

HORRORSCOPE FOR THE SPRING MONTHS 2015:

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

GEMINI

Do not give your power away this week which is not telling Essential Energy anything they didn't already know. In fact when you receive the bill you'll be feeling your whole life is quite highly charged and with considerable emotion.

CANCER

Wheels will be turning in your life this week but those skateboard wheels will remain still. You may wonder how come what started out as a good idea so quickly turned into a Rec.

LEO

Pluto is in Capricorn, the kids are eating popcorn, the old man's into hard porn, feral cats rutting dusk to dawn, any wonder you're feeling forlorn? The hall carpet's looking worn, Facebook just a yawn — geez, where's my life gorn?

VIRGO

They say Herschel, now Uranus, is a symbol of radical thinking, or maybe the source from where a lot of pub talk emanates. That's a terrible joke and I think I should have sat on it.

LIBRA

Venus is wearing blue jeans and Palerang is heading for Queanbeans. An aspect is described as partite when it is exact and a Fit For the Future submission is quite futile when the state government has already made up its mind.

SCORPIO

Do you want to give a sucker an even break? Be at the corner of Bowler St and Clyde St (unformed still) down at the Rec when the area is opened up. It's to make it more family-friendly but I've heard that a few local families got underway in those bushes in quite a friendly way.

SAGITTARIUS

Saturn in Sagittarius means you must duck and dive not drink and drive. Go to the pool, it's just across the road, almost the same; one's a watering hole and the other's water in a hole.

CAPRICORN

Down at the monastery the Abbott got the boot and no-one was more surprised than he. It's just amazing that most of the ingredients are the same yet the cake is expected to Turnbull better, sorry, turn out better.



AQUARIUS

An undecile might be heading your way if you were expressing one-eleventh of a circle, when two planets are plus or minus 32° 43' 07" apart. Of course if you're down at the pizza shop and they're trying to cut it like that, it's more likely to involve an imbecile. Don't order the Anarita, certainly not if it's been delivered to the 8th house because the driver is new to town.

PISCES

Conjunction can create intensity, stress and confusion — so can congestion, especially on a long weekend down the main street in summer. But is a bypass the answer, coronary or diversionary? If we discourage the yogi blues from rat running will that not do?

ARIES

Metatron is the Prince of the Countenance but metadata is the prints of your crawling through cyber-space. Counter-intelligence is more than just picking the faster queue at the bakery. Like Miss Emma's dancers you must stay on your toes. Remember, down at the ASIO bunker they are recording every website you visit and will soon be able to Spooke™ your name, your profile and match you with other like-minded trouble-makers.

TAURUS

The Seventh House governs marriage, business partnerships, harmony, disharmony and open enemies — much the same as the Upper House really. It looks like the rules might change to get rid of the fringe nutters and make room for more of the traditional nutters that you normally find in that pen of Paul Keating's 'unrepresentative swill'.

Let's all get off the grid

We need to go off the grid. Not individually — but collectively. To do this we might need a revolution. Not that old thing with the proletariat rising up as one with their hammers and sickles and all that stuff; that has never been likely and is the fantasy only of people who sell strident newspapers in the rain outside Town Hall station.

No, what we need is a different way of dealing with the challenges of the future heading our way at an ever-increasing pace. Our governments, Federal and State are putting their faith and policy decisions in the hands of the free, read private, market.

But as usual, when there are captive customers, the rules keep changing to benefit the supplier at the expense of the consumer. When it was thought that more infrastructure was needed to guarantee the integrity of our power supply, the network companies were allowed to charge the consumer for future upgrades. As it happened, power usage failed to go up or went down.

Not batting an eyelid, apart from shedding as many jobs as possible, power companies switched their attention to retail deals. Churning (grabbing customers from a rival) took off with a dizzying assortment of tariff plans.

Research by St Vincent de Paul has found that it's the retail portion of a typical power bill that's risen the most. As reported in the *SMH* the Society exposed this rort:

"We have an energy retail market that ensures customers are paying over the odds for an essential service unless they annually dedicate time to compare energy plans and switch retailer."

No compassionate society allows its people to be screwed by not keeping up with trends in essential services pricing. It's bad enough with ever-more complex phone plans but to do it to electricity, a non-discretionary purchase, is unconscionable if not criminal.

This type of behaviour needs to be

addressed by community action and here in Braidwood we're small enough, smart enough and remote enough to do it. If our governments are heading towards corporatisation at our expense then we'll need to collectivise to meet the challenge.



Into the future by Paul Cockram

Braidwood goes off

Here's the plan. We need a suitable site close to town and preferably near a high-voltage power line. We need to raise capital, with help from our community bank perhaps, to build a solar array big enough to power Braidwood.

We need a metering point where the net income or export of our Braidwood 'power station' is measured. If the plan does not at first include battery storage we'll be buying at night, but that's OK.



There are no insurmountable technical obstacles to a town connecting to the grid this way — only political barriers. The power companies won't like the idea of losing customers. The owners of the transmission lines won't like the extra complication of ensuring the integrity of supply. We may have to rent their poles and wires but that's fair.

In most community services, the bush plays second fiddle to the city — actually it's more like a second-hand guitar with a few strings missing if we're talking telecommunications. But there's something we have that will soon be in high demand — space.

It might come to pass that the grid will reverse itself in the years ahead. Instead of a relatively small but powerful coal-fired generator near the city feeding a radiating grid, a system of widely-spread solar, wind and whatever-else will feed towards the city.

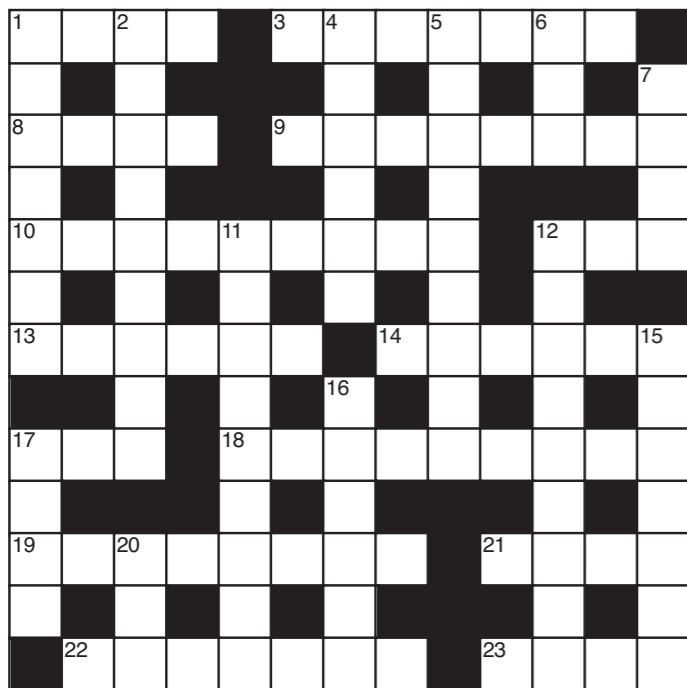
If we're not just fooling around with this alternative energy jive, there's going to be a lot of land covered in solar panels. It's not that hard to do and it's easily scalable. We don't need to wait for a corporation to build really big power stations and then charge us for the product.

The raw energy input is freely supplied to everyone on Earth (subject to the vagaries of latitude). We don't need big brother to do it all for us in exchange for an eight-hour day's work making money for the man.

This is the exciting part of the energy revolution. The sun will transform the whole dynamic of energy security. The trees and the other green stuff seem to have it figured and here is our big chance to be as clever as them.

If we stuff about for too long though we will be, just like the trees, more or less deeply rooted.

BRAIDWOOD BAFFLER #9



ACROSS

1. "There was a little girl and she had a little ...?" (4)
- 3, 9 across. Celebrated in Braidwood on September 24 this year. (7,3,5)
8. In an elevated position (4)
10. A woman who officiates in sacred rites (9)
12. Away from (3)
13. Soft or delicate in substance (6)
14. Accommodated (6)
17. Belonging to a male (3)
18. Might keep 1 across in place? (9)
19. The current British one has been doing this for longer than any before her (8)
21. Rural business (4)
22. Extras; additions (7)
23. She did her 19 across, between 1702 and 1707 (4)

DOWN

1. Slang for an attractive woman — or toasted dough? (7)
2. Changes focus or direction (9)
4. Repetitions of sound bouncing back from a surface (6)

ACROSS

5. Unlikely chances of success (4,5)
6. ASX code for Ironbark Zinc Ltd. (3)
7. Leave as is (4)
11. Female name derived from the Greek for "crown" (9)
12. The female sex hormone (9)
15. Hours between sunrise and sunset (7)
16. Gestured: inscribed (6)
17. Belonging (to a woman) (4)
20. Celebrated world-wide annually on 12 March (3, inits)

SOLUTION TO BAFFLER #8

