



the 1953

March 2025 | Summer Edition



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The Sound of Stellies: Sweat, Fake Trees and Semi-Final Glory

Mia Bredell



If Stellies had a soundtrack it would probably be the sound of one overenthusiastic guy playing the piano in the Neelsie, the confused whisper of first-years trying to figure out where the Van der Sterr is and the satisfying ‘thunk’ of a wine bottle being opened on the weekend. However, at this year’s Connect Lydemia got the opportunity to create our own Sound of Stellies with three dance performances, ranging from dazzling musical theatre to groovy Amapiano.

This year Lydia teamed up with Academia proving that team work really does make the dream work. The trek to Academia in the sweltering heat was an ordeal, but the moment we walked into their rehearsal space, the cool breeze from the fans and the sparkling water made it all worth it.

Speaking of standing out moments, our very own Neha did an incredible job at portraying a sassy musical theatre lover who entered her villain arc after hearing that Stellenbosch might change from being a very musical place to well... not a musical place. Luckily, she realised that allowing other people to express their own musical opinions was very important to achieve diversity and unity within communities.

To really emphasize the “our team is better than yours” mindset everyone got to “unleash their

inner artist” when we painted our own t-shirts. Some discovered their DIY- talents while others ended up with more paint on their arms and on the floor than on their shirt.

A highlight of the day was definitely the set design worthy of an Oscar. Picture this: Fake prop trees and a giant Neelsie sign that brought the magic of Stellies campus to life. Our amazing choreographers decided to take the challenge and choreograph to three different dance styles: A Spectacular musical theatre number to the iconic Don’t Rain on My Parade, a quick paced high energy hip-hop number to the Greatest Show, as well as a challenging but very fun Amapiano.

With only a little blood, sweat, few tears and a lot of sunscreen we made it to the semi-finals! (I had zero doubt that we could do it) Not only did we make the top 6 but Lydemia also walked away with best Soundtrack!

Of all the things that made Connect 2025 such a special and memorable experience, it was not all of our amazing achievements (although it does help) but the fact that it gave us Newcomers the opportunity to build life-long friendships, taught us to laugh when making mistakes, and helped us realise what amazing memories we can make in Lekker Lekker Lydia.



Compassion Chronicles

Anika Meissenheimer

Lights, Camera, Impact! Welcome to Lydia x Eendrag Social Impact Day!

During Welcoming Week Lydia teamed up with Eendrag for a Social Impact day. The heat was high, but our gees was higher. We started the day with a lovely social at Eendrag to get to know each other a little better before we got on the buses, and off to Rietenbosch Primary we went.

What is more important to a child than fun in the sun? Our goal was just that: creating a fun, memorable day for the Grade 2 class of Rietenbosch. It was a huge success, although I am not sure who had more fun, us or the Grade 2s. A vibrant hub of creativity and compassion was created during this Social Impact Fun Day.

It was all fun and games, literally. Various stations were set up for the children to enjoy. A water bucket challenge was one of the highlights of the day and a great way to cool off during the heatwave. The face painting station was packed with kids all wanting to be their favourite superhero, or just a pretty butterfly – don't we all!

There was definitely a clear winner when it came to stations: the slip 'n slide of course. Some of the Eendrag boys had to be held back or else they would have jumped in too. The cool water was just the thing for the kids to cool off while still playing with their friends. There is just something about watching the innocence of children playing that gives us that needed peace of mind that everything will work out the way it should.

Some great bonds were formed in a very short time. The idiom "Believe like a child"



was embodied this day. It was mesmerising how quickly they let their guard down, and how they opened their hearts and home to us, complete strangers. They taught us that we can still be curious, wonder, and play, even if we thought we were too grown up to do so. We learned that it is okay to go back to your roots and let your inner child out. They gave us an experience we will not forget for a long time. We were taught to live in the moment and appreciate every day as a gift we receive again and again.

If you missed out on this wonderful experience and would like to experience this joy and warmth yourself, you have the opportunity every Friday from 15:00 to 17:00 when Lydia leaves for the Prochorus Outreach (signups mandatory). The Prochorus organization is a non-profit organization that aims to help better our society. This is a wonderful opportunity to give back to the community and to do your part in bettering our environment.

At the end of the day, I am not sure who the Social Impact Day had a bigger impact on – us or the children. The experience is a day none of us will ever forget, and it changed us all for the better.



For as long as we can remember, every year the frogs and the doves get together to showcase their respective talents and cement their long-standing friendship. This year's Lydia-Majuba culture evening is not an event we are soon to forget, a chaotic mix of talent and (sometimes intentional) comedy left the audience dreading the night's end.

Between the duets, dances, performances and card tricks, no one was left bored. A broad assortment of Lydia dance groups, including our own House Committee and Mentors, flooded the stage with a few interpretive dance moves. Our mentors showed us what they've got with the Pitch Perfect performance of a lifetime, leaving us questioning "is it all about the money money money?". The HC gave us an ode to the dreaded Hannah Montana with a mashup of Disney songs – a true blast from the past! We

also had the feature of an itty-bitsy spider that, in addition to being able to climb up the water sprout, was really able to bust out some moves! And unforgettably, the performance that cemented our deception, Abi and Matt's heartfelt 'Tangled' duet that left us all texting our exes in a wave of emotion.

But we all knew Lydia had talent, the real question was if Majuba was ready to rise to the challenge. Between rehearsed classics of a synchronised swimming routine and the orchestrated beauty of the iconic 'Pineapple Pen', it's fair to say they did not disappoint. The splash of tradition as the Majuba HC dove into the first semester! The Shakespearean level of wordplay involved in the classic 'Pineapple Pen' brought the audience to tears. The acapella performance of Queen's 'Bohemian Rhapsody', showed the first years of Majuba were not scared of a

little embarrassment in the pursuit of comedy. Not to any surprise, there was also a stunning 'Tequila' display. Who knew eighteen-year-old boys liked tequila!?!

Would it even be a Stellenbosch University event if the night wasn't prolonged by a spontaneous Sokkie? Lydianers were spun off their feet as the first years showed they never wanted the night to end! As the event finally came to a close, we were all bid goodnight with Majuba's extremely nonchalant 'bye'. With our hearts a little warmer, egos a little bruised, and feet a little sore from all the dancing, the first years had sweet dreams of the evening. That is until they were jolted awake by the glorious Hannah Montana!

In all seriousness, in a conversation with Jackie, the HC who was in charge of the evening, I was lucky to get insight into the

history and purpose of the event. It's easy to forget the true reason that Lydia and Majuba came together – to celebrate their long standing friendship, and for the first years to get to know each other better. Jackie said she really tried to make the 2025 culture evening more newcomer-centric, allowing every first year to get involved in any way they chose.

The mentor and HC performances let the newcomers see a new side of them, reminding us that true leadership isn't just about responsibility but it's also about small doses of loving embarrassment.

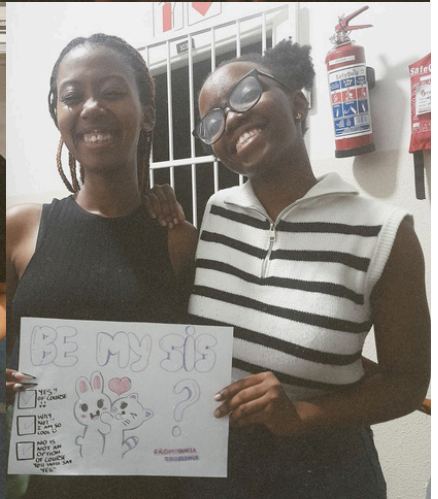
The first years displayed some true vulnerability and character in their plethora of performances. In conclusion, the night was a huge success, uniting the two residences as well as the wonderful humans within them.

Big Sis Lil Sis Report

Madison Roelofse

This term, there was a week set out for Big Sis Lil Sis. During the week, there were events planned out for the seniors and newcomers to connect. On Monday, 10 March, there was speed dating in the coffee hall which gave everyone a chance to familiarize themselves with each other. On Wednesday, 12 March, there was an ice-cream outing at De Vrije Burger. This allowed for everyone to mingle while enjoying a soft serve. On Thursday, 13 March, there was a colouring session, where coffee, creativity and connections were shared. On Friday, 14 March, it was Proposal Day.

The Lydia FUN group was filled with photos of all the proposals. There were big smiles and memories made, that will last a lifetime. Big Sis Lil Sis was a success, as many new sisterships were formed, making Lydia a true home away from home.



Introducing... Lydia's Senior's Committee

Lexi Dames

Introducing Lydia's fantastic, gorgeous, breath-taking, hardworking, astounding, intelligent, and did I say gorgeous... Senior's Committee of 2025!

Firstly, I would like to take a moment to give our Senior's Committee of 2024 a round of applause, and a pat on the back! Shout out to Abigail Larsen, who was the leader of the pack! She made last year incredibly special for all seniors under her leadership. And a mention must be made to all the hardworking girls who made last year sparkle - Rachel Reardon, Jeanne du Toit, Gia Antoni, Madi Roelofse, Beryl Briers-Louw, Karla Delport, Caitlin Soden, Maquerite Winter and my lovely self - Lexi Dames!



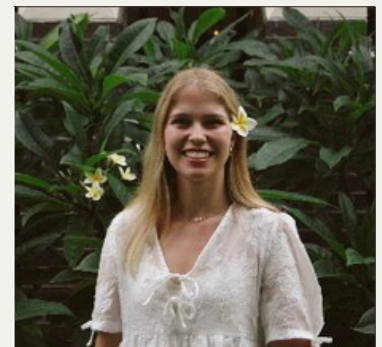
Now, out with the old and in with the new! I am proud to welcome our lovely Lydia's new Senior's Committee.



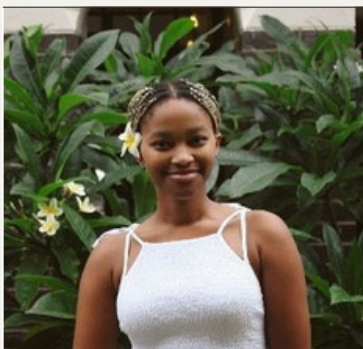
Sadie Geard

I would like to introduce Sadie Geard, the new head of the senior's comm! She is the incredible chairperson with the vision to 'make a positive impact on Lydia this year. Not only do I wish the best for Lydia but create gees, unity and be friendly faces around our house'. Sadie is from Somerset West and is currently studying BData Science, but her plan B is to be a dog mom!

Deahañe Lubbe is the new secretary, and will also be organising the Garden Celebration. (I heard last year they set the bar really high... I definitely did not organise it or anything). She is from Bloemfontein and is studying BScAgric viticulture and oenology. Her plan B is 'Boer Soek ñ Vrou'. Her vision for this year is to 'create a space where we can love and uplift one another. To help each realise our dreams and have some of the most memorable moments in our lives!'



Deahañe Lubbe



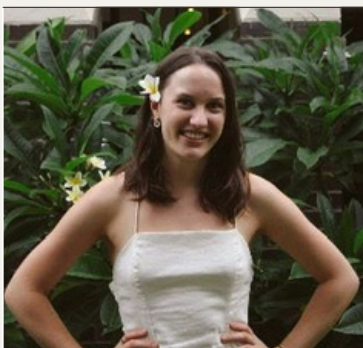
Aqhama Bangazi

Aqhama Bangazi is the new treasurer and will organise the Women's Day event. She is from Jobrezzy and is studying a BSc Conservation Ecology. She has quite a plan B of channeling her 'inner Barbie, marry a rich man, and become a Pilates housewife that raises money for charities'. And her vision is short and sweet: 'sisterhood and love!'

Ella Pope, or my boss for this article, is in charge of the 1953 (well, duh!) and Social Impact. She is our international girlie with her hometown being in Harare, Zimbabwe, and is studying Bcom Actuarial Science. Her plan B is to do art, organise events, and travel! Her vision is to 'ignite and maintain a passion and willingness to participate for those in our awesome res, especially since it seems to dull a bit after the first year. At the end of the day it is OUR home, and also a place where we can grow in many different aspects!'



Ella Pope



Grace Jankowitz

Grace Jankowitz is organising Big Sis Lil Sis and Garden Celebration. She is from Joburg and is studying a BA Humanities. Her plan B aligns with local is lekker as she plans to marry a farmer or SA rugby player. Her vision is to 'be more involved and active in our Residence. To enjoy participating and being apart of fun activities.'

Lindisipho Siwisa is in charge of Big Sis Lil Sis, and Equip Seniors. Her hometown is Gqeberha, and she is studying for her Bacc, and she is really hoping it works out as she has no plan B. She 'wants the seniors to feel both seen and heard so they have pride in being a Lydianer, and [she] wants to bridge the gap between Seniors and newcomers to make Lydia feel more like a home to our seniors (and our newcomers).'



Lindisipho Siwisa

Lara Bornmann will be running Lydia Market and the Woman's Day event. She is from Somerset West and is studying a BSc Human Life Sciences. Her plan B is 'F1 WAG', which is a wife and/or girlfriend of a Formula 1 (race car, vroom vroom, fast fast) driver - I definitely did not Google that. Her vision for this year is 'to connect more with each other'.



Lara Bornmann



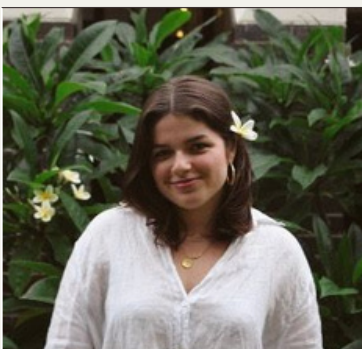
Anoxolo Maqubela

Anoxolo Maqubela is organising this year's Socials and Equip Seniors. Her hometown is Strand, Somerset West and she is studying a BSc Human Life Sciences. And her plan B is to stick to plan A - becoming a doctor. Her vision is 'to see the seniors of Lydia stick together as a family, to make the best of their time here at Lydia and to create an environment that's safe for the new Lydianers to continue upholding the traditions and to feel like Lydia is home for them too!'

Laumari Hawken is in charge of the Senior's Dance and Lydia Market. She is from Potties, Limpopo and is studying Bcom Financial Risk Management. Her plan B is to become a rich house-wife that plays golf and tans. Her vision for this year is to 'become one big friend group / sisters who support, love and hype each other up in everything we do with GROOT GEES!'



Laumari Hawken



Loré de Kock

Loré de Kock is studying Bcom law- cue in the 'Suits' intro- and has the portfolio of socials. She is also from abroad, in Bermuda (yes, as in the triangle), but lived in South Africa before!

What an incredible team! We are excited to see what you do next. Remember to say hi to all these gorgeous girls in the halls.

Newcomer's Committee 2025:

Fresh faces, fresh ideas

Neha Simran Moodley

The Newcomer's Committee is created every year from the new batch of first years. This year we have a stunning lineup of 10 girls ready to make a change and represent their fellow first years.

Look forward to exciting events such as the Newcomer's Dance and Miss Lydia. The committee is prioritizing the newcomer's relations with our Lydia Seniors, as well as wellness and social impact. The girls are also hard at work organizing socials inside and outside of Lydia. They will also have a stall at the Lydia Market, so please come support!

Ultimately, the Newcomer's Committee is excited to get to know one another and give the 2025 Lydia Newcomers a first year to remember!

Get to know the members:



Nadia Kruger



From: George
Degree: BCom International Business
Portfolios: Chairperson
Fun Fact: I love (and miss) beach day adventures and spontaneous side quests.

Heike Muller



From: Swakopmund,
Namibia
Degree: BAccounting
Portfolios: Treasurer &
Senior Relations

Kara Swanepoel



From: Mokopane
Degree: BAccounting
Portfolios: Socials & Senior
Relations
Fun Fact: I never have to
stand on my toes!

Neha Simran Moodley



From: Durban
Degree: BCom International
Business
Portfolios: Socials & Miss
Lydia
Fun fact: I haven't grown
any taller since Grade 6...
still waiting.

Kate Shapiro



From: Stellenbosch
Degree: BCom International
Business
Portfolios: Newcomer's
Dance & Wellness
Fun Fact: I used to have a
hamster named Mochi and
I've never been to Finland.

Minke Gouw



From: Stellenbosch
Degree: Industrial
Engineering
Portfolios: Newcomers
Dance & Miss Lydia
Fun Fact: I enjoy going for a
run in my free time. My goal
is to run five 21km races
before 21 (3 down, 2 to go.)

Lisa Louw



From: Stellenbosch
Degree: BAccounting
Portfolios: Newcomer's
Dance & Wellness
Fun Fact: I am a coffee
freak!!

Chelsy Rickard*From:* George*Degree:* BCom International Business*Portfolios:* Newcomer's Dance & Social Impact*Fun Fact:* My life motto is "do life BIG!"*Name: Anika Heles**From:* Stellenbosch*Degree:* BCom Industrial Psychology*Portfolios:* Secretary & Social Impact*Fun Fact:* I thought I would be a professional rhythmic gymnast when I was little.*Reese Watson**From:* Mossel Bay*Degree:* BCom Law*Portfolios:* Media & Marketing*Fun Fact:* My goal is to own Barbie's whole wardrobe (life-size, of course) and to have a house with an art and sewing workshop.

Lydia week

Lala Dames

In order to demonstrate our padda power™, Lydia held a spirit week from the 3rd to the 8th of March, which made our lovely Lydianers wear their house pride on their sleeves (metaphorically and literally), and participate in fun activities. The Lydianers really showed up this week, dressing on theme each day and posting on their section group which gained points per section in the Lydia week intersectionals (You have to wait to the end to find out the winner).

Day 1 :

Monday was Merch Madness! Meaning that the Lydianers had to wear merch from other residences and PSOs, the more the better. The girls with boyfriends in a res did have an upper hand advantage, but the Lydianers still pulled through, making the whole of Campus very confused in the process. I wore the merch from my old PSO (which I was in before getting into Lydia) and someone asked if I was going to the Aristeia House Funds Dance :[] Anyways... In the evening Lydia held a poster making session to show off the Lydianers artistic skills, and it was a chance to chat and socialise with the other girls. After that we held a spirit session, which I'm sure woke up the whole of the Vicmeyer cluster.



Day 2:

Tuesday was "Dress as Your Type". Again the girlyies with boyfriends had the upper hand here. But, again, the Lydianers were going all out. All I'm going to say is that there was probably some more confusion by people on campus. I showed my love for the British by wearing a Union Jack top that was wayyyyyyy to tight. The boere, the British, the f-boys, the cowboys, the boys who walk barefoot on campus, were all represented by the Lydianers. That night we had a culture evening with the (surprisingly) very harmonious Helssssssssshooooogggtteeeee! EJ REPRESENT! We had amazing performances from the Lydianers. The talented ladies were: The HC team who did a nostalgic mash-up dance, Jenique Kiewitz and Madison Roelofse who danced down, Lala Dames (That's me!) who played the guitar and sang "The Chain" by Fleetwood Mac, Andiswa Mapahga who sang "Location" by Khalid, Alicia Nxumalo who sang a beautiful acapella song, and Emma van der Merve who played a wonderful duet with (non-Lydianer) Daniel Van Zyl-Smit.

Helshoogte also really shone at the culture evening, with multiple different bands performing (too many to keep count of). There was even basically a mini concert by the band GSTRiNG. And EJ playing the Vuvuzela. Helshoogte was actually bursting with talent. Helshoogte was also filled with many options for dates to the House Fund Dance, as our HC Alexa (in the middle of the culture evening) asked all those who applied for the Blind date auction to state their case to be a date for a lovely Lydianer. This was also for the Lydianers to get more hyped for the excitement on Thursday.

Day 3:

Wednesday was “We Wear Merch”. Now we can actually wear our wonderful merch. And, as expected, the Lydianers went over the top to show their Lydia pride, with some girls painting themselves with green paint, painting the town green before the other Lydianers did that night. That evening we had cluster bumper night which was grilling inter cluster volleyball, netball and hockey. Then the rest of Lydia painted the town green, going around campus chanting and spreading padda power™.



Day 4:

On Thursday Lydia went back in time with dressing Y2K. However, there was a weird infection going around Lydia. The symptoms were: randomly hitting the dis-knees, singing “Who SAID, I can’t wear my CONVERSE!” uncontrollably, believing you are the lead of a Disney original movie, and thinking that dresses over jeans is a good look. I might still be affected by this disease, because I slayed in my dress over jeans. That night we had the HFD Auction. The Stakes were high. The options, overwhelming! The popcorn, delicious! Some of the eligible bachelors had bidding wars, the others... shame. But it was a fun event that got us more excited about the HFD the following week.

Day 5:

Friday’s theme was everything but a bag. And yoh, getting my guitar through the small lecture rows wasn’t the most fun. Girls brought to campus trolleys, crates, plants, and even their friends to be their bag for the day. But I think the best “not a bag” was Reece Watson with a Checkers 60/60 Bike as her bag. That night Lydia held a Karaoke night in the coffee hall, where the girlyies showed off their amazing singing skills.

The final day: on Saturday the theme was “collective accessory” with all the Lydianers wearing all the green accessories they could find. That day all the points of Lydianers participation over the week were calculated and the winning section was announced at the closing ceremony. And the winner was... drumroll please.... Nocturnal with 83 points! Lydia week was a fun opportunity for the Lydianers to show our house pride, dress as wildly as we wanted, and bond with other Lydianers.

Lydia week isn’t just to show other res’s that we are the best -which we obviously are- it is to make our sisterhood stronger and make fond memories that we can look back on once we leave our wonderful home, Lydia.



Lydia House fund dance : Auction

Alexa Barnard

Hair, makeup, outfit... What am I missing? A DATE!

Don't worry, the Dance Committee had you covered for HFD ;))

The Dance Committee came up with the idea to do a blind date auction to ensure no Lydianer would be lonely at HFD – and in my opinion, they delivered!

After sending out the application forms to communities like Huis Marais, Helshoogte, Simonsberg, Majuba, Dagbreek, Helderberg, Metanoia, Aurora, Eendrag and more, we waited anxiously for the number of applicants to grow. After casting the magic love spell, we received just over 200 applicants (enter EJ sticker: almal soek 'n stukkie Lydia)!

All interested Lydianers (and those who just wanted to see their friends possibly find their soulmates (okay, okay, I know... Alexa, that was a bit too far-fetched)) came to the enchanted Coffee Hall to view the worthy soldiers who signed up to meet their princesses (insert "A girl worth fighting for" song from Mulan here). They received an auction paddle, with what they hoped to be their lucky number, to use throughout the evening if someone, or something, caught their eye.

Before we started with the handsome suitors, we auctioned off some memorabilia from previous dances held at Lydia over the years. The oldest was the final memento of the 2017 Lydia House Dance – a wine glass. From the same year, a few remaining shot glasses from the First Years' Dance were also sold. Paddles shot up at the chance to own one of these stunning glasses. Soon, we only had a few left (these can still be bought from me (Alexa) if you're interested!).

Now, finally, for the moment everyone was waiting for... who would find their Prince Charming?

We started with the older gentlemen who had quite a few eager bidders shooting up their paddles as soon as the auctioneer mentioned their starting bid. One after the other, dates were stolen right out from under somebody else. Friendships were tested as Leonard Davies' application came onto the screen. Gia, keeping her head in the game, raised her paddle, but soon, someone from the back challenged her and entered the ring. The battle for Leonard continued until R140. Who was left with their paddle up in the air, you ask?

The proud winner was Miss Gia Antoni! Sadly, Leonard eventually couldn't make it, but wasn't that nail-biting?

We moved between the fourth, third and second years, with famous names like Tsepo, Tim and Sakkie getting snatched as dates. Finally, arriving at the long-anticipated first years. Girls moved to the edges of their seats, waiting for their suitor's name to appear on the screen. Soon, Stephen won Abi's heart after fighting off a dragon and Schalk rode in on a white horse to grab Juané's attention.

The evening came to an end, with many girls finding their soon-to-be princes! Should this be an annual thing? Well, we'll have to wait and see who found love and whose date turned into a frog (but not worthy of Princess Slympie).

Love,
Match-making-Cupid,
Alexa





Lydia House fund dance : Disney duos

Alexa Barnard

'What time is it? U gotta, Get'cha get'cha head in the game...' Oh, wait, wrong song!

'What time is it? Party time! The time of our lives!'

This is a true description of our Disney-themed House Fund Dance (HFD) that took place on 11 March at Dorp! The party started within Lydia, as Lydianers got ready together and revealed to their friends their Disney-themed outfits that they had been planning for weeks.

As people were ready to leave, they made their way to the front door where their dates were patiently waiting in their coordinated outfits. Rats & chefs, Rapunzel & Flynn (or green Pascals), Minnie & Mickey, and Princes & Princesses united to start their magical walk to the fairytale castle (I apologise that I have to describe Dorp like this).

As they arrived at the doors, they were greeted by Lumière, from Beauty and the Beast, who ticked their names off his scroll. The red carpet led upstairs where they could use their enchanted parchment to collect a delicious potion from the bar. Afterwards, they found thrones to sit on and start chatting with all the royal guests.

Photos were taken, friends were made, and the only thing missing were the ballroom activities. People soon started to make their way to the dancefloor. The song 'Shut up and Dance' caused dance battles to break out, Abba songs turned into karaoke and Kurt Darren turned the whole dancefloor into a sokkie stage!

The music, people and atmosphere transformed this into a magical evening for all to enjoy (those who had more potions enjoyed it more than others). HFD definitely set the bar for the rest of the dances this year, and we cannot wait for more – starting with Seniors Dance on 15 April!

Thank you to everyone who brought a big smile, amazing attitude, exceptional outfits and dancing shoes! We loved that everyone could have a night together without any academic worries.

I'll see you on the next dance floor (this time hopefully with no rats)!

Love,
Dance HC,
Alexa

A First-Year Journey:

Navigating the First Term as a BCom International Business Student at Stellenbosch University

Neha Simran Moodley

The transition from high school to university is an exciting yet daunting experience for any student, especially when moving to a new city. For a first-year BCom International Business student from Durban, the first term at Stellenbosch University was a whirlwind of emotions, challenges and growth. Settling into a girls' residence, adapting to a new academic system, and embracing student life have all been part of this transformative journey.

Arrival and Orientation

The journey began with an emotional farewell to my family and the scenic flight from Durban to Cape Town, followed by an equally scenic drive to the historic town of Stellenbosch. The University felt huge and daunting! Initially, I felt insignificant in this big sea of students, each living their own life. Moving into a girls' residence – meeting my new roommate, decorating a small but cozy room and quickly learning the ins and outs of res life – was both thrilling and nerve-wracking.

Our two weeks of orientation were packed with activities designed to help us settle in, make friends, and familiarize ourselves with campus culture. The seniors were incredibly friendly and I immediately felt so welcomed. Some of my highlights were our social

impact day and cluster athletics day. I wanted to participate in the athletics just to represent VicMeyr, but somehow ended up running the 100-, 300- and 600-meter races... While I was not necessarily the fastest runner, the girls of Lydia were supportive all the way through it and that made me feel a lot better.

Another highlight was Vensters (Connect). It was scary to audition for an acting role in front of so many new people – but I made it! Funnily enough, I've actually been recognised a few times as the girl who ran around on stage with the red cape. It was such an amazing experience and as someone who wants to work in the arts someday (yet I'm studying a BCom degree), it was so exciting to discover ways to still be involved in culture.

Academic Challenges and Adjustments

The academic aspect of university life is an immediate shift from the structured environment of high school. Lectures are either very far apart or so back-to-back that you don't even get a lunch break. At university, it requires much more discipline to show up to lectures and self-study the content.

Time management becomes crucial as assignments, tests and group projects start piling up – there's something due every week. Any degree can feel overwhelming at first, but there are multiple channels of support such as interactive tutorials that can help with this. For BCom International Business students, one of these support channels is the Society of International Business (which had a beautiful and informative opening function this term).

Residence Committees, Extracurriculars and Social Adjustments

Beyond academics, participating in extracurricular activities helps balance the workload and enriches the university experience. I'm playing volleyball (and somehow ended up as VicMeyr Cluster's volleyball representative) and this offers a great way to stay active, relieve stress and bond with new teammates. Additionally, getting involved in res committees provides opportunities to develop leadership skills, organize events and contribute to residence life. One of the committees I'm part of is the 1953! I also wrote the script and did some choreography for Molassasêr, so please come support your fellow Lydianers at our performance! In my biased opinion, you won't be disappointed.

On the academic side, I was also voted class representative for my Business Management 113 class, and we had a lovely introductory session with the EBSK where I got to meet the committee members

as well as representatives from different modules and year groups. It does feel like I'm all over the place – it's definitely been busy – but it has been awesome so far!

Finding Balance and Growth

By the end of the first term, homesickness still persists, but Stellenbosch is starting to become a second home. The experience of managing independence, forming new friendships, balancing academics with extracurriculars and maintaining an active social life has taught me invaluable lessons in adaptability and resilience. The first term may have been challenging, but it has set the foundation for a fulfilling and successful university journey, and I can't believe it's already over!

For any student embarking on this path, the key is to embrace every experience – both the highs and the lows – because each one contributes to growth. Stellenbosch offers an enriching and dynamic environment where every first-year student can thrive, and I'm so looking forward to what lies ahead!

Must-Visit Restaurants in Stellenbosch

Madison Roelofse

Living in Stellenbosch isn't just about the stunning mountain views and academic hustle—it's also about the amazing food! Whether you're grabbing a quick bite or celebrating a special occasion, this town is home to some seriously heart-warming restaurants that you've got to try. So grab your tea, kick back, and let's dive into the best spots Stellenbosch has to offer!

One of my absolute favourites is **Rome in a Bite**. If you're after a cozy atmosphere with authentic Italian pizza and pasta, this is the place to be. Picture yourself under fairy lights, serenaded by opera singers while you enjoy your meal outside. It's an experience you won't forget!

Another gem is **De Warenmarkt**. This Stellenbosch hotspot offers a diverse menu with something for everyone, all at prices that are surprisingly reasonable for an upscale eatery. Whether you're there for a relaxed lunch with friends, a birthday dinner, or just to grab a drink, you can't go wrong. And trust me, their Wagyu beef burger is a must-try—it's a game changer!

For those burger lovers out there, **Oudewerf Hotel** serves up a famous burger that's both delicious and affordable. Add in the beautiful interior and excellent service, and you've got a dining experience worth every bite.

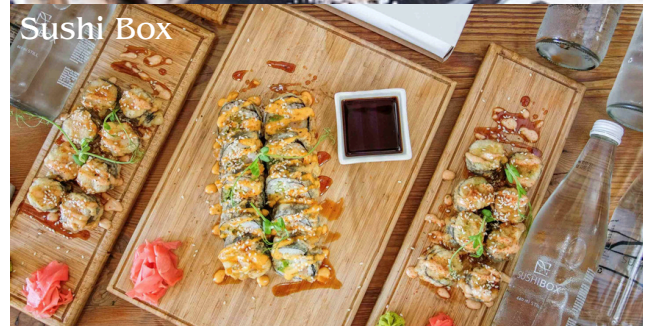
If you're looking for something a little off the beaten path, check out **Sushi Box**. This place serves fresh, divine sushi, and their crispy prawn roll with homemade lemonade is a winning combo. The service is top-notch, with an accommodating staff ready to make your meal enjoyable.

Now, let's talk about **Fat Butcher**. Yes, it's on the pricier side, but the mouth-watering steaks are totally worth it. If you're on a budget, their beef burger is a great option too. And whatever you do, save room for dessert—their brownies are legendary. Seriously, I'm craving one right now!

If you're a fan of Brash or Smasht but don't live in Cape Town, **Stud Burger** should definitely be on your radar. They offer a



Fat Butcher



Sushi Box



Stud Burger

a dine-in special that's cheaper than takeaway, and their double patty burger is pure perfection. The ratio of bun to patty is just right.

Lastly, the classic **De Vrije Burger** deserves a mention. The juicy patty and fresh bun combo is a showstopper, and don't even think about skipping the crispy fries. They're the perfect side to your burger, guaranteed to leave you satisfied.

So, I hope your tea is finished and your shoes are on, because after reading this, you're definitely going to want to explore all these incredible spots. I hope my reviews have both warmed your wallet and your palate, and maybe even inspired you to become Stellenbosch's next greatest foodie (because I'm definitely working on it)!

Sipping Stories :

The perfect pairing of books and wine in Stellenbosch

Mia Bredell

If Stellenbosch had a personality, it would be the friend with a bottle of Shiraz in their bag and a dog-eared annotated novel in their back pocket. For years Stellenbosch has been the place where students can debate their academic choices while still finding time to read bad literature and drink cheap wine. But where did this reading and wine culture come from?

After its discovery in 1679, Stellenbosch became famous among the Dutch for its rich soil and climate, which was the ideal environment to quench the wine-loving settlers' thirst. Stellenbosch quickly transformed into the picturesque vineyard-filled hills that we know and love today. By 1971 Stellenbosch became the first South African region to establish a wine route, which really emphasizes the deep love affair that Stellies has with wine.

Writers have long turned to wine for inspiration. Hemingway had his whiskey, Fitzgerald his gin, and Stellenbosch writers a half-empty bottle of Pinotage. For decades book societies and clubs have gathered at wine farms and tastings to discuss their latest literary experiences. Although the act of sharing books and wine with other people just feels right, the benefits are supported through real science, believe it or not. Studies have shown that sharing a glass of wine is linked to various health-benefits, while book clubs foster stronger social connections. Therefore (according to science) when paired together it's a killer combo.

The art of pairing books and wine can seem tricky at first, but remember practice makes perfect...😊

Cabernet Sauvignon: intense, bold, and intellectually rich, *The Secret History* by Donna Tart will unfold perfectly with a full-bodied red Cab Sauv with its dark fruit flavours.

Merlot: Sally Rooney's smoothly written *Intermezzo* filled with miscommunication, love and complex



human relationships perfectly embodies the velvety tannins and effortlessly smooth Merlot.

Bordeaux Blend: *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy is a novel with emotional intensity, and its passionate, unique romantic relationship pair perfectly with the blended grape varietals which reflect the layered storytelling.

Sauvignon Blanc: crisp and airy, with herbaceous flavours the Sauvignon Blanc relates to the underlying tale of *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Both are elegant and will leave you thinking long after they are finished.

Chenin Blanc: *The Year of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion is a reflection of grief that will have you reaching for tissues while continuously smiling at Didion's telling of fond memories. This versatility is complemented through the Chenin Blanc which can range from crisp and dry to rich and honeyed.

Chardonnay: An oaked Chardonnay with its richer and creamier profile mirrors the melancholic undertones that shifts to moments of brightness, in *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath.

Rosé: With its refreshing, bright, fruity flavours Rosé is the perfect pairing with the feel-good, light hearted romantic novel, *Better than the Movies* by Lynn Painter. Perfect for an uplifting read.

Grapetizer: The whimsical fizziness of a non-alcoholic Grapetizer is reflected in the journey down the rabbit hole in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll.

Whether enjoying a robust Shiraz or simply sticking with a Grapetizer, books and wine have the ability to transport us to a different world one page/sip at a time. Remember, in Stellenbosch, the pairing of wine and literature isn't just a pastime, it's a lifestyle. Cheers to the perfect pairing!

Not another study guide...

Anika Meissenheimer

Listen up Lydia, our A1's are in progress and we all need a bit of motivations during this trying time. Luckily you have your Lydianer Sisters backing and motivating you all the way.

You may be feeling uncertain and you feel that you want to give up, but one of my favourite quotes by John Lennon state, "Everything will be okay in the end, and if it is not okay it is not the end". Don't ever lose hope and keep pushing, your future self will thank you.

To help guide you, your Senior Sisters are lending a helping hand by sharing some of their wisdom they have gained throughout their university experience:

A reoccurring favourite study spot: The bib! What could be better than being surrounded by billions of books? The library is quiet, ideal for those late-night cram sessions, and most importantly, free Wi-Fi and no distractions! It gives "silent disco vibes", everyone is too distracted with their own work to bother you. No noisy neighbours, just you and your notes, and the occasional 'shh' from the librarian (who is secretly your study Guardian Angel). Pro tip, if you fall asleep during your study cram, just pretend that you are meditating between study sessions, the bib won't judge. It's seen worse. The library is your study BFF—no drama, all focus, and endless opportunities to become the main character of your academic story.

Feeling peckish during those study sessions? The seniors have your back. Tauniscia Witbooi and Rachel-Elizabeth Reardon share their go-to snack. For Rachel

its peanuts and for Tauniscia the occasionally Jungle Oats are there to keep her on the go when studying. Alexa Barnard and Jenique Kiewitz have a little guilty pleasure: any sweet treat, is there as motivation. Don't worry girls, you are not alone in that department! Your brain is a calorie-burning machine when studying. Snacking provides a supply of energy, preventing that dreaded mid-study crash. Let's face it, exams are tough, and snacks are comforting. A well-timed treat can lift your spirits and keep you motivated to tackle that next chapter.

You are stressed and need a mood booster, what do you do? Listen to your favourite energizing song, of course! Whether they are listening to Worship music, a bit of Disney, the Hamilton or How to Train your Dragon soundtrack, the girls are keeping their spirits high and ready to tackle any exam. Your favourite playlist can light a fire under your study game. Music activates the brain's reward centres, making even the duller topics feel slightly less torturous. It's like promising yourself pizza but with beats instead of cheese. Feeling sluggish? Upbeat music can give you an energy boost, turning your study session into a mini dance party (chair dancing counts). So, plug in those headphones and let the music turn your exam prep into a blockbuster montage scene. Just remember: no singing out loud in the library!

See the words swimming on the pages? You need a break! Well, grab your popcorn, Tehilla Milne recommends watching some Netflix to unwind. Can't argue with that logic! Lara Bornmann has an idea we can all get

behind: take a well-deserved nap. Nothing energizes the mind like a good power nap. Naps make you a memory ninja. So, the next time you feel sleepy while studying, don't fight it, embrace the nap! It's science-approved and way better than staring blankly at your notes while dreaming of sleep anyway. Lindisipho Siwisa recommends a good dance party to lift your spirit. Don't let those pesky exams get you down in the dumps, crank those tunes. If you like a more physical approach, Ency Tema and Lize van Zyl-Smit have got you covered. They recommend going for a walk/run along the river. Nothing beats taking a walk in the nature to get the creative juices flowing. Research shows that spending time in nature reduces stress and anxiety. Think of it as Mother Nature's way of saying, "Relax, you've got this!" So, lace up your sneakers, hit the nearest park, and let the magic of nature turn your exam prep into a walk in the park, literally!

While they themselves might still be figuring things out, the girls recommend staying strong in your religion. Have faith and stand strong in the foundations of your religion. Make sure to get enough sleep, try not to stare at your screen too much. Studies show

that even the mere presence of your phone reduces your brainpower. It's like your brain sees the phone and says, "Cool, I'll take a break now"—not ideal when you're trying to cram for an exam. With your phone nearby, you might accidentally become a gold medallist in scrolling through TikTok or watching cooking videos instead of studying. (Spoiler alert: knowing how to make soufflé probably won't help on your next big A1). Keep yourself accountable, set up a study schedule that leaves enough time for "Me-Time". This will help you feel more on top of your studies. Find study methods that work for you and FOCUS IN CLASS! When you focus in class, your brain is already doing the heavy lifting of understanding concepts. It's like pre-loading your mental hard drive so you don't have to cram later. Plus, you'll avoid that awkward "Wait, we learned this?" moment during the test.

Remember, studying isn't about being perfect, it's about showing up, laughing at your mistakes, and occasionally bribing your brain with snacks. So go forth, conquer those exams, and when you're done, treat yourself to something epic (like a nap, a pizza, or a victory dance in your pajamas). And like Dory said, "Just keep swimming"!

How to Recover, Recoup, and Reconquer

Ella Pope

Lecture, study, A1. Study, lecture, A1. A1, study, lecture, rinse and repeat. It's tiring, isn't it? And among all this stress and the mountains of work, sitting back and relaxing seems like freedom at the end of a life sentence. Yet we need it. We are humans, not programmable machines that only stop when something is broken. So, in the golden light of recess, let us consider how you can recover, recoup, and reconquer this next term.

At any given hour of the day, I guarantee you will find someone running, at the gym, or doing some form of exercise in Stellenbosch. There are many motives for people to work out, but a very valid one is stress relief. Yes, people want to maintain the 'summer bod', or are training, but exercising is also an effective way to blow off steam. Some might argue a jog, for example, only makes them forget about studies, because you are gasping for air so much, that the thought of an exam pops out of your head. However, at the end of the day, our bodies are made to be mobile and active. That's not to say you must train for a marathon, but even an amble around Coetzenberg could do you a world of good.

Secondly, taking effective study breaks is an underrated method of recovery. It is all very well and good to take a 15-minute study break, but if you are scrolling on Instagram, I fear you are not truly giving yourself the rest you need. I know it is difficult, and I too need to listen to my own advice, but if your mind doesn't recover in that time, then when you do go back to the books, you will find that you are less productive than you could be. Alternatively, you could go outside, smell the Frangipanis – if that floats your boat – or talk to a friend. Stepping outside in the sun and fresh air, or getting a snack of some sort (a tried and trusted method of mine) can also help calm the cogs whirring in your mind. Additionally, ensuring that your studying itself is productive will mean your pauses are more meaningful.

Socialising and changing your scenery is also beneficial when you want to take a longer break. It is necessary to let the steam out of the pressure cooker. I can attest that after a long time with your nose in your books, it is enriching to go out for an hour or two and cool off. Perhaps a jug (or two) at de Lapa is what you need, or twirling around a Kruis Kerk Sokkie dancefloor, or going to church. Whatever it may be that tickles your fancy, it is worthwhile to get out, or else you might find that you begin to really resent studying. Even if you only alternate your work spot, and migrate from the Bib to the Jan Mouton, or the Botanical Gardens, or to the floor of your room, it is doing you well. We are social beings, don't hermit yourself away in a bubble; live life, breathe air (I know somehow we're gonna get there), and clear your mind.

Recollecting, reviewing and recouping your thoughts will also help you detangle the jumble of your brain. Even a skyscraper appears small from a large enough distance, and often looking at your heap of work up close is far more intimidating than when you take a step back and assess it. Reflecting on what you have done and how it can later be improved on is important, and aids you in becoming more efficient in the future. I often find that the beginning of a semester is hard because you are learning how to tackle each different module, all from different angles. How I did maths last year isn't the same as now, but I had to review what I was doing to reach that conclusion.

Lastly, write a list! Set small, achievable study goals for each module. Map out what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, and the direness of the deadline. A clear mental picture or a precise, written-down list can help you visualise what you must do and can lessen the load, or make it seem more digestible. Furthermore, long-term goals are like a carrot hung before a horse – they can motivate you to keep pushing. I'm not sure about you, but seeing all the graduates the other day put life into perspective for me, and helped me realise that there is in fact a light at the end of the tunnel. Let yourself see what you want to achieve, and then the drive to do it will come.

We were never told our degrees would be easy; good things come from hard work. You will go through rough terrains, pleasant valleys, and steep ascents that seem never-ending, but there is a sunlit summit to this dreaded mountain with the most amazing, jaw-dropping view; you just have to ask yourself if you want to see it.

What is going on in the real world? – Current Affairs 2025

Danielle Van Eeden

As a student in the beautiful town of Stellenbosch—where there's always something to keep you busy, from classes and exams to dances, sports, and friends—it's easy to forget that a world exists beyond the horizon of vineyards. Furthermore, living in Lydia means constantly being immersed in a whirlwind of events, internal politics, and community successes (or failures), making it easy to get completely swept up in the student bubble.

Consequently, you may feel uninformed and out of touch with important global news. As the first quarter of 2025 ends, this article will provide you with an overview of some of the most significant recent events that you should know about. And yes, this is a much better alternative to Instagram, which, much to the dismay of anyone who values reliable, factual information, seems to be becoming the most popular news source of our generation.

South Africa – tension between SA and the USA

In recent months there has been growing tension between South Africa and the United States, primarily sparked by South Africa's Expropriation Act. Signed into law by President Cyril Ramaphosa in January, the Act expands government powers to acquire and redistribute land. U.S. President Donald Trump has strongly condemned the Act, alongside other South African government actions, labelling them as "massive" human rights violations and "racial discrimination", targeting white Afrikaners. Taking further action, Trump signed an executive order suspending foreign aid to South Africa, also citing South Africa's stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict as a factor in these sanctions. Of particular concern are the cuts to foreign aid,

as they pose a significant threat to the ongoing HIV/AIDS treatment programs in South Africa, which depend heavily on U.S. assistance.

Tensions between South Africa and the United States escalated in March when Trump's administration expelled South Africa's ambassador, Ebrahim Rasool. This came after Rasool made comments criticizing the white supremacist elements within the MAGA (Make America Great Again) movement. In response, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio called Rasool a "race-baiting politician" who "hates America", ultimately declaring him "persona non grata" (person not welcome). Rasool has since returned to South Africa.

More on America – what is going on with Trump... and Elon Musk?

Firstly, in case you missed it last year, Donald Trump won the 2024 General Election and was officially sworn in as the President of the United States for the second time on January 20th, 2025. This has caused significant political conflict, both within the U.S. and globally.

Secondly, talk of Elon Musk seems to be inescapable lately, which might have you wondering: why is he so involved in everything, and what on earth is he doing? First off, since January this year, Musk has been a senior advisor to Trump, which is why he has been so involved in politics. On top of that, Trump has appointed him as head of DOGE – the Department of Government Efficiency. The fact that the richest man alive has been amidst top government discussions and decisions has been highly controversial.

An update on the Russia-Ukraine war

The current Russo-Ukrainian war has now been ongoing for 1128 days, since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, escalating the conflict that had been present since 2014. There have been constant political and military developments, and although there have been many attempts at brokering peace, significant challenges remain. According to estimates, at least 700,000 Russian soldiers, and 400,000 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed or injured.

Another key moment that has been widespread online is the Oval Office meeting between Trump and Zelensky (President of Ukraine), in which the leaders discussed what further steps will be taken with the Ukraine/Russia war. The meeting was very confrontational, resulting in no clear agreements signed, and the U.S. suspending aid to Ukraine for a week until they agreed to a temporary 30-day ceasefire.

An update on the Israel-Palestine war

The current conflict has now been ongoing since October 2023, although the broader Israel/Palestine conflict has been active for many decades. In Gaza, where most of the Israeli attacks have been concentrated, there have been over 60,000 estimated casualties.

On January 19th, 2025, a ceasefire was agreed upon after months of negotiation between the U.S., Qatar and Egypt. The first stage of the 3-stage plan involved releasing hostages and supplying aid to Gaza, among other agreed goals. The second stage was supposed to involve the establishment of a permanent ceasefire, and the third stage would entail the eventual reconstruction of Gaza. The 2nd and 3rd stages have not happened, and after the official expiration of the ceasefire on March 18th, airstrikes have continued.

More on conflict

The civil war in Sudan, which began in April

2023, between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) is ongoing. The conflict has led to significant casualties, displacement, and a humanitarian crisis. The situation remains highly volatile, with ongoing military engagements and a critical need for humanitarian assistance.

In January 2025, violent clashes between Congolese security forces and the M23 rebel group escalated. M23 seized control of Goma, a key city in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), near the Rwandan border. With one million people fleeing the country and 21 million in desperate need of humanitarian aid, the DRC is grappling with one of the world's most severe and deadly crises.

Other interesting headlines

American commercial aerospace company Firefly, successfully landed on the moon on March 2nd. It was an unmanned landing, but nevertheless a significant achievement.

On March 4, 2025, Colossal Biosciences announced the creation of woolly mice through genetic editing, as part of efforts to revive traits of the extinct woolly mammoth, sparking discussions on the ethical and ecological implications of such endeavours.

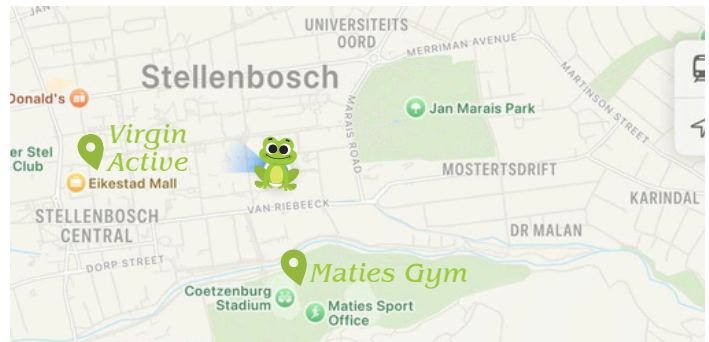
At the Grammys in February, Kendrick Lamar won Record of the Year with his song "Not Like Us". Following the Grammys, the film "Anora" won the Best Picture Oscar in March.

DeepSeek, a Chinese AI start-up, caused a stir in the tech world in January with its latest model, DeepSeek R1, which supposedly rivals the technology of OpenAI (ChatGPT) while being far cheaper to run.

That's all for now! Keep reading the news (from reliable sources). To make a positive difference in the world, we must first be informed on what is going on.

The Battle of the Gyms: Maties Gym vs Virgin Active

Kate Shapiro



There are few things worse than your fitness journey being stunted by the paralysis of indecision about where to work out. I took the liberty to visit both gyms, get a tour and ask a few questions. So, let's let the gyms speak for themselves. Where do they stand on key factors such as accessibility, pricing and quality?

For students, the most significant factor when choosing a gym is affordability. Maties Gym offers a relatively budget-friendly option, only charging R459 per month (including the 15% student discount), and if you're a part of Maties Sport, it's only R432 a month. Conversely, Virgin Active comes in at a whopping R1400 per month for access to only the Stellenbosch branch and R1570 for access to any of their locations across South Africa. They also offer an off-peak membership that allows access between 8am and 4pm on weekdays and anytime on weekends for R1060 per month. However, the price of Virgin Active goes down considerably if you're with Discovery Health Insurance, reducing the cost by a whole 50%. Moreover, being with Discovery and being between the ages of 18 and 23 brings your cost all the way down to R390 a month.

In respect to location, both gyms are a 15-minute walk from our lovely Lydia, making them equally accessible. However, the walk to Maties is along a more rural route for those who need their fresh air, whereas Virgin is located in central Stellenbosch which is better for those who want to be in the bustle of town.

The atmosphere of a gym is also vital in keeping your motivation up and heavily impacts your overall experience. Maties boasts expansive glass windows and mesmerising views of the mountains, making it a scenic escape from the hustle and bustle of Stellies. Conversely, Virgin is not nearly as light filled and airy but does have spectacular views of the Coetzenburg Mountains on the upper level.

When it comes to classes, both gyms offer a huge variety of workouts. Maties provides classes such as aqua fitness, HIIT, spinning, Yoga, Hyrox, mat Pilates and aerial Yoga. Virgin also offers classes such as aqua fitness, boxing, dancing/Zumba, strength and conditioning, and Yoga. Note that neither of these are the complete lists of classes they offer. Visit their respective websites for more information.

Importantly, no Virgin Active member will speak about their membership without mentioning the plethora of perks that Virgin offers when you meet your movement goals for the week. Active members get access to a rewards system where they can earn a weekly free smoothie from Kauai, protein powders, pre-workout shakes, or a free sneaker clean.

Ultimately, your decision of which gym to join will depend on your priorities. If you like a more rural atmosphere at a more accessible price point, Maties is for you. However, if you have Discovery Health Insurance and want a more central location then Virgin may be the better choice. Wherever you choose to go, you'll still exchange those awkward smiles and nods with people you met during welcoming whose names you can't remember. So... maybe just go for a run?

Which bar/club in Stellenbosch are you?

Jacqueline Swart

Living in Stellenbosch requires a serious set of navigation skills. You need to know your way to the best coffee shops, the Van Der Sterr entrances and which places to go when you hit the town.

You can't consider yourself a true Stellenbosch student if you haven't spent the whole day attending lectures (or not – in my case, not) and then get convinced by your friends at 6pm to get ready to go to NuBar. After saying 'no' 50 times, you finally cave in and only get back at 2am with blisters on your feet.

This has happened to me multiple times. In fact, I am often the one doing the convincing and not the saying 'no'. But while most of my friends are dancing their hearts out, I find myself thinking, pondering, questioning, contemplating... If I were any of these going-out-places, which one would I be???

After doing an extensive amount of research and fieldwork in the nightlife I think I have finally figured out what personality each bar or club has.

NuBar

If you were Nubar, you would be the type to be fashionably late but immediately become the centre of attention. You are most likely Afrikaans and are always able to convince someone to stay for a little bit longer even when you swore you were leaving. You are a massive extrovert, a victim of FOMO and slightly chaotic and reckless.

Star sign: Sagittarius

De Lapa

De Lapa matches the type of the wild card friend – super hyped and a little too loud. You may be a little embarrassing but in an iconic way. You make reckless decisions and probably lose your phone halfway through the evening. You might not always remember the events of the night the next morning, but you always remember the vibe. You love your friends and spontaneous road trips.

Star sign: Aries

Aandklas

If you are Aandklas, you are probably a laid-back alternative rebel who is a little rough around the edges but undeniably cool. You're always keen for a deep chat over a beer. You are likely to own band tees that are actually vintage, not just from Cotton On. You are probably musically opinionated, knowing the entire Arctic Monkey discography. Though you don't try to impress people, you somehow manage to get everyone to obsess over you. You are mysterious and unapologetic.

Star sign: Gemini/Scorpio

Dorp

If Dorp Bar were a person, it would be the smooth, mysterious Stellenbosch enigma – the one who looks expensive, but still orders a brandy and Coke. If this is you, you probably don't go out often, but when you do, it's an event. You know everyone, yet no one really knows you. You are composed but somewhat magnetic. You probably love cooking and dancing in the kitchen at 3am.

Star sign: Capricorn

Fools

If you are like Fools, you have the fun 'youngest sibling' personality. You probably like making decisions on the spot and are always keen for an adventure. You absolutely love taking dance breaks. You enjoy going to the beach and prefer summer over winter. You are true golden retriever energy.

Star sign: Leo & Pisces

Bohemia

If you are Bohemia, you are probably the artsy philosophy major who drinks black coffee in the morning and cheap wine at night. You are indie and alternative to the core (probably super into Fleetwood Mac). You love deep conversations, thrifted clothes and poetry. You like journalling and have probably thought of starting your own band.

Star sign: Aquarius and Taurus

Catwalk

If you were Catwalk, you'd be the over-the-top drama queen of Stellenbosch nightlife – always dressed to impress, dancing like the main character, and causing just the right amount of chaos. You live for the spotlight, thrive on attention and somehow turn every night into a performance of glitter, heels and questionable decisions. You can be a little loud, messy and a bit flirty.

Star sign: Libra

De Akker

If you are De Akker, you're an old soul – a wise but slightly unhinged uncle of Stellenbosch. You have zero pretension; you don't care about the latest trends or overpriced cocktails. You love watching sports and talking for hours on end. You are probably stubborn, love routine and like to keep things traditional.

Star sign: Virgo

Brauhaus

If you are anything like Brauhaus, you are effortlessly cool, down to earth and friendly. You have a little bit of a European vibe to you and always talk about your love for German beer. You thrive in a big crowd. You enjoy rainy weather, playing cards with your friends and belting 'Sweet Caroline' every chance you get.

Star sign: Cancer

The Frog Finds the Frangi

Ella Pope

Once, there was a padda who lived in Eerste River;
Where the waters were wild, and currents were strong.

When, one day, she sought for a tranquil asylum:
A place to be safe-housed and where she'd belong.

Along went her journey, across foreign lands;
Uncouth and chaotic, she crossed many yards.
With men painted orange, wildly charging around,
And much singing some not-so-gallant bards.

She trekked past the rugby and the sea of red youths,
Past striking mountain views, slowly she strolled.
She paused for a glass of white in the verdant vineyards,
Yet still hadn't found this haven about which she been told.

She hopped into de Lapa after some time in the queue,
And of course had a robot, her favourite the green.
Then feasted on waffles in a crowded Moody Blues,
But where-oh-where was this Promised Land she'd never seen?

Then, shining in the distance like a golden beacon,
She beheld her home marked with flowers yellow and white.
Elated, she was welcomed into Lydia with arms wide open,
And never again, in the river, would she experience the lonely night.

HooHoo are these owls really?

Chelsy Rickard

When I first moved into Lydia, I had quite a few questions about what my room would be like. Would I have a comfortable bed? Would I have enough cupboard space (an important factor since I practically packed enough clothes for the whole of Lydia)? What will the view from my window be like?

All these worries were quickly and completely resolved as soon as I saw my lovely new room. However, I did not expect the added bonus of having two little pets right outside my window. When I spotted the owls for the first time, I was quiet and careful, not wanting to scare them away. But a few days later, when the owls still sat in their usual spots in the jacaranda tree, I realised they were there to stay – and I couldn't be more delighted that I get to have a bird's eye view of them.

Although these owls are practically part of the Lydia family, very few of us know much about them. After some research, I discovered that they are African Spotted Eagle-Owls. This owl species is common in Southern Africa and are often called urban owls, since they live comfortably in close proximity to humans. They are one of the smallest of the eagle owls, measuring only 45cm in length and weighing no more than 907g. However, their wingspan of 100 - 140cm (compared to barn owls that only have a wingspan of 80 – 110cm) contributes to their majestic appearance.

Our owls' prey consists mainly of rodents, insects, small mammals, reptiles and birds. I will admit that I was utterly shocked when I saw one of the owls with a helpless dove in its claws the other day, but there's no need to be alarmed – they are part of the owls' regular diet. I will admit, however, that I still try to shoo away any doves happily (and obliviously) sitting in the tree when the owls are around, just in case it's dinner time.

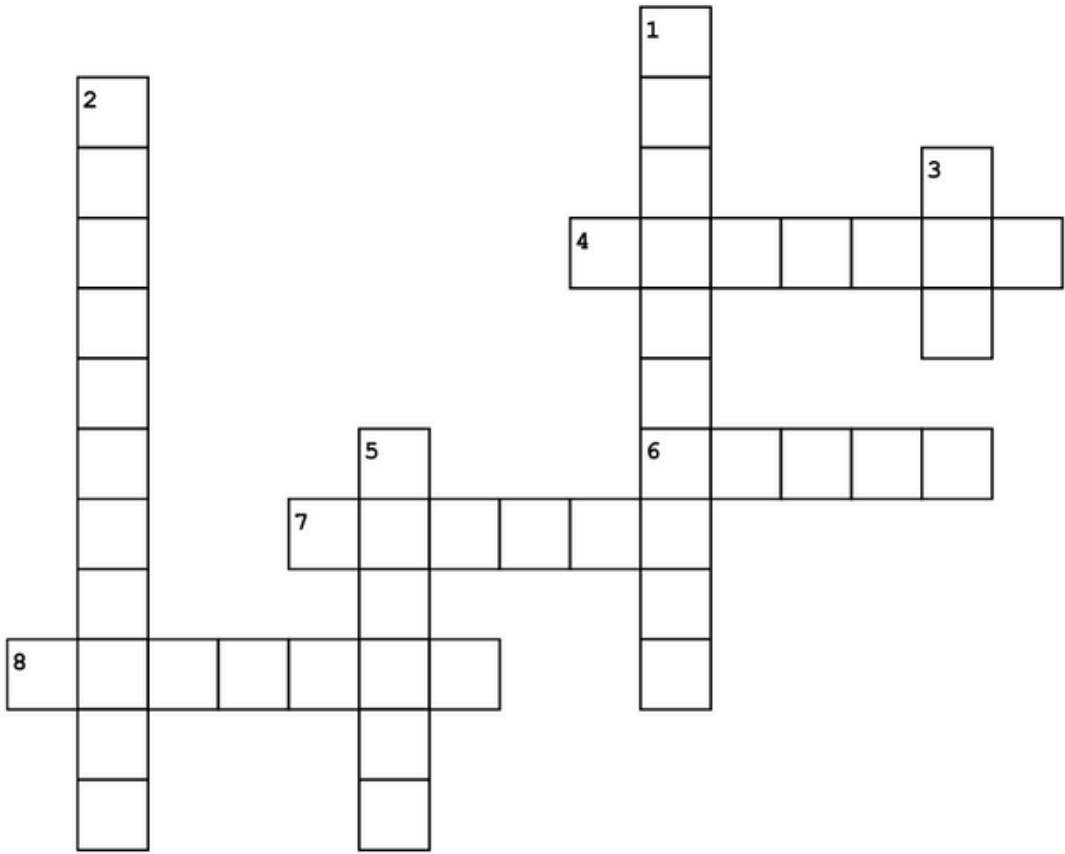
Spotted eagle owls are monogamous, meaning that pairs mate for life. Mates will usually build nests on the ground, hidden in the grass or behind rocks, making me doubt that the owls nesting in our tree are love birds. Males will usually call with two hoots: "Hooo Hooo" and females will answer with three: "Hooo Hoo Hooo". Be sure to listen out for these calls next time you're sitting on the benches on the third floor's balcony and see whether you can uncover the mystery of the owls' genders.

I'm sure many of us have wondered how tame these pets of ours really are. Although they seem to be quite comfortable around humans, they are still wild birds and should be treated as such. If threatened, they may puff up, hiss or even strike with their talons (i.e. their claws). You don't want to mess with these guys! Personally, I think we are incredibly fortunate to have these little guys as fellow-Lydianers. Their watchful eyes have seen us coming and going, smiling and crying and I'm sure their sharp ears have eavesdropped on many long phone calls I've had with my mom! So, let's be grateful that they've stuck around for so long and next time they shoot you that (creepy) wink, remember to wink right back.

Some fun facts about African Spotted Eagle-Owls:

- Owls have 14 bones in their necks (humans only have 7); this allows them to rotate their necks 270 degrees. They really do see everything!
- Spotted eagle-owls enjoy bathing and during summer thunderstorms they may be seen on tree limbs or on the ground with spread wings, soaking in the rain.
- When Spotted eagle-owl chicks hatch, their eyes are grey in colour and within two weeks gradually become yellow.
- Spotted eagle-owls often re-use their nesting sites for many years and some pairs have been known to use their nests for up to 40 years. So, hopefully our little friends will be waiting in Lydia's jacaranda tree to greet many more generations of Lydianers.

You might love Lydia, *but do you know Lydia?*



Across

- 4. destination for a sweet treat
- 6. alles vir die *blank*
- 7. sêr partners
- 8. prettiest princess ever

Down

- 1. sweet smell
- 2. intersectional winners (yet again)
- 3. derby competitors
- 5. (noisy) quad visitor

Answers

- Across
1. EnRoute
2. Padda
3. htb
4. EnRoute
Down
1. frangipani
2. garden villa
3. htb
4. hadida
5. hadida
6. Padda
7. Majuba
8. Slymple