

THE STARS ARE DEFINITELY CRAZY

HORRORSCOPE FOR THE SUMMER MONTHS OF 2017:

To allow for the vagaries of the universe and interpretive inexactitude, it might pay to read everyone else's stars as well.

SAGITTARIUS

A fear that devout believers will be forced to perform unsavoury services is being spread by pious mischief makers, some wearing funny hats, medieval cloaks and maybe even holding a shepherd's staff. What these recalcitrant evangelists fail to see is that it's more a case of modern enlightened life tolerating them, than the other way around.

CAPRICORN

A good time to test just how far you can push things. Oh dear, the neighbour's out on the street trying to roll start the car. "Alright, I'll help," you say and then he drops the clutch in first and you splat into the boot. Being in the right gear is not just some Kardashian catch cry.

AQUARIUS

For those of you wanting to spice up your personal relationships, remember that the grass might look greener on the other side, but they might just have a better lawn mower. Your daydream of true love, wild sex and happiness ever after might become less like 'Sex in The City' and more like 'Walter Mitty'.

PISCES

Oh my goodness, how many people are now looking forward to seeing the 'Back of Burke'? Actually it seems like the front of Burke was the more dangerous side. It's staggering to think there was such a known noxious weed in the backyard for so long and that management at DDT9 cared more about the cash.

TAURUS

In days gone by when the Sydney sewage treatment plant went regularly on the fritz, it used to be said that no-one swam at Bondi Beach, they just went through

the motions. Surfing a wave of numerical superiority, our QPRC 'Tim's Team' has passed a few motions of its own recently and then wiped itself with consultants' reports.

GEMINI

If you find yourself itching to make unnecessary purchases we've got you covered (but not in hair it seems). How about a 'Nano Trimmer™' for that unsightly nose and ear hair? Appliance and smelly-poo makers have already got women needing to be as bald as a baby's bum everywhere except in the immaculately coiffed head area. Now it's men's turn to feel a bit icky if a little cilia or two should dare to protrude from the schnoz or one's aural organs. Boxing day might suffer a cacophony of, "Oh gross! Who left all the nose hairs in the sink?"

CANCER

This is an excellent time for making changes — or if you've just bought a dud-brand car or maybe had a wild religious epiphany, for changing makers.



LEO

It used to be, 'what's the sound of one hand clapping?' but now with Facebook it's more, 'what's the response to one person posting?' if no-one comments. Remember though, many more people read than post. If you're getting funny looks in the supermarket queue it's maybe not only for the weird stuff in your trolley, but more that while a post is a late-night indulgence for you, for others it's something to be as thick as.

VIRGO

The world keeps turning but those skateboard wheels remain stopped. This is a good time for conciliation and understanding of another person's point of view. If we're not careful the skate park will end up at Narbethong because that's where today's dihard proponents will be by the time it's built.

LIBRA

On television this month you'll be potentially under the influence of multinational gambling houses spending big. So many new ways to lose your money. Do you realise that you can actually decline to place a bet right up until the moment you chuck your hard-earned dosh away in the futile hope of winning easy moolah? It's called, the 'this Lad's not broke, rack off you money grubbers' option. You don't even need an app for it.

SCORPIO

'Ring a ring 'o roses, a pocketful of rye, if my life's unbearable I want the right to die.' As one rare sensible polliie said recently, "this is not a matter of life and death, rather it's a question of death or painful death". Once again pious, bossy people should be ignored.

THE MINERALS COUNCIL ISN'T GOING TO LIKE THIS

The sun is a gift from God

(and coal is the work of the Devil)

How about this for an idea. That the Sun is a gift from God whilst coal might just about have become the work of the devil.

Starting with the obvious, look up for God and the sun, look down for coal and the devil.

But of course it's more than that. Religion teaches us that all life originates with God in a spiritual sense and science teaches us that all life on our planet is dependent on the sun.

In a scientific sense, on earth we have two life forces that have worked in harmony for millions of years.

One, photosynthesis is the power from the sun to make living solid matter from a gas and a liquid. That is, by bonding carbon from carbon dioxide out of the air with water — creating hydrocarbons and carbohydrates.

The second force, combustion, is the reverse of photosynthesis. One stores the sunlight's energy and the other releases it. Millions of years of stored energy from the forest floor or the seabed makes a litre of oil or a lump of coal very rich in stored energy.

OK, so the sun is up and the coal is down but what's this to do with religion?

Let's start with the essence of most religions — the part that requires the faithful to live by a code of behaviour or ethic. One main theme of any worthwhile religion is the equality of all people in the eyes of God.

Sunlight also shares this equality. Every morning the sun shines down on us, its intensity regulated only by weather, the seasons and geographical latitude. And that is the fundamental difference between energy from the sun and energy from coal — the inequality of ownership.

Coal, (and oil and gas too of course), provide succour only to those who have a share in the ownership of the resource — or can pay money to those that do. And even though it's a finite resource, it is available in abundance to some people, in economically measured amounts to others, but not at all to millions of the poorest people on the planet.

Ironically and tragically, many of the world's poorest people, who do not have the most basic of services, enough food even, live in places blessed with abundant sunshine. The meek will not be inheriting the earth until this energy usage disparity is addressed.

Any God worth believing in would want as many of His (or Her) flock to live as meaningful lives as possible. The sun shines on us all regardless of ethnic origin, social standing or bank balance. God and the sun have this egalitarianism in common.

Perhaps the devil is not actually in the coal — but it is in the detail. Mining coal is a destructive process. For decades it destroyed the health of underground miners but nowadays it mostly destroys the environment. In all cases, what is left in the wake of a mine is a diminished environment and quite often disastrously so.

The water table, on which our farmers rely, can be seriously and permanently damaged by collapsing long-wall cavities. This damage will be with us long after the resource has been exported, burned and spewed into the air.

Almost all scientific opinion worldwide is urging caution about continuing high levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. And there is the real tragedy.

Tomorrow's problem CO² is today safely sequestered under our feet.

Leaving as much coal as possible underground and unburnt is by far the cheapest and best way to deal with carbon emissions and safeguard the future.

The old saying goes that if you give people a few fish, they'll eat fish for a few days — but if you teach them how to fish, they'll have fish forever.

It's the same with solar power versus coal power. If you give a village in Asia, India or Africa access to coal-fired electricity, they'll have power so



towards the future by Paul Cockram

long as you supply it and they can pay, and pay, and continue to pay.

This is the devilish vision of the profiteers in the energy sector. Our coal is to be exported as part of a plan to connect millions, perhaps billions, of people to the grid. A wealthy multinational gang of shareholders at one end of the wire, the power station — and millions of customers at the other end, all receiving a bill each month.

If we provide people with solar arrays, via gifts, grants or loans, they'll have affordable electricity for ever.

Electricity runs pumps and communication equipment like telephones and computers. Think how much richer the world would be if we could get millions of poor people on line. How many writers and poets are out there? These people could then work from home in all kinds of industries just as we in the West can.

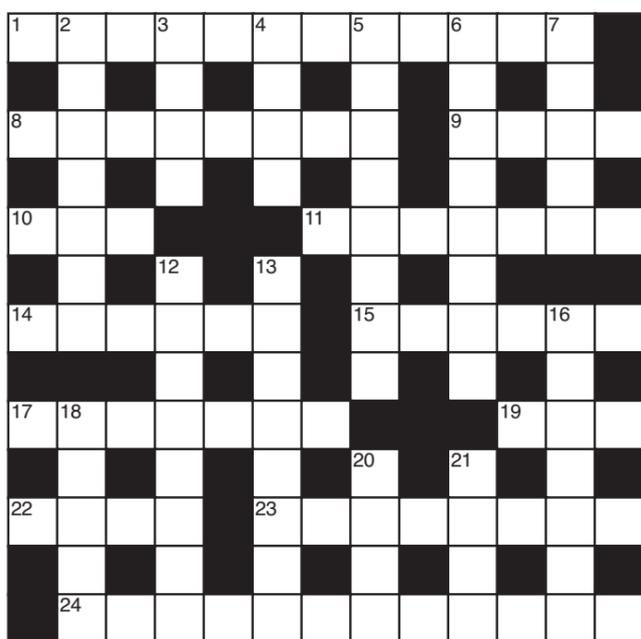
Why shouldn't the children in Africa have access to Facebook, Google and Wikipedia?

The sun is a great democratic force that does, and always will, shine without prejudice on all of God's creation. Any God worth believing in would want to see us sharing, as equitably as possible, access to energy, food, health and education.

The sun shines on us all. Whether it was provided by God or some mysterious big bang; it makes no difference. It's up to us to decide whether we're going to saddle the planet with hell holes where the coal used to be and continue to suffer huge inequities in energy availability ...

Or look up to the sun, towards God if you like, and help steer humanity towards a sustainable and more equitable heaven on earth. ■

BRAIDWOOD BAFFLER BWD 15



ACROSS

- Means of telecommunication (6,6)
- Turns
- Common sense
- To question
- Red-wooded Western Australian trees
- Fruit
- Middle-easterners
- Eastern European country
- Star sign
- Mexican food
- Woodwind instrument
- NT town (5,7)

DOWN

- Noncoastal waters (4,3)
- Someone worshiped
- Covetousness
- To do with Spain or Spanish-speaking Latin America

6. Rural (3-5)

- Adelaide-wards
- Pasta
- Crustacean which clings to wood
- What sunk the Titanic?
- Place near here with a big blow hole
- Temporary living place
- New Zealander

SOLUTION TO BAFFLER BWD 14

