

INSIDE THIS WEEK'S EDITION

Alex Open Gardens distributes funds



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Rotary visits the woodworkers



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Molesworth Rev and Rummage



Page 21

Weekend sport



Pages 22-24

Health merger: community concern, confusion and scepticism

A MAJOR community survey conducted by Murrindindi Shire Council across Alexandra, Yea, and surrounding towns has revealed a range of views, with a majority expressing concern, confusion and scepticism about the proposed voluntary amalgamation between Alexandra District Health (ADH) and Eastern Health (EH). Conducted over 16 days and attracting 278 responses, the survey provides a statistically significant snapshot of community sentiment.

Responses came from across the shire, with the largest number from Alexandra (55 per cent) and Yea (43 per cent). Across all questions and themes, 64 to 67 per cent of respondents were opposed or strongly

opposed to the amalgamation, expressing concerns about the potential loss of local services, leadership, and community identity.

Common concerns included fears that the amalgamation would become a "backdoor forced takeover," the potential loss of the ADH CEO and board, decisions being shifted to Melbourne, closures or downgrading of services, how this impacts Yea and District Memorial Hospital and its future, loss of local autonomy, and poor communication with no clear plan. Many respondents also referred to past negative experiences, such as the Healesville downgrade and issues within Grampians Health.

Around 20 to 25 per cent of respondents were unsure or confused about what the amalgamation's implications, with many stating they did not understand the difference between amalgamation and a partnership, felt they had not received enough information, the consultation period was too short, and could not form an opinion without a detailed plan.

A smaller group (12 to 14 per cent) indicated conditional support, contingent on guarantees such as service protection, local representation, and evidence of actual improvement. Only a minority, 10 to 12 per cent, strongly supported amalgamation, citing potential benefits including increased sustainability, access to specialists, workforce

development, and trust in the ADH Board's judgment. Even among supporters, most emphasised the need for safeguards and transparency.

Residents were clear about the conditions they want to see in place. Approximately 55 to 60 per cent demanded strong local representation, and 50 to 55 per cent called for guaranteed protection of existing services. Around 35 to 40 per cent insisted that local autonomy and management structures be maintained, while 25 to 30 per cent emphasised that services should be expanded and not reduced. Many also highlighted the importance of transparency, accountability and ongoing community consultation.

While some respondents saw possible advantages, such as more specialist services, a more stable workforce, shared staffing and training, better financial sustainability, economies of scale, and expanded services, these benefits would only be acceptable with concrete guarantees in place.

Overall, the survey reveals a community that is protective of its rural health services, cautious about metropolitan governance, seeking better consultation, and willing to consider change only with firm protections. A minority sees potential benefits, but the dominant sentiment remains concern, confusion, and mistrust, largely due to a lack of clear, detailed information and the rushed nature of the process.

The survey indicates a need to rebuild community trust through transparency, detailed planning, genuine engagement, and strong local governance safeguards.

To read the entire report on this survey, please visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/healthcaresurveyresults or collect a hard copy at either the Alexandra or Yea Council offices.

[If people are keen to express their concerns about the proposed merger to the Alexandra District Health CEO, they will need to contact acting CEO Claire Palmer as Jane Poxon will be on long service leave until March 2026. -Ed]



Deputy Mayor Anita Carr, Cr Paul Hildebrand, Mayor Damien Gallagher and Rotarian Ian Smith at the 'Say No to Family Violence' event, held in Rotary Park on Friday, November 28. More images and information on page 6 of this edition. -AR

Disaster roaming could save lives this bushfire season.

Disaster roaming is a simple, life-saving reform. With bushfire season here, the National Farmers' Federation is supporting my plan. Regional Australians deserve a telecommunications system that works when it matters most.



Helen Haines MP

Wangaratta: 117 Murphy Street, Wangaratta | 03 5721 7077
Wodonga: 79 High Street, Wodonga | 02 6024 6284
helen.haines.mp@aph.gov.au | helenhaines.org

Authorised by Helen Haines, 117 Murphy St, Wangaratta VIC 3677.



Alexandra District Health

5772 0900

Yea & District Memorial Hospital

5736 0400

In an emergency dial 000

ALEXANDRA DISTRICT HEALTH

Standard

THE YE & DISTRICT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

The Yea Chronicle

CONTACT DETAILS

CLASSIFIEDS AND COMMERCIAL PRINTING

reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

MANAGER AND ACCOUNTS Karen Morrison

manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au

accounts@alexandranewspapers.com.au

ADVERTISING

1sales@alexandranewspapers.com.au

TRADES and ONLINE DIRECTORY - Mary

trades@alexandranewspapers.com.au

EDITOR Anne Richey

editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au

(Bailey) journalist@alexandranewspapers.com.au

SPORTS

sports@alexandranewspapers.com.au

43 Grant Street - PO Box 5, Alexandra 3714

Telephone: 5772 1002 Fax: 5772 1603

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ALEXANDRA

NEWSPAPERS

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COMMUNITY DIARY

Alexandra District Health

5772 0900

Non-emergency police assistance

131 444

EMERGENCY 000

Local Radio Frequency

UGFM 106.9 Alexandra / Lake Eildon

UGFM 98.5 Marysville / Lake Mountain

MONTHLY COMMUNITY GROUPS

WEEKLY

Tue Women's Walk @ 7am @Embassy of Ideas

Wed Oasis Church, free coffee connection Ph 0408 123 581

Fri Man Walk @ 7am meet at RSL Hall

Fri Communita 10am-12pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801

Sun Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training. Ph 0456 583 611

Sun AA meeting; 7pm St Johns Hall. Ph 1300 22 22 22.

MONTHLY

1st Wed Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318

1st Thur Murrindindi Men 6-8pm@ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801

1st Sun Crop/Produce swap 10.30am-noon @ Embassy of Ideas

2nd Tue Alexandra District Garden Society Meeting Ph 5772 2285

2nd Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.

3rd Wed Alex Lions business meeting, rear RSL hall 0427 595 318

3rd Thu Alexandra Ladies Probus 10am RSL Ph 0428 976 252

3rd Thu Community Potluck dinner 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas

3rd Sun Alexandra RSL Ph 0409 950 913

4th Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.

4th Thu Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517

Last Fri Carers Group 10am Grant Street Grocer. 0418 402 455

ALEXANDRA

NEWSPAPERS

For a \$10 annual fee for one line, your club or organisation's regular meeting dates will be listed each week. Not only is this a reminder to your regular members but also a good source of what groups are available in the community, when they meet and a contact phone number.

Alexandra and District Senior Citizen Club report

by David Tanner

Alexandra and District Senior Citizen Club’s stalwart bridge players are always enthusiastic and turned up as usual for an enjoyable session

THUMBS UP

THUMBS DOWN

THUMBS UP:

To Murrindindi Resource Recovery Centre. Friendly, helpful, efficient service. Thank you. A satified customer.

THUMBS UP:

To Mick Taylor from Thornton who volunteered his time and services to slash around The Mount for Menzies Support Services.

THUMBS UP:

Congratulations to Redgate Bazaar for the great nativity scene in their window. A reminder to everyone we are celebrating Jesus's birthday.

THUMBS UP:

To Kerry M, Sue S and all their helpers for another beautifully presented ‘luncheon’, once again raising funds for Breast Cancer awareness.

Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down is a reader's contribution section of Alexandra Newspapers. Send your Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down to editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au

Contributions will be edited and/or published at the Editor's discretion. We request that this section not be used as a slander attack on persons, businesses or property

on Wednesday afternoon although they had to play in the gloom with the power outage due to the severe storm.

Don’t forget that they will always welcome anyone who would like to join in. In fact, if you’ve often entertained the thought of learning to play, then do not hesitate to pop in on a Wednesday afternoon round about 1pm and you will receive a warm welcome and plenty of helpful advice.

It’s obviously that time of the year, with club members having so many conflicting commitments that sometimes the roll-up for our Friday meeting is lower than normal. Even secretary Mike was away helping medical research. Mind you, if you couldn’t make it, we will probably catch up with you in the waiting room of the local medical clinic or the hospital.

The social meeting itself was another chaotic event in which nothing of particular importance was achieved except confirmation that everyone is looking forward to our Christmas Lunch at the Rubicon hotel on Friday, December 12. Some members will be

driving direct and others meeting at the hall at 11.30am. Next week’s social meeting is the deadline for sorting out anyone requiring a lift on the day.

This will be a Christmas lunch to be remembered, and many thanks go to Jeanette who has been scurrying around finding all sorts of ‘goodies’ to include in the Christmas hampers. Probably best that you are there to enter in the draw so don’t make any medical appointments for the 12th.

Our thanks also to Mel at Murrindindi Shire Council for organising Andrew the plumber to rectify the malfunction of toilets at the Senior’s Hall. Andrew responded promptly and even during that evil storm last Wednesday, he toiled away in the rain to remove the tree roots from next door that had take up residence in our old terra cotta piping.

We welcome new members and if you fancy a chat, a cuppa and a game of cards please come along and join us on a Friday afternoon at the Bayley Street clubroom.

Meanwhile, stay safe and keep smiling.

✉

Letters to the Editor

Breakaway Bridge

IT was heartening to hear from representatives from our shire on the work going on behind the scenes to replace the Breakaway Bridge at the recent public meeting. It has been a long three years for many in the community without this critical piece of infrastructure connecting both sides of our district. There are many businesses and individuals who rely on this link road let alone support services in time of emergency. Unfortunately, an element of ‘scare mongering’ by a few in

the community has caused unnecessary angst to local Alexandra residents on Grant Street. Constructive dialogue has helped assure locals that no one wants a thoroughfare ladened with trucks through our valley. Thank you to our shire CEO, mayor, councillors and engineers who are working diligently towards reconnecting both sides of Acheron with potentially added speed restrictions which will further aid in protecting our slice of paradise.

The Leckey family

RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT					
STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS	
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	09.00AM Mon	1.67	LGH	steady	
Rubicon River at Rubicon	09.00AM Mon	0.64	LGH	steady	
Acheron River at Taggerty	09.00AM Mon	0.79	LGH	steady	
Home Creek at Yarck	04.45AM Mon	0.16	LGH	steady	
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	08.25AM Mon	0.60	LGH	steady	
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	10.00PM Sun	0.36	LGH	steady	
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	09.00AM Mon	0.98	steady		
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	09.00AM Mon	3.77	LGH	steady	
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	09.00AM Mon	0.54	LGH	steady	
Goulburn River at Trawool	09.00AM Mon	1.41	LGH	steady	
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	09.00AM Mon	0.30	LGH	steadyl	
Goulburn River at Seymour	09.00AM Mon	1.68	LGH	steady	
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	09.00AM Mon	1.14	LGH	steady	
*ISSUED AT 09:27 AM AEDT MONDAY 1 DECEMBER 2025					

ALEXANDRA

NEWSPAPERS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

can be submitted via email to

editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au or

reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

or by mail to Alexandra Newspapers

PO Box 5, Alexandra 3714.

Letters **must be 300 words or less.** We will not publish defamatory letters, or content which is offensive, threatening or containing personal attacks. Submitted letters may be edited before going to print.

All letters must contain writers name, address and contact number. (not necessarily for publication). Letters without these details supplied cannot not be published. Deadline for Letters to the Editor is 9am Monday.

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Standard

The Yea Chronicle

Weekly Weather

December 3 - December 9, 2025

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

Yea

DAY

LOW

HIGH

DAY

LOW

HIGH

Wednesday

14

26

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Wednesday

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Tuesday

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☁️

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

DISTRICT RAINFALL

Alexandra..... 28mm

Buxton..... 48mm

Eildon (AWS)..... 24mm

Flowerdale..... 31mm

Jamieson..... 44mm

Kinglake..... 39mm

Lake Eildon..... 33mm

Mansfield..... N/Amm

Taggerty 36mm

Yarck 29mm

Yea..... 24mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

LAKE EILDON

Height above sea level this week..... 275.73m

Capacity as at 9am Monday..... 55.8%

Metres below full supply..... 13.17m

Daily inflow 3000ML

Release 3300ML

Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change)..... 58%

THE ALEXANDRA · EILDON · MARYSVILLE

Standard

INCORPORATING THE ALEXANDRA TIMES · THE YARCK, GOBUR, TAGGERTY, THORNTON, AND ACHERON EXPRESS

DEADLINES

Real Estate

Thursday 5pm

Trades & Services

Thursday noon

Early General News

Thursday 5pm

Classifieds

Monday noon

Editorial

Monday 9am

Sports Editorial

Monday 10am

Letters to the Editor

Monday 9am

Thumbsup/down

Monday 10am

If you have any enquiries please do not hesitate to contact the office on

5772 1002 or

reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

We thank you for your continued support

Emergency services grants awarded

EMERGENCY services volunteers across the Murrindindi region will receive more trucks, equipment and modern facilities to help keep communities safe thanks to the Victorian Government's Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program (VESEP).

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes congratulated the recipients of this year's VESEP grants, which will deliver new vehicles, equipment and facility upgrades across Victoria.

VESEP is an annual grants program that helps Victorian emergency services volunteer groups purchase essential equipment or make facility improvements so they can strengthen and support their vital work.

Volunteer groups can apply for grants of up to \$250,000, an increase of \$100,000 from the previous maximum, with the government contributing \$2 for every \$1 raised by the local volunteer group.

This year's round delivers more than \$30 million in grants, the largest ever, across the Country Fire Authority (CFA), Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES), Life Saving Victoria, Volunteer Marine Search and Rescue, and other emergency service organisations.

Funding for this round includes almost \$20 million for more than 40 vehicles, more than \$5 million to update 15 facilities and more than \$1 million for operational equipment across the state.

Locally, the grants include Terip Terip Fire Brigade (\$250,000 for a station upgrade), Koriella Fire Brigade (\$240,000 for station extension), Strath Creek/Reedy Creek Fire Brigade (\$101,500 for a field command vehicle), Limestone Fire Brigade (\$88,750 for a field command vehicle) Alexandra Fire Brigade (\$69,334 for a BA support vehicle), Molesworth Fire Brigade (\$4500 for station upgrades), Kinglake SES (\$235,767 for a MRT 4x4 replacement) and Alexandra SES (\$31,863 for building works).

The press release states, "Thanks to the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund, VESEP funding will double over the next four years, with an additional \$62 million invested to support volunteers. Every dollar raised through the fund goes directly to emergency and disaster recovery services.

Minister for Emergency Services Vicki Ward said, "These grants are incredibly popular every year, and we'll keep backing our volunteers, helping them focus on what they do best, protecting lives and property.

"With more funding on offer than ever before, almost double, we're showing our determination to support our hardworking emergency services volunteers."

Parvovirus detected in Mansfield Shire

PARVOVIRUS is a dangerous and contagious virus that affects dogs and has recently been detected in nearby Mansfield Shire.

If you have a dog, please be alert to any potential symptoms, which can include severe vomiting, bloody and foul-smelling diarrhea, lethargy, loss of appetite and dehydration. The disease is highly contagious between dogs but does not infect humans.

If your dog has these symptoms, isolate your dog and contact your vet for further advice. Ensuring your dog receives its recommended vaccinations is the best defence against parvovirus. Speak to your vet if you're unsure.

The Community Contributions of Judy Blizzard

MANY local residents are familiar with Judy Blizzard, who has been a valued member of the Alexandra community for the past seven years. On Wednesday, November 26, six members of the Alexandra Lions Club joined forces with the Alexandra Rotary Club for a special event to mark the end of the year. During this memorable gathering, Lion Judy Blizzard brought with her a significant item from her youth.

As the event unfolded, Judy donned a distinctive jacket that she acquired during her time as a Rotary exchange student. This jacket, which she wore proudly, dates back to her three-month exchange at Palmerston North High School in New Zealand. Judy took the opportunity to share the fond memories she has of her exchange experience, expressing her gratitude for the support and opportunities provided by Rotary during that formative period.

Judy recounted how she was part of a small group from the eastern suburbs of Melbourne selected for the exchange program. The experience, alongside the guidance she received from her parents, inspired her to become involved in community service. This ultimately led her to join the Lions Club, where she continues to volunteer and contribute to the community. Beyond her work with the Lions, Judy also dedicates time to the Alexandra Hub, where she assists local residents with various projects and initiatives.

A photograph taken during the event captures Judy in her exchange jacket, standing beside Rotary President John Alcock. This image symbolizes her ongoing connection to both the Rotary and Lions organizations and highlights her steadfast commitment to community service in Alexandra.



Alexandra Rotary President John Alcock with Judy Blizzard. -S



Le Tour participants, garden owners and volunteers. -S

Alexandra and District Open Gardens distributes funds

ALEXANDRA and District Open Gardens was a success despite the heavy rain on the Sunday. Numbers through the gates exceeded 2000 individual garden visits and over \$10,000 was raised through ticket sales and donations.

The committee members are still at work, distributing funds and confirming potential gardens for 2026 Open Gardens weekend.

Community groups that have been recently awarded a donation include Rotary Club of Alexandra (\$1500), Buxton CFA (\$2000), and Marysville Brownie and Guides (\$1500).

In addition to the above allocation, community groups that were fundraising at an

open garden collectively raised an additional total of \$3150.

The committee organised a Le Tour on the Tuesday after the weekend giving the garden owners and gate sitters an opportunity to view the other gardens. A group of 12 people attended enjoying a beautiful sunny day.

If you enjoyed visiting the Open Gardens and would like to be involved at organisational level, the committee is currently seeking new members to assist with preparations for next year.

An interest in gardening is desirable but not mandatory, while computer skills and

familiarity with social media would be an asset. You can get in touch via email: info@alexandraopengardens.com.au or phone Melinda on 0418 378 806 to have a chat.

The committee would like to thank the garden owners, sponsors and many volunteers who make the open gardens such a success and a reminder to put the dates in your calendar for next year, Saturday, October 24 and Sunday, October 25 for another exciting lineup of gardens to visit.

Visit alexandraopengardens.com.au for more information.

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& STANDARD SALOONS

Gordon Street, Alexandra
NEXT TO GOULF CREEK

GATE PRICES

FAMILY (2 ADULTS & 3 CHILDREN)	\$60
ADULTS	\$25
Alexandra Residents	\$15
CHILDREN (10-16YRS)	\$10
CHILDREN (UNDER 10)	FREE

RACING STARTS AT 4PM
www.alexandraspeedway.org.au

Church Services

ANGLICAN
St Johns Alexandra
9am Eucharist each Sunday
Children welcome.
Rev Mario Hendricks -
Rectory 0435 953 777

CATHOLIC
Immaculate Conception Parish
Parish Administrator Fr Jose Mathew.
Presbytery 0468 810 871
St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 5pm
Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am
Sacred Heart Yea, Sunday 10.45am

UNITING CHURCH In Australia
St Andrews, Downey Street,
Alexandra
Worshipping, Welcoming
Sharing the transforming love of
Jesus. Services 10am each Sunday
Contact 5772 2362

OASIS COMMUNITY CHURCH
Loving God, Loving People,
Loving Life
118 Grant Street, Alexandra
0408 123 581
Meeting every Sunday @ 10am

**MOUNT CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY
BAPTIST CHURCH**
37 Grant Street, Alexandra
Pastor Daniel Kriss
Services 10am every Sunday
Phone 0400 282 536
mccbc.com.au

THE VINE
A Christian community part of the Baptist
Union of Victoria
Sunday 4.30pm service
Kids program during school term
Meets at St Andrew's, 37 Downey Street,
Alexandra
Contact - 0438 642 559

Out&About

THE items in Out and About are sourced from our advertising and news stories. Out and About is not a free community listing diary. Not all items can be included and are placed at the discretion of Alexandra Newspapers.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

Alexandra Historical Society AGM will be held at Dove Cottage at 2pm.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

Darren Gilbert Open Studio Saturday and Sunday, 10am-4pm each day. 5 Giffard Street Yea. Other times arranged by appointment 0421 378 451.

Alexandra Speedway revs up again. Sport sedans, modified sedans, junior sedans and more. Racing starts at 4pm. alexandraspeedway.org.au

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10

2025 Cathedral Invitational will be packed with leading and emerging names in Australian golfing, the tournament is set to be a kicker. Tickets are on sale to the public for day two. \$60 for adults, or \$30 for adults living within a 30 kilometre radius of the course, \$30 for concession, and children under 12 are free. For more information, visit cathedralinvitational.com

Funding for new mobile library truck

THE Victorian Government has announced the latest round of the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program, investing in 18 libraries across the state, including Murrindindi Shire.

The funds aim to help deliver high quality library infrastructure projects to support the changing needs of Victorian communities.

Murrindindi Shire Council received \$767,592 to replace Murrindindi's current mobile library truck with a new, more agile vehicle, expanding access to library services from eight to 10 locations. This upgrade will improve service reliability, reach more remote communities, and deliver more programs, supporting education, social connection, and wellbeing for all ages across Murrindindi Shire.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes said, "This funding will strengthen Murrindindi's ability to provide safe spaces and essential learning resources, creating real benefits for our community."

For more information on the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program visit localgovernment.vic.gov.au/grants/living-libraries-infrastructure-program

McLeish concerned about proposed solar farm in Rubicon

MEMBER for Eildon Cindy McLeish said Thornton and Rubicon locals continue the fight to save the Rubicon Valley from the proposed construction of an industrial-scale solar farm and battery energy storage system.

The 300 hectare project, proposed by SREA, a subsidiary of corporate giant Samsung, could have between 140,000 and 200,000 solar panels. This has raised community concern for safety due to increased fire hazards, management issues and local sustainability damage.

After attending a recent community meeting in Thornton and hearing local concerns, Ms McLeish took the matter to Parliament, asking the Minister for Planning to meet with local landholders in Rubicon.

Ms McLeish said, "Residents are desperate for the Minister to visit the area, understand their concerns and realise why the establishment of such a huge project along the Taggerty-Thornton and Rubicon roads in Thornton is inappropriate in the Rubicon Valley."

"There are very real concerns that need to be addressed."

She said that the community concerns include increased fire hazard as the proposed site lies within a high bushfire risk area and the district has only one road in and out, making evacuation during a fire or emergency event very dangerous; The use of lithium batteries and transformers increasing fire and explosion risk; Lack the resources and capacity to contain a transformer or lithium battery fire, which could endanger lives, destroy property, and cause long-term environmental damage to this part of the state; SREA and Samsung's poor global sustainability and ethical record; Lack of community consultation and ability for SREA and Samsung representatives to answer questions raised by the community; and destroying unique beauty of Rubicon Valley

"Locals realise that they unfortunately have very little say in the matter and the sign-off rests with the Minister for Planning.

"This is not about being anti-renewables at all, this is about considerable concerns that local residents have.

"This is in a very beautiful, idyllic part of the state. I urge the Minister to visit Rubicon," she said.



Attendees at the Breakaway Bridge meeting. -AR

Breakaway Bridge update

ON Thursday, November 27, Murrindindi Shire Council conducted a meeting to provide the community with an update on the plans for the Breakaway Bridge reinstatement.

They outlined the background to the catastrophic failure of the bridge in 2022, and the issues around the changing river course.

Under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement (DRFA), funded by the state and federal governments, funding is available for the restoration of essential assets, such as the bridge, however it is like-for-like, and this poses challenges. Council is not in a financial position to fund a second lane on the bridge, so they are looking for a way to make the funding work.

If they were to install a single lane bridge, there would need to be traffic lights at either end, due to the frequent winter fog and the fact that the bridge would need to be raised to a higher level than previously. This would come at a cost of around \$1 million, plus ongoing maintenance costs. Council are aiming to make the argument to government that the cost of traffic lights and back-up power supply could instead be put into having a second lane on the bridge.

They also pointed out that accessing funding requires many technical experts, an onerous process including assessments of the bridge, banks, riverbed and structure. The experts considered reestablishing the banks, repairing and extending the bridge or replacing the bridge. Repairing the

bridge is unfortunately not an option as the wooden bridge substructure was damaged in the flood, and it would need to withstand more floods in the future. The aim is to design for resilience, passing the 'grandfather test', ensuring that the issue is solved for the long-term.

The agencies involved include Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, Goulburn Murray Water, Emergency Recovery Victoria, the Department of Transport and Planning, National Emergency Management Authority and of course, Murrindindi Shire Council.

Council has gone out to tender on the bridge re-build, with multiple options sought from the various organisations. Council will then return to government and provide this information, as the funding is agreed pending the tender outcome.

Council is focused toward rebuilding the bridge, despite some residents being opposed to the idea. Many of their concerns were overcome through council stating that there may be some traffic management plans, including 'traffic calming' put in place to ensure that the road doesn't become an alternate route in and out of Alexandra, particularly for trucks.

Many at the meeting were loudly in support of rebuilding the bridge, although some were concerned that the community weren't allowed to vote on the proposals at the meeting. It is expected that the community will have further input moving forward.

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Standard
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Merton General Store
Seymour Newsagency
Taggerty Store
Thornton Store
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 **Country Press**
AUSTRALIA

Yea Community Bank records a profit

JAMES Osborne, chair of Murrindindi Community Enterprises (MCEL) which operates the Yea Community Bank, was pleased to report an operating profit of \$204,000 for the last financial year at the annual general meeting held on Tuesday, November 25.

He said that the operating profit resulted in the full recovery of shareholders' equity, and at the same time the board has achieved a position where it is feasible to consider declaring a further dividend, adding to the dividends paid in the last two years.

The operating profit is 30 per cent lower than last year, with Mr Osborne saying, "Fundamentally the decrease is due to the decrease in interest rates and to a much lesser extent the costs associated with the share buyback program. We were also forced to change our opening days to four rather than three due to Armaguard changing its cash pick-up and delivery schedule to Tuesday. Consequently, we had to increase the hours of the staff therefore incurring increased salary costs.

"We are anticipating any continuing decline in interest rates could adversely impact our financial results during the foreseeable future. However, we have initiatives in progress designed to maintain the growth in shareholder equity and the payment of an annual dividend. MCEL is profitable and has a positive future. For the first time in the 15 year history of the bank we are coming to an AGM with a positive equity balance sheet with zero debts and having a further five year franchise agreement."

The Yea Community Bank is the only bank within the entire Murrindindi Shire. Mr Osborne noted that by limiting the opening days, they have been able to retain a cap on branch operating costs while still maintaining the opportunity for customers to enjoy reliable and expert face-to-face banking services.

He said, "During the year our community bank staff have again performed at an outstanding level. We received many encouraging compliments regarding the quality of service and the pleasure of being able to have staff attend to one's banking needs in a friendly and helpful manner.

"Staffing is always a challenge bearing in mind MCEL cannot provide five-day, full-time positions. We were delighted to make additional appointments during the financial year, which resulted in the branch now being fully staffed. Training for new staff is always demanding and places a huge demand on branch operations. However, the core team has done an outstanding job in ensuring the branch continues operational. The MCEL Board acknowledges the outstanding contribution our branch manager makes in ensuring high levels of customer service and making the branch a great place to work and for customers to visit."

He added, "Having restored shareholder equity to its initial level and secured a relatively stable financial outlook, the board reviewed the MCEL shareholding structure. Over the last 15 years several initial shareholders have passed, and their shareholding distributed to beneficiaries. This has resulted in a MCEL share register with a significant number of shareholders holding what is effectively an unmarketable number of shares. The board instigated a share buyback program that enabled small shareholders to divest their holdings. To be fair to all shareholders the share buyback program was available to all shareholders not just those with a small shareholding. The buyback offer enabled all shareholders to cash in up to 500 shares.

"Following the share buyback we have proceeded to finalise a transition from our manual paper and spreadsheet system to a professional group called Registry Direct who specialise in maintaining share registers. Sometime during the next six weeks, shareholders will receive an email from Registry Direct. Please do not ignore this email. It will contain important instructions on how you can log in and access your shareholder information. Through the portal, shareholders can update contact and bank details for the payment of dividends, view your shareholding information, access your transactional history, and download copies of your share certificate and any related documents. All future communications to shareholders will also come to you directly



John Agostinelli, endorsed by the board to lead Murrindindi Community Enterprises in 2026, with former chair Jim Osborne. -S

from Registry Direct being the official share register for our community bank. In early 2026 further information will be provided to shareholders outlining the process for buying, selling or transferring shares."

Mr Osborne added, "Establishing this facility is the final part of the jigsaw to completing all the legal steps we have had to undertake in bringing MCEL to proper legal status. It has been a long and difficult task."

He pointed out that just because the bank knows contact details, it doesn't mean that the board does. The board does not have access to any of the bank records that the branch holds. Those details are private between each customer and the bank and would be a serious privacy breach if the board had access.

MCEL operates under a franchise agreement with the Bendigo Bank, and the franchise agreement was due for renewal during the year. The agreement has been renegotiated and as a result the franchise agreement has been extended for a further five years. They have also signed a new five year tenancy lease agreement for the bank premises.

Mr Osborne said, "After the end of the financial year, the MCEL Board received advice that the Bendigo Bank had decided to close its community bank agency network. Consequently, the Agency at Alexandra and the ATM in Eildon were closed in October. MCEL was not consulted regarding the decision or consideration given to the impact on MCEL or our customers in Alexandra or Eildon. The closures are part of a Bendigo Bank decision to close its entire agency network and involved the closure of 28 agencies across Australia. While disappointed with the decision, the main challenge now for the MCEL board is to minimise the impact on the banking service for our loyal Alexandra and Eildon customers. From a shareholder perspective the adverse impact on MCEL profits of the agency and ATM withdrawal of services, is projected not to be significant."

He noted the changes in the industry recently, including the impact of mortgage brokers on the banking industry, with around eight out of 10 loans now negotiated via a mortgage broker.

Mr Osborne provided the following summary of the bank's financial year. "We are profitable with positive equity and are debt free. We have a new five year franchise

agreement and a new five year lease of our bank building. A continuing decline in interest rates is anticipated and we have plans to manage our operating costs accordingly. The global financial market uncertainty is a concern particularly the way excessive tariffs are being randomly imposed and/or changed by the major economies. Retaining and building on the level of business we have in the Yea/Alexandra and surrounding communities is vital. We have a good team in place to manage the daily business and grow the business."

He concluded by encouraging shareholders to encourage others to join and use the bank, adding, "The only way the community can keep a banking facility in Yea and Murrindindi Shire is by using it. If the Yea and shire community do not support the branch it will not survive. Have no doubt all the banks are closing regional branches given the opportunity. The Alexandra and Eildon closures are our own examples. Using our community bank is our best and only way to deny the banks the opportunity."

Concern over increased pressure on the Goulburn River

Carl Walters, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) Chief Executive Officer, came out in opposition to the Australia Government's announcement to expand the non-strategic water buyback program in the Southern Murray Darling Basin.

He said, "The Federal Government's announcement to increase the volume of water that may be purchased in the southern connected basin by an additional 130 GL is of particular concern for our catchment due to the increased pressure on the Goulburn River and the challenges of the narrows of the Murray River and Barmah.

"The Goulburn Broken CMA has previously raised concerns about the inability to deliver the current volumes of water for the environment, through the Goulburn River in particular, without causing damage to the natural environment of the waterway.

"The assumption that the Goulburn River can be used as a "channel" to meet the demands of the downstream system is flawed. As those responsible for representing the river and ensuring it continues to improve over time, we are extremely concerned.

"We cannot accept that the environment of the Goulburn River can be sacrificed to meet outcomes further downstream. This has been our consistent message for more than 12 months but seems to have not been heard outside Victoria.

"There is already enough water recovered from the Goulburn to meet local environmental objectives. More water purchase here will only increase pressure on this system.

"The Goulburn Broken CMA is committed to ensuring the health of the Goulburn River and to protecting for future generations the prosperity of our regional community that depends on it."

When contacted about the concerns, a spokesperson from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water said, "Water purchases by the Australian Government are based on a value for money assessment which considers the environmental benefits that water offered for sale can deliver.

"Advice from both the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder supports buying water rights from the Goulburn catchment to help meet Basin Plan objectives both locally and regionally, especially as constraints are addressed over time."



Alexandra Community Pharmacy

20 Years of Alexandra Community Pharmacy

@ 101 Grant St, Alexandra VIC 3714

We want to thank everyone for their support over the last
20 years and look forward to many more
&
to celebrate we are offering **20% off** our gifting range
and **25% off** Artdeco and Juvena!!
Starts 4th December - Ends 6th December



Amanda and Emily from Anglicare and Emily from Familycare. -AR



Walkers crossing the swing bridge over UT Creek. -AR

Murrindindi says no to family violence

THE Murrindindi Walk for Respect was held during 16 Days of Activism in conjunction with Rotary’s ‘Say No to Family Violence’ message.

The event was held in Rotary Park on Friday, November 28, in sunny and warm conditions, drawing people from all parts of the shire. Many wore purple t-shirts, available for purchase at the event, supporting the message.

There were various stalls, with organisations providing information and advice on a variety of topics.

Mayor Damien Gallagher emceed the event. He said, “Your presence here today means something. It shows that in Murrindindi, we do not turn away from difficult issues. We face them together.”

He added, “Today we walk with purpose. We walk to stand against domestic and family violence. We walk for equality, for safety, and for the simple but powerful idea that respect must underpin every relationship, every home, every club, every workplace, and every community. This is not easy work, but real change rarely is. It takes time, compassion, and a community willing to stand side by side, and that is exactly what we’re doing today.”

“Respect is more than just a slogan. It’s a way we choose to live every day. It looks like building healthy, equal relationships, practicing enthusiastic consent, ensuring fairness in our workplaces, clubs and homes, speaking up when something isn’t right, and role modelling the behaviours we want our kids to grow up with. Everyone, absolutely everyone, deserves to feel safe, valued and respected.”

He stated that in the year ending March 2025, 208 family violence incidents were reported across Murrindindi Shire, a 14.3 per cent increase on the year before. He commented, “Every one of those numbers represents a person, a family and a life impacted. That’s why this walk matters. Every step today honours those who have been harmed, it supports those who are still navigating their way through it and it signals the future we’re determined to build.”

“Creating safer communities is something we do together. We listen to lived experience, we pay attention to the data and we work alongside local services who show extraordinary dedication day in and day out. To those who shared their stories, thank you for your courage. You’ve reminded us that family violence does not fit a stereotype. It does not discriminate by postcode, income, education or status.”

He also reminded people that judgement has no place in the conversation, and said that everyone can help through challenging assumptions and focusing on creating environments where people are believed, supported and informed about their options.

“Every one of us can help,” he said, “By listening without judgment, sharing information about support services, and promoting respect in our homes, workplaces, and communities.”

Ian Smith from Rotary Alexandra said, “Rotary are united nationally and internationally campaign for this particular cause.”

He said, “It’s inspiring to see so many community groups here today. Individuals come together for this important cause, because events like this remind us that real change happens when we all stand united and work together.”

He thanked the Alexandra Fire Brigade for the barbecue, Redgate Alexandra CWA for the providing morning tea and powerful craft decorations that carry a message of hope, and U3A East Murrindindi, promoting active retirement through social connection

Alison from Vincentcare also spoke about family violence systems, the gendered nature of family violence, how rigid gender roles and stereotypes contribute to harm, and the important role we all play in prevention.

She noted that *The National Community Attitude Survey* tells us that 82 per cent of people will not go to the police about family violence, so the 208 incidents can be multiplied by five for a more accurate figure. In a small community like Murrindindi, that’s a huge number.

She also spoke to various stallholders. U3A outlined their activities for older people. Alexandra District Health explained they have generalist counselling and social work services and they educate their staff to identify family violence and link people in with the right services, including Vincentcare or Orange Door. Familycare have a worker based in Alexandra, and like Alexandra District Health, they’re not as specialised family violence service but do also work in that space of identification and a lot of work in the recovery phase of victim survivors. They also have men’s counselling. Anglicare are fairly new to the southern Goulburn area and have been offering family violence specialist services for about six months now. They also offer services for people who use violence, such as the Men’s Behaviour Change program, which is a 20 week program that they’re currently running online, and they work with victim survivors of family violence not in the crisis stage. Vincentcare work with people in the crisis stage.

Following the speeches, the attendees took a walk to reflect and connect, followed by a lovely barbecue lunch.



Shannon, Rob and Marie from The Bridge Youth and Family Services. -AR



Rotarians promoting the ‘Say No to Family Violence’ message outside Alexandra FoodWorks on Thursday, September 27. -AR



Lucy with Alison and Mel from Vincentcare. -AR



Chris Wasley and Jess Jensen from Alexandra District Health. -AR



Purple shirts were available to support the cause. -AR



The Alexandra Fire Brigade provided the barbecue at the event. Pictured are Gail Kneeshaw, David Kneeshaw, Mick Van Heuzen and John Sier. -AR



Chris Lynch and Samuel Fawke, both from Alexandra Fire Brigade, Chris di Ciero from Benalla Police, Stephen Keating from CFA District 12, and Steve Lynch. -AR

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ALEXANDRA PRIMARY SCHOOL

ST MARY’S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Charlotte Milner

Charlotte consistently shows the school values and comes to school each day with a fabulous attitude. She always uses kind words and actions with everyone in the class. Charlotte is inclusive and goes out of her way to include others in games and group work. She takes feedback and uses it to improve her work. She takes on learning challenges and has been extending herself with year 1 content. We are so proud to have you in our learning community, Charlotte. You are a star.



Jack D

To acknowledge Jack’s growing determination and confidence in his learning. Jack has been consistently pushing himself to do his very best, especially in literacy. His confidence is soaring, and it’s truly exciting to watch his progress. We are so proud of his efforts and the positive attitude he brings to his learning each day.

EILDON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Ellie-Mae Jamieson

Ellie-Mae set herself the goal of completing her English Skills book by the end of the year, and she’s seeing it through by completing at least three pages a day , all done to the best of her ability. This amazing effort shows our school values of integrity, resilience, and achievement. Such a great accomplishment



Jake Tennyson

For demonstrating the school value of Resilience by showing an enthusiasm for learning during maths, even when the problems were challenging. Well done Jake.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by
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Good news for anglers

VICTORIA’S Murray cod fisheries are in strong shape ahead of the annual season opening, according to a monitoring program funded in part by recreational fishing licence fees.

Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) CEO Travis Dowling said the Native Fish Report Cards, developed in partnership with Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action’s Arthur Rylah Institute (ARI), delivered insights into cod populations in four key waterways.

“Cod season opens Monday, December 1 and there’s good news for anglers planning summer trips to the Goulburn, Ovens and Lindsay rivers and Gunbower Creek,” he said.

“The report cards paint a picture of how these fisheries are travelling and feature insights such as the percentage of legal-size fish and whether recent breeding has occurred.”

The annual report cards are informed by ARI survey work, using electrofishing and fyke nets to assess populations of Murray cod and other native species in 10 systems statewide.

The Goulburn recorded a slight increase on 2024 survey numbers with evidence of recent recruitment meaning breeding is occurring naturally within the system.

“The data helps fisheries managers assess which waters may benefit from our record-breaking fish stocking program and where natural recruitment is occurring,” Mr Dowling said.

“A combination of factors including stocking millions of Murray cod into Victorian waters each year, more fish habitat, better handling by anglers and effective bag and size limits are playing a part in improving cod fishing for everyone right across the state.”

Catch limit information for Murray cod can be accessed via the free *VicFishing* app.

Kate Hill honoured with Hume Deputy Chief Fire Officer Award

FOREST Fire Management Victoria is proud to recognise Kate Hill from the Murrindindi District as the recipient of the Hume Region Deputy Chief Fire Officer Award, an honour that celebrates exceptional contribution to

emergency management and leadership.

Kate began her career in 2011 as a Project Firefighter in Marysville, quickly earning a reputation for her hands-on approach and willingness to take on the toughest jobs.



Kate Hill. -S

Over six seasons, she worked on burn preparation, bushfire response, and site management, while gaining licences to operate heavy machinery and trucks, skills that would prove invaluable in the years ahead.

In 2017, Kate stepped into an ongoing Forest and Fire Operations Officer role and became one of the first Unimog operators in the region. Her technical ability and calm leadership saw her lead crews through challenging conditions, including the Upper Murray-Walwa fire in early 2020.

Under extreme circumstances, Kate played a vital role in protecting assets in the Nariel Valley, demonstrating resilience and clear decision-making when it mattered most. She has also deployed to major fire events in South Australia and Queensland, bringing her expertise to communities in crisis.

Alongside her operational achievements, Kate has made a lasting impact on training and capability development. After completing her Certificate IV in Training and Assessment in 2022, she became a valued Trainer and Assessor, helping others build the skills needed for safe and effective fire operations.

In her current role as District Technical Training Officer, Kate has introduced mentoring programs, delivered specialist courses, and supported new firefighters as they prepare for the season ahead.

Kate’s commitment to protecting communities and supporting her colleagues reflects the very best of our organisation. Her determination, technical skill, and leadership have shaped not only her own career but the capability of those around her.

Kate was presented with her award by Hume Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Aaron Kennedy, at the recent Murrindindi District Pre-season Briefing.

Eildon raises funds for breast cancer

A MORNING Tea was held in Eildon on Saturday, November 29 to raise funds for breast cancer. The event was well attended, with people enjoying lots of lovely food, as well as raffle and door prizes.



November meeting of Murrindindi Shire Council

CR Adams was an apology, as was Cr McAulay for a minor hospital procedure.

Public participation

Stuart Herron from Cathedral Range Winery spoke to item 4.3 on the agenda, a planning application for 125 Knafl Road, Taggerty, for the “use and development of land for a winery”. He presented a positive case for Cathedral Range Winery.

Angelina Bell from Bell Legal and Planning spoke in favour of item 4.2 on the agenda, a planning application for 95 Falls Road in Marysville to perform a three lot subdivision.

Ester Mass, speaking for the residents of the area, voiced her opposition to the proposed subdivision at 95 Falls Road in Marysville, arguing that the move goes against an established covenant to not further subdivide the block.

Murrindindi Shire Council CEO, Livia Bonazzi, read six letters submitted to council by members of the public during this segment.

Michael Kowalik wrote a letter opposing the planning application for 1735 Healesville-Kinglake Road in Toolangi, which is proposed for a “two lot subdivision, use of land for a store and creation of access to a road in the transport zone two”. He suggested the planning application goes against the small-town nature of Toolangi.

Rachael and Michael Cavill, Julie Palmer and Nicholas Deane all wrote letters opposing the planning application for 95 Falls Road in Marysville.

Robert Utter and Chloe Heron both wrote letters throwing their support behind the planning application for 125 Knafl Road in Taggerty, for the establishment of the Cathedral Range Winery cellar door.

Item four: Community and Development Group reports

The planning application for 1735 Healesville-Kinglake Road in Toolangi was considered, which is a two lot subdivision that will be used for a domestic store, not associated with any commercial operation, and the creation of access to a road in the transport zone two. Council voted to approve the application.

The application for a three-lot subdivision at 95 Falls Road in Marysville was considered. No development of the proposed lots is proposed as part of the application, and the application requests an amendment by council to Section 173 Agreement to remove a prohibition on further subdivision for the subject land. Objections were raised by the community. Council voted to approve the application.

An application to use and develop a winery on the land at 125 Knafl Road, Taggerty, was considered by council. Objections were raised by the community, including bushfire risk. CFA gave their consent to the application. Council voted to approve the application.

An application was submitted asking council to amend the development plan for Binns-McCraes Road in Alexandra to include industrial land on the northern side of the road. Council voted to approve the amended development plan.

The Molesworth and District Community Plan was developed during the 2024-25 period, with a meeting held in February at the Molesworth Hall to discuss priorities. The final plan has now been developed, and council noted the Molesworth and District Community Plan.

Council discussed the quarterly allocations of the grants and sponsorship program, noting the various quick response grants and individual sponsorship grants and endorsing one local event grant of \$4500 for the Rotary Club of Alexandra's Dindi Daze event. The full list of grants and sponsorships for the quarter can be found in the November council meeting minutes at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Council/Council-Meetings/Agendas-and-Minutes

Draft guidelines for successful renewable energy projects were developed by council officers, designed to guide how large-scale renewable energy projects can be delivered in a way that benefits Murrindindi Shire communities. Council voted to endorse the draft guidelines.

Item five: People and Corporate Performance Group reports

A progress report for the September quarter of council's Priority Action Plan 2025-26 was presented. Highlights from the quarter include the commencement of the four-bin kerbside collection, 23 community grants being awarded, and the completion of the Alexandra Movement and Place Study. Council noted the report.

The annual assigning of portfolios to councillors took place at the meeting, with a slight reshuffling from last year. The councillor portfolio appointments are: Cr McAulay to Economic Development, Local Jobs and Skills; Cr Carpenter to Sustainable Population Growth and Land Use Planning; Cr Lording to Amenities and Road Care; Cr Hildebrand to Sustainability and Assets; Cr Adams to Community Wellbeing; and Cr Carr to Integrity, Finance and Engagement.

Councillor representative appointments were presented during the meeting, with the councillors appointed as representatives to various internal committees and external bodies, allowing for open communication with local community groups and local government organisations. The full list of representative appointments can be found on the meeting minutes, at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Council/Council-Meetings/Agendas-and-Minutes

The timetable of council meetings for 2026 was discussed, with the same arrangements as this year being continued. Monthly council meetings will be alternated between Yea and Alexandra on the fourth Wednesday of the month commencing at 6pm, with the December meeting scheduled for the third Wednesday of the month. There is also the potential option being explored of holding one or more council meetings in Kinglake in 2026. Council adopted the timetable of scheduled meetings.

Item six: Assets and Environment Group reports

CONT25/2 Panel Contract Flooring Maintenance Services for Infrastructure Assets (three years with possible two-year extension, \$650,000 total) was awarded to: C4 National Flooring Services Pty Ltd; Blended Services Group Pty Ltd; Chookies Flooring Xtra Pty Ltd; Melbourne Master Painting and Maintenance Pty Ltd; and Flooring Future Pty Ltd.

CONT25/3 Panel Contract Plumbing Maintenance Services for Infrastructure Assets (three years with possible two-year extension, \$3,000,000 total) was awarded to: A and C Wood Plumbing Pty Ltd; Kinglake Plumbing and Drainage Pty Ltd; The Trustee for KPC Plumbing and Drainage Pty Ltd; The Trustee for Gilligan Family Trust; Travis Capp Plumbing Pty Ltd; EJ's Total Services Pty Ltd.

CONT25/4 Panel Contract Electrical Maintenance Services for Infrastructure Assets (three years with possible two-year extension, \$3,000,000 total) was awarded to: Allround Electrical Pty Ltd; Book Electrical Pty Ltd; E-Tec Pty Ltd; HNB Electrical Pty Ltd; Tollec Electrical Services Pty Ltd; J Williams Electrical Pty Ltd; and Vivid Energy Solutions Pty Ltd.

CONT25/5 Panel Contract Painting Maintenance Services for Infrastructure Assets (three years with possible two-year extension, \$650,000 total) was awarded to: Argyle Maintenance Services Pty Ltd; Blended Services Group Pty Ltd; Higgins Coatings Pty Ltd; Melbourne Master Painters Pty Ltd; and I Paint Melbourne Pty Ltd.

CONT25/24 Kinglake Memorial Reserve Oval Reconstruction was awarded to Victorian Sports Group Pty Ltd for a total contract value of \$968,050.50, with a contingency amount of \$120,00.

The Urban Tree Strategy 2025-2035 was presented to council for adoption, following public consultation from September 18 to October 13, 2025. The strategy aims to improve the multiple community benefits to be gained from careful planning and improvement of the urban tree forest in various townships, and includes an action plan of short, medium and long-term actions over the 10-year period. Council voted to adopt the strategy.



Sylvia Brooks received the Legend of the Year for Most Hours on Air, totalling 637 hours. -S



Peter Weeks with Peter Rice who was awarded Best All Round Programs for the past 30 years. -S



Michael Mawson won the Community Involvement Award. Pictured with Peter Weeks. -S

The 2025 UGFM Presenter Awards

ON Sunday, November 16, the UGFM Radio Murrindindi 2025 Presenter Awards acknowledged broadcasters for their dedication to volunteering on local community radio.

All presenters were acknowledged for their time on air by vice president Michael Mawson at a recent Christmas and awards get together at the Alexandra Bowling Club.

Sylvia Brooks received the award for 637 hours on air and Legend of the Year. In total, the 40 presenters and committee gave nearly 7000 hours of volunteer time broadcasting last year in studios, outside broadcasts and behind the scenes work.

The President's Awards went to Nomes Booker for Best Female All Rounder, Brian Sillett for Best Male All Rounder, Peter Rice for Best Programs over 30 Years, Gerry Laws for 20 Years Assisting in Sponsorship Production, and Encouragement Awards to Deirdre Penhale and Sarah Hopkins. The Hard Yakka Award went to Mike Dalmau, Best Rock Program to Andrew Wareham and Marco Ciente, and Community Involvement Award to Michael Mawson.

Appreciation certificates were also awarded to 20 volunteers who have been involved with UGFM as correspondents providing local news and sport for the past 31 years, including Elaine White for over 25 years as Yea correspondent and Colin Long as Eildon Golf Club correspondent for over 20 years and Mark Jones for managing the Marysville Studio and interview work.



Mayor Damien Gallagher and Cr Sandice McAulay enjoying lunch with some of the UGFM volunteers. -S



Another table of volunteers. -S



Sarah Hopkins received an Encouragement Award. -S



Gilly on the barbecue. -S



UGFM President Peter Weeks with Brian Sillett won Best Male All Rounder. -S



Peter Weeks awarding Gerry Laws for his involvement in Sponsorship Production past 20 years. -S



Peter Weeks with Deirdre Penhale who received an Encouragement Award. -S



Peter Weeks with Mike Dalmau who received a Hard Yakka for 'Good Morning Murrindindi'. -S



Volunteers enjoying lunch at the Alexandra Bowls Club.



Let's eat, it's our treat

Wound healing bee-nefits

WHILE there are any number of modern medicinal remedies available to treat injuries, people previously used honey to prompt wound healing. In fact, people have been using honey as a remedy for thousands of years, dating all the way back to ancient Egypt.

Honey has antibacterial properties and a unique pH balance that promotes oxygen and healing compounds in a wound, making it useful for natural healing.

According to a literature review published in the journal, *Wounds* and quoted on *Healthline's* website, honey offers many healing benefits.

"Acidic pH promotes healing. Honey has an acidic pH of between 3.2 and 4.5. When applied to wounds, the acidic pH encourages the blood to release oxygen, which is important to wound healing. An acidic pH also reduces the presence of substances called proteases

that impair the wound healing process," the review says.

"Sugar has an osmotic effect. The sugar naturally present in honey has the effect of drawing water out of damaged tissues (known as an osmotic effect). This reduces swelling and encourages the flow of lymph to heal the wound. Sugar also draws water out of bacterial cells, which can help keep them from multiplying.

"Antibacterial effect. Honey has been shown to have an antibacterial effect on bacteria commonly present in wounds, such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and vancomycin-resistant *Enterococci* (VRE). Part of this resistance may be through its osmotic effects."

If choosing to apply honey to wounds, such as burns and ulcers, it is important to keep everything clean and sterile. Apply the honey to a dressing first, then to the injury. The ideal type of honey is Manuka honey, but other forms sold for healing include Gelam, Tualang, and MediHoney.



Honey was used in ancient times to treat wounds. -Wilfredor

Let's Eat November winner

THE winner of our November Let's Eat \$50 voucher was Don Hendrickson from Koriella. Don will be having a \$50 feed on us at Sedona Estate. Be sure to get your entry form from this edition for your chance to win a \$50 meal at the venue advertised in this edition of Let's Eat; It's our treat. Get in early with your entries for our last Let's Eat for 2025. Remember to circle your venue of choice.



Let's eat; it's our treat

Your chance to WIN a \$50 meal voucher

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....

Email.....

Eligible venues this month: (Circle your preferred choice below)

- Kinglake Pub - Philip Lobley Wines
- Sedona Estate - The Corner Hotel Alexandra

One entry per household

Winner will be notified by phone and published in the first edition of the month.
T&C: Only venues listed above in this edition are eligible to be chosen. Voucher is not redeemable for cash. To be used for one purchase only. Multiple vouchers cannot be saved and used together. Staff or family members of Alexandra Newspapers are ineligible to enter. Original form must be returned. If you do not circle your choice, your entry is invalid.

For your chance to win a \$50 voucher, return this entry by noon, **Wednesday, December 17.**

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11.30am - 5.00pm

Dogs are welcome

OPEN: 27 - 31 December





Let's eat, it's our treat

How to pair wine with food

YOU don't have to be a connoisseur of fine wines to know how to complement a meal with a good wine pairing. There are just a few simple tips and tricks to remember, that will lead to getting the most out of a bottle of wine.

To begin with, you can either select a wine to complement a dish, called a complementary pairing, or you can choose a wine that enhances the dish, known as a congruent pairing.

Different types of wine have different acidity levels, meaning that they can either match the delicious meal you are eating, or they can contrast.

Traditionally, matching the weight of food and wine is a safe technique. For lighter food, typically lower in fat, you might choose a lighter wine, and for heavier and richer food, you would choose a heavier wine. An example of this would be light foods like chicken and fish pairing well with a lighter white wine like a sauvignon blanc, or prawns and chardonnay working well together because they are both medium-weight and rich in flavour.



White wines can pair well with lighter foods, while reds pair with heavier and richer foods. -Stefan Johnson

You can also match flavours between dishes and wines. If you were having a spicy pepper steak, you could pair it nicely with a spicy and strong shiraz.

When it comes to the acidity of wines, it gets slightly more complicated. High-acid wines can be used to cleanse your palate when eating oily foods. Alternatively, drier wines,

like a pinot grigio, pair well with food that is strongly acidic, like a salad with vinegar dressing.

A general rule is to serve wine that is at least as sweet as the food being served. Serving a dry wine with sweet food can make the wine seem over-acidic and bitter.



White wine pairs well with fruits, given they are a light food. -Robert Gombos

Furthermore, pairing a sweet wine with spicy food can offer relief when your mouth starts tingling.

As with anything however, food and wine is subjective, so play around and experiment. A traditional pairing might not be to your liking, and that's okay. Match food and wine to what you enjoy, not what people recommend.



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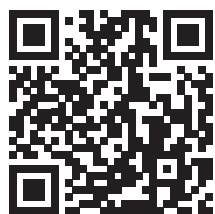
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New x-ray machine to help native wildlife

MURRINDINDI Ranges Wildlife Shelter have taken receipt of a new mobile x-ray machine, to help support their work caring for injured native wildlife.

Kate Turner from the organisation explained that there’s been a long process involved.

She explained that 10 years ago, she returned to university to study to be a veterinary technician, so she would have the qualifications to be able to get a licence to use the x-ray machine. The course is three year full time, but Kate did it part-time and it took her five years as she was wildlife caring at the same time.

There has also been a long, slow process of fundraising. She thanked the public, Bendigo Bank Kinglake and the Valley Group, and Murrindindi Shire Council for their support.

They were finally able to purchase the x-ray machine this year, costing \$43,500.

Kate can now take x-rays and send the radiographs to one of the many vets who volunteer their time. They assess and provide Kate with feedback. The animals can then be treated accordingly.

Kate said, “It’s not so much of a lifesaver, but it will speed up whether they’re a definite euthanase, and without the suffering of trying to lug them into the car and then into a clinic and then back out again.

“We’ve got one roo here who’s going to get released a month earlier than I originally planned because we’ve found that his fracture’s already healed. Normally I’d have to wait a little bit longer to be confident that they’re all healed up, but now I can just go, yep, that’s healed, off you go.”

The machine is portable and battery operated, taking up a seat and footwell in the vehicle, and it means that the x-rays can occur on the side of the road or in a paddock, for example.



A sulphur crested cockatoo wing. -S



The pelvis of a wombat. -S



Eastern grey kangaroo feet. -S



Eastern grey kangaroo feet. -S



Eastern grey kangaroo feet. -S

Rotary visits the woodworkers

ON Wednesday, November 19, members of Alexandra Rotary Club visited the ‘Woodies’, also known as Alexandra Community Shed/Eildon and District Woodworkers Guild headquarters in McKenzie Street, behind the car wash.

Woodies president Manny Ghirxi welcomed Rotarians including District Governor Elect Paul Miegel and his partner Meredith, and Penny Paxman from Rotary Club of Yea.

Members of the Woodies demonstrated their expertise on various pieces of equipment, including laser engravers,etchers, pyrographers and lathes, and displayed examples of their work.

Some Rotarians took the opportunity to do some early Christmas shopping, or think about commissioning a restoration project.

The visit concluded with a shared meal in the meeting room/kitchen as new friendships were forged.



Members of Alexandra Woodworkers recently enjoyed hosting the Alexandra Rotary Club for a tour of their clubrooms and workshops. -S



The woodworkers showcased wood turning and their new laser burner. -S



Meredith Meigel, District Governor Elect Paul Meigel and Alexandra Rotary President John Allcock. -S



People enjoying the children's activities area last year. -BD



Some of the market stalls set up for last year's Dindi Daze. -BD

Dindi Daze returns for second year

DINDI Daze, now in its second year, is a fun-filled, family-focused celebration of everything that makes Murrindindi great. Held in Rotary Park, this year's event builds on the success of its inaugural year and has evolved to place even greater emphasis on families, community members doing it tough, and our younger residents.

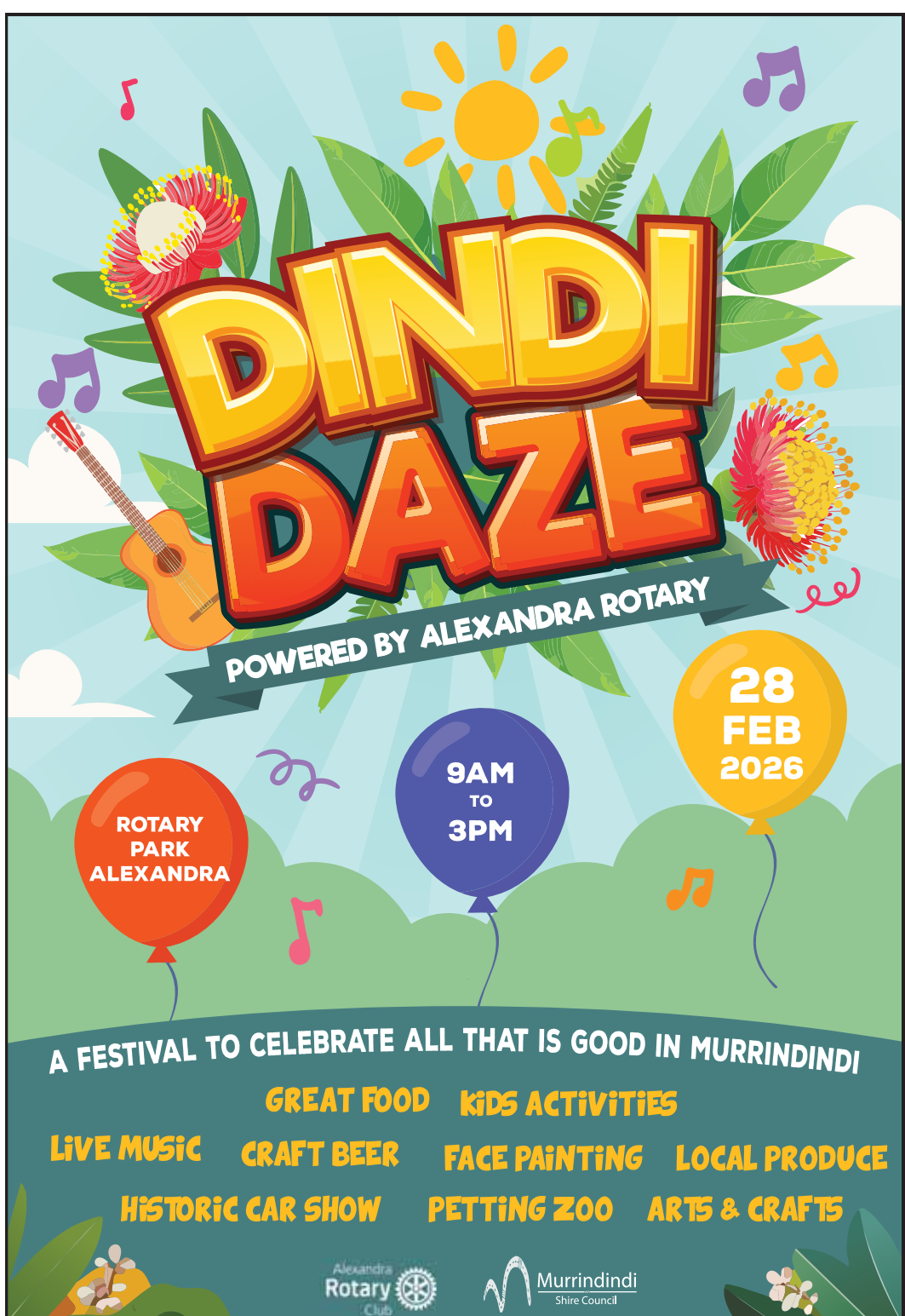
The day will feature a range of children's activities, including free face painting, games, and competitions. A highlight will be the mobile animal farm, home to 35 to 40 baby farm animals. Children will have the opportunity to enter the pen in small groups to pat, feed and hold the animals.

A variety of local young and more established performers will provide entertainment throughout the event, creating a lively and inclusive atmosphere. Visitors can enjoy food vans and pop-ups, local craft beers, wines, and spirits, as well as arts and crafts stalls, an historic vehicle procession and display, and even steam train rides.

A range of community-based stalls and displays will also be available, including Victoria Police, CFA, Woodies (Alexandra Community Shed Inc / Eildon & District Woodworkers), Embassy of Ideas and Food Share, Lions Club and Rotary. The event team is also seeking to include stalls focused on mental health, healthy ageing, and support for victims of family violence, further strengthening Dindi Daze's and Rotary's commitment to community wellbeing.

The focus of Dindi Daze is to bring the Murrindindi community together to celebrate everything that makes our region special and, of course, to have some fun. The event also aims to attract visitors and tourists, providing an opportunity to showcase local talent, including our region's art, crafts, food, wine and beer.

Dindi Daze is run by Alexandra Rotary and will be held in Rotary Park, Alexandra on Saturday, February 28 from 9am to 3pm.



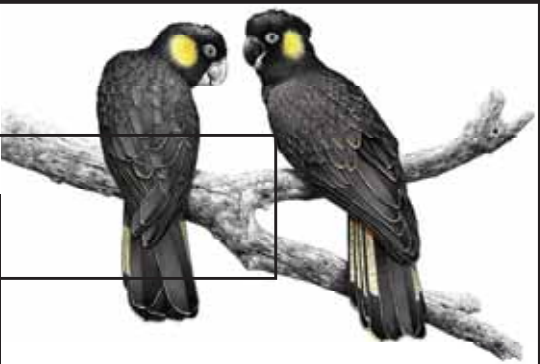
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Penultimate cattle sale at Yea for 2025

NUTRIEN Yea’s Autumn Weaner Drop sale took place last Friday at the Yea Saleyards, with prices continuing their trend of staying high.

Some 1778 cattle were yarded, with a mixture of weaner steers and heifers for sale. Average price per head was \$1605, with the average weight per head sitting at 282 kilograms, equalling out to an average for the day of 569c/kg.

Steers sold well, reaching a top price per head of \$2200 and top weight of 368.6 kilograms, equalling to 597c/kg.

Heifers continued their regular trend of selling lower than their steer counterparts, reaching a top price per head of \$1670 and top weight of 357.8 kilograms. Doing the maths shows the top heifers made 467c/kg.

The final cattle sale for the year at Yea is the Combined Agents Store Sale on Friday, December 5, before a break is had until sales in January.



A decent crowd for Nutrien’s Autumn Weaner Drop sale at Yea last Friday. -BD

STOCK REPORT 28 NOVEMBER 2025			
Nutrien Weaner Sale	Total Yarding	Steers	Heifers
Number of head	1,778		
Average \$ per head	\$1,605		
Average weight per head	282 kg		
Top price per head		\$2,200	\$1,670
Top weight		368.6 kg	357.8 kg
Turnover	\$2.8 million		

VFF launches petition to protect farmland

THE Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is calling on Victorians to pledge their support to grow and protect the state’s prime farmland by signing a new petition as part of the new ‘Help protect Victorian farmland’ campaign.

VFF President Brett Hosking said Victoria’s farmland represents a huge asset that needs protecting.

“Our farmland is an economic powerhouse that underpins more than 150,000 jobs and contributes in excess of \$20 billion to the Victorian economy each year,” he said.

“Victoria is Australia’s food bowl and our farmland is a national treasure, producing almost a quarter of the nation’s food, from just three per cent of arable Australian land.

“Our farmers protect and conserve our state’s incredible biodiversity, as well as being industry leaders in the emissions reduction our planet needs so urgently.

“Farmers and the soil they farm are irreplaceable and I’m urging everyone to back our farmers. We must send this message loud and clear to governments right across the nation.”

Across Victoria, productive agricultural land is facing challenges for competing land use, such as housing estates, mining approvals, transmission corridors and large-scale energy projects. The rate of our prime farmland loss is staggering. We’ve lost well in excess of 100,000 hectares to housing alone in the past 10 years, that’s 6500 times the area of the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The petition is designed to remind governments and decision makers that farmers and the rural communities they support are vital to our state’s success.

The VFF is calling for a change in how land use decisions are made, with a particular focus on food security, local communities, and long-term sustainability.

The VFF is urging the Victorian Government to develop a statewide strategy that: Protects high-value agricultural land from fragmentation; ensures real consultation with local communities; provides fair compensation for landholders and communities; and guarantees shared benefits for regional areas impacted by development.

“We’re not asking for development to stop. We’re asking for it to be planned with intelligence, respect and an eye to the future.”

“It’s time we looked at our Victorian farmers and rural communities as an icon to be celebrated for all they provide to our economy, community and environment. I’m asking you to join us and help celebrate them with me,” Mr Hosking said.

Victorians can support the campaign and sign the petition at vff.org.au/help-protect-victorian-farmland/

The Trap

By Jed Dunstan

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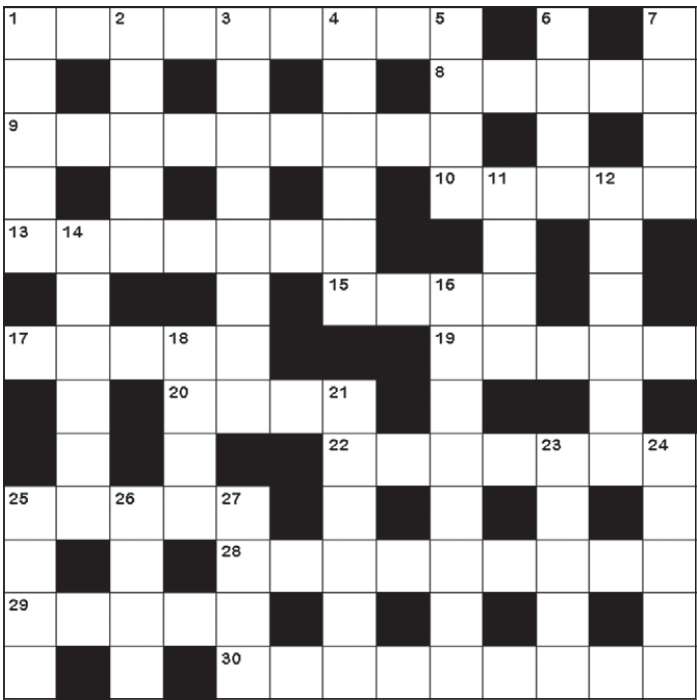
PUZZLES

SOLUTIONS
Page 19

Crossword

ACROSS

- 1. With no effort to conceal their impudence.
- 8. An exhibition of cowboy skills.
- 9. Fortune telling from the study of the stars.
- 10. Low land that is seasonally flooded.
- 13. An event causing distress or anxiety.
- 15. Long strip of marked metal used to measure.
- 17. Joyful religious song celebrating Christmas.
- 19. Relating to or resembling the eye.
- 20. Emit a steady even light without flames.
- 22. Attracting the attention of a taxi in the street.
- 25. Someone who has never been married.
- 28. Compliance with a law or a command.
- 29. A lottery with an accumulating jackpot.
- 30. A whirlpool of extraordinary size or violence.



DOWN

- 1. An animal other than a human being.
- 2. The relative sizes of two quantities.
- 3. A game that is known as Aussie Rules.
- 4. A small cabinet used for storage.
- 5. Removes all the moisture from.
- 6. The main thing you are thinking about.
- 7. The basic pattern of the human fingerprint.
- 11. Shed tears because of sadness or pain.
- 12. A fawning, compliant follower.
- 14. A justification for something happening.
- 16. The art and science of government.
- 18. Mythical giant who likes to eat human beings.
- 21. Breathe with a husky or whistling sound.
- 23. Confined to an exclusive group.
- 24. Shine with a faint or irregular brightness.
- 25. Repulsive or offensive.
- 26. Soaks thoroughly with a liquid.
- 27. A grim fate or destiny.

Word Search

S P H B E K U G X F E T Q Y B
H T R T S Z X W V W X V M E R
C W R B I W T A S X R V P N M
T L P E F M N J V Y E B F O N
A J B F B N S A R E E T F O W
B M S W O O I C F D U V B L Q
R D K M Z I R K H R W V E C S
E X A O P Z H S S G E B O P Q
B D H E M S W O R T H E A A T
M B U T C P L N C F M C M T J
U Z C V V O Y F B Q E M I A J
C R C Y J R B A S Y K P B J N
M Z W W A S H I N G T O N B J
W E I Z T S N M C L J E S T B
Z O C O H N A M K C A J U Y V

Actors by Surname

CLOONEY	HEMSWORTH	ROBERTS
CUMBERBATCH	JACKMAN	SMITH
DAMON	JACKSON	SPACEY
FREEMAN	PITT	WASHINGTON

Math Square

	+		+		19
-		+		+	
1	+		-		-4
+		+		+	
4	+		+		16
9		10		24	

Fill in the missing numbers.

The missing values are the whole numbers between 1 and 9.
Each number is only used once.
Each row is a math equation.
Each column is a math equation.
Remember that multiplication and division are performed before addition and subtraction.

Cryptogram

Actors

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
				25				
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
					5			
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
	8							

O ' T
23 5 16 9

E T E T O
26 1 25 9 25 16 23 8 5

E O O
11 25 6 24 5 10 5 12

E O T
17 1 25 16 5 8

Sudoku

		4						
5	3			7				1
9		1		6			8	5
				4	6	5		
	5		7		9		6	
		2	5	1				
4	1			8		7		6
7				5			9	4
						1		

Difficulty: Very Hard

Fill in the boxes using the numbers 1 to 9.
Every row and column and every group of 9 boxes inside the thicker lines must contain each number and letter only once.

KID'S PUZZLES

Colouring Page



Word Search

A A W T S D N E M A O R L Q I
X M C A S M I H C O Q U K W N
P T B I J G Q N A Q A E M B O
T O C E R N N M S M W T K R I
J F I C R E B O A D N A B H T
O T Q F A U M S M U V M B A I
W T H L L W S A O A M A K M N
K J P A P M A M W Z K M H B U
S J N N A D A X R D R S I L M
E C A M P L I F Y U U O K E M
E B X X F I M T X B S Q P F A
M W U B Z M K L M S C X N L E
E L B A I M A A Z K S K P A L
U O L L J L T S B R C E C F E
A M A Z E D H O H C C Q G X P

Words starting with "AM"

AMASS	AMENDS
AMATEUR	AMERICA
AMAZED	AMIALE
AMBER	AMMUNITION
AMBLE	AMONGST
AMBULANCE	AMOUNT
AMBUSH	AMPLIFY

Math Square

	+		+		14
+		-		-	
	+		-		2
-		-		+	
6	+		+	1	11
2		-10		-1	

Fill in the missing numbers.

The missing values are the whole numbers between 1 and 9.
Each number is only used once.
Each row is a math equation.
Each column is a math equation.
Remember that multiplication and division are performed before addition and subtraction.

Jokes

Q: What's the best thing about Switzerland?

A: I don't know, but the flag is a big plus.

Q: Why did the tree take up a hobby?

A: It wanted to branch out.

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17 11 21 23 25 22 9 24 18 14 7 19 4 16 5 26 13 1 3 8 12 20 6 2 10 15

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E	A	O	L	R	O	D	E	O		
A	S	T	R	O	L	O	G	Y	E	O
S	I	T	S	S	W	A	M	P		
T	R	O	U	B	L	E	E	I		
E	A	T	A	P	E	N				
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SUDOKU

2	8	4	1	9	5	6	3	7
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4	1	5	9	8	3	7	2	6
7	2	3	6	5	1	8	9	4
8	6	9	4	2	7	1	5	3

MATH SQUARES

6	+	5	+	8	19
-		+		+	
1	+	2	-	7	-4
+		+		+	
4	+	3	+	9	16
9		10		24	

KIDS - MATH SQUARES

5	+	2	+	7	14
+		-		-	
3	+	8	-	9	2
-		-		+	
6	+	4	+	1	11
2		-10		-1	

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MEETINGS

ALEXANDRA Historical Society AGM at 2pm on December 4, 2025 at Dove Cottage.

FRIENDS of Kellock Inc. AGM will be held on Wednesday, December 10 at Kellock Lodge, Bon Street, Alexandra at 9.30am in the Board Room. All welcome.

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DEATH NOTICES

PUMPA, Peter John.
1945 - 2025
Peter passed November 20, 2025.

He was a very special person in the lives of Sue, and family. Therefore, he was a very special part, for many years, in the Folley family. Another chapter closes.

PUMPA, Peter John.
25/11/1945 - 20/11/2025.
79 years young. Passed away peacefully. Beloved father of Jason, Barrie and step father to Jeremy, father in law to Trish, Marion, Gabby and families. A wake and celebration of his life will be at The Royal Mail Hotel in Yea on Saturday, December 13, 2025 at 2pm. All Peters friends are very welcome to join.

WHITELEY, Henry William.
'Harry'

Aged 93 years.
Dearly loved husband of Pat for 67 years.
Loving father of Meryll and Gaye
Father in law to Brian and Tom.

Wonderful 'grumpy' to four grandchildren, five great grandchildren 'Holding hands forever'.

Private family burial, 11.30am Friday, December 5, 2025, Marysville Cemetery followed by Memorial Service at 1pm at Marysville Golf Club, all welcome.



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Plan ahead for fire season

WITH fire danger season arriving, Yarra Valley Water is urging customers in grass fire and bushfire-prone areas to include a water supply in their emergency plan.

Even with recent rain, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) has stated this year's fire season could be the most dangerous since the 2009 Black Saturday fires. This is part of a trend of fire seasons starting earlier and lasting longer due to changing weather patterns.

The fire danger period comes into effect in some local government areas across the Yarra Valley Water service area from November 17 and could continue through to May 2026.

High-risk fire areas in Yarra Valley Water's service area include the shires of Yarra Ranges, Nillumbik, Cardinia, Mitchell, and Murrindindi, and the cities of Hume, Whittlesea, Banyule, Manningham, and Maroondah.

Bridie Fennessy, General Manager Asset Services, said a reliable water supply cannot be guaranteed during a fire and preparation is crucial.

"We all know grass fires and bushfires can happen at any time, with the potential to devastate properties and damage water pipes and tanks," Ms Fennessy said.

"During a fire, our customers could experience low water pressure, loss of supply or reduced water quality. This could be due to equipment damage due to heat or fire, high demand for water from firefighters, or power outages" she said.

Yarra Valley Water works with other agencies to prepare for the fire season and Ms Fennessy said the water corporation wants everyone in its service area to be ready too.

"We urge everyone to include drinking water in their emergency kit. And if you intend to defend your property, you need an independent water supply because you won't be able to rely on mains water during a fire," Ms Fennessy said.

The Country Fire Authority and Fire Rescue Victoria recommend you have an independent water supply of at least 10,000 litres and a non mains reliant pump if you are intending to stay and fight a fire.

For more information about preparing for fires and your water supply, including quick links to CFA and Fire Rescue Victoria Fire Ready and Fire Survival guides, visit yvw.com.au/bushfireinfo

Vehicle anti-theft measures recommended

POLICE are urging car owners to install anti-theft measures after several cars were stolen in Shepparton last week using electronic devices.

It's believed the devices, which program or mimic car keys, were used to break in and steal at least three Holden Commodores from the area.

Two were stolen from public carparks in the Shepparton area, while the third was stolen from a residential driveway. Two vehicles, while extensively damaged, were recovered by police in under two days.

Holden Commodores, as well as certain make and models with electronic push start technology are currently being stolen two to three times more often than the five-year average.

Statewide police intelligence conservatively estimates as many as one in five of all cars are disappearing despite their owners retaining the keys.

While these devices are not illegal to own, Victoria Police has seized more than 800 across the state in the past year from individuals arrested for stealing cars.

Car owners are being encouraged by police to install anti-theft measures such as on-board diagnostic port locks, while officers continue to engage with impacted manufacturers and insurers to help turn the tide.

Simple measures such as parking your vehicle off the street and always ensuring your vehicle is locked, even when at home, are also worth their weight in gold.

Remain vigilant on asbestos safety

"NATIONAL Asbestos Awareness Week provides an important reminder as we head into end of year, when people may be looking to undertake renovation or DIY work on older properties and the need to be vigilant in managing safety on site," Jocelyn Martin, HIA Managing Director, said.

"If you're working on homes built before 1990, you need to assume asbestos could be present in elements such as cladding, eave sheets, electrical switchboards, internal linings and even in pipework, roofing and floor underlays.

"It is vital to engage a licensed assessor for inspection and testing, and if asbestos is found, ensure it's removed by a licensed professional.

"The progress in asbestos awareness and management across Australia has been very good. With comprehensive legislation, dedicated removal programs, and increased industry

awareness, we've significantly reduced the risks associated with asbestos.

"However, everyone undertaking work on existing homes needs to remain vigilant to prevent complacency and protect the next generation of workers and homeowners.

"HIA encourages the industry and those looking to undertake renovation and DIY projects to use this year's Asbestos Awareness Week to take time to review their safe work practices and ensure all workers coming on home building sites are adequately trained and communicated to openly about potential risks.

"HIA has an extensive range of safety resources and dedicated information on working safely around asbestos and about identification, removal and safety obligations visit hia.com.au or contact your local state or territory work safety authority," Ms Martin said.

Molesworth's Rev and Rummage

THE Molesworth Rev and Rummage was held in overcast and rainy conditions on Saturday, November 29, but that didn't dampen the spirits of the attendees and stallholders.

The event was held at the Molesworth Recreation Reserve, showcasing vintage finds, local makers, classic cars and food trucks. It was a weekend of good vibes in Molesworth.



Some vehicle owners took the chance to have some fun. -AR



One of the lovely historic vehicles on display at the Molesworth Rev and Rummage. -AR



Peter Allan from The Butchers Shop. -AR



Kim Derbyshire from Acacia Lane. -AR



Kaiden was a keen vendor on the day. -AR



Mark at one of the stalls. -AR



Amanda and Rob from Sassy Sister Liqueur. -AR



Michelle Lander signing a copy of her book. -S

Pickle's Purple Potion launched in Alexandra

ON Saturday, November 29, local author Michelle Lander provided guests with a treat, at the Launch of her second children's book

Held at Allume Moi cafe, with Sarah as a host, Michelle's brother Dr David Deelen gave the introduction. To the delight of the audience, both main characters of the book, *Pickles Purple Potion*, were in attendance, seven year old Chloe Deelen and her entertaining pet rooster Pickle.

Michelle explained the passion behind her books. She wants to achieve four things for her audience, to connect with, entertain, empower and delight. She is an English teacher with a love of literature, especially reading aloud to children.

Her characters are always real children and animals who have had a lasting impact on her life. She said, "So know that if you make it into one of my books, you have had a profound affect on my heart, and writing the story is my way of showing you that, and

immortalising it, so that it will last forever."

Pickle the rooster actually let out a 'cockadoodle do' when Michelle took a break from reading an excerpt from her book, which the audience found highly amusing. Michelle had already made one author visit to a school with her book, to St John's in Euroa (Chloe's school) which was very enthusiastically received. She plans to make more in the new year.

If you haven't already been able to procure a copy and would like to, there will be future opportunities when she replenishes her stock as all were sold out on Saturday. Sarah's cafe Allume Moi in Alexandra will have them available when they arrive for \$15 or they can be purchased on Amazon.

Michelle plans to keep writing children's books, so keep an eye out for them, to delight, entertain, empower and connect with the children that are dear to your heart.

Haines calls for faster implementation of disaster roaming

MEMBER for Indi, Dr Helen Haines, has renewed her call for faster implementation of disaster roaming, and welcomed support from the National Farmers' Federation as the bushfire season approaches.

Dr Haines said disaster roaming remains a critical missing piece in Australia's telecommunications infrastructure.

"I've long called for the rollout of disaster roaming because it's a common-sense reform that will save lives during natural disasters," Dr Haines said.

"When bushfires, floods or storms hit, Australians should be able to roam onto any available mobile network to make emergency calls or receive warnings. Safety should not depend on which telco you're with."

Dr Haines noted that the Senate's *Connecting the Country* report, the ACCC's *Regional Mobile Infrastructure Inquiry*, and the *Bean Review* have all recommended the reform, yet it remains undelivered.

"I called on the government in my 2024 Regional Telecommunications Review submission to roll out this capability before the next fire season. It's now late 2025, and regional Australians still do not have it."

Despite saying it would consider disaster roaming more than two years ago, the government has provided no public update since.

National Farmers' Federation President Hamish McIntyre said disaster roaming was essential to protecting regional communities.

"When natural disasters hit, people shouldn't lose the ability to communicate just because one mobile network goes down. This can leave entire communities cut off," Mr McIntyre said.

"Farmers are often on the frontline of fires, floods and storms and they are critical to local emergency response. Communication is key to a fast and effective response."

"We've seen the Triple Zero fallback fail in recent outages. Strengthening that system is important, but communities also need to reach neighbours, family, and local responders."

"Temporary disaster roaming is a straightforward fix that lets people stay connected when it matters most."

Dr Haines said the support from the NFF underscores the urgency for federal action.

"Regional Australians deserve nothing less than a telecommunications system that works when they need it most," she said.

Round eight of term four pennant: Alexandra Squash Club

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition

Blue vein versus Feta
ETHAN versus Tyler: They don't get any closer than this. Ethan won the first two games, but Tyler won the next two games to level the points resulting in a draw. 55 to 55.
Randy versus Laura (fill in): Close all the way. Two tied games and two games separated by a mere point Laura won extra points to win the match by two. 61 to 59.
Jared versus Lucas: A great match with good long rallies. Jared stayed in control of the 'T' to take home all four games and the match. 66 to 50.
John versus Michael H (fill in): John showed why he is the top ranked player in this level, with consistent play, bringing Michael's unbeaten run for the season to an end. 63 to 50.

Camembert versus Mozzarella

Jordan/Robbie versus Eric: Good rallies. Eric has improved a lot. Jordan and Robbie are also getting good. Eric couldn't keep up with his opponents and conceded defeat. 72 to 50.
Liane versus Sally: A good start by Sally, showing great court dominance with some lovely shots. Liane came back in the third with great serves. A great match to the end. Sally's fast start was too much for Liane to overturn. 60 to 56.
Chris versus Matt: Another close match. Matt jumped to an early lead but the many miss hits in game two gave Chris the lead. Matt regained his composure in game three to take the lead back. Both players tried all their tricks in the final game, but Matt held the margin to win by two-points. 58 to 56.
Derrick versus Jim: Close game the whole way through. Derrick's high serves gave Jim problems, but Jim took control early

in the final game with smart lower risk shots that stuck Derrick in the back corner. Derrick found a way to claw his way back and sealed the win with a loopy serve to split the difference. 51 to 50.
Wednesday competition
Barracudas versus Stingrays
Matthew versus Beth: It was a see-sawing match with both players taking two games. Matthew put in some good work but couldn't make up the point deficit. Beth was the winner. 63 to 48.
Blake versus Mick: Mick held the game with strong serves that left Blake searching for answers. Mick claimed the win. 75 to 40.
Daniel K versus James (fill in): Returning to the Alexandra courts with a much-improved squash game, James filled in giving Daniel a good run around. It was a brilliant competition and James's positioning on the courts was

good, but Daniel's skills still reign supreme. 54 to 44.
Hammerheads versus Piranhas
Jessica versus Nicole: It was a close game with minimal points the difference in each game. Jessica had a good win in game three, increasing her margin and assisting in her victory. 53 to 44.
Kristelle versus Travis: Both players put everything on the line to win each point. There were some nice lobs, drops and drives. Kristelle miraculously aided in her own demise with numerous faulty serves. Travis was playing well and the addition of extra drives to his game made a big difference. 68 to 55.
Daniel W versus Justin: Great rallies and all the shots were really close. Daniel was just too consistent with his play and claimed the victory. 64 to 52.

Marysville Golf report

by Lesley Rundle

IT was another busy week at the club with members hosting two events and playing in the regular weekly competitions.
Last Thursday the Dalhousie Veterans played a stableford round before having lunch and holding their AGM in the clubhouse. The 42 players enjoyed the course and the lunch supplied by chef Bickey in the Pavilion Bar and Grill.
The Dalhousie Veterans Committee was elected with Alan Pell (Yea) President, Quita McDonald (Broadford) Secretary, Geoff Ranger (Broadford) Captain, Wayne Kupke (Eildon) Vice Captain and Steve Coker (Marysville) Treasurer. These players were thanked for accepting the positions of responsibility for another year.
Last Friday the annual Building Industry Cycling and Golf Challenge was held with some participants cycling around the district and others playing 18 holes of golf. Following their activities all the participants enjoyed lunch in the Pavilion and they were all very positive about the time they spent in the stunning Triangle area and on the challenging course. The day was kindly sponsored by ITM and TRANSCEND from the construction industry.

These two events were coordinated by Steve Coker who works tirelessly behind the scenes to make events such as these happen. His commitment and effort is appreciated by all members. Thanks also to the green keeping team for the work they do in preparing the course for local and visiting golfers and to all the volunteers who assist the club in so many ways.
The Thursday nine holers played stableford last Thursday on the front nine holes. Glen Rattay (5) had an excellent 20 points followed by Geoff Ferguson (8) with 18 points on a three-way countback. The nearest the pins were won by Keith Atwell on the fourth and Harry Harris on the ninth. The golfers warmly welcomed Fiona Wright who joined the Thursday golfers for the first time.

The Saturday golfers played a mixed four ball best ball with partners drawn before tee off. The winners were Glen and Amanda Rattay with an excellent 50 points. The runners up were Ming Kuan and Paul Martin with 45 points. The nearest the pins were won by Drew Kaempkes, Gail Leigh, Amanda Rattay and Ming Kuan who also won the Golden Shot. At the presentation members thanked David Douthwaite for supplying some new signage for the course and Chef Bickey for sponsoring the new score cards.
Members are reminded that there is a working bee at the club on Tuesday, December 9. The annual Presentation Day is on Saturday, December 20 when following a novelty game of golf and lunch the presentation of the 2025 trophies will be held. Members, family and friends are encouraged to attend this celebration of the golfing year. Numbers are required for catering purposes so please submit your names as soon as possible to captain Richy Clark.



The new profile of the sixth green is now there for all to see. -S

Clear, rain, clear at Alexandra Golf Club

by Dave Silverman

IT was last Tuesday's turn to enjoy a favourable weather forecast last week, and a field of 13 turned out to take advantage of the fine, warm conditions.
The winner was Greg Millard, who scored 38 points, as did Perrin Gooding who came second, with Len Jenkins in third on 33.
"Shonky" Millard also picked up the nearest the pin on seven on his way to the win, with Paul Martin taking 17 and 18 going to Greg Ebinger. The rundown included Bill Wind, Brad Newton and Russell Purcell.
Nine ladies teed off last Wednesday morning to play a Stableford round, but, after 14 holes the rain arrived with vengeance, and the decision was made to abandon play. So after walking back to the clubhouse and getting thoroughly saturated, the sun came out, just to add insult to injury.
The rain cleared just in time for last Saturday's tee off. Simpson's Fuel were the sponsors, and 14 players were up for the challenge of a four ball best ball on a course with a bit of the sting taken out of it by the overnight precipitation.
In the end, it was all very tight, with just one point across the top three pairs. Dan Burns and Len Jenkins were the winners with 44 points, Nigel Waterhouse and John Steer were second, also with 44, and 43 points put Perrin Gooding and Leo Dynes into third place.
Two of the five available nearest the pins went begging, but five went to Steve Darmody, Burnsie took seven and Lenny J claimed 18. Perrin Gooding finished off a good day by winning the raffle.



Mick Holohan sends it on the sixth. -S

A busy term of achievement at Alexandra Secondary College

by Ally Crouch, Sports Coordinator ASC

AS term four draws to a close at Alexandra Secondary College (ASC), students have continued to demonstrate dedication, talent and pride in representing the college across a wide range of sporting events.

Earlier this term, 11 students participated in the Benalla Clay Target Shooting Competition, accompanied by parent helpers Stu Coward and Ben Clark. The event provided a valuable opportunity for students to experience the precision, focus and adrenaline associated with competitive clay target shooting.

Alexandra Secondary College was also proudly represented at the School Sport Victoria State Cross Country Championships, held at the Yarra Valley Racecourse. To qualify for this elite level, athletes must finish in the top 12 at both the Southern Ranges and Hume Cross Country events. Congratulations to Levi Campbell who placed 33rd with a time of 11:46, Marli Collier who placed 31st with a time of 14:32, and Koa Parker who achieved an exceptional eighth place with a time of 12:28.

Nineteen students competed in the Hume Secondary School Regional Track and Field Finals. It was an outstanding day for the college, with numerous personal bests recorded. ASC athletes secured nine first places, five second places and 10 third places, culminating in an impressive 10th place overall out of 40 secondary schools in the region.

Congratulations to Koa Parker, Harish Balansag, Sam Harris and Zoe Collier who represented the college at the School Sport Victoria Track and Field State Schools Finals. This unbelievable achievement is a testament to the athlete's dedication. Koa placed sixth in the 1500 metres, fourth in the 800 metres and fifth in Shot Put. Zoe placed sixth in Javelin; Sam placed sixth in Long Jump and Harish placed sixth in Long Jump and eighth in the 100 metres.

The Year Seven Girls' Volleyball Team also enjoyed a remarkable season. After dominating the Southern Ranges Interschool Sport Competition, the team progressed to the Hume Regional Finals where they performed strongly, securing a place at the School Sport Victoria State Finals. The team faced an exceptionally high standard of competition at state level and narrowly missed a semi-final berth.

The team's sportsmanship, resilience and positive attitude were recognised with the prestigious Spirit of Sport Award, selected by

officials and coaches. An outstanding honour for the students and the college.

In lighter competition, the traditional Staff vs Year 12 matches continued throughout the year. The Year 12 cohort claimed victories in Beach Volleyball and Netball. After a review of relay changeover tactics, they were also awarded the win in the Swimming Relay. However, in a surprising turn, the staff secured a hard-fought victory in the Indoor Volleyball match, triumphing in a tight three-set game.

As 2025 approaches, Alexandra Secondary College reflects on a year filled with participation, achievement and personal growth. Students have challenged themselves physically and mentally, contributing to another brilliant and memorable year for the college community.



The Year Seven Girls' Volleyball team at Alexandra Secondary College.

Merton cricketers host tight match with City Colts



Merton cricketer sending the ball. -S

MERTON cricketers hosted City Colts on a slow lush outfield at the Merton Cricket Ground (MCG) last Saturday.

Merton batting first made 5/158 with a fine 118 run partnership between father and son Luke and James Benton, Luke top scoring for his side with 71 while young James making his first half century contributing 53. Luke Berriman was the only other batsmen to make double figures with 17.

Thanish Gadela with 3/42 the leading wicket taker for the Colts. Merton possibly left a few runs short in the latter overs with

wickets in hand, however a solid total on a slow outfield would be a challenging task for the young City Colts side.

After the impressive tea break with thanks to the Merton players and partners City Colts went to work on chasing down the 159 victory target. Colts young guns Mich Feldtmann and Gus Marek both 62 played an excellent innings to set up victory for the visitors playing their shots and keeping the run rate required in check.

After their departure things started to get tight in the last six overs however the damage had been done and the Merton

bowlers struggled to build enough pressure with too many loose balls enabling Colts to score the required runs five wickets down in the 35th over.

Luke Berriman 2/24, Murray Sutton and James Benton the other wicket takers for Merton. This is the third close loss this season coming down to the last overs, with the small moments throughout the game costly to the Merton side. Delatite will host the Merton side in the local derby at Lords next Saturday.

B Grade cricketers advance to top of the ladder

by Michael Mawson

THE seventh round of the season saw the B-Grade Alexandra team advance to the top of the Seymour and District Cricket Association (SDCA) ladder by easily accounting for the Yea Tigers by six wickets. This victory came from a strong all-round bowling performance in playing conditions that were less than ideal.

After missing two weeks in a row due to a bye and a forfeit from Avenel, the Redbacks looked like missing a third consecutive game with the weather being wet in the lead-up to Saturday. Fortunately, Yea had remembered to cover the pitch this time around and the rain stayed away long enough for the game to run.

There were a few changes to the team-sheet. Terry Hall emerged from his sarcophagus and came into the side for his first game of the season. Toby Ward came down from A-Grade to provide some much-needed fast bowling. Ward would be playing against his younger brother and father.

Despite the covered pitch, when Alexandra arrived at Yea, they saw a pitch that looked

more like a damp lawn than a cricketing surface. There was even a wet patch on the ground that needed to be dried with a leaf-blower. The Redbacks captain, Michael Mawson won the toss and had no hesitation in electing to bowl first while the pitch would be at its liveliest.

The Yea batters had a nightmare as the opening bowlers extracted variable bounce from the wicket and swinging from the humid air. The opening pair of Toby Ward and Lucas Crane were not helped by the butterfingers of the Redbacks fielders. However, each player got through the defences of the Yea batters with bowled and leg before wicket (LBW). Crane looked to have batsmen out LBW several times before one was finally paid. Ward took three wickets and Crane had two.

Levi Ronalds had the Yea batters tied up in knots with his slow bowling that came down from the clouds. He claimed two wickets including a fortunate LBW. Banjo Fitzpatrick showed a return to good form with two wickets and Terry Hall kept the Yea team

quiet with his straight-break bowling. When Reigan Kuttikadan bowled Trent Hopner, the Yea innings was all wrapped up for a meagre score of 24 in 20 overs. Six ducks were registered on the scorecard.

Mark Watts was the pick of the Yea batters, surviving a few close shaves on the way to a score of 13 before edging a Toby Ward delivery to the keeper.

The tea break was not taken and the Redbacks went on to chase what should have been an easy target.

The batting order was shuffled with junior players, Dusty Fitzpatrick and Will Donahue being elevated given there was not time for them to bowl. Mawson and Fitzpatrick opened the batting. Yea's opening bowler, Zayde Macleod is formidably fast; however, he conceded five extras in his first over and advanced the Redback cause.

Dusty Fitzpatrick made a run before Zak Mills claimed a caught-behind wicket when the Yea Players and the umpire heard a snick

in what can be diagnosed as a collective auditory hallucination.

Mawson continued his terrible run with the bat. He was playing Mill's bowling well but survived a couple of near misses off Macleod's pace until his luck ran out with a bad ball deviating off his toe into the stumps. Will Donahue spooned a catch to be out for no score. Levi Ronalds recorded a rare low score when a spinner kept low and trapped him LBW.

In another match, these batting figures would be worrisome; however, with a target score of only 25, Banjo Fitzpatrick and Toby Ward cruised past the target. Banjo enjoyed making a score of eight by lobbing catchable shots that landed in between the inert Yea fielders.

This big victory puts the Redbacks on top of the ladder by quotient ahead of Tallarook and Puckapunyal. These teams also have five wins from six matches. The Redbacks should face a bigger test next week when they host fourth-placed Pyalong.

THE ALEXANDRA • EILDON • MARYSVILLE

Standard Sport

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Division Five of Peter Collyer, Roselyn Livy, Mal Gill and Ray Mathieson. -S



Midweek best winning rink of Tim Langmead, Denice Chisholm, Craig Parkinson and Ken Argent. -S

Alexandra Bowls Club Division Four has a win at home

by Marie Evans

GOULBURN Valley State Pairs finals were played last Sunday and Alexandra Bowls Club players Ian Harper and Graeme Matthews played the pair from Mooroopna and had the closest of games to lose 12 to 13. Great effort and congratulations for making the finals.

Pennant bowls can be very rewarding for some players and for others it can be frustrating. Midweek Division Four played at home and all Alexandra players had a particularly rewarding game against Euroa. Whereas Division Three who played away had a one-shot loss to Euroa who are second on the ladder. Division Five played at home against Tatura Hilltop and lost the overall but did have a winning rink.

Midweek Division Four won convincingly 69 to 44. Playing at home provided the edge and excellent bowls ensured the win. The best winning rink was Tim Langmead (Skip), Ken Argent, Craig Parkinson and Denice Chisholm. They won 12 ends and led for the entire game. The final score 23 to 11.

Bob Binghamy (Skip), Mark Stone, Pauline Gilmore and Peter Collyer also won. They won 12 ends in a row to be 17 to three up on end 13. Euroa reduced that to six to 17 by end 16. However, they made little impact over the last five ends and Alexandra had a 20 to 10 win.

A complete sweep of the three rinks was achieved with John Blamey (Skip), Bob Mayfield, Marty Manning and Christine Mayfield defeating their opposition. They trailed five to nine on end six but were 18 to 13 up by end 13. They extended that lead to be 24 to 18 on end 18. Despite Euroa winning some ends Alexandra consolidated their win with two shots on the last end to win 26 to 23.

Alexandra plays away to Violet Town next week and will be looking to repeat the win.

Division Three travelled to Euroa last Saturday and lost 79 to 78. The best and only winning rink was Ian Harper (Skip), Graeme

Matthews, Ken Argent and Saxon Langmead. They won 16 out of 21 ends including seven of the last eight ends. It was a top-class victory 35 to 10.

Jim Wheelhouse (Skip), Doug Cooper, Andy Tobias and Ben Gilchrist began well and were six to zero up on end two but were six to eight down by end six. By end 10 they had regained the lead to be 11 to eight. A five shot loss on end 17 and Euroa were 21 to Alexandra 13. Three out of the last four ends were won by Alexandra but not by enough shots and Euroa won 22 to 17.

Greg Gilmore (Skip), Larry Scott, Tim Langmead and Lauren Gilchrist won nine ends out of 21 and trailed for the game. They lost 20 to 13.

David Nicklos (Skip), Scott Ferrier, Christine Mayfield and Denice Chisholm won eight ends overall and lost 10 to 27.

With seven of the 14 rounds completed Alexandra will be wanting to improve over the second half of the season. Next round is at home against Eildon.

Division Five had one winning rink out of the three when they played Tatura Hilltop on Saturday. Ray Mathieson (Skip), Roselyn Livy, Peter Collyer and Malcolm Gill won 13 ends. Alexandra was five to 12 down on end 10 but won the next four ends to trail nine to 12. They won five out of the last seven ends to win 16 to 14. A great fight back.

John Blamey (Skip), Bob Mayfield, Craig Parkinson and Rob Roach won nine ends. They trailed 10 to 11 on end 11 and 10 to 17 by end 15. Alexandra was 13 to 17 on end 17. It was two ends each for the last four and Hilltop came away with 20 to 16 win.

Bob Binghamy (Skip), Steve Kirby, Anne Gunton and Warren Nelson lost nine to 35. The overall was a 28 shot win to Tatura Hilltop 69 to 41. Alexandra plays away to Euroa next round.

Club games in singles and pairs need to be finished as soon as possible. Check the board for the next rounds.



Division Three winners Saxon Langmead, Graeme Matthews, Ian Harper and Ken Argent. -S