

The Yea Chronicle

PO Box 5, Alexandra Vic. 3714

With which is incorporated The Yea Telegraph, The Yea Telephone and Upper Goulburn Advocate

Ph: (03) 5772 1002; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Your community newspaper since 1885 Wednesday, February 11, 2026 \$2.00 inc. GST

Most trusted news source in the Murrindindi Shire since 1890

murrindindibusiness.com.au

INSIDE THIS WEEK'S EDITION

Landcare leading bushfire fencing



Page 6

Community heroes recognised



Page 8

February cattle sales report



Page 13

Weekend sport



Pages 17-20



Gary Cox with Rotary President Darryl King. -AR

Yea Fire Brigade Group presented with Rotary's Community Service Award

YEA Rotary President Darryl King took the opportunity to present the Rotary Community Service Award following the Yea community meeting about the Longwood fire.

He explained that the award would normally be handed out at the Australia Day breakfast, however the event was cancelled this year due to the fire. As so many gathered for the community meeting, it seemed like an appropriate opportunity to make the announcement.

Darryl said, "The Community Service Award recognises outstanding service, commitment, and dedication to the community. The members of the Yea Fire Brigade Group go above and beyond in protecting life, property, and wellbeing of our region, often in challenging and dangerous conditions. Your professionalism, teamwork, willingness to serve, whether during fire season or through ongoing community support, exemplifies the spirit of the award. On behalf of Rotary

Club of Yea and the community, I'd like to thank you for your timeless efforts and an unwavering commitment and it's with great pride on behalf of Rotary Club of Yea that Gary Cox, the group leader, is going to accept this award."

When accepting the award, Gary Cox thanked the Rotary Club and said, "I'm accepting this award on behalf of the 297 operational firefighters that form the Yea Group and the 12 brigades, together with a host of other volunteers around the brigades that raise money for things we need, feed us when we need it, and in addition to that the private units that are usually at a fire before we are and usually leave a fire after we do, and finally to those that came before us for convincing their children to join the CFA. Thank you."

The award also has a cash prize component, with \$1000 going towards the Yea Fire Brigade Group of the CFA.

Parliamentary Inquiry into Victorian bushfires

THE Victorian Liberal Nationals announced on Wednesday, February 4 that "Victorians will be able to have their say and have questions about the summer bushfires answered after the Liberals and Nationals secured support for a Parliamentary inquiry.

"Volunteers, firefighters, farmers, emergency management personnel and

communities affected by the 2026 summer bushfires have all raised questions about preparation, resourcing of emergency services agencies and management of the fires.

"These can now be addressed through the inquiry to be undertaken by the Legislative

Council's Environment and Planning Standing Committee.

"Victorians impacted by the bushfires deserve a voice. They deserve to have their experiences heard," Leader of The Nationals and Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Danny O'Brien said.

The inquiry is expected to question the government's bushfire preparedness and response and ensure that governments learn from these fires and strengthen the state's future strategies.

The government supported the inquiry. The inquiry will report by June 1.



Photocopied or emailed entries will not be accepted.
ONE ENTRY PER HOUSEHOLD
Melbourne Showgrounds Feb 18-22
To go in the draw, this voucher must be received by
noon, Tuesday, February 17

Alexandra Newspapers, 43 Grant Street
(PO Box 5), Alexandra, 3714

Staff or associated family members of Alexandra Newspapers are not eligible to enter.

Win 1 of 5 double adult passes (Children under 15 FREE)
Victorian Caravan and Camping Supershow Feb 18-22

Name

Address Phone

ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS

Letters to the Editor

CFA fleet concerns

THE reason that Jacinta Allan was confronted by angry fire impacted residents recently was the failing firefighting fleet.

The current aging CFA fleet of tankers has been the subject of a number of reports that

have fallen on 'deaf ears'. The current situation has arisen due to chronic underfunding since the Labor party took over as the Victorian Government in 2014.

The reality is, within the latest available data which was April 2024, it was quoted that there were 230 CFA tankers over 30 years old, and 233 aged between 25 and 30. At the time of writing, it is suggested that the 'out of date' fleet numbers have now blown out to well over 500.

The current Victorian Labor Government seems to have a problem with their mathematics. At the current rate of funding, many of the older units in the system will be yet another five years older before they are replaced, even if action is taken now.

As at June 2025 the CFA had 2331 appliances. The estimated average appliance replacement cost, over the next five years is \$550,000. The current 2025/26 budget allocation will only replace 40 units. In order for the CFA to achieve the goal of having no tanker older than 20 and no pumper over 15, they need an annual budget of at least \$50 million to replace 90 units annually. This is just to cover the replacement cycle of the estimated 1800 'in date' appliances, and arrest the annual 'leakage' of further units into the 'out of date' fleet.

The current 2025/6 budget proposal for fleet replacement of \$22 million is hopelessly inadequate. The minister has announced that they were rolling out 48 heavy tankers and two light tankers in 2025/26, which is still 40 units short for maintaining the 'status quo' for the 'in date' fleet.

However, the current appliance fleet still leaves us with at least 500 units that should have been replaced in the past 10 years, but due to the ongoing chronic underfunding by the Victorian Labor Government, these units have now passed into the 'out of date' fleet.

What is needed to correct this situation, is a 'one off' program of \$275 million, perhaps spent over the next five years, to correct the 'backlog' created by the lack of funding over

the past 10 years. What will be needed once all of the 'out of date' units are repatriated back into the 'in date' fleet, is \$64 million per year just to maintain the 20 year cycle for the entire fleet.

The ability to achieve the above objectives is contingent upon the equipment suppliers being able to double production for the next five years, and to then produce 100 to 120 new units per year thereafter. While the 'out of date' units are kept in good working condition, the main issues at this point in time are, that the manufacturers are no longer required to supply spare parts, and these units do not comply with the current emission standards, or Occupational Health and Safety, and Workplace regulations.

The situation that the 50,000 CFA volunteers now find themselves in, as they attempt to protect the community, in what is shaping up to be one of the worst fire seasons on record, is an absolute disgrace.

The CFA volunteers who are saving Victorian taxpayers \$10 billion per year in wages and associated costs, and the government cannot even supply them with operational and compliant equipment.

Barry O'Connor, Benalla

Letterboxes

IMMEDIATELY after the Longwood fire swept through the Highlands area, I received a phone call from Gary Tuck, President of the Yea Men's Shed. Gary asked two very good questions, 'What do you need?' and 'How can we help?'

Realising that so many sheds were lost it was apparent that the Men's Shed efforts would be best suited in the 'shed' space. The call then went out for donations of any pre-loved tools, particularly hand tools, as the power was not expected to be restored for some time.

The generous residents of Yea responded beautifully, and the Men's Shed quickly became a busy collection point. Three trailers have been donated and gifted to

people whose vehicles have been destroyed. Several chainsaws have likewise been gifted to those in need and of course the trailers were dispatched laden with all sorts of tools. The Men's Shed have also arranged for tools to be sent to Alexandra for distribution to Fawcett, Yarck, Terip Terip and Ruffy.

We then saw the need for replacement of letterboxes, the Yea Men's Shed came up with a nice design and began a 'production line' of boxes and stands that will be installed with the help of our local posties. Several other Men's Sheds are also working on letterboxes to share the load.

Our mission was simple, provide a ray of hope and a bit of a starting point to people who had lost much. The generosity of people donating tools, as well as the time, energy and collaboration, has been heartwarming. We live in a fantastic community and I am proud to be part of it.

Alex Bauer, Highlands

Applications open for Power Saving Bonus

ELIGIBLE concession card households can claim the \$100 Power Saving Bonus payment by applying online at the Victorian Energy Compare website.

If you need help to apply, visit one of 259 participating Neighbourhood Houses across the state, or call the Victorian Energy Compare helpline on 1800 000 832.

One payment is available per household for eligible concession card holders, including Health Care card, Pensioner Concession card, Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession card, and Veterans' Affairs Gold card.

Visit compare.energy.vic.gov.au to claim your bonus by March 31, and compare energy offers while you're there.

COMMUNITY DIARY

Yea District Hospital
5736 0400

Non-emergency police assistance
131 444

EMERGENCY 000

Local Radio Frequency

UGFM 88.9 Yea / Highlands

UGFM 98.9 Flowerdale/Hazeldene

UGFM 94.5 Kinglake Ranges

MONTHLY COMMUNITY GROUPS

1st Mon St Luke's Seniors, St Lukes Hall, Ph Jenny 0407 972 099

1st Thu Yea Hospital/Rosebank Aux 2pm. Ph 5797 3057

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

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

Last Fri Yea-Kinglake RSL, 11.30am RSL Hall, Ph 5796 9353

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.

River Heights for the Goulburn Catchment				
Station Name	Time	Height	Tendency	Flood Class
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	11.00AM Mon	1.95	LGH	steady
Rubicon River at Rubicon	11.00AM Mon	0.38	LGH	steady
Acheron River at Taggerty	11.00AM Mon	0.44	LGH	steady
Home Creek at Yarck	11.00AM Mon	0.07	LGH	steady
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	11.26AM Mon	0.38	LGH	steady
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	07.00AM Mon	0.18	LGH	steady
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	11.00AM Mon	0.32	LGH	steady
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	11.00AM Mon	3.85	LGH	steady
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	11.00AM Mon	0.26	LGH	steady
Goulburn River at Trawool	11.00AM Mon	1.53	LGH	steady
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	11.00AM Mon	-0.09	LGH	steady
Goulburn River at Seymour	11.15AM Mon	1.79	LGH	steady
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	12.00PM Sun	0.79	LGH	steady
*ISSUED AT 11:39 AM AEDT MONDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2026				

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.

Like us on Facebook

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

Weekly Weather

February 11 - February 17, 2026

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

Yea

DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	11	34	Wednesday	11	34
Thursday	9	19	Thursday	9	19
Friday	11	25	Friday	11	24
Saturday	15	29	Saturday	15	29
Sunday	17	31	Sunday	17	31
Monday	18	31	Monday	18	31
Tuesday	16	29	Tuesday	16	29

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

DISTRICT RAINFALL

Alexandra..... 0.4mm

Buxton..... 4mm

Eildon (AWS)..... 0.6mm

Flowerdale..... 5mm

Jamieson..... 0.6mm

Kinglake N/Amm

Lake Eildon 0.8/8mm

Mansfield..... 1mm

Taggerty 0.4mm

Yarck 0.4mm

Yea..... 3mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

LAKE EILDON

Height above sea level this week.....272.80m

Capacity as at 9am Monday.....48.3%

Metres below full supply.....16.1m

Daily inflow500ML

Release..... 4500ML

Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change).....79%

The Yea Chronicle

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
Thumbs up/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

Murrindindi carries major share of Victoria’s fire losses

INITIAL assessments indicate the Murrindindi Shire community experienced nearly half of the total damage from the January 9 fires across Victoria.

Four weeks on and many community members are now confronting the long and often overwhelming path to recovery.

With fire activity reduced, council said they are focused on supporting the community by providing clear information, practical help and a steady path forward through recovery and rebuilding.

Council teams have supported the state-led response efforts throughout the emergency and will continue to keep the community informed. While conditions have stabilised, safety risks remain. Active fire remains in parts of the landscape and flare-ups may still occur. Residents are encouraged to continue monitoring official advice via the Emergency Victoria app.

With community recovery underway, the next stage is about gaining a detailed understanding of the full extent of the fire’s impact, so support can be targeted and community-led recovery efforts are based on real needs. This work is detailed and will take time. It includes driving, walking and inspecting around 450km of roads, trees and infrastructure, on both sides, around 900km of detailed assessment.

Visiting every impacted property, including homes, sheds, outbuildings, stock fencing, water tanks, septic systems and other infrastructure. Conducting environmental

health checks, including septic tank advice. Assessing building safety and structural integrity. Documenting infrastructure damage, including areas not yet visible or accessible.

These inspections are essential to support a safe return, guide rebuilding and ensure that recovery funding goes where it is genuinely needed.

Fatigue, grief, frustration and uncertainty are natural and understandable responses at this stage.

Across the shire, communities have shown extraordinary care, checking in on neighbours, sharing supplies and information, and supporting one another emotionally and practically. Council is working to facilitate these community-led efforts by providing supplies, information and support wherever it’s needed.

Council officers will stay in close contact with the community throughout this process, providing updates, listening to concerns and connecting people with the right support.

Information and support are available at council’s Bushfire Information Hubs located at Yea Library and Customer Service Centre and Alexandra Library.

These hubs offer face-to-face support, help access disaster relief payments and state and Commonwealth services, referrals for clean-up and wellbeing supports, and clear, up-to-date information.

A key role for council is to advocate to state and federal governments throughout

the long journey ahead to ensure the needs of Murrindindi communities remain central in all relief and recovery decisions. Further advocacy is focused on state-led clean-up of impacted properties, waiving fees associated with rebuilding, support for impacted businesses and agricultural ventures, funding to support rebuilding resilient community facilities and infrastructure, and support for community-led recovery plans

This work will continue throughout the months ahead.

Murrindindi Shire Mayor Damien Gallagher said the community’s needs must remain at the centre of all response and recovery efforts.

“Our community has experienced profound loss, and people are beginning to feel the weight of what lies ahead. Fatigue, frustration and uncertainty are completely understandable.

“At the same time, we continue to witness remarkable care, generosity and resilience. Council is committed to supporting every impacted resident, business and town. Your recovery is our priority.

“With this media release coinciding with the anniversary of the 2009 bushfires this Saturday, we are reminded that recovery is not a moment in time, but a journey.

“As a community that has lived through and learned from the lasting impacts of fire, we honour those we lost, reflect on how far we have come, and recommit to standing alongside one another through recovery.

“We are here to help, whether you need clear information, support to navigate services, or simply a place to sit, talk and have a cuppa. Council’s doors are open, and we will continue walking alongside our community for as long as it takes.”

Travelling on closed roads places you and others at risk

There are still 410 km of roads to assess following the recent bushfire. To date, 40 km has been opened. Travelling on closed roads places you and others at risk.

If you travel on a closed road for reasons other than commuting to your residence or business, including farms, you may void your vehicle insurance if an incident occurs.

Even when travelling to your residence or farm, you do so at your own risk. While access may be necessary, authorities may recommend that you do not travel where conditions are unsafe.

Roadside assistance providers may also refuse to attend incidents on closed roads.

Do not move or interfere with road closure signage. These signs are in place to protect road users and workers, and moving them creates serious safety risks.

Essential recovery activities, including tree works, Ausnet works and clean up operations, are being delayed by ongoing vehicle movement on closed roads. Please limit travel to allow these crews to work safely and efficiently.

Some damaged roads may take months to repair. The longer these works take, the longer roads will remain closed. Reducing unnecessary travel will help reopen roads sooner and support faster recovery for the whole community.

For the most current information on closures, visit tinyurl.com/tfs3hktk

Elder Rights Australia visiting Menzies to support

ELDER Rights Australia (ERA) foster a diverse community where older people are respected, heard and well-informed, and can exercise their rights with confidence. A founding member of The Older Persons’ Advocacy Network (OPAN), ERA delivers the National Aged Care Advocacy Program (NACAP) and the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS) in Victoria.

They also work within the broader community to raise awareness of elder abuse response and prevention. Their services are free, independent and confidential, and focus on empowering the older person to achieve positive outcomes that support their individual needs.

Advocacy

Assistance in registering for and accessing aged care services. Professional advocacy and one-on-one support to ensure that older people receive culturally safe, quality aged care at home or in a residential setting. Help to raise concerns or complaints. Reliable information on aged care including fees and charges. Help with financial hardship applications.

Social Support

Connecting volunteers with isolated older people who receive aged care

via the AgedCare Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS).

Education

Community information sessions on all aspects of aged care and the rights of older Australians. Education sessions for the aged care sector including elder abuse prevention and response, balancing rights and risk and the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS).

Face-to-face support all over Victoria

ERA professional Advocates live and work in their communities, giving them a deep understanding of local issues and strong community connections. Volunteers provide social support and also foster meaningful connections within the local community.

Elder Rights Australia is coming to chat to staff and clients on Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 1pm. This will be held at the Mount, 2456 Goulburn Valley Highway, Alexandra.

Details are in the flyer. To RSVP or receive further information contact 0493 892 567.

A light afternoon tea will be provided.



Elder Rights Australia are coming to chat to the Menzies staff and clients.

Elder Rights Australia foster a diverse community where older people are respected, heard and well-informed, and can exercise their rights with confidence. Their services are free, independent and confidential focusing on empowering the older person to achieve positive outcomes that support their individual needs.

Date and time:
Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 2pm

Address:
**The Mount,
2456 Goulburn Valley Highway, Alexandra**

To RSVP or receive further information, please contact on **0493 892 567**

A light afternoon tea will be provided.



FINAL EMBRACE FUNERALS

SEYMOUR & WHITTLESEA

**No Service, Direct Cremation
in Victoria from \$2,500**

**Simple Cremation
Funeral Packages from \$5,500**

**Traditional Burial
Funeral Packages from \$6,995
(plus cemetery fees)**

**100% Locally family owned and operated
Proudly serving our community with
dignity, grace and respect.**

**Goulburn Chapel - 82 Anzac Ave, Seymour
24 / 7 phone: 5756 3740
www.finalembracefunerals.com.au**



**Alexandra
Motorcycles & Machinery
& BOWD HEATING**

Proud to be of service for 60 years.

The loss in these 2026 fires is so great and your strength so profound it has brought Australia and beyond together to share that Spirit.

You’re an AWESOME COMMUNITY.

**On behalf of my amazing team and our families
Here’s to better times ahead.**

Be kind to yourselves and thanks.

- Ros Bowd

ON Tuesday, February 3, Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish put forward a condolence motion in the Victorian Parliament regarding the 2026 Longwood bushfire.

She said, “As we have heard, the fire at Longwood moved quickly and tore through the areas of the northern part of my electorate, doubling in size and eventually burning 140,000 hectares. Unusual because it did not have a particular fire front, it burnt in 360 degrees and left multiple paths of devastation, loss of homes, sheds, tools, machinery, stock, hay, silage, pasture, water troughs, tanks and livelihoods. And as we have heard, we lost the life of Max Hobson, cattle farmer at Terip Terip.

“Seventy per cent of the Longwood fires tore through my electorate, predominantly in Murrindindi and also through Mansfield. The impact assessment shows that 45 per cent

of the total number of structures destroyed across Victoria were in the Murrindindi Shire.

“Murrindindi Shire is a small, cash-poor shire at the best of times and will very much struggle to make ends meet here and will need considerable government support. They have behaved exceptionally through these fires. 193 homes were lost in Murrindindi across 21 localities. Highlands lost 38 homes, Yarck 33, Gobur 23, Terip Terip 19, Caveat 18, Fawcett 11, Molesworth 10, Alexandra seven, Dropmore seven, Kanumbra six, Ghin Ghin five and Koriella four. Across Cathkin, Maintongoon, Whanregarwen, Limestone, Devils River, Gooram, Merton and Ruffy there were a handful. Merton also lost five, in the Mansfield Shire.

“These are exceptional numbers of losses on top of 519 sheds, 2000 kilometres of damaged or destroyed fencing, 14,000

hectares of farmland, which is different from the areas burned, and over 5500 livestock.

“What people might not expect was that 389 beehives were lost there, and this could have particular impacts on the agricultural sector going ahead. 3222 people sought drought disaster relief payments.

“These losses were extensive. But for many in my electorate, this was not their first rodeo. Murrindindi is used to devastation. We had the October 2022 floods. We have had storms, cyclones and the tragic circumstances over Black Saturday. I acknowledge that this Saturday it will have been 17 years since that event. Our emergency services performed exceptionally, backed up by locals, the farmers with their own units, the private vehicles, but also the staff from Forest Fire Management Victoria, who are seen very positively.

“We saw the spirit of mateship through all of this. As I said, for many it was not their first rodeo. I was talking to young Kellan Fiske of Gruyere Fire Brigade. Kellan was 20 on the back of a truck in Marysville, where his family hails from, on Black Saturday. He had been there before. John Drysdale, who lost his grandfather’s house in Yarck, had been through Ash Wednesday, Black Saturday and these fires. He stayed to defend but said, ‘I knew when to leave.’ It was evident that so many people did have plans, whether they were staying to fight or leaving early or choosing the time to leave.

“The roads were burnt, so they were cut off. Our communities were cut off. People could not get there to give them support. What was remarkable was the growth from within. At the Yea Community House, Carlie Underhill got into action really quickly. At Fawcett we had Sam Hicks, Andrea Bauer in Highlands and Lyn Burleigh at Terip Terip. In Yarck, the pub was initially the community meeting place, followed by the hall, and it was a community effort with everybody playing to their strengths. People came together locally to determine what they needed, and it was just amazing what could be achieved and brought together from the ground up. Community-led recovery absolutely worked so well here. They were overwhelmed with the support of donations and food. The hay supplies had a lot of trouble getting in. We had so many donations of hay, and it was slow to come in. When farmers lost fences, pasture and hay, they needed hay. They needed to get stock out and taken elsewhere. There were some delays there but it eventually got through, and we had some incredible convoys going through. Andrew Embling from Alexandra and Dame Pattie Menzies really got this going. We had the Need for Feed through the Lions Club.

“My gratitude goes to so many of the volunteers, whether they were the CFA, private vehicles, those providing food, those helping sort through the donations, of which there were many, or those that helped euthanase as well, because they do not want farmers to put down their own stock. There is nothing more distressing than to put down your livelihood, and people came to help them with that, community members who rallied.

“The council staff at Murrindindi were amazing, led by the mayor Damien Gallagher, who started on the back of a truck before ending up taking on more of his mayoral role. There was the collaboration, and this is so important, between Murrindindi, Mansfield and Strathbogie shires and then the support given to them by the Yarra Ranges shire and Whittlesea and most recently by Melbourne City Council, because they have skills that they can help Murrindindi with at the moment.

“We had the unbreakable farmers. The stock agents were fabulous getting into gear to help the farmers. Agriculture Victoria, as mentioned before, were on the ground trying to help people. I spoke to somebody from Leongatha, Colac and Horsham in Yarck, which is where they had come from.

“My support has been unwavering, and this is not my first rodeo either. I will continue to support those impacted.

“I have got to thank Jack Buksh from the Premier’s office, who on some days I felt like I spoke to 40 times, and I still continue to do so. I did appreciate him being available and getting back to me. My messages now are here, fencing, fencing, fencing. People have said we have got to get systems in place. Well, systems are in place. The communities are doing this. They cannot wait for government to make decisions and move. They need support in coordination. They need local support in getting that fencing done. The majority of people who were impacted are farmers and the difficult period is coming now, after that adrenaline wears off over the next few weeks. I pledge that I will be there for them. Things were not perfect; they are not perfect. There are still challenges, and we need to get through those so that our communities continue to thrive again in the future.”



Medicare's got the bill

With increased government funding, more GPs are making bulk billing more accessible for all Australians.

Foundation Murrindindi's Murrindindi Disaster Fund to support bushfire recovery

FOUNDATION Murrindindi has established the Murrindindi Disaster Fund to support bushfire recovery in Murrindindi Shire, with donations welcomed from individuals, families, community groups, organisations and businesses across Australia.

The Murrindindi Disaster Fund has been established to provide support across the short,

medium and long term, including immediate relief, recovery assistance, and initiatives that help rebuild wellbeing, livelihoods and community connection.

Donations can be made directly through the Foundation Murrindindi website foundationmurrindindi.org.au

Tax deductible donations are also available through Foundation Murrindindi's partner, Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR), via the QR code in the advertisement or through contacting Foundation Murrindindi directly. All contributions, large or small, help ensure that support remains available not just today, but well into the future. Every cent raised stays here in Murrindindi Shire.

Bushfire recovery is strengthened when people come together, drawing on local knowledge, relationships and collective resilience. Foundation Murrindindi recognises the importance of these community-led pathways and is committed to supporting recovery as communities heal and rebuild.

"The needs following a bushfire evolve over time," Robyn Hill from Foundation Murrindindi said. "There is immediate support required now, but there are also medium- and long-term needs that can emerge months and even years later. Our role is to walk alongside our community for as long as it takes."

Established in the aftermath of the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires, Foundation Murrindindi was created by the community, for the community, to support long-term recovery and resilience. With deep local knowledge and years of experience in bushfire recovery, the Foundation understands that recovery does not end when the emergency response is over.

As a trusted local community foundation, Foundation Murrindindi works closely with community groups, services and residents to identify gaps and direct funding where it can have the greatest impact.

Importantly, Foundation Murrindindi will not take any administration fees from the Disaster Fund. Every dollar donated will be carefully stewarded to ensure it reaches those who need it most, when they need it most.

Foundation Murrindindi stands alongside communities in Murrindindi Shire, now, and for the long road ahead.

Our wonderful fire recovery hubs

by Seymour Incident Control Centre

IN the aftermath of the devastating Longwood fires in Victoria's North East, small communities are showing extraordinary strength and unity. Across the region, community run hubs, created for community, by community, have become lifelines for residents navigating loss, uncertainty and the first steps of recovery.

At Highlands, Andrea Bower and the Highlands-Caveat community have opened their hall to anyone needing meals, donated goods, provisions, or simply a place to connect. Volunteers work around the clock to make sure neighbours have what they need, practical support delivered with compassion.

In Fawcett, Sam Hicks and the Fawcett-Koriella community are running a vibrant hub at the Fawcett Hall, distributing food, clothing, linens and essential items. They've also created a welcoming space for information sessions delivered by support agencies and organisations, ensuring vital advice reaches community members directly.

At Creightons Creek, Chris Bakker and the local community are providing essential supplies and keeping their community connected. From practical goods to organised sessions focused on mental health and other important recovery topics, they are ensuring that people are supported not just physically, but emotionally recognising that true recovery is both practical and deeply human.

In Terip Terip, Lyn Burley and her volunteers continue to coordinate meals, goods and

everyday essentials for families who have lost homes and properties. Their steady, organised approach has been a source of reassurance and stability for many.

Over in Yarck, Graham Halliburton and the Yarck-Gobur community have opened their space to provide hot food, donated goods, animal feed, clothing, and a safe environment where people can talk, ask questions and access visiting service providers.

And at Ruffy, Felicity Sloman and the Ruffy community have mobilised swiftly, creating a responsive hub that is supplying essential items, meals, support and practical help to affected residents. Their focus has been meeting immediate needs while ensuring no one feels isolated during the recovery process.

The Yea Community House also activated very quickly and have been doing a wonderful job of supporting fire affected people in so many ways.

Across all these towns, agencies and organisations are coming directly into the hubs to meet community members where they are making support more accessible, trauma informed and locally centred.

These hubs are more than distribution points. They are gathering places, sources of hope, and anchors of resilience. They show what happens when local knowledge, kindness and community leadership drive recovery efforts.

This is community led recovery at its finest, practical, dignified, connected and powered by the people who know their communities best.



Foundation Murrindindi

MURRINDINDI Disaster Fund

Foundation Murrindindi has launched the Murrindindi Disaster Fund to support affected communities within Murrindindi Shire.

This fund will provide practical assistance to support medium and long term community led recovery activities and projects. Every contribution, no matter the size, matters. All financial donations stay within Murrindindi Shire.

To make a direct donation to Foundation Murrindindi. Scan here

To make a tax deductible donation through our Charity Partners at the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR). Scan here

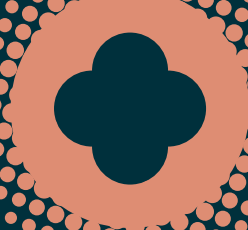
For more information contact Roby Hill 0488 007 688 or visit www.foundationmurrindindi.org.au



and



are now known as



omnia

Community Health

Find out more



omniachcommunityhealth.org.au



5421 1666



info@omniach.org.au



Student of the Week

Proudly supported by Yea & District Community Bank® Branch



SACRED HEART SCHOOL

Congratulations to
Scarlett, Ryder, Harrison, Max and Heidi
for their commitment to living our school
values of Respect, Resilience and Safety.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by
Kinglake branch





Recovery and wellbeing boost for local schools

DEPUTY Premier and Minister for Education Ben Carroll recently announced the schools in areas most impacted by recent bushfires that will share in \$2 million of additional funding to address the immediate mental health and wellbeing needs of students.

The funding will be delivered as a top-up to impacted public schools’ existing Schools Mental Health Fund, enabling them to purchase additional evidence-based mental health and wellbeing support.

Schools were identified based on direct bushfire impacts to facilities and communities, including where students and staff have experienced loss of property or disruption.

Locally, these schools include Eildon Primary School (\$30,404), Buxton Primary School (\$30,404), Alexandra Primary School (\$37,500), Yea Primary School (\$37,500), Alexandra Secondary College (\$75,000) and Yea High School (\$75,000).

The funding will provide impacted public schools with access to increased recovery

and wellbeing support, focusing on trauma-informed support as well as disaster, grief and loss programs.

This boost supports the government’s Recovery and Resilience Model for schools, an evidence-based framework which includes the core features of routine and safety, health and wellbeing, belonging and connectedness.

New uniforms, books and other educational items can also be replaced through State Schools’ Relief. Schools can also apply

for additional support through the School Breakfast Club Program.

Minister Carroll said, “We want our students and staff across the state to know we are behind them every step of the way, and help restore a sense of safety and calm to our school communities.

“We know the significant damage these fires can bring to our students emotional wellbeing, and we are putting every effort in place to mitigate the trauma and disruption they have caused.”

VFF calls for pothole action

REGIONAL Victoria continues to be riddled by new potholes, with new statistics highlighting a staggering increase in reported potholes of up to 178 per cent in the west of the state, according to the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF).

VFF President Brett Hosking said the findings reported by the *Herald Sun* paint a worrying reality that many drivers and regional Victorians face every day.

“The tragic reality is you are much more likely to lose your life when driving on country roads when compared to driving in the city.

“When you’ve got pothole reports in the west of Victoria surging by 178 per cent, you’ve got an enormous and dangerous issue.

“Drivers are expected to maintain road worthy cars. It’s time for cars to drive car worthy roads to ensure drivers aren’t playing a daily game of roads roulette.”

“There can be no doubting that the continued underfunding and total neglect of our regional roads is costing lives. We will never accept this and the buck must stop with the government,” Mr Hosking said.

Ahead of this year’s Victorian Budget, the VFF is calling for a sustained and future thinking plan to fix our crumbling road and transport infrastructure, including \$250 million to be provided to local councils to repair and upgrade local roads, with a focus on ensuring efficient ‘first and last mile’ access to farm businesses.

This local road investment would need to be coupled with significant uplift in funding for state and federal-funded roads.

“The longer you ignore the problem, the worse it gets...and it can’t get much worse.”

“Not only are our roads a huge safety issue, they are a massive economic handbrake on Victoria. Everyone loses when we can’t efficiently move freight and the wear and tear on vehicles is sky-high.

“We’re calling on the Victorian Government to genuinely invest to fix and maintain the mess that is our regional road network.”

“We need genuine leadership and real investment that delivers safe roads, thriving local economies, and fair treatment for country Victorians,” Mr Hosking said.



Landcare members hard at work. -S



Landcare members at a property wich required re-fencing. -S

Landcare leading bushfire fencing project

THE Upper Goulburn Landcare Network (UGLN) are helping farmers and others who did not have insurance or adequate insurance to cover their loss of fencing that resulted from the disastrous ‘Longwood fires’ that commenced on Thursday, January 8.

UGLN’s fencing work will be coordinated by Chris Cobern, who has vast experience from previous fires including the 2009 Black Saturday fires. The actual work will be split into two components.

The first is the removal of damaged fences and preparation for the rebuilding. Much of this work will be carried out by volunteers directly supervised by Chris. Many of these volunteers will be staff of various corporations, such as the NAB and ANZ.

The second component is fence reconstruction. This work will be carried

out under the overall coordination of Chris but managed on a day-to-day basis by an experienced fencer assisted by volunteers.

In carrying out the work, UGLN volunteers will use plant and equipment donated to UGLN by the Uniting Church in Benalla. This equipment was used after the 2009 fires by the Uniting Church and UGLN to rebuild fences on affected properties. Tools and sundry equipment are either part of the donated equipment, donated by others or purchased. All actual fencing materials will be supplied by the landowners.

Volunteers will be given proper training in toolbox meetings before commencing work each day. First aid will be available and adequate food and water provided. Volunteers will be covered by personal accident insurance. The overall programme is anticipated to last for at least two years.

UGLN will need volunteers to assist with all the above work. Experience in fencing would be helpful but not essential as a lot of the work especially the clean up and preparation is unskilled work involving cutting and coiling of damaged wire, extracting burnt or damaged posts and end assemblies and general clean up. Protective equipment, water and lunches are provided.

This is an opportunity for members of Landcare groups and the community to assist those who have been so badly hurt by the fires. It’s envisaged that volunteers would commit to work on a particular property for a day or days together with other volunteers as required.

Interested people should contact Chris Cobern on 0413 855 490 or by email ugln.projects@ugln.net

Register for Clean Up Support

CLEAN Up Support is available for people impacted by the recent fires, however under the current guidelines, sheds will only be cleaned up under this program if they are within 100m of the main residence. The government was asked why this is the case, given that on farms, the vast majority of sheds are away from the main house, meaning that a very large number of farmers in our area will be unable to access this support.

They responded, “Property owners may be eligible for free clean-up support if their property is in an eligible council area, has structures damaged by the January 2026 bushfires, and is uninsured or underinsured. Registrations for the Clean-up Program opened on January 30. Public information outlines the core eligibility criteria, and works including all-hazards assessments, are currently underway.

“Every property and structure is different. Owners with uninsured or underinsured damaged structures including sheds are encouraged to register for the program so assessors can determine eligibility.

“All Victorians who have been impacted by the January 2026 Victorian bushfires can call the Emergency Recovery Hotline on 1800 560 760 to find out what recovery services they are eligible for.”

Chemist *Care* Now

**Get it at the chemist
without a visit to the GP**

**Save time with
Chemist Care Now**

Chemists are now treating more conditions without the need for a visit to the GP. From UTI's to the contraceptive pill refill and more, save time and get it at the chemist.



To find participating chemists
and available treatments go to
chemistcarenow.vic.gov.au



FoRTEM Australia has launched the first stage of its dedicated Disaster Resilience Toolkit, expanding its mental health literacy resource hub to better support emergency services workers, their families, and communities impacted by disasters and critical events.

The new toolkit brings together practical, evidence-based resources into a centralised, one-stop platform designed specifically for the unique pressures faced by police, fire, ambulance, SES and other frontline personnel, as well as their families who support them at home.

“Education and preparedness sit at the heart of everything we do,” Fortem Australia CEO Mick Willing APM said.

“By strengthening mental health literacy, reducing stigma and improving access to support, the disaster resilience toolkit is another way Fortem helps emergency services

workers and their families build resilience before, during and after disaster events.”

As part of the initial rollout, Fortem has released *Disaster resilience: recover*, a practical A5 resource available in digital and printed formats to support accessibility and ease of use. The booklet provides practical guidance to help individuals understand emotional, physical, and psychological impacts of disaster and critical incidents, and outlines pathways to support services challenges.

The resource is available for free download via Fortem’s website, with printed copies distributed through Fortem-led social connection activities and agency engagements. First responder agencies and community organisations can also order printed copies directly through the website.

The toolkit also introduces a new disaster resilience directory, a dedicated web page

that compiles links to state, territory and local government disaster resilience, emergency management and recovery information in one central, easy-to-navigate hub.

“During disasters, families need clear, reliable information they can trust,” Mr Willing said.

“Emergency services workers are often deployed across the country or required to move at short notice, which can leave families navigating unfamiliar systems while supporting loved ones on the frontline.”

By centralising resources in one place, the directory reduces confusion and stress, helping families quickly find clear, trusted information so they can better understand available services, recovery processes and local assistance.

Local governments are invited to submit their disaster webpages for

inclusion, strengthening local relevance while maintaining national accessibility and consistency.

Additional features include a new disaster-specific resources page and the recently launched *Aftermath: rebuilding strength, restoring hope*, which has already been downloaded hundreds of times since its release on January 6.

Future updates to the resource hub will include additional resources as well as a service locator tool, enabling users to identify additional support services in their area.

The launch aligns with Fortem’s strategic commitment to expanding engagement in regional, rural and remote locations, ensuring support is accessible regardless of postcode.

You can explore the full toolkit and access resources via: fortemaustralia.org.au/

Bushfire contractor pay

THE Victorian Opposition recently expressed concern that multiple contractors providing heavy machinery supporting summer’s bushfire effort hadn’t yet been paid. Some starting work on fires in December.

They said that in many cases, the outstanding amounts tally into the hundreds of thousands of dollars for individual contractors, with an estimated \$15 million in total.

Leader of The Nationals and Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Danny O’Brien said contractors have been told Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMV) hasn’t paid them because they don’t have the staff to process timesheets.

Mr O’Brien put this to the government during Question Time, and Environment Minister Steve Dimopoulos said FFMV was not focussed on ‘bookkeeping’.

Mr O’Brien said Labor’s payment tardiness was unacceptable and was placing enormous pressure on small businesses with very large overheads.

He added, “These contractors are doing incredible work in dangerous conditions to support the fire effort and to have to wait for payment is threatening their businesses.”

When contacted about the issue, a Victorian Government Spokesperson said, “We acknowledge and thank all of the work done by everyone involved in the bushfire response to keep our communities safe. DEECA has increased its resources and put on additional staff to support faster payments to contractors. Any outstanding payments are being addressed as priority.”

Scam warning: Roof cleaning post-fire

A PERSON in the fire impacted area was in contact with their insurance company following the fires and the clean up was being arranged. The person then received a call from a man keen to arrange roof cleaning for the house. The person thought it was through the insurance company, but there was an odd amount of pressure for the cleaning to happen the following day and there was no business name mentioned.

On the following day, one man arrived, looking very unprofessional and did some work, but not as had been determined by the insurance company. \$1400 was demanded for the work, saying (falsely) that it could be claimed back off the insurance company.

The fire-impacted people contacted their insurance company who quickly advised that it was a scam and as a result, they refused to pay.

If you are approached with a similar offer, call your insurance company immediately to confirm whether they are legitimate. If you have already been scammed, contact the police.

If you are aware of any other scams occurring, please let us know.

It’s truly shocking and appalling that fire impacted people are being targeted like this.

Community heroes recognised

The Yarck Hall Committee recognised some special efforts at the inaugural pot luck dinner on Monday, February 2.

Kylie jumped in to support some of Yarck’s most impacted farmers with stock management and fencing, and Izabella who attends St Mary’s Primary School and Guneet who attends Alexandra Secondary College dedicated a chunk of their school holidays to configuring, sorting, and tidying the community-led Hub at Yarck. What a wonderful effort.



Guneet, Sharon, Izabella, Kylie and Shivaun. -S

The Victorian Caravan and Camping Supershow

THE future of Australian travel will be on full display when the Victorian Caravan and Camping Supershow rolls into Melbourne Showgrounds from Wednesday, February 18 to Sunday, February 22. As the country’s largest and most influential caravan and camping event, the Supershow will unveil new 2026 models, milestone industry moments and hands-on experiences that show how caravanning continues to evolve for modern travellers.

For five action-packed days, the Showgrounds will become the place where dreams of the open road turn into real plans, where questions are answered, and where the next generation of Australian adventures begins.

“This show is about inspiring and educating people to travel their own way,” Daniel Sahlberg, CEO of Caravan Industry Victoria said. “The Supershow brings together innovation, education and inspiration in one place, so visitors can explore what’s possible, make informed decisions, and confidently take their next step, whether that’s their very first trip or their biggest adventure yet.”

With hundreds of exhibitors and thousands of products on display, visitors can explore everything from high-end off-road caravans and advanced campers to compact touring solutions, accessories and outdoor gear all in one massive indoor and outdoor space. It’s the ideal place to compare, ask questions and discover what suits your lifestyle.

Fill in the form on the front page of this edition for a chance to win free tickets.

AusNet replaced 300 poles in Longwood fire area

THE Longwood fire caused widespread damage to AusNet infrastructure. Specifically, over 300 poles have been replaced with non-wood alternatives in the region.

AusNet’s priority and focus has been on restoring supply as quickly and safely as possible. They are still undertaking emergency repairs identified during the full network assessment and expected these critical works to be completed by the end of last week.

The majority of AusNet customers had their power back on by January 29.

There are currently just over 100 customers still without power in some of the most bushfire-affected areas and crews are working diligently through these. Beyond the immediate restoration and emergency repairs, AusNet will continue broader resilience building works over the next month.

These activities are expected to have minimal impact on customers and will significantly improve the network’s long-term performance and reliability. They have also brought forward their asset inspection program for the region.

By aligning inspections with the rebuild activities, AusNet aim to complete all required maintenance works earlier than originally scheduled, reducing the need to return to the area for further planned works for the remainder of 2026. AusNet is committed to constructing a stronger, more resilient network for the community.

Bendigo Bank Victorian Bushfire Appeal surpasses \$600,000

BENDIGO Bank’s Victorian Bushfire Appeal has raised \$615,000 in less than a month in a powerful show of support for individuals, families and communities impacted by the fires.

Since the appeal was launched by the bank’s charitable arm, the Community Enterprise Foundation on January 12, funds have already helped deliver immediate relief to fire-affected residents and communities including \$20,000 to support the Blazeaid Camp for Longwood and surrounds, and \$22,000 to support the employment of a relief coordinator for three months to design, implement and support a recovery program for people impacted by the bushfires.

Bendigo Bank CEO, Richard Fennell, said while these early interventions delivered important support to those impacted, the majority of the funds raised would be directed toward medium and long-term recovery initiatives.

“We know from experience the impact of bushfires lingers long after the flames are extinguished,” Mr Fennell said. “The emotional, financial, and environmental effects can last for years. Medium and long-term recovery funding will focus on helping communities rebuild, supporting mental

health and wellbeing, and working with local communities on what they need to recover.

Mr Fennell thanked everyone who had donated so far, calling out the Bendigo Bank Community Banks in Victoria, in particular.

“The Appeal’s success reflects the generosity of many donors, in particular, our Community Banks in Victoria, which have contributed over half of the donations received so far, furthering the ongoing support to their communities which has seen more than \$400 million returned since its inception. This response sends a powerful message to fire-affected communities: you are not alone and our support will continue,” Mr Fennell said.

People wishing to support these communities are encouraged to provide monetary donations directly to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal at bendigobank.com.au/community/foundation/disaster-appeals/victorian-bushfire-appeal/ as monetary donations are quicker, more effective, and logistically provide far more flexibility than donations of material items or pre-loved goods. Donations can be made at any time online or at your local Bendigo Bank branch. All donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

Eligible customers impacted by the Victorian fires can access a range of support from Bendigo Bank.

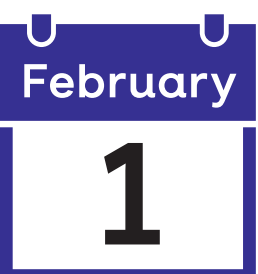


Seymour, Albury and Shepparton lines

more ways to move

The Metro Tunnel is now open

- New V/Line timetable with 10 new weekly peak services for Seymour
- New connections and destinations in Melbourne with the Metro Tunnel
- Change to the City Loop at North Melbourne (Seymour/Shepparton services) or Southern Cross, then change to the Metro Tunnel



Check your changes on the PTV app or
transport.vic.gov.au

Fire affected farmers: Greg and Darcey Heffernan

GREG and Darcey Heffernan, a father-daughter duo farming cattle on some 530 hectares of land called Merrinehbek in Cathkin, were affected by the recent Longwood bushfires.

They took time out of their busy schedule of post-fire recovery to talk about the impacts of the fires on their property and farming operations.

During the fire event, Greg stayed to protect the house while Darcey and the rest of the family evacuated to the cricket grounds. Their house was unaffected, but they lost cattle and hay sheds.

“On that day, you couldn’t see how anything could work. It was just swinging from east to west, all from the north,” Greg said.

“A fire started right up in the middle of the paddock, about one and a half kilometres from the house, and the fire hadn’t even come over the hill yet. And then fire after fire after fire came in. I’d say at least four fires came in.

“They were just sort of on different fronts, different parts. Didn’t have the CFA here at all, no planes, no helicopters, no nothing. But I honestly don’t know if they would have made much difference.”

Darcey manages the Merrinehbek farm and its operations and was able to give detailed accounts of what happened after the immediate fire crisis.

“Our immediate problems were with the livestock, because we knew that some must have been burnt. We had to deal with that straight away.

“We had the vets out on the Sunday, and then we drafted them up on the Monday and they came out to confirm what we had picked out. And so they said, ‘yep, all those ones have to be put down,’” Darcey said.

“Then we had the knackery out on Monday, at the end of that, Monday night. And then we still, there’s two more in there that I’d still consider a loss to the fires as well, but they’re still alive at the moment, but they won’t be.”

Greg added, “Of course, putting all the cattle into somewhere where they could get feed, but we had feed. We were very fortunate.

“And then we had the vet out, and we spoke to them. He said you can just feed them silage. A lot of our silage did survive. So we did some silage and they actually didn’t go backwards at all. We just got rid of two mobs of cattle cows, and there’s another mob to go next Tuesday. So we’ve lightened a fair bit.”

The impact on their farming operations has hit particularly hard, given this year was going to be a great year for Merrinehbek.

“We were set up to have a bumper year, we were really looking forward to this year,” Greg said.

Darcey added, “This year was going to be the year we were organised and set up and everything was going to be good, really good. We weaned everything two weeks ago now. And they were spring drop calves weaned. Four to five months.”

“We don’t do that,” Greg explained, “But I mean, you’ve got to because the cow’s going to look after herself before they look after the calf, and they usually go downhill. So you’ve got to.

“And you’re saving your best tucker for the calves, and we are. We’ve got an agronomist helping us, or a couple of agronomists helping us with what’s required for the feeds.”

The farm lost 12 head of cattle initially, and there are two more that Darcey is fairly certain won’t survive much longer. Plus any pregnancies that the distressed cows aborted.

“We pregnancy tested on Monday and I believe we had a high percentage that weren’t in calf,” Darcey said.

“For some, that’s normal, but I reckon there would have been at least 10 or so that were aborted due to the fires and then due to their calves having to be put down. I think it was all a bit too much. Obviously it’s just a high stress event. So I think there were quite a few abortions in there. I’d consider that a loss as well.”

Three hay sheds on the property burnt, with one surviving that was still full of hay, putting Greg and Darcey in the lucky position of being able to feed their cattle immediately afterwards.



The farmers from Merrinehbek, Dylan, Darcey Heffernan and Greg Heffernan. -BD

“Three hay sheds. One was half full, one was full. Another one had the machinery in it, which is all gone too,” Greg said.

“We built the new hay shed, we didn’t use the old ones. So we put the machinery in it. And we’ve had some quotes for replacement, but we’re shocked at how much it will be. Unfortunately we didn’t insure that machinery, because I didn’t think it was worth it.

“But I did have my hay insured, and I did have the hay sheds insured. It won’t be so bad, especially if they come good on it. We’ve only gone through the start of the process of getting paid. The assessor is independent, and he’s written up what we should be getting.”

As with most of the properties within the affected area of the Longwood bushfires, power supply immediately afterwards was a big problem, with restoration still ongoing for some.

“A big one for us initially was the power,” Greg said.

“Because one of the switchboards was in one of the old sheds that burnt down, you’ve got to get a plethora of different people to come and sign off on it. You’ve got to get SP AusNet, you’ve got to have your own electrician with his own inspector. And then you’ve got to have the final bloke who goes and inspects the whole lot. That took two weeks, or over two weeks.

“The trouble was our good water. We’ve got water that comes out of the hills, which is gravity fed, but we’ve got good bore water, which of course you can’t run without a pump. So that was a bit of a stressful thing. But we managed to get through it, and of course running generators all the time.”

Fencing is another important issue for farmers that has emerged following the bushfires.

“We’ve got a lot of steel fencing, we’ve had a lot of new fencing, but actually we haven’t even been up there to have a look at it. I imagine it would have survived,” Greg said.

“The trouble is it will have shortened its life significantly. So it’s not a problem now, but probably in three or four years’ time when the bottom ones start to rust, and hopefully the steel fence plates don’t rust too much.”

Darcey added, “Some of the wires are broken because of the heat. Some are melted. But a lot of our gates were hung on strainer posts, wooden strainers, so they’ve been broken.”

“Everything wood was burnt, so we’re replacing everything with steel. We’ve actually got a couple of fencers here, they’re helping out and chipping away,” Greg said.

“Initially, the very first couple of days, we had to make sure that we could keep our stock in. But the stock were in so much shock that they weren’t wandering around much. The bulls, honestly, were in the front paddock, and any one of them could just walk straight out. They didn’t.”

Tree cover and shade is something that wouldn’t perhaps enter the public consciousness, but it will prove a challenge for livestock moving forward. Giant 200-year-old trees cannot be replaced, even if new trees are planted tomorrow.

“One of our biggest problems is going to be all the shelter. We lost a lot of trees,” Darcey said.

“There’s going to be a lot of paddocks that aren’t going to have enough shelter in them now. Like, big 200-year-old redgums and stuff. It’s a pretty big loss. You can’t replace that.”

Asked about making decisions on how to move forward following the fires, Darcey advocated for a level-headed approach that doesn’t rely on immediate reaction, but rather, careful consideration.

“We kind of keep conservative, like a safe amount of stock that we can handle all the time. I’m pretty keen on keeping that the way it is. I was talking to Dad about it yesterday, I was never going to make a decision in the first week,” Darcey said.

“A lot of people might have just pulled the pin, or could make that decision to decide to sell everything and call it quits. I can’t, I couldn’t make that decision. I definitely couldn’t have. It would have killed me sending every cow to the abattoirs to get rid of them and call it quits.

“I said, if that’s something I’m still worried about and I don’t want to do this anymore, it’s something I’d think about in six months’ time. I’ve got to deal with this problem and fix it and make everyone happy again. Keep the cattle happy, everyone’s happy, and then make that decision.

“But I don’t think that decision will happen, I’m quite happy doing this indefinitely. I don’t think we’ll really change much. I think we’re quite happy with how things are and how we run things. I think keep it the way it is, maybe try and manage the hills a little bit better.”

Greg explained that they made a list of options in the first week and stuck it on the fridge, to keep all the paths forward in mind.

“The first week I ran up a little bit of a thing of all our options, and, you know, whatever they were, just everything. I stuck it on the fridge. So we could think about it,” he said.

“But the truth is, our cattle, we’ve had them now for 20 years or so. Not the cows, but you know, the herd. And when you start looking at the cows and how they’ve come out of this, you go, well, very resilient. It’d take a long time to get back to where we are.

“If you threw it all out, start again, you know, she could, but I can’t. And I’m thinking, we’ve got options. We’ve got options with hay. And we’ve got people wanting to help, if we do get some decent insurance, we’ll go and buy a heap more hay.

“And we’ll get over it. You know, the little fences, they’re only fences and we’ll fix things. But it’s the stock that you put your heart and soul into. So if you can keep them and soldier on, good.”

Like many in the communities of the fire area, Greg and Darcey have had a lot of support behind them to help with recovery.

“We’ve had a lot of support. You have the DPI, and all the people you can consult with about what to do or how much to feed and when to wean and when to do things and all of that,” Darcey said.

“Contractors, Ernie Hadfield, they’ve been really good. Everyone in Nutrien Alexandra, Emma, she’s fantastic. She’s done really, really well. She’s the only one in the shop at the moment. And then Stuart, the agronomist, he’s done really well. They’ve all been really good, and I don’t know how we would have done without them.”

Greg added, “Yeah, our stock agents have helped us a lot. I had three phone calls from agents I don’t even use, but I know, I just know them. Everyone was looking after us straight away. Probably without even knowing that we actually did burn. They would have said, ‘oh, Alexandra’ and just called.”

Darcey’s concluding words were offering advice to the community and talking about the small moments of positivity.

“Look after yourselves. Talk to people, thank all the people that helped. Everyone in our little street, everyone’s been great. Rely on and talk to your community. Don’t just sit there by yourself all the time, it’ll do you no good,” she said.

“The community has been great. Even watching all the hay trucks go past. It’s heartwarming. It’s good to see, just a bit of positivity to see something good.”

Their best start, starts with Free Kinder



Free Kinder is available for three- and four-year-old children at standalone sessional kindergartens and long day care centres across Victoria – saving families an average of \$2,400 per child, per year.

From 2026, some children will be eligible for more time at Four-Year-Old Kindergarten each week.

Visit vic.gov.au/pre-prep

Kindergarten is a safe environment for children to build skills, become more independent and make friends.

At kindergarten, children will learn:

- language, literacy and numeracy skills through play, art, music and dance
- skills and confidence before primary school.

Contact your preferred kinder service or local council to learn about how to enrol for 2026.

Visit vic.gov.au/kinder

PUZZLES

SOLUTIONS
Page 14

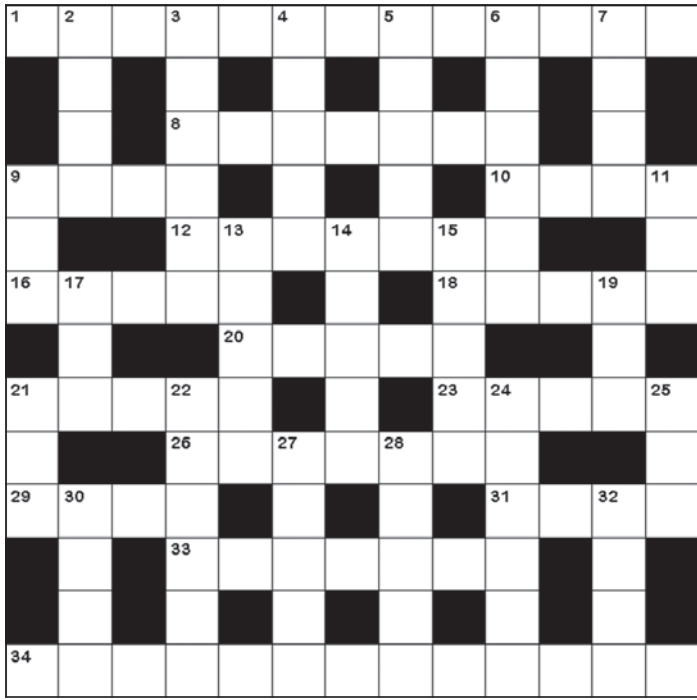
Crossword

ACROSS

- 1. The children of your son or daughter.
- 8. Converts ordinary language into code.
- 9. An abrupt spasmodic movement.
- 10. A tiny, scarcely detectable amount.
- 12. Enters one's name on a membership list.
- 16. Move smoothly and effortlessly.
- 18. Not the same as the ones already mentioned.
- 20. House lizard found on walls in warm climates.
- 21. A rise in the temperature of the body.
- 23. Open disrespect for a person or thing.
- 26. Large edible marine crustacean.
- 29. Festive occasion for an athletic competition.
- 31. Move gently and carefully into place.
- 33. Dumped down with a heavy thud.
- 34. Firms that eradicate rodents and insects.

DOWN

- 2. Meat cooked a short time to retain redness.
- 3. Cut very slightly, with a razor.
- 4. Pickled flower bud used in pungent sauces.
- 5. Considered the best of its kind.



- 6. Refrain from certain behaviour.
- 7. The departure of an actor from the stage.
- 9. Run or ride at a steady slow trot.
- 11. A simple tune for instrumental performance.
- 13. Person with dark skin who comes from Africa.
- 14. Predatory black-and-white toothed whales.
- 15. Not carefully arranged in a package.
- 17. The liquid obtained by leaching wood ashes.
- 19. The organ we use for hearing.
- 21. A thick mist that reduces visibility.
- 22. Pass or slip by.
- 24. A person's financial standing.
- 25. Indicates the maiden name of a married woman.
- 27. A blossom on a flowering plant.
- 28. Something of sentimental value.
- 30. The highest point of something.
- 32. Mark left by the healing of injured tissue.

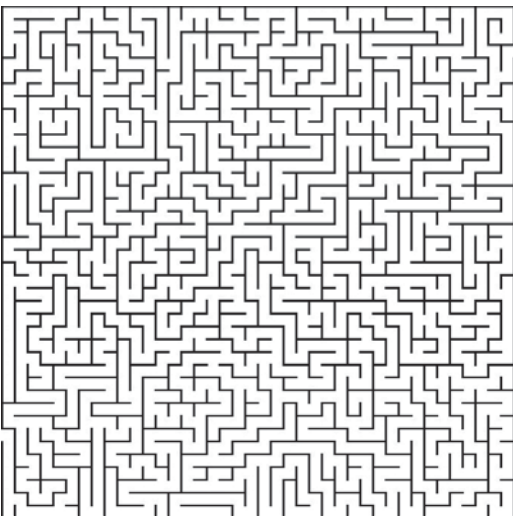
Word Search

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

Valentines Day

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| BOYFRIEND | FLOWERS |
| CANDLELIGHT | GIRLFRIEND |
| CHAMPAGNE | HEARTS |
| CHOCOLATES | KISSES |
| DANCING | RESTAURANT |
| ENGAGEMENT | ROMANCE |

Maze



Sudoku

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

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.

Math Square

4	-	7	+		-1
+		x		-	
	-		+		6
+		+		+	
	-		-		2
21		36		5	

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.

KID'S PUZZLES

Colouring Page



Word Search - Words starting with "B"

BACKPACK	J	S	N	O	O	L	L	A	B	B	B	T	G	I	O
BALLOONS	I	G	X	R	P	S	D	Q	X	P	O	D	C	A	R
BANANA	J	Q	K	W	L	I	X	B	E	V	R	W	I	S	Q
BASKETBALL	M	N	H	I	S	M	L	G	Q	A	A	B	L	W	W
BEACH	T	D	P	C	X	M	A	J	O	H	O	U	G	T	W
BEDROOM	O	E	Q	L	A	H	U	B	Z	M	H	B	Q	T	K
BICYCLE	L	L	A	B	T	E	K	S	A	B	N	B	J	P	C
BLACKBOARD	I	Y	X	M	K	C	B	M	B	Q	P	L	L	P	A
BOWL	Z	O	Z	C	A	E	Q	O	R	I	Q	E	S	B	P
BRIK	P	X	I	L	A	U	P	O	B	E	C	S	C	R	K
BRICK	S	R	B	U	N	N	Y	R	U	X	H	Y	I	B	C
BROTHER	B	M	U	S	O	A	G	D	L	K	B	T	C	M	A
BUBBLES	B	A	N	A	N	A	K	E	L	R	I	Z	O	L	B
BULL	Z	P	C	F	B	L	H	B	J	O	T	C	P	R	E
BUNNY	Y	I	J	Y	B	C	B	Z	A	L	E	G	T	I	B

Math Square

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.

	-		+	9	6
+		-		-	
	-		+	2	4
+		+		+	
	-		+		9
15		11		13	

Jokes

Q: Why was 6 afraid of 7?

A: Because 7, 8, 9.

Q: What is worse than it raining cats & dogs?

A: Hailing taxi's

The Farmer's Ag News



Sarah and Rod Chisholm from Fernside in Highlands. Their cattle were being sold last Friday. -BD

Mixed quality for February combined store sale at Yea Saleyards

YEA Saleyards held their February Combined Agents Store Sale last Friday, with Nutrien, Elders and VLP all selling. There was over 1700 cattle yarded, with mixed quality.

The average price per head was \$1430 with an average weight of 326 kilograms, equalling out to around 439c/kg on the day.

Representatives from Agriculture Victoria and Farm Angels were around, while Yea and

District Memorial Hospital were utilising the new Mobile Health Van to conduct skin checks on-site.

Nutrien Ag Solutions Livestock Agent Austin Gerhardy summarised the store sale.

"It's the first store sale fixture for 2026. Lightweight steers and heifers were plentiful and dominated the yarding. Overall, the quality was mixed but heavy grown and yearling cattle of both types were of good quality and sold to strong competition," Austin said.

"Bearing in mind with the mixed quality throughout the yarding buyers were selective on their types and quality, with price ranges reflecting that trend.

"Feeder steers sold from 420 to 485c/kg. Backgrounding type steers sold anywhere from 465c/kg to 592c/kg, they're a very good

line of weaned lightweight Angus steers to head back to the paddock. There were some lightweight cattle that were sub 250 kilograms in the coloured steer offering that did sell to 486c/kg.

"The Angus heifers, the first lane was of outstanding quality in my opinion, and these sold from 390 to 455c/kg, and that was right through all classes and weight lanes with Angus heifers. Coloured heifers were very similar.

"It was shared with local competition. Gippsland were influential and did buy, they were possibly the strength of that sale, certainly. Obviously with the season that they're having, they're playing a role in that."

The next cattle sale at the Yea Saleyards will be the March Combined Agents Store Sale on Friday, March 6, beginning at 9.30am.



A decent crowd showed up for the first Yea cattle sale since the Longwood fire. -BD



The various vendors for the combined agents cattle sale, being Nutrien, VLP and Elders. -BD



There were a variety of cattle breeds being sold last Friday. -BD

YEA SALEYARDS STOCK REPORT 6 FEBRUARY 2026				
Combined Agents Store Sale	Total Yarding	Steers	Heifers	Cows & Calves
Number of head	1,724			
Average \$ per head	\$1,430			
Average weight per head	326kg			
Top price per head		\$3,000	\$2,110	\$2,300
Top weight		750kg	505kg	
Turnover	\$2.45 million			



The crowded first steer laneway. -BD

Consider options before re-fencing after fire

by Clem Sturmfels, Land Management Extension Officer, Agriculture Victoria

RECENT bushfires have had devastating consequences for many farming families, destroying infrastructure such as fences, sheds, and water systems. Among this devastation, they also offer an opportunity to review and update farm layouts.

Farmers are encouraged to consider if their current layout is still the most effective for their business and to reflect on the following questions: Are you making the best use of more productive areas on the farm? Are you protecting areas vulnerable to soil erosion, structure decline, and inundation?

Can you better protect areas of bush, native grasslands, and waterway frontages? Would a new laneway system make running the farm easier and more efficient? Are your gates and troughs in the best location to maximise production and allow the efficient movement of stock and equipment?

Along with those questions, consider reviewing your fencing requirements. Do you need traditional fencing, or might electric fencing offer more flexibility and lower cost? Would you consider virtual fencing sometime in the future?

Rather than putting fences where they were prior to fires, consider re-fencing along land management unit or land class boundaries.

Land class fencing allows you to better manage different land types on your farm and can result in better pastures and crops, improved productivity and the protection of soils, wetlands, and remnant vegetation.

While slope is a key criteria in determining land class, it's also important to consider the depth and structure of soil, the presence of stone or rock and the risk of water logging or inundation. In normal times these are the sorts of things you might consider over a longer period of time.

It might involve discussions with your family and employees, attending a whole farm planning course and preparing a plan

of your future farm using a large, laminated aerial photo or computer mapping program.

A video providing an overview of whole farm planning is available on Agriculture Victoria's Feeding Livestock website feedinglivestock.vic.gov.au/pasture-resources/pasture-tools/

To assist with land classing, Agriculture Victoria has also developed an application which can be used on smartphone, tablet or computer. The application is available via our Learning Management System at learning.agriculture.vic.gov.au/

For more on fire recovery support and information, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/bushfires or call 136 186.

ANTENNAS



Christopher Edwards
0405 554 915
info@chris-tv.com.au
Sec Reg: 997-462-605

Chris's TV

The Television Reception Specialist

- TV & FM radio antennas
- Extra TV wall points
- Surround sound systems
- Data points & mesh WIFI

- Starlink, VAST & Foxtel installs
- TV brackets & wall mount TVs
- Home theatre
- CCTV security systems

Fully Registered Fully Insured Fully Vaccinated

BOOKKEEPING



TURNOVER BOOKKEEPING

*BAS *IAS *Superannuation

*Accounts Receivable

*Accounts Payable *Payroll

Ph Trevor Turner

0419 575 176

CARPET CLEANING



- ✓ Stain removal
- ✓ Urine treatment
- ✓ Upholstery cleaning
- ✓ Carpet steam cleaning
- ✓ Tile and grout cleaning

Ph 0427 322 124
admin@gvrestorations.com.au

CONVEYANCING



Sargeants

CONVEYANCING & PROPERTY
TRANSFER SPECIALISTS

Debra Loveday
5772 2500
71 Grant Street, Alexandra
debra@sargeantsm.com.au
Conveyancing throughout Victoria

ELECTRICIANS

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS



• Domestic / Commercial

• Undergrounds

• Cable Locations • Trenching

• Solar Installations & Batteries

Ph 0418 543 310
info@e-tec.net.au
www.etecelctrical.com.au

MM00042 Rec N°12906

EXCAVATION & EARTHMOVING



KEATH'S EXCAVATIONS P/L, YARCK

EARTH MOVING

Excavators ~ Dozers ~ Graders
Scrapers ~ Loaders ~ Rollers
Backhoe ~ Water Carts
Low Loader ~ Tippers
Trucks & Trailers

All equipment operated by qualified operators
PERSONAL SUPERVISION – 42 YEARS EXPERIENCE
Phone 5773 4242 Mobile 0428 577 951
keathsexc@bigpond.com

EMC0082

FENCING

McMASTER FENCING CONTRACTOR

All general farm fencing, cattle yards, sheep yards, vineyards, on site welding and oxy work.
Tree plantation ripping
5 hydraulic post drivers and pneumatic drivers

GRASS SLASHING
4 extra heavy duty slashers

GENERAL FREIGHT
Hay, timber, wool, steel, grapes, machinery

GLEN (HORACE) McMASTER
5797 2921
Mobile 0417 529 809

EMC0072

KITCHENS



Murrindindi KITCHENS

Can design and build...



Custom built kitchens, 3D kitchen design, Granite and Reconstituted stone, laundries, Creative design and quality, vanities, wardrobes

0409 146 465
38 Johnston St, Alexandra
sales@murrindindikitchens.com

PAINTERS

W. & J. GREEN

PROFESSIONAL PAINTING

50 Years experience in all things painting

0407 134 756

PLUMBERS

G (Jack) McMaster

Plumbing Lic No 29767 YOUR LOCAL PLUMBER

• New work & Renovations • Domestic & Commercial

• Septic tanks, Water tanks • Pumps etc • Gas Fitting

• Roofing & Spouting • Trenching • Backflow Prevention

Ph 0428 972 386

SERVICE STATIONS



Simpson's FUEL

Fuelling North East Victoria since 1953
with quality products and great service.

Supplying bulk fuels to your farm or business.

Lubricant specialists, catering for all your needs
with Mobil and Prolube lubricants,
greases and solvents.



Ampol Alexandra
Ampol Eildon
Mansfield Diesel Stop **AMPOL**

0357721205 | www.simpsonsfuel.com.au

BOOK YOUR SPACE IN THE TRADES DIRECTORY

Phone: 5772 1002
Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au
Deadline: 12 noon Thursdays

43 Grant Street, Alexandra VIC 3714



PUZZLES SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

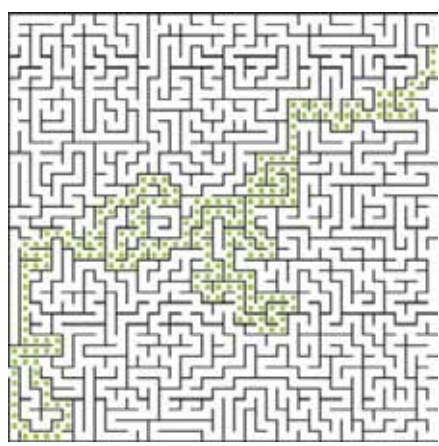
SUDOKU

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

MATH SQUARE

4	-	7	+	2	-1
+		x		-	
8	-	5	+	3	6
+		+		+	
9	-	1	-	6	2
21		36		5	

MAZE



KIDS - MATH SQUARE

4	-	7	+	9	6
+		-		-	
3	-	1	+	2	4
+		+		+	
8	-	5	+	6	9
15		11		13	

www.murrindindibusiness.com.au

Child sexual abuse at schools prior to 2000

THE Forum for Truth and Recognition is providing people with a safe and respectful space to share their experiences of child sexual abuse in Victorian government schools and certain non-government schools prior to the year 2000.

Angela Connors, Chair of the Forum, is hearing directly from people who have experienced child sexual abuse in Victorian schools by a relevant employee.

The experiences shared will contribute to a public record that recognises people’s trauma and the lifelong and far-reaching impacts of child sexual abuse.

People have the choice of meeting with Ms Connors in-person or online to share their experiences or by making a written or creative submission. Experiences can be shared anonymously, confidentially or publicly.

The Forum encourages people to participate by contacting the Forum or making a submission up until Wednesday, March 18.

Ms Connors is scheduled to deliver her report to the Premier of Victoria in mid-2026.

To participate, contact the Forum on 1800 967 933 (free call) or email contact@truthandrecognition.vic.gov.au. More information is available on their website.

Tiny Towns grants available

THE Victorian Government is giving Victoria’s smallest towns an extra month to apply for a Tiny Towns Fund grant, offering regional communities more time to apply for support to help improve their towns.

Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes announced that applications for round three of the \$20 million Tiny Towns Fund have been extended by four weeks and will now close at 4pm on Wednesday, March 4.

Grants of between \$5000 and \$50,000 are available to towns with fewer than 5000 people for projects that provide more opportunities to connect, attract visitors, improve facilities and deliver infrastructure upgrades.

The application extension is part of the Victorian Government’s broader response to support communities impacted by bushfires and floods.

Applications for a Tiny Towns Fund grant can be submitted at rdv.vic.gov.au/tiny-towns-fund

Redress for historical institutional abuse

IF you experienced abuse and/or neglect as a child in institutions in Victoria prior to 1990, you can apply for Redress. Redress has been set up to recognise and acknowledge what happened, and the harm caused.

Support is available to applicants, at any stage of the process, through free and confidential Redress support services.

No amount of money can ever make up for what happened, but there can be acknowledgement of what has happened in the past and support can be provided to address the impacts of abuse and neglect.

To apply, visit services.dffh.vic.gov.au/redress



Speakers at the Community Meeting regarding the Longwood Fire, held on Thursday, February 5. -AR

Community meeting held in Yea

A COMMUNITY meeting was held on Thursday, February 5 at the Yea Shire Hall to discuss the current status of the Longwood fire.

Mayor Damien Gallagher emceed the meeting and provided the opening address. He spoke about the wonderful volunteer efforts in the shire, along with the vital community support hubs.

Jamie Hanson was the CFA Incident Controller during the Longwood fire. He explained that the control centre had to be moved from Alexandra to Seymour due to the loss of power and communication challenges. A full interview with Jamie will be included in next week's edition.

Mariela Diaz, CEO of Emergency Recovery Victoria, and Jeff Ryan from Forge Solutions, the contractor for the clean up, also spoke.

Attendees also heard from Murrindindi's Community and Development Director Andrew Paxton who spoke about the assessments being done by the shire, as well as the vast amount of work needed to fix the infrastructure of the shire.

There were also representatives from the Department of Family Affairs and Housing and Agriculture Victoria in attendance.

Anne Leadbeater, who works nationally on disaster recovery, said, "I have to say that research and experience tells us that where we are right now, three to four weeks after

the disaster, is about the hardest place we can be. There is such a lot that's going on. People have been running on adrenaline for four weeks and also trying to come to terms with the enormity of this event and what the impact is on their lives and long-term. So if it feels really hard now, that's pretty right. That's exactly where we land. At this stage, it can be very common for the impacts of disasters that start impacting on your sleep patterns. You might be absolutely exhausted, but still finding yourself playing awake at three o'clock in the morning and not able to sleep. You might be not as hungry as you normally are, you might be forgetting to drink water, all of those things that we normally just do automatically can get sidetracked by the experience of a disaster."

She later added, "Be on the lookout for those signs of distress and fatigue. And rather than waiting for it to go wrong and then seeking the help to fix it, maybe think about trying to seek the help to stop it going on in the first place. Reach out to whomever it is, a trusted friend or family member, your GP, a counselling service, the bushfire support line, don't wait. Just try and share the burden, share the load, and that's going to make it easier for you to manage day to day, also manage for the longer term."

To watch the full meeting, visit facebook.com/share/v/1CDpBGEdL9/

BoM releases Climate Statement

THE Bureau of Meteorology has released the Annual Climate Statement 2025, confirming that annual maximum and minimum temperatures were above average across most of the country, with varied rainfall totals last year.

This follows the release of the preliminary key summary in January 2026 and provides the Bureau's official record temperature, rainfall, water resources, oceans, atmosphere and notable weather events for Australia in 2025.

Temperature

In 2025, Australia recorded its fourth-warmest year on record, with the national annual average temperature 1.23 °C above the long-term average.

Maximum temperatures were 1.48 °C above average, ranking equal fourth-warmest on record and minimum temperatures were 0.98 °C above average, ranking eighth-warmest on record.

Climatology Specialist Nadine D'Argent said Australia recorded above-average national temperatures in every month of 2025.

"Heatwave conditions affected large parts of the country between January and March, and again from October to December," Ms D'Argent said.

"January, February, March and October were within the top five warmest on record for their respective months, and it was the warmest March on record.

"This continues the warming trend over recent decades as observed in State of the Climate 2024.

"The warming in Australia is consistent with global trends, with the degree of warming similar to the overall average across the world's land areas.

"While minimum temperatures were mostly above average, some areas observed cooler than average minimum temperatures during winter."

Rainfall

Nationally, Australia received 503 mm of rainfall in 2025, around eight per cent

above average.

"Northern Australia saw above-average rainfall for the 2024-25 wet season (October to April), despite a dry January caused by a late monsoon onset," Ms D'Argent said.

"The start of the 2025-26 wet season (October to December) was also wetter than average due to Tropical Cyclones Fina and Hayley and the arrival of the monsoon from mid-December.

"For southern Australia, cool-season rainfall (April–October) was generally below average, with some areas experiencing rainfall in the lowest 10 per cent of all years."

Water resources

"Australia's total surface water storage continued to decline in 2025, falling five per cent over the year to reach 68 per cent of accessible capacity by year's end," Ms D'Argent said.

"The Murray-Darling Basin recorded a more substantial reduction, with storage levels dropping 14 per cent to 62 per cent of accessible capacity."

Surface water availability increased in pockets of northern New South Wales and the Menindee Lakes in the far west of the state following above-average local rainfall.

Soil moisture was below average across much of southern Australia, while remaining above average through northern Australia and coastal New South Wales.

Oceans and atmosphere

"Sea surface temperatures across the Australian region in 2025 were the warmest on record for the second consecutive year, reaching 0.93 °C above average. The previous record was set in 2024," Ms D'Argent said.

"In Antarctica, sea-ice extent remained historically low, ranking fourth lowest for summer and third lowest for winter."

Annual Climate Statement 2025

The full Annual Climate Statement, including state and territory information, is available on the Bureau of Meteorology's website.

Classifieds

Call 5772 1002 now to book your ad today!
Fax: 5772 1603 or Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS



Classified information

Office hours

Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm
Ph 5772 1002

E: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

Deadline - Noon Monday

Proofs

Line ads proofs not supplied
Display will only be supplied if requested

Payment

Payment is required at the time of placing a classified advertisement. Cash or credit card facilities available. Master Card or Visa (no AMEX). Non-payment prior to deadline may result in advertisement not appearing.

Death notices

Cannot be published without confirmation from a direct family member or funeral director.

Vehicles/Deals on Wheels

Registration number or VIN number must be included in advertisement. Deals on Wheels will run for 8 weeks unless cancelled.

Bargains under \$100

Either one item to the value of \$100 or several items not totalling more than \$100.

Animals

It is an offence to advertise the sale of a dog or cat or to give away free unless the Source number and microchip identification number of each animal generated by the Pet Exchange Register is included in the advertisement.

Refunds or credits

Check your advertisement on its first appearance. Although every care is taken to ensure your advertisement is correct errors can occur. Notify us immediately if there are errors in your advertisement. Refunds or credits will not be issued if your advertisement has appeared more than once and you have not notified us. Credits or refunds will not be given if advertisements appear out of order.

Conditions of advertising

Alexandra Newspapers Pty Ltd has the right to refuse any advertisement. Alexandra Newspapers Pty Ltd gives no guarantee for positioning of advertisements.

Copy right

Material published in this edition is subject to copyright provisions and cannot be used without the company's permission.

Alexandra Newspapers Pty Ltd accepts no responsibility for the unauthorised republication of such material.

TRADES ADVERTISING DEADLINE NOON THURSDAY

The Alexandra Standard and The Yea Chronicle are printed by North East Media, Wangaratta.

Print Post Approved - PP 100000292.

FOR SALE



ATV KAWASAKI MULE. 4010 Diesel Turbo 900cc. 4WD H/L auto. Elec winch. Dual battery (new), hyd tipper, driving lights and spot light, gun holders x 2. UHF radio, low hrs(1143). \$15,000 or nearest offer. Located in Euroa. Ph 0477 991 411

FOR HIRE

FITNESS EQUIPMENT

Rental and Sales
Alexandra
Treadmills, X- trainers, exercise bikes, rowers and more.
PH:0407 231 377

PETS & LIVESTOCK

ISA BROWN LAYERS
- POL, \$35 each. Phone 5798 1868. Pick-up in Alexandra or Yea.
beckysfreerange@gmail.com

SITUATION VACANT



We're Hiring
Friendly Dental Assistant

Love making patients smile?
Our family focused practice in Alexandra Dental Clinic needs a bubbly, reliable Dental Assistant to join our team. No weekends, great culture, and competitive pay. If you have 1+ years experience and a positive attitude, we want to hear from you.

No experience? We are willing to train the right, energetic candidate. If you are hardworking, eager to learn, and love helping people, this is your chance. Send your resume to manager@alexandradental.com.au



PART TIME
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Monday-Friday 9am-3pm
27.5hrs per week

ARE YOU A MULTI-TASKER WITH A CAN DO ATTITUDE?

A position has become available with Alexandra Newspapers to join our busy team.

JOB REQUIREMENTS:

- Excellent customer service;
- Excellent communication skills and phone manner;
- Computer skills essential. Email, Excel and Word a must;
- Previous admin experience an advantage;
- To be respectful, friendly and punctual;
- Ability to work in a small close knit team;
- Have the ability to work within strict deadlines;
- Proof reading will be a requirement at times;
- Ability and willingness to learn new tasks;
- On job training will be provided.

TASKS:

- Telephone duties, ringing customers and answering enquiries;
- Assisting customers in person;
- Accepting advertising and processing payments via EFT in person and over the phone;
- Assist with preparation of weekly newspapers and associated tasks;
- Photocopying/scanning/filing and all general admin duties;
- Client follow up;
- This position is not limited to the above tasks

Please email cover letter and resume addressing above criteria with three references to

manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au
Closing date February 27, 2026.

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

Out&About WHAT'S ON?

THE items in Out and About are sourced from our current advertising. 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.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

You are invited to a chat with Elders Rights Australia and the Menzies staff and clients at 2pm. The Mount, 2456 GV Highway, Alexandra. RSVP or for further information contact 0493 892 567. A light afternoon tea will be provided.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21

This Way North, Tuck Shop Ladies and Jude Perl will be at Fawcett Hall. This is a free local event, bookings essential. Music, fun, BYO drinks and picnic.

What are the tax implications following a fire?

THE post-fire recovery can have tax implications, some helpful and some potentially challenging.

An Australian Taxation Office (ATO) spokesperson said, "If you've been affected by an event or natural disaster such as a bushfire, we can support you. We understand that family and property are your priority at this time. We'll give you time to recover and help you sort out your tax affairs when you're ready. We generally stop sending correspondence to people in areas affected by major disasters. Once the crisis has passed, we can help you get back on track."

"Depending on your situation, we may be able to give you extra time to pay tax or lodge tax returns, activity statements or other obligations, set up a payment plan tailored to your individual situation, or remit penalties or interest charged during the time you've been affected."

For more information on what support is available in your circumstances, visit [tinyurl.com/ycyshe9d](https://www.ato.gov.au/your-circumstances) or phone the ATO's Emergency support line on 1800 806 218.

Whether an insurance payout is subject to tax depends on what you received the payout for and your individual circumstances.

Insurance payouts for damaged or destroyed personal items or assets, such as your family home (main residence), furniture or electrical goods, are generally not taxable and don't need to be declared as income.

However, there can be tax consequences, where the insurance payout relates to personal use asset (ie. a boat) that cost you more than \$10,000, a collectable, such as a painting, jewellery or antiques, that cost you more than \$500, property used to earn assessable income, for example, a rental property, business premises or part of a home used to run a home business.

There are also specific concessions and elections that may be available to Small Business owners and those involved in primary production businesses.

For more information on the tax consequences of receiving an insurance payout as a result of a disaster, visit [tinyurl.com/yc6ashap](https://www.ato.gov.au/your-circumstances), or contact a registered tax agent for advice.

Yea benefits from funding to help regional shows thrive

THE Victorian Government is helping regional communities showcase the best of Victoria, providing funding to 40 agricultural and pastoral societies to deliver projects that families and visitors can enjoy.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes announced local recipients of the 2025 Agricultural and Pastoral Society Grants Program, supporting projects that bring communities together and promote Victoria's agricultural industry.

"Helping regional communities thrive is at the heart of these grants. As a government, we're proud to support initiatives that deliver real benefits and enable society to create events that bring their communities together," Ms Symes said.

Yea Agricultural Pastoral and Horticultural Society will use the funding to purchase grand-stand seating.

Victoria's regional shows celebrate the heart of their



The crowd gathered to watch the dunk tank at last year's Yea Show. -BD

communities, showcasing everything from fresh produce and handmade craft, making them a must visit destination throughout the vibrant spring and summer seasons.

The program supports projects and activities promoting agriculture, improving infrastructure and upgrading amenities for community use during annual agricultural shows and events, ensuring these shows

remain a vibrant hub for families, volunteers, and visitors alike.

For more information, head to agriculture.vic.gov.au/support-and-resources/funds-grants-programs/agricultural-and-pastoral-society-grants

ADH: Providing shelter in a time of crisis

by Alexandra District Health

ALEXANDRA District Health (ADH) has been thanked for its swift, coordinated and compassionate response to the bushfire emergency that swept through the region on January 9, an event that has caused significant disruption and distress across the whole Murrindindi community.

While many local families and staff faced personal losses, including damage to homes, farming properties, fencing and livestock, ADH became a refuge and point of stability during the crisis.

On the Friday, as fire conditions rapidly deteriorated, around 40 community members sought emergency shelter at the hospital. In line with ADH's strong commitment to community-centred care, pets were welcomed into the safe space as well, including several dogs and even a much-loved cockatiel that quickly became a comforting presence for evacuees.

Despite facing their own uncertainties and, for some, significant property loss, we are very proud of ADH staff who demonstrated exceptional dedication. Those who had chosen not to evacuate arrived at the hospital ready to assist however they could. Families of staff also came in voluntarily, providing

additional hands when it mattered most. A massive thank you to Peter Mitchell, Mark Warren-Smith, Charlie, Louise and Rose Hurrey, and Bradley and Hayley Soward-Findlay who stepped in without hesitation. Their support ranged from preparing food and drinks to undertaking essential fire-safety tasks such as placing wet towels under doors and positioning buckets and mops to extinguish potential ember attacks.

Their contribution ensured the hospital remained a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

The bushfire also disrupted normal staffing and medical rosters. With several clinicians unable to travel due to road closures and hazardous conditions, local GP Dr Mark Wallace from the Alexandra Medical Centre joined ADH nursing staff to provide ongoing care for Urgent Care Centre patients throughout the emergency period. We are very grateful to Mark for his support. His collaboration with ADH clinicians ensured that critical healthcare services remained uninterrupted, despite the rapidly changing situation.

The response effort extended well beyond Alexandra. Our colleagues at Yea and District Memorial Hospital stayed in regular contact and provided hands-on assistance by sending

two staff members to Alexandra when road closures prevented them from travelling to Yea. Their presence provided necessary relief and additional support to the ADH team.

When regular suppliers were unable to reach the region, Eastern Health stepped in to ensure continuity of essential provisions. They supplied medical items, pharmacy stock and linen, resources that proved vital to maintaining safe operations during the emergency. ADH Director of Medical Services, also collaborated closely with her colleague at Eastern Health to organise ongoing medical workforce coverage, ensuring emergency physicians were available to staff the Urgent Care Centre.

The bushfire was a frightening and exhausting experience for many across the district, but the response at ADH has been described as a powerful example of what community resilience looks like in practice. Staff, families, volunteers and partner organisations came together to ensure everyone, patients, staff, and members of the public, had safety, shelter and compassionate care when it was needed most.

As recovery continues, ADH leaders have expressed deep gratitude for the extraordinary teamwork displayed across the region.

Beef producer confidence surges according to MLA

PRODUCER confidence across Australia's grassfed beef sector has surged to its strongest level in recent years, according to the latest Beef Producers Intentions Survey (BPIS) from Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA).

Almost 80 per cent of producers report a positive outlook for the year ahead, marking a significant lift in sentiment across every state and both major production systems.

The findings reflect an industry feeling supported by improved rainfall, solid market conditions and sustained global demand for Australian beef.

MLA's Market Information Manager Stephen Bignell said the data shows producers are looking toward 2026 with renewed optimism after navigating variable conditions in previous years.

"The confidence being expressed is not just short

term but signals a belief in the resilience and future potential of the sector," Mr Bignell said.

"Producers are telling us they feel confident in the year ahead. Improved seasonal conditions and stable pricing are giving producers the certainty they need.

"We are also seeing strong interest from international markets, which continues to underpin domestic confidence.

"It is clear that producers are positioning themselves to take advantage of the opportunities they see emerging."

This heightened confidence is translating directly into planning decisions on farm.

Half of all surveyed producers expect to increase herd numbers in the coming year, and many are choosing to retain more heifers as replacements or invest in additional livestock as part of longer-term rebuilding strategies.

These decisions are closely linked to expectations of favourable conditions and a desire among many producers to grow and strengthen their operations.

Mr Bignell noted that these patterns demonstrate clear forward thinking and willingness among producers to invest in herd productivity.

"Retaining more heifers tells us producers are thinking well beyond this season. It shows they are making decisions that build resilience and opportunity into their herds. Confidence is not just an attitude shift, it is showing up in how producers are planning for the future," Mr Bignell said.

The survey results also highlight that confidence is widespread across both northern and southern production regions.

While each region faces its own seasonal and operational challenges, both report very

strong sentiment and similar expectations for the year ahead.

Producers point to improving rainfall, better growing conditions and a more settled pricing environment as key factors boosting their outlook.

Sales behaviour also reflects the strengthening optimism, with producers expecting solid volumes to carry into the first half of 2026. Saleyards remain the primary channel for most operations, while larger producers indicate growing engagement with direct processor and feedlot pathways.

With responses collected from 2977 producers across Australia, the November 2025 survey provides one of the most comprehensive updates on producer sentiment and forward planning in the industry.

To view the full report, please visit: tinyurl.com/3xdju7vr



Competing in the heat. -S



Cheyenne Richards from Murrindindi and Georgia Robertson from Shepparton. -S

Murrindindi Little Aths at Regional Athletics Competition

OVER the weekend, a determined group of Murrindindi Little Athletes braved the Bendigo heat to compete at the Regional Athletics Competition.

Across two big days, seven athletes took on 28 events, delivered 18 personal bests, and proudly brought home 17 medals.

The club says a huge thank you goes to the parents and siblings who volunteered throughout the event. Your support keeps opportunities like this possible, and the whole club is grateful for the time and energy you give.

Best of luck to the athletes who have qualified for the state championships in March.



Some of the Murrindindi Little Athletics group at the Regional Athletics Competition in Bendigo. -S



Logan Steiner with his medals. -S



Shiloh Clacy had some success in Bendigo. -S



Zoe Collier with her medal. -S



Levi Campbell with his medals. -S

SPORT

Merton cricketers leap to top of WDCA ladder

MERTON cricketers travelled to the North Wangaratta Oval to take on Rovers Bruck United in a match that was a must win for both sides with Merton second on the ladder and Rovers third.

Merton won the toss and batted making a respectable 6/182 off the allocated 36 overs. A solid second wicket partnership between Murray Sutton 67 and 17 yr old James Benton 78 not out, the pair involved in a 110 run partnership which would set up the game for the visitors.

James Campbell with 4/25 the leading wicket taker for Rovers. The 182 victory target was a little under par in trying conditions and a quick outfield with the home sides key batsmen first and second in the league batting.

Merton would have to bowl well and take wickets for any chance of victory. The

Merton opening bowling attack of Sutton 1/14 and Luke Berriman 2/29 bowling well with good support from their teammates in the field keeping the pressure on.

Henry Berriman again changed the game with a fine spell of bowling taking 4/33 along with Harry Craddock one wicket and the father son combination of Rohan and Henry Berriman removing the top scorer Jerrimy Ackroyd for 58 saw the home side all out in the last over for 163. James Campbell the other top bat for Rovers making 44.

The win has elevated Merton to the top of the Wangaratta and District Cricket Association B grade ladder with three rounds remaining before the finals. Merton host Beechworth Wanderers next Saturday at the Merton Cricket Ground (MCG).



Murray Sutton. -S



James Benton on his way to 78 not out. -S

Alexandra Squash Club starts up for 2026

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition
Magpies versus Crows

ETHAN versus Robbie: Some great rallies. Robbie is now an official club member having joined the weekly pennant and making a statement by winning his first official match. 56 to 49.

Randy versus Laura: It was the first match back and everyone was a bit rusty. As the match went on Randy found his range to take the lead and the match. 86 to 48.

Justin (fill in) versus Chris: Justin was too strong for Chris, putting in four solid games. Justin's practice and competitions over summer have really paid off helping him in his victory. 83 to 47.

John versus Jim: John jumped to a lead with his precision game. The next three games were a slug-fest with neither player conceding an inch. The margin from the first game was the difference and the clincher in John's win. 58 to 50.

Pelicans versus Cockatoos

Tyler versus Jordan/Jim (fill in): Tyler had the first two games against Jordan who had to leave for basketball, Jim took his place for the rest of the

match. Jordan was holding ground against Tyler who picked up his game in second half. Tyler couldn't quite pull off the win. 62 to 59.

Jess versus Liane: Jess raced out of the blocks to set up a lead that was maintained for the rest of the match. A fun match to watch. 61 to 46.

Mark versus Ben F: Mark makes his return after a 10-year break. He still has it going toe-to-toe all the way to the end, tying the match with Ben. 56 to 56.

Michael H versus Phil: Michael took a strong lead. Phil stepped up a level this pennant and had a tough two games at the start but steadied to make Michael work for it. Michael claimed the victory. 62 to 45.

Wednesday competition
Freightliners versus Scania's

Nicole versus Ben H: Starting slow, Nicole didn't quite win the first game in her first official match. Taking Ben head on, Nicole made her presence known by claiming the next three games to triumph in her debut. 53 to 46.

Sam versus Travis: A familiar feud between two well matched players. While Travis played in a competition over the break, Sam has not been on the court since last year. At the end of the third game Travis was up by

one point. They went all out in the final game to draw, crowning Travis the match winner with a one-point lead. 63 to 62.

Michael M versus Justin: Michael M opened with a winning game only to have Justin return with ferocity and a newfound focus. Making the most of each point, Justin swung through to win the rest of the games and the match. 64 to 50.

Kenworths versus Macks

Matthew versus Jessica: A close and entertaining match. It was two games each with Jessica holding control in the middle and Matthew taking games one and four. With only a three-point difference, Jessica took victory. 55 to 52.

Travis (fill in) versus Kristelle: What should have been a good match was a sad excuse for squash. Travis was playing fine, but Kristelle was not herself and appeared to lack basic squash skills on the night. Travis absolutely trashed his opponent. 80 to 46.

Daniel K versus Daniel W: Daniel W put on his running shoes to keep up with Daniel K. The rallies were long and the continuous drives down the wall were deep. Daniel W had a good match, making a decent score, but Daniel K claimed the match. 59 to 39.

Kinglake Basketball Association season begins

AS everyone gets back into school, returning and new players at Kinglake Basketball Association (KBA) will kick off their grading and trial rounds starting February 9, with the “true” season starting after grading ends.

At KBA, the first three weeks of each season are what are called “grading weeks”, where the club make sure players are fairly spread across teams so the season gets the best out of all participants.

Teams of under eights, under 10s train and play on Mondays, while under 12s and under 14s play Wednesday nights.

New this season

Mini Ball on Monday is new this season, and is a great way for four to seven year olds to learn the skills of basketball in a friendly and safe space. Facilitated by adults and older players, it's all about the younger ones gaining their confidence.

Seniors competition

KBA's seniors competition is making a comeback this season. Thursday nights. Mixed gender. Perfect for anyone. The start date for seniors is a little later than the other age groups, and should commence in late March/early April.

Sadly, this season there weren't enough players sign up for the under 16 and under 18 age groups but please, if you are interested, shoot the club an email at kinglakebasketballassociation@gmail.com

Season two will be here in no time and KBA are keen to make all age groups happen. The club wishes good luck to all players this week and a huge thank you to all their volunteers and referees.

Barefoot Bowls and pennant for Yea Bowls Club

by Maurie Finn

Another great night at Barefoot Bowls

ONCE again there was a great turn up to Yea Bowls Club Barefoot Bowls, sponsored by Nutrien Harcourt.

On a lovely, breezy evening, more than 40 bowlers turned out for a drink, good fun, meeting new people, and once again, some good bowling.

The bowling session was completed once again by a 'Spider' where everyone bowls a bowl at the same time toward a box of

chocolates placed in the middle of the green. The winner was Tony, a first-time bowler.

Other winners of prizes were for the best bowl of the night, the bowl that most helped their opposition, the team with the best name, etcetera.

There are two more weeks of Barefoot Bowls to go before the Community Challenge, and the club reminds players to not miss out.

Yea Bowls pennant wrap

With another early start due to the heat policy, the Yea Bowls Club team travelled to Shepparton Park to take on the top side of the competition in their undercover rink. Early

in the season Yea came out victors, but this time it was Shepparton Park who held sway.

The most competitive rinks for Yea were Terry McInnes with Doug Shirrefs and newcomers Wayne and Fiona Tanner, who were making their debut to pennant bowls. They had a very even game with the Yea team holding a narrow lead for most of the game; however, Shepparton got to a two shot lead on the second last end, and although the Yea team held a two shot advantage on the last end Shepparton were able to convert and hold on to win.

The other competitive rink was Maurie Finn with Judy Elenius, Maree Brennan and

Angela Finn. Although well down early, they gradually worked their way back into the game and reduced the margin to just eight shots at the end of the game

This week the club see the final round of the home and away season, Yea at home, hosting Tallygaroopna. Regardless of the outcome, for the first time in four years, Yea will miss out on the finals however it has been a very successful season with lots of players getting the chance to play pennant at a higher level and remain very competitive.

Ladies Singles Championship Final

For the fourth year in a row, Viv Cavanagh and Angela Finn played off for the title. This year Angela came out in front to make it two wins each.

Viv started brilliantly to hold a handy lead early in the game, however Angela found form and clawed her way back into the game, then won six ends in a row to hit the front, then hold on to win.

Congratulations to both Viv and Angela for some outstanding bowling.



Socialising at Barefoot Bowls. -S



Singles Ladies Club Champion for 2026, Angela Finn. -S



Pennant at Shepparton Park. -S

Men make a charge at Yea Golf Club

by Alan Pell

Gender Challenge Round Seven

LAST Wednesday saw 43 players compete in the seventh round of the Gender Challenge, with a two-person Ambrose format played. The field consisted of 12 men's teams and nine ladies' teams.

Winners on the day: First went to Phil Armstrong / Gavin Houldcroft, nett 62 (Gross 75); second Mic Spagnolo / Gary Pollard, nett 64 (Gross 69); third Rob Gill / Mic Sheather, nett 67 (Gross 81); fourth Brian Priestley / Allan Coates, nett 68.75 countback (Gross 77); fifth Neil Peterson / Rob O'Halloran, nett 69 (Gross 78).

Nearest the pin on the second went to Alan Pell and Di Holdsworth.

The best ladies team was Vicki Clements, Miranda Gill and Marg Britain with a fine nett 69.5 in their three-person team.

The men were well behind at the start of the day but now have a glimmer of hope after taking the full 85 points from the event.

Gender points awarded: M. Spagnolo / G. Pollard 25; Rob Gill / Mic Sheather 20; Brian Priestley / Allan Coates 15; Neil Peterson / Rob O'Halloran 10; Tony Rule / John Phillips 5.

Team average (Men) 10. Averages: Men 68.9, Ladies 74.8.

Due to the men having five more players, the top result was not counted in the Gender Challenge scoring.

Total score after seven rounds (with two to play): Ladies 375; Men 220.

The final round will feature extra points, with each individual match worth 10 points.

After golf lunch with over 50 people was held with the major attraction being to thank Neil and Mary-Ann Peterson for their

contributions to Yea Golf Club. Mary-Ann was treasurer for three years and catered for club workers events for many years. Neil Peterson was always a keen volunteer and player for the club as well. They have moved to Lilydale for health reasons.

Monthly Medal February 2026

Last Saturday saw the first Monthly Medal of 2026 and an exceptional round of golf from Steve Rumney (23), who returned a superb nett 65. Steve has been putting in plenty of practice lately and it is clearly paying off.

Second place went to Paul Heyen (24) with an excellent nett 66, followed by Rob Gill (33) with 67 on a countback from Alan Pell (13) also on 67, and Jim Redmond (24) with 68.

Nearest the pin on the second was Martin Lowe, who also shared the putting prize with Anthony Coleman, both recording 26 putts.

Ladies Monthly Medal

Nicola Rule produced a fine round to win with nett 65, ahead of Cindy Armstrong and Penny Britton who both finished with nett 73.

This was Nicola's first win at the club and all were delighted to see her take out the Monthly Medal, congratulations Nicola.

The Friday night social event for February saw 53 people at the club for a meal and get together. Thanks Phil Armstrong for the wonderful night including six hole golf, pork ribs for tea and involving new members. Many thanks again to Yea Meats for supplying the meat hamper which Judi Newman gladly accepted in the raffle.

Also on Friday night at RACV Healesville one of the club's junior members Jobe Dunne took out the final of the Friday Night Shootout. There were nine finalists and the 16 year old took the title.



Judi Newman won the raffle. -S



Captain Vicki Clements presents Nicola Rule with her monthly medal. -S



Neil Peterson recently a winner with the AH Smith Trophy. -S

SDCA wins the inaugural McIvor Challenge

SENIOR representative cricket has returned with a bang for the Seymour District Cricket Association (SDCA) following a convincing 56 run win over the Emu Valley Cricket Association (EVCA) in the first ever McIvor Challenge.

The match marked a significant milestone for cricket in the region, providing an opportunity for the region's finest cricketers to go head-to-head in a one off match.

EVCA won the toss at Chittick Park and sent the SDCA in to bat with Josh Rudge (28) and Charles Davies (39) getting the side off to a flying start, going at six runs an over for the first 10.

Rudge's dismissal brought Lachlan Watts to the crease, allowing the competition's leading player to stamp his authority on the contest.

Watts dominated the EVCA bowling attack, supported in a 57 run partnership with Lachlan Drummond (14). Watts was eventually dismissed for 99, with 14 fours and a six, showing his class at a higher level.

Cam Evans chipped in with a tidy innings of 22 not out to get the SDCA to 227 at the completion of their 45 overs.

Blake Munari-O'Dwyer got the SDCA off to a strong start with the ball, claiming two wickets in his opening spell before Watts came into the attack and chipped away at the EVCA middle order.

Across a game winning spell of nine overs, Watts claimed 4/40 and held two catches in the field to complete an incredible all round performance.

Andrew Butterworth claimed the final three wickets of the match as the SDCA got over the line by 56 runs.



The victorious Seymour Club SDCA team. -S



SDCA Coach Cam Armstrong and Captain Lachlan Watts. -S

Match reports for SDCA round

A Grade

YEA Tigers 1/55 (Z Macleod 31 not out) defeat Alexandra 51 (V Hewage 21, D Thompson 3/3, Z Macleod 3/9).

It was an early finish at Yea as the Tigers put in a dominant performance against Alexandra. It was Dylan Thompson (3/3) and Zayde Macleod (3/9) who led the way with the ball, supported by Biron Hardinge (2/13) and Jack Christie (2/15).

Alexandra ended up all out for 51 with Vinu Hewage the only batsman to offer any resistance.

With the bat it was Macleod who backed up his strong bowling performance, making 31 not out off 26 to guide Yea to the win within 10 overs.

B Grade

Alexandra 182 (A Wood 53, L Ronalds 45) defeated Yea Tigers 13 (T Ward 6/6).

Carlton Football Club players inspire locals

YEA Football Netball Club recently welcomed a special visit from Carlton Football Club, giving local players an unforgettable AFL experience.

On the evening of Thursday, February 5, Carlton players including Adam Cerra, Talor Byrne, Ashton Moir and Blake Acres attended the club.

It was a great opportunity for junior players, netballers, footballers, families and footy fans to get up close with elite AFL talent. There were kicks, chats, photos, laughs and plenty of footy inspiration for the next generation.



Carlton player Blake Acres with Yea President Peter Armstrong. -AR



Blake Acres and Ashton Moir with some of Yea's junior players. -AR