a survey regarding garden rubble removal service within the estate, offered as a separately paid service to participating residents.

The City of Tshwane has confirmed that garden refuse is no longer collected as part of the normal municipal refuse collection on Mondays, as stated in the Waste Management By-law:

6. (2) *Builder's rubble, steel, timber, soil, pebbles, rocks, and garden refuse must not be disposed of in the containers meant for general waste. Where such are observed to have been included in the container, such container will be left unserviced.*

As a result, the proposed service would provide twice-weekly collections on Mondays and Fridays for organic garden waste only, including grass cuttings, leaves, and small branches. No building rubble or non-organic waste will be collected.

The service is intended to improve cleanliness within the estate, reduce illegal dumping, and remove the need for individual owners to arrange the removal of garden rubble themselves.

Residents are requested to complete the survey, which will be sent out on Monday, 8 March, to indicate whether they would be interested in using this service. This expression of interest is for planning purposes only and does not constitute a commitment.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Police Emergency	10111
Lyttelton Police Station	012 644 8600
Pierre van Ryneveld Community Policing Forum	079 528 1630
Fire Emergency	10177
Medical Emergency	082 911

Main Gate Guardroom	012 662 3505
Security Duty Manager	082 937 8391
Controller	012 662 3505 Ext 3

Irene Farm Villages:	
Estate Office	012 662 3505
Estate Manager	066 008 8523

Managing Agent: Account Ability	
Tel: 082 780 0059 • Fax: 086 671 9798 • info@aams.co.za	

BUDGET

Re: Levy Increase: 2027 Financial Year (1 March 2026 to 28 February 2027)

The Irene Farm Villages Homeowners Association remains in a healthy financial position. Most members are diligently paying their monthly levies. The current financial year, February 2026 expenditure, including non-recurring expenses, is forecast below budget mainly due to the decision to delay the non-recurring expenditure on the contractors' yard and the borehole sleeve and flow test, pending required permits and approvals. A net surplus is forecasted for the financial year February 2026.

Kindly take note that in terms of Article 7 of the Memorandum of Incorporation (MOI) of the Irene Farm Villages Homeowners Association, the board of directors approved an increase to the monthly levy of 4.5% with effect from the 1st April 2026. Due to the increase, the levy rate per square meter increases from R2.88025 to R3.00986, calculated on the total size of each member's property (stand size, not the house size).

This increase is required for the purpose of meeting all the expenses which the Irene Farm Villages Homeowners Association has incurred, or which the directors reasonably anticipate the Irene Farm Villages Homeowners Association will incur in the attainment of its objectives or the pursuit of its business, including some provisions in part for future expenses. The net surplus forecasted for the financial year February 2026 will be used to offset the deficit expected in the February 2027 budget. The approved levy and operational expense budget summary are shown below:



technology, maintenance, estate infrastructure, and parks enhancements.

Provisions are also raised for future expenditure, reserved from current savings, for the replacement of the electric perimeter fence around the estate, planned for the February 2027 budget; the upgrading of the contractors' yard, planned for the February 2028 budget; and a further subsidence management provision.

Details of non-recurring expenses are shown below:

IRENE FARM VILLAGES HOME OWNER ASSOCIATION					FY26 Budget		FY26 Forecast	FY27 new budget	Project placeholders to be funded from savings up to FY26	Total Project placeholders to be funded from savings Cumulative FY27
Summary Projects					Source					
Non-Recurring Expenses funded from Operating budget						1 570 000	189 313	1 497 400		
IT - IT Equipment	Budget	80 000	118 819	75 000						
Env - Doggy Park	Budget	70 000	11 845	150 000						
Env - 6 Seater picnic set	Budget	30 000	29 028	-						
Env - Borehole sleeve and flow test	Budget	390 000	-	-						
Env - Replace trees in Longpark	Budget	-	-	80 000						
Env - Removal of Fever trees in Longpark	Budget	-	-	150 000						
Env - Jungle gyms & parks upgrades	Budget	-	-	397 600						
Dev - Contractors Yard	Budget	1 000 000	29 620	-						
Main - Paint yellow & black paving at entrances	Budget	-	-	50 000						
Main - Trailer for the estate	Budget	-	-	40 000						
Main - Repair balcony at SG	Budget	-	-	39 800						
Main - Upgrade of lighting protection system	Budget	-	-	120 000						
Main - Batteries for golf cart	Budget	-	-	35 000						
Main - Office renovations	Budget	-	-	135 000						
Sec - 18 x New tracking devices	Budget	-	-	40 000						
Sec - New numberplates for motorcycles	Budget	-	-	10 000						
Sec - FLIR Cameras or Alternative Fence	Budget	-	-	175 000						
Non-Recurring Expenses funded from savings						1 800 000	2 755 036	2 280 000	3 370 000	5 650 000
Sec - FLIR Cameras or Alternative Fence	Savings	150 000	105 037	-						
Dev - Contractors Yard	Savings	-	1 000 000	1 000 000						
Env - Subsidence Management	Savings	1 050 000	1 050 000	2 000 000						
Sec - Perimeter Fence Replacement	Savings	600 000	600 000	280 000						

The new levy will be charged from the 1st of April 2026. Members are reminded that their monthly levy payments are due in advance on the first day of each month.

Any enquiries can be directed to the Estate Manager (estatemanager@irenefarmvillages.co.za), who will forward the same to the Irene Farm Villages Home Owners Association's Financial Committee for response.

IRENE FARM VILLAGES HOME OWNER ASSOCIATION Summary Income Statement					FY26 Budget	FY26 Forecast	FY27 new budget	% variance FY26 Forecast to FY27 new Budget
Normal Levies					17 988 236	17 988 236	18 796 270	4%
Other Income					96 000	630 014	96 000	-85%
Investment income					390 000	528 632	390 000	-26%
Operational income					18 474 236	19 146 883	19 282 270	1%
Professional /Administration					1 750 432	1 683 364	1 642 434	-2%
General Office					395 214	363 914	478 441	31%
Operational Expenses					4 174 632	3 887 662	4 373 909	13%
Security					7 263 099	7 428 750	7 873 156	6%
Repairs & Maintenance					3 301 480	3 133 485	3 978 512	27%
Operational Expenditure					16 884 857	16 497 174	18 346 453	11%
Operating Surplus					1 589 379	2 649 709	935 817	-65%
Non-Recurring Expenses funded from Operating budget					1 570 000	189 313	1 497 400	691%
IT Projects					80 000	118 819	75 000	-37%
Environmental Projects					490 000	40 873	777 600	>100%
Development Projects					1 000 000	29 620	-	0%
Maintenance Projects					-	-	419 800	100%
Security Projects					-	-	225 000	100%
Net Surplus / (deficit)					19 379	2 460 396	(561 583)	-123%
Non-Recurring Expenses funded from savings					1 800 000	2 755 036	2 280 000	-17%
Environmental Projects funded from savings					1 050 000	1 050 000	2 000 000	90%
Development Projects funded from savings					-	1 000 000	-	-100%
Security Projects funded from savings					750 000	705 037	280 000	-60%

Planned non-recurring expenditure for the financial year February 2027 budget includes security, information

As we enjoy the last of these beautiful summer days, let's also start looking ahead to the much-anticipated long weekends in April. It's the perfect time to plan a little rest, family gatherings, or simply some well-deserved downtime.

Wishing you all a smooth transition into the new season and a wonderful month ahead.

Anna-Mart Steyn
Estate Manager



IRENE FARM VILLAGES HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION
Summary Operational Income Statement – YTD January 2026
 January 2026 Year to Date YTD Variance
 Actual Budget Actual Budget Value %

Operational Income						
<i>Levy Income</i>	1 504 303	1 504 303	16 483 936	16 483 933	3	0,0%
<i>Other Income</i>	63 060	40 500	721 123	445 500	275 623	61,9%
	1 567 363	1 544 803	17 205 059	16 929 433	275 626	1,6%
Operational Expenditure						
<i>Professional /Administration</i>	98 907	158 986	1 501 768	1 606 446	104 678	6,5%
Accounting and Auditing	50 480	57 117	641 338	628 287	(13 051)	-2,1%
Insurance, Legal and Admin	48 427	101 869	860 430	978 159	117 729	12,0%
<i>General Office</i>	29 669	33 067	324 824	362 147	37 323	10,3%
Office Administration	29 669	33 067	324 824	362 147	37 323	10,3%
<i>Operational Expenses</i>	325 509	331 594	3 494 119	3 843 038	348 919	9,1%
Municipal Charges	47 681	76 123	798 816	822 857	24 041	2,9%
General Operations	18 422	39 271	451 747	431 981	(19 766)	-4,6%
Salaries & Wages	259 405	216 200	2 243 556	2 588 200	344 644	13,3%
<i>Security</i>	560 925	605 259	6 854 504	6 657 849	(196 655)	-3,0%
Security Operations	86 499	108 565	1 395 835	1 194 215	(201 620)	-16,9%
Guarding Services	474 426	496 694	5 371 752	5 463 634	91 882	1,7%
Insurance Claims and Excess	0	0	86 918	0	(86 918)	100,0%
<i>Repairs & Maintenance</i>	283 236	275 123	2 871 895	3 026 353	154 458	5,1%
Repairs & Maintenance	275 953	268 811	2 849 304	2 956 921	107 617	3,6%
Park Maintenance Contract	7 284	6 312	22 591	69 432	46 841	67,5%
	1 298 246	1 404 029	15 047 111	15 495 833	448 722	2,9%
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	269 117	140 774	2 157 948	1 433 600		
Non-Recurring Income	55 695	0	353 252	0	353 252	100,0%
Estate Penalties	2 550	0	66 000	0	66 000	100,0%
Speed Infringements (Net)	46 990	0	229 808	0	229 808	100,0%
Other Revenue	6 155	0	57 444	0	57 444	100,0%
Non-Recurring Expenses	86 179	0	417 665	1 570 000	1 152 335	73,4%
Net Positive/ (Negative)	(30 483)	0	(64 413)	(1 570 000)	(799 083)	
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	238 633	140 774	2 093 534	(136 400)		

Summary Income Statement by Account Ability
 Office Address: Sovereign Drive, Route 21 Corporate Park
 Accounting Office Hours: 8:00 to 13:00 Monday to Friday

Office Tel: 082 780 0059
 Accounts Email: accounts@aams.co.za
 IFV Accounts: Winny Boshoff



Brent Lindeque

A VULNERABLE TEEN, A CLOSED DOOR AND A CALL FOR CARE



This story began on Christmas Eve, with black bags at a front door and a decision that would quietly reshape two lives in an instant.

When a young person turns 18, we tend to assume they're suddenly ready for the world. That independence arrives neatly on cue. But birthdays don't erase trauma, disability or unfinished childhoods. For one vulnerable teenager, that milestone marked the moment support fell away instead of stepping up.

Sarah is currently supporting a young woman who has just turned 18. She is autistic, still completing her schooling and has a long history of mental and physical health challenges. She also grew up in a home that was unsafe for many years.

"On the morning of Christmas Eve, her mother arrived at my home," Sarah told me. "She unloaded black bags with her daughter's belongings, said she was going back home, and that her daughter would be better off with me."

There was no plan in place. No formal support waiting on the other side of that decision. Turning her away would have meant sending her back into instability. Since December, this young woman has stabilised significantly. She is completing her matric equivalence online and continues to work with her psychologist. In Sarah's home, she has structure, routine and, most importantly, a sense of safety. The change isn't dramatic — it's quiet. She sleeps through the night more

often. She is beginning to imagine what comes after school. For the first time in a long time, she isn't living in crisis mode.

But goodwill, even when it comes from the best intentions, cannot carry everything.

Support often thins out just as expectations increase. Navigating adult services and safeguarding processes is complex at the best of times. For a traumatised autistic young person still finishing school, it can be overwhelming.

What's needed now is experienced, traumainformed guidance. Someone to help coordinate care, ensure proper oversight and walk alongside her as decisions are made about her future. Complex situations like this don't always fit neatly into existing structures, and professional support comes at a cost.

The crowdfund exists simply to bridge that gap. Not for comfort or excess, but to secure the professional help required to

keep her safe and supported at a critical turning point. Sarah is contributing what she can, while also supporting her own child who is starting university this year. What she is asking for is help to ensure that this young woman is not left vulnerable simply because her situation is complicated.

This isn't a story about blame. It's about a moment where care still has the power to change the trajectory of a life. It's about recognising that sometimes a young person needs the adults around them to stay present a little longer.

If you are in a position to contribute to Sarah's crowdfund, your support could help unlock the guidance needed right now. If you're not, sharing this story still matters. In communities like ours, sometimes being seen is what opens the next door.

**Name changed to "Sarah" to protect privacy.*



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With campuses in both Johannesburg and Pretoria, the school serves expatriate and local families alike, combining world-class academic standards with a commitment to the holistic development of the child. Students are not just taught; they are known. Our students are given the freedom to pursue their passions, explore new interests, and shape their own educational journey.

LEARNING ISN'T LINEAR

AISJ's instruction is designed to adapt - helping students understand ideas, not just facts. Students ask questions, make connections across subjects, and apply their knowledge in meaningful ways, preparing them for life beyond the classroom. We emphasise a deeper understanding, critical thinking, and real-world problem-solving.

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By adjusting instruction, support, and opportunities as students grow, we ensure that each learner is appropriately challenged, intentionally supported, and empowered to build confidence, independence, and success.



DISCOVER HOW A STRONG START LEADS TO A BRIGHT FUTURE!

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AISJ's balanced education is built on four pillars:

- Academics - Concept-driven, inquiry-based learning prepares students for top universities worldwide
- Arts - Opportunities in visual arts, music, and performance starting from 3 years old
- Athletics - Participating in local and international sports tournaments, arts festivals, and conferences
- Service - Students engage meaningfully with local and global communities, developing empathy, leadership, and a sense of responsibility

Together, these pillars ensure students develop academically, creatively, physically, socially, and as globally minded individuals ready to contribute positively to the world around them.

"Our learners are prepared not just for school, but for the world beyond it."



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For students in Grades 8-12, AISJ's luxury boarding programme offers a supportive, independent environment where learners grow academically, socially, and personally. Boarding combines rigorous academics, personalised pathways, and a nurturing community, providing continuity and stability for families, especially those who are internationally mobile.

Students live and learn alongside peers from diverse backgrounds, forming friendships and skills that last a lifetime. Here, they develop independence, resilience, and a sense of belonging - preparing them for university, careers, and life beyond school.

"At AISJ, learning has no limits, and neither do our students."



WHY AISJ STANDS OUT

AISJ provides academic excellence, a global perspective, and a deep commitment to the whole child. Every student is recognised as an individual, with learning designed to meet their strengths, interests, and ways of thinking.

From the first steps in early childhood through graduation, we offer continuity, care, and community at every stage of the journey. Students explore their passions, build confidence and resilience, and grow as curious, capable, and independent learners.

Our goal is to shape learners who are not only academically prepared but also confident, adaptable, and ready to engage with the world. Students leave AISJ equipped - not just for the next grade, but for life beyond school, wherever their journey takes them.

Our students graduate ready for universities and opportunities around the globe. Our alumni have gone on to attend top institutions in the US, UK, South Africa and beyond, combining academic excellence with the skills and confidence to thrive anywhere in the world.



CHOOSING THE RIGHT PET FOR ESTATE LIVING

BY TEGAN LAMBERT

A pet can transform a house into a home. In estate living, however, the decision carries a little more weight. Shared walls, smaller gardens, community rules and close neighbours all play a role in what will work comfortably for everyone.

Before choosing a pet, it is worth considering your available space, daily routine, noise levels and the long-term commitment involved. Estate life rewards thoughtful decisions, and the right companion can enrich not only your home, but the wider community too.

Dogs

Dogs remain the most popular choice, and for good reason. They offer loyalty, companionship and security. In estate environments, temperament and energy levels matter more than size alone.

Family-friendly breeds known for their adaptability, such as Labradors, Golden Retrievers and French Bulldogs, often settle well into estate life when properly exercised. High-energy working breeds may struggle without structured activity and sufficient space.

Regular walks, training and responsible waste management are essential. A well-trained dog strengthens community living. A neglected one can strain it.

Cats

Cats suit estate living beautifully, particularly when kept indoors or within secure garden spaces. They are independent, quiet and generally adaptable.

Calm breeds such as British Shorthairs, Ragdolls and British Longhairs tend to thrive in structured home environments. More active or vocal breeds may require additional stimulation.

For busy professionals or families who prefer a quieter companion, cats often provide the perfect balance of affection and independence.

Fish

Aquariums bring a sense of calm to any home. Fish require minimal space and create no disturbance to neighbours, making them ideal for estate properties.

While tank maintenance requires consistency and care, fish

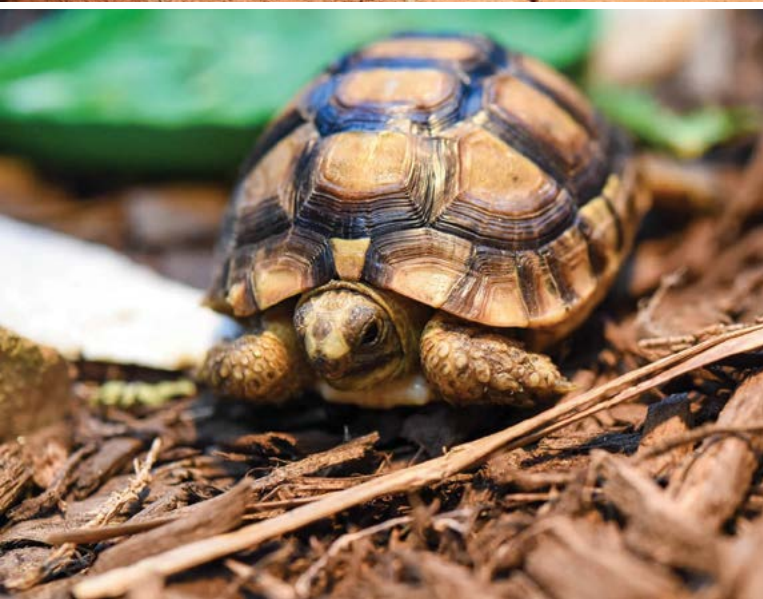


offer a peaceful presence and are an excellent way to teach children responsibility.

Rabbits

Rabbits are intelligent and affectionate animals that can form strong bonds with their owners. They do, however, require more space and enrichment than many people realise.

With secure enclosures and regular interaction, rabbits



can adapt well to estate homes and make gentle family companions.

Hamsters

Small and manageable, hamsters are often a child's first pet. They require appropriate housing, enrichment and supervision, but they fit comfortably into smaller homes.

Research is important, as some species prefer to live alone while others benefit from companionship.

Birds

Bird ownership ranges from small budgies to larger parrots. Smaller species tend to suit estate living better, as they are easier to house and generally quieter.

Larger birds are intelligent and interactive but can be vocal and require significant time and stimulation. Lifespan is another important consideration, as some species live for decades.

Guinea Pigs

Guinea pigs are social, gentle and well suited to family homes. With proper enclosures and routine care, they adapt easily to indoor living.

A pet can transform a house into a home. In estate living, however, the decision carries a little more weight. Shared walls, smaller gardens, community rules and close neighbours all play a role in what will work comfortably for everyone.

They offer a rewarding middle ground between larger small animals and more compact pets.

Horses

For residents living near equestrian facilities, horse ownership remains a realistic and rewarding option. Horses require time, financial investment and daily care, but they offer structure, exercise and a strong sense of community connection.

While they may not live within the estate itself, they are part of the lifestyle many residents value.

Reptiles

Reptiles such as geckos, bearded dragons and certain snake species are quiet, contained and well suited to homes with close neighbours.

They require carefully controlled environments, including heating and lighting, so preparation is essential. For owners who appreciate routine and observation, reptiles can be fascinating companions.

Tortoises

Tortoises are calm, quiet and well suited to homes with outdoor space. They require secure enclosures and consistent care. Their long lifespan means they are a serious commitment and often become part of the family for generations.

A Thoughtful Choice

Estate living does not limit pet ownership. It simply encourages consideration.

The best pet is one that fits your space, your schedule and your willingness to commit long term. It is also one that respects the shared environment around you.

When chosen wisely and cared for responsibly, a pet adds warmth, companionship and rhythm to daily life. In a close-knit community, that sense of balance matters.



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Photo by Klara Kulikova on Unsplash

Please email your answer along with your full name, your cell number, estate name and your stand number, detailing 'Restaurant Competition' in the subject line, to (Click on the link below): competitions@eiapublishing.co.za and like our Facebook page to enter the competition. The winner will be notified by email.

Restaurant Competition

Answer the question below and stand a chance to win a restaurant voucher worth R500.00 from The Baron:

Which pet is the most popular choice for people living in Estates?



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THE INVISIBLE LOAD

The Mental Work of Running a Household

It is Tuesday evening. The family calendar is open. There are school notices to sign, sports kit to wash, a medical appointment to confirm, a birthday gift to buy and a reminder that the dog's vaccinations are due next week.

None of these tasks are difficult on their own. Yet someone is keeping track of all of them.

That running list in the background of daily life is known as the mental load. It is the invisible work that keeps a household functioning.

What the Mental Load Actually Is

The mental load is not about washing dishes or packing lunchboxes. It is about remembering that lunchboxes need packing in the first place.

It is the planning, anticipating and organising that sits behind visible tasks. It is knowing which child has sport on which day. It is tracking school communications. It is noticing when groceries are running low. It is remembering to book appointments before they become urgent.

It is oversight.

This cognitive work rarely gets acknowledged because it does not look like work. Yet it requires constant attention. For many parents, the mental dashboard never fully switches off.

Why It Matters

Carrying ongoing responsibility for household oversight affects wellbeing. Research on caregiver burden shows that sustained cognitive responsibility increases stress, impacts sleep and contributes to burnout.

The pressure does not necessarily come from the number of tasks. It comes from being the one who must remember.

When one person becomes the default planner, that role can quietly shape the emotional climate of the home. Irritation builds more easily. Exhaustion lingers longer. Small oversights feel heavier because they are layered on top of an already full mental list.

Children also absorb this atmosphere. They notice tension even when it is not spoken about.

Recognising the mental load is not about dramatizing domestic life. It is about understanding how invisible responsibility influences energy and relationships.

How It Shows Up in Everyday Life

In estate communities like Dainfern, households are often busy. Extra murals, school events, community activities and work commitments fill calendars quickly.

The mental load might include:

- Remembering which gate access is needed for which visitor.
- Tracking lift clubs.
- Managing school WhatsApp groups.
- Booking holiday programmes.
- Planning meals around shifting schedules.
- Keeping track of family commitments alongside professional deadlines.

It also includes the small, unnoticed details. Replacing outgrown sports shoes. Checking homework portals. Scheduling dental cleanings. Following up on permission slips.

Ask yourself a simple question. Who keeps track of the things that others do not even realise need tracking?

That is the mental load.

Why It Often Falls Unevenly

Studies consistently show that women tend to carry more of this invisible responsibility, even in households where physical tasks are shared. This pattern is not universal and it is not about blame. It is often shaped by habit, expectation and default roles that develop over time.

One partner becomes the organiser. The other becomes the helper.

The difficulty is that help is different from shared ownership. When one person retains ultimate oversight, they remain mentally responsible even if others assist.

This dynamic can exist quietly for years without being named.

Bringing it into awareness is not about creating conflict. It is about clarity.

Making the Invisible Visible

The most effective way to reduce the mental load is to make it visible.

Start by listing what actually lives in one person's head. Appointments. School cycles. Household maintenance. Social commitments. Administrative tasks.

Seeing the full scope often surprises both partners.

From there, practical steps can help.

Use shared digital calendars where responsibility is clearly assigned, not assumed.

Rotate oversight of certain domains. One person manages all medical appointments for a term. The other oversees school administration.

Have regular check ins that focus on planning rather than reacting. Ask, "What is on your list this week?" instead of "Have you done this yet?"

Shift from helping to owning. Ownership includes remembering.

Small structural changes reduce the cognitive burden significantly.

A Healthier Household Rhythm

In high functioning communities, there can be a quiet pressure to keep everything running smoothly. Homes look organised. Calendars appear controlled. From the outside, it can seem effortless.

But effortlessness is often powered by unseen mental work.

Recognising the invisible load does not diminish anyone's contribution. It strengthens households by creating fairness and reducing silent strain.

When mental responsibility is shared, energy shifts. Tension eases. Conversations improve. Children witness collaboration rather than quiet exhaustion.

The mental load will always exist in some form. Homes require coordination. Life requires planning.

The difference lies in whether that responsibility is carried by one person alone or understood as a shared task.

Making the invisible visible is a simple but powerful place to begin.





Chef Andile Magwaza



Chef Ukhonaye Mconi

CHEFS ON TV SHARE THE SPOTLIGHT WITH A COOKING ROBOT

Two leading South African food personalities were reunited when they shared recipes and tips on television – and both will share some of the spotlight with a state-of-the-art cooking robot that is transforming South African kitchens.

Chefs Andile Magwaza and Ukhonaye Mconi met when they were lecturers at Capsicum's Rosebank campus in Johannesburg, with Mconi also an alumnus of the culinary school. Last year, Mconi was appointed head chef and manager at The Chef's Studio in Cape Town, as well as event manager for the Private Chef Works group. Magwaza remains a senior lecturer at the culinary school.

They joined forces on the Espresso Morning Show on S3 (DStv Channel 193) in November 2025, where they demonstrated two dishes, including the South African classic, Malva pudding.

Magwaza says his food philosophy is all about food that touches the soul, and believes that even when food evolves with trends that come and go, it is important that 'you leave nostalgic memories on each plate of food.' This sentiment is echoed by Mconi, who says: "Your best meal is formulated in your

heart and soul, and any person who eats your food is affected by what you have in your heart; happy or troubled."

Both chefs – who have impressive CVs including work experience in the US – are also brand ambassadors for the smart kitchen appliance, the TOKIT Omni Cook C2 which has been brought into this country by the Swiss Diversitas Group, which they used on the show. These 'cooking robots', with their smart technology, allow users to improve the quality of prepared dishes, save time that would otherwise be spent on cooking and cleaning up, save on energy costs and minimise food waste. If you are cooking on the TOKIT, you simply connect to the free cookNjoy recipe database with its more than 5000 recipes and be guided through them with step-by-step instructions on its touchscreen for a consistent, freshly prepared meal of great quality.

Says Magwaza: "The machine's flexibility allows beginners to create impressive dishes with minimal stress by simply following instructions on the device's step-by-step digital interface, while professionals integrate it into their workflows for efficiency and consistent results. Many professional kitchens in this country use these types of machines."

The following recipes can be made both with and without a smart kitchen appliance.

"Your best meal is formulated in your heart and soul, and any person who eats your food is affected by what you have in your heart; happy or troubled."



Chicken curry

Ingredients

- 500g boneless chicken thighs
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 2½ tbl curry powder (or to taste)
- 30ml white wine
- 1 large brown onion or 2 medium onions, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 60ml sunflower or canola oil
- 2tbl tomato paste
- 2tbl stock paste or powder diluted in 250ml of water
- coriander leaves, chopped
- 3 tbl plain yoghurt (optional)

Method

Cut the chicken into 2-3 cm pieces. Mix the cayenne pepper, half a tablespoon of the curry powder and the wine into a bowl, add the chicken and marinate for 15 minutes. Add oil to a large pot and over medium heat, fry the chopped onion and garlic until soft. Add the remaining curry powder and cook for one to two minutes. Add the marinated chicken and sauté for five minutes. Add the tomato paste and stock. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes or until cooked. Add more liquid if too dry. Once cooked, transfer to a bowl and garnish with chopped coriander and yoghurt. Serve hot with rice.



Malva Pudding

Ingredients

For the pudding

- 30g butter plus extra to grease
- ½ cup (125ml) sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbl smooth apricot jam
- 1 tsp (5ml) bicarbonate of soda
- 200ml milk
- 1 tsp white vinegar
- 140g self-raising flour
- pinch of sea salt

For the cream sauce

- 200ml pouring (whipping) cream
- 100ml white sugar
- 1 tsp (5ml) vanilla extract
- 80ml boiling water
- 80ml butter

Method

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease a 30 x 21 cm ovenproof dish and set aside. Place sugar and butter into a mixing bowl and cream with an electric beater. Add eggs, apricot jam, bicarbonate of soda, milk, vinegar, flour and salt and mix until smooth. Pour batter into the prepared dish and bake for 25 minutes or until golden brown and firm. For the sauce, place the cream, sugar, vanilla, water and butter into a pot on the stove and heat until melted.

Gently pour the sauce over the hot sponge, then return to the oven and bake for a further five minutes. Serve warm.

BOSS YOUR MONEY: A NO-FLUFF GUIDE TO BUILDING WEALTH IN SOUTH AFRICA

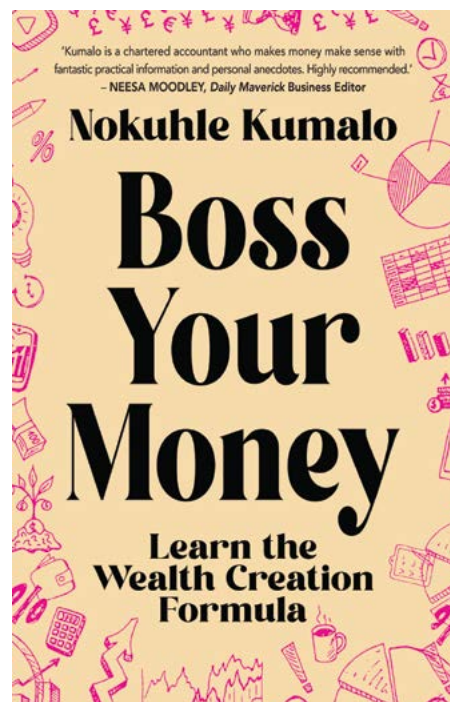
As South Africans look to reset their finances for 2026, chartered accountant and content creator Nokuhle Kumalo -Chamoto releases her new book *Boss Your Money: Learn the Wealth Creation Formula*.

While many finance books offer generic advice, *Boss Your Money* is a no-fluff guide written specifically for the South African context. The author is known to her many online followers for her relatable and honest approach, and unpacks the money habits we inherit, common money mistakes we make, and the specific steps required for ordinary people to build wealth. She delivers a concrete road map for financial independence, at the core of which is her wealth creation formula.

Readers will discover the following:

- answers to their specific questions – from work and salary negotiation to saving, investing, and buying your first car or home;
- how to break the cycle – unpacking the money habits we inherit from our parents and the common mistakes we make;
- how to take control – a guide to finally understanding money, how you earn it, spend it, save it, and build your wealth.

Says Kumalo-Chamoto: “Wealth creation isn’t a mystery, it’s a formula. I wrote this book to provide the honest, hard-won insights I wish I had when I started. It is time to stop stressing about money and finally take control of how we earn, spend and build it”.



Kumalo-Chamoto is a chartered accountant, financial educator, speaker, content creator and author. She is dedicated to helping young professionals make sense of money and modern adulthood.

Falling Forward by Rachel Kolisi

Falling Forward is a deeply personal memoir by Rachel Kolisi, written in collaboration with Zibu Sithole. It will be released in March 2026 to coincide with her documentary of the same name.

Falling Forward is a story of reclaiming identity, voice and courage. In this candid memoir, Rachel traces her journey through childhood, the realities of marriage and motherhood, the pressures of living life in the public eye, and the grounding forces of faith and philanthropy. With honesty and strength, she explores how moments of falling can become catalysts for renewal, purpose and forward momentum.

“There are stories you can tell on camera, and then there are the truths that need the quiet space of a page to be fully understood,” she says. “Writing *Falling Forward* was about stepping beyond the public narrative to own my voice completely. This is about the private moments of breaking and rebuilding. My hope is that women

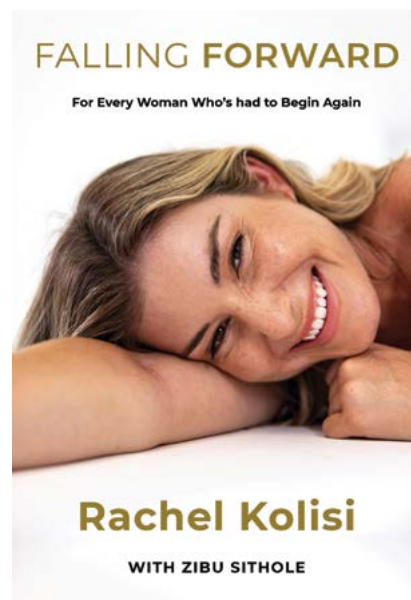
reading the book find companionship in its pages and realise that falling isn’t the end – it’s often how we find our way to who we were always meant to be.”

Terry Morris, MD of Pan Macmillan South Africa, says that Rachel’s story is a deeply personal one that will resonate with many readers. “She has faced her challenges with resilience, grit, grace and the support of many. We are so proud to partner with her in publishing *Falling Forward* and know that the book will bring hope and optimism to many South African readers.”

The book will be available nationwide and online from mid-March 2026.

About the authors

RACHEL KOLISI is a South African speaker, businesswoman, philanthropist, storyteller and mother. She is deeply committed to social impact and has spent years working to restore dignity, expand access to opportunity and advocate for women and communities facing systemic



inequality. Through Rachel’s voice and work, she continues to empower others to rise, rebuild and move forward with intention.

ZIBU SITHOLE is the author of the much-loved ZOLA trilogy of novels as well as a published ghostwriter and journalist with more than ten years of experience across print, television and other media.

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HOMEMAKERS FAIR 2026

The Homemakers Fair returns to the Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit from 27–29 March 2026, offering homeowners a carefully curated, high-quality home improvement experience designed to inspire confident decisions and exciting inspiration for home projects.

With more than three decades of experience hosting home-focused exhibitions, the Homemakers Fair continues to evolve alongside the needs of modern homeowners. The 2026 event places a strong emphasis on quality over quantity, with exhibitors handpicked across all key home improvement categories to ensure visitors can explore a broad yet considered selection of trusted, vetted and reliable service providers.

From building and renovation solutions to interiors, kitchens, bathrooms, outdoor living, décor and lifestyle enhancements, the expo offers homeowners the opportunity to gather ideas, seek expert advice, compare offerings and connect directly with professionals who understand what it takes to turn inspiration into reality.

"Globally, we're seeing a strong shift towards the home as a place of comfort, identity and long-term investment," says Michelle Crouwkamp, Head of Events at Homemakers. "International trends show that people are prioritising spaces that support well-being, sustainability and everyday living. Our role is to bring together the right mix of expertise and inspiration so homeowners can make informed choices that truly serve how they live."

More than just a home improvement exhibition, the Homemakers Fair is also designed as an enjoyable day out. Visitors can take breaks between planning their next project by exploring gourmet food trucks, browsing speciality food vendors to stock their pantries and enjoying live





music and curated wine tastings; creating a relaxed, festival-style atmosphere throughout the weekend.

Whether you are planning a major renovation, refreshing a single space, or simply gathering ideas for the future, the Homemakers Fair 2026 offers a focused, engaging environment where homeowners can explore possibilities, get inspired and dream about their home's potential!

Event Information

Dates: 27–29 March 2026

Times:

• **Friday:** 10:00 – 18:00

• **Saturday & Sunday:** 09:00 – 18:00

Venue:

Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit & International Convention Centre

Cnr R55 & Allandale Road,
Kyalami Estate, Midrand

Tickets:

Available online at
www.homemakersfair.co.za
or via ticketing partner TIXSA –
www.tixsa.co.za

Ticket Prices:

- **Adults:** R140 (R130 if you buy online)
 - **Pensioners:** R90
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 - **Bestie's Pass:** R200 (2 Adults, Friday only, online tickets only)
 - **Weekend Pass:** R350
 - **Family Pass:** R330 (2 Adults & 2 Children)
- Parking:** R30

About the Homemakers Fair

For over 30 years, the Homemakers Fair has connected homeowners with trusted experts, innovative products, and practical inspiration. Known for its credibility and industry insight, the expo remains a cornerstone event for anyone serious about improving, investing in, and enjoying their home.

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