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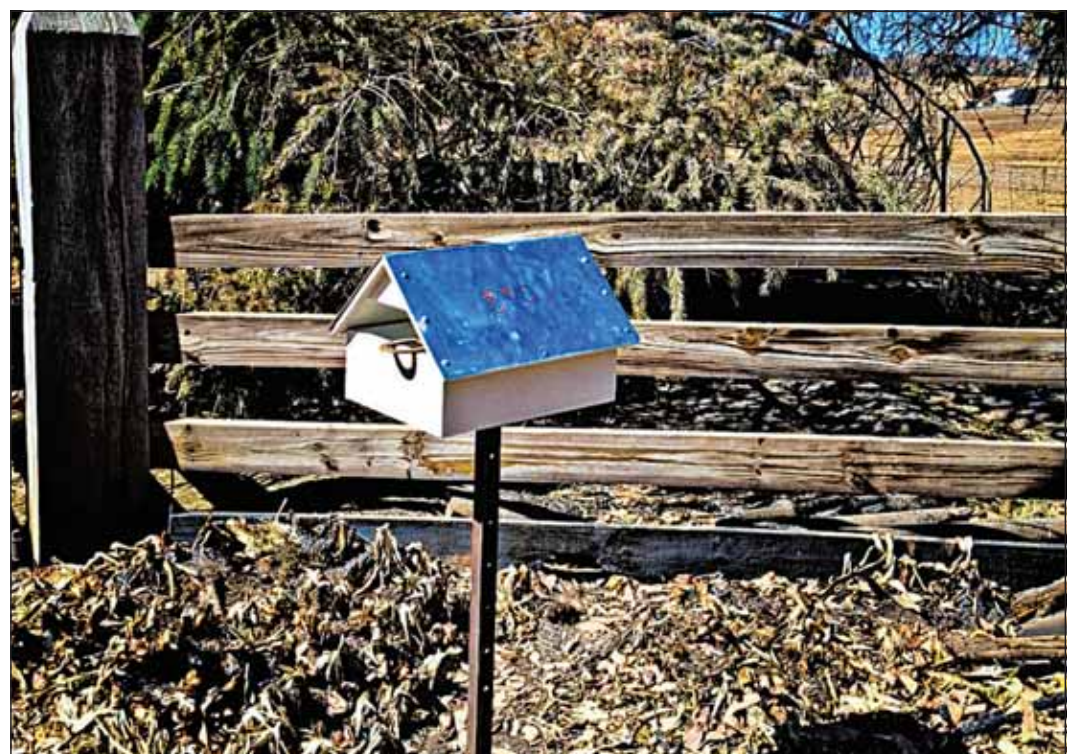
Bruce, the Highland's postman, on one of his tool and letter box collections from Yea Men's Shed. -S



Colin Jones with his original design boxes. -S



Yarra Glen Men's Shed constructed letter boxes. Finished by Yea Men's Shed. -S



A box installed by Bruce on a star picket mount. -S

Yea Men's Shed construct handmade letterboxes for fire-affected properties

AMID the devastation of the Longwood bushfires, residents in the Highlands lost their letterboxes, meaning they were unable to have their mail delivered. The Yea Men's Shed leapt into action, working with the Yarra Glen Men's Shed to craft handmade letterboxes.

The letterboxes for Highland residents were requested by Andrea Bauer of the Highlands Hub. Colin Jones from the Yea Men's Shed created the design and worked with men's shed members to craft the original set, and they were

delivered and installed by dedicated postman Bruce Eccles.

Of the 32 letterboxes made by the Yea Men's Shed, 28 went to the Highlands and four went to Fawcett. The project began in mid-January, and the last letterboxes were sent up last week.

Yea Men's Shed member Alan Cole described the project and the work involved.

"I spent a fair bit of time painting. Other people have spent a fair bit of time screwing the hinges on, that's taken a while, and installing

the metal rooves on. It was certainly a group effort, it wasn't any one person," he said.

"All of the wood was donated to the Yarra Glen Men's Shed, and that was donated by a place in Bayswater, like 28 sheets of eight by four.

"There's a couple of workers down there [at Yarra Glen Men's Shed] who've done most of the cutting out and assembling the box bit. We then collected them and then screwed the hinges and painted them, put the metal rooves on most of them.

"One of the real heroes in this is the postie who delivers in Highlands area, Bruce Eccles. He has been the one who has actually collected the letterboxes from the shed when they've been completed.

"He's been taking them up to the Highlands, and installing them in front of people's places. It's easy enough to make in the shed a letterbox, but to get out there in people's places and dig the holes and mount them is beyond the call of duty," Alan finished.

Motorbike club ride through Yarck and Alexandra

THE Mansfield American Motorbike Club will be holding a memorial run on Saturday, March 14, raising funds for the Alexandra CFA Group. Around 100 motorbikes are expected.

They plan to leave Mansfield at 10.30am, arriving at Yarck at 11am. They will depart Yarck at 11am and arrive in Alexandra at

about 11.45am escorted by local CFA units, heading to the Alexandra CFA Station, where captain Chris Lynch will provide the members with a presentation on the fire.

The motorbike club will also take the opportunity to present the funds raised during the weekend.

Alexandra District Health
5772 0900

Yea & District Memorial Hospital
5736 0400

In an emergency dial
000

ALEXANDRA DISTRICT HEALTH

Standard

THE YE A CHRONICLE

The Yea Chronicle

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ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS



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Anne Leadbeater OAM. -S

Anne Leadbeater OAM joins council as strategic advisor

MURRINDINDI Shire Council is pleased to welcome Anne Leadbeater OAM to council. Anne is working in the role of Strategic Advisor Bushfire Recovery, to support community recovery following the January 2026 fires.

Anne is a nationally recognised leader in disaster recovery and community resilience. She is known for her work following Victoria's 2009 Black Saturday bushfires, where she helped coordinate recovery for the Kinglake Ranges communities.

That work was later recognised as best practice in the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, and in 2014 Anne was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her service to disaster affected communities.

With more than two decades' experience across local and state government and the community sector, Anne has supported communities recovering from fire, flood, drought and other disasters across Australia and New Zealand.

Her belief in community led recovery and understanding of local government make her a valuable addition to council's recovery team as they continue supporting communities through the long recovery journey.

Letters to the Editor

Hairdressing

WHY do people in Yea travel to Seymour to get their hair cut? There is a more than capable hairdresser in town.

Name and address supplied but withheld by request

Health bus

THANK you for last week's article reporting on the work currently being undertaken via the Murrindindi Mobile Health Clinic. It was wonderful that the Mobile Clinic was able to be launched on January 7 and almost immediately

be put into active service in supporting communities across Murrindindi affected by the Longwood fires. The long-term impact on these communities will result in the Mobile Clinic being in use across Murrindindi Shire for months to come.

The ability to take health care, and in particular mental health services, to those directly impacted by the bushfires is just so important in rebuilding communities and strengthening resilience. High levels of chronic disease and a serious lack of basic healthcare services

across Murrindindi make this essential.

The Murrindindi Mobile Health Clinic is a community led initiative. It was the brain-child of Alexandra Events which successfully raised some \$140,000 towards the project.

All Murrindindi residents are indebted to Alexandra Events for this remarkable and already essential component of our local health care system.

*Ian Marshman AM,
Chair, Yea and District
Memorial Hospital*

Arrests following series of burglaries

POLICE have advised that the Alexandra Crime Investigation Unit and Yarra Ranges Crime Investigation Unit detectives have charged five men following a series of burglaries, thefts and criminal damage incidents in the Eastern region of Victoria from November 15, 2025 to January 12.

It is alleged thousands of dollars of equipment and property were damaged and stolen.

The burglaries took place in Narbethong, Buxton, Marysville, Taggerty, Devils River, Rubicon, Kinglake and Maintongoon, Chirnside Park, Healesville, Woori Yallock, and Launching Place.

One theft of particular note was of a \$20,000 generator at Mount Gordon, near Marysville, which ensures that local radio can transmit emergency information during power outages.

This theft occurred just days before the fire in Longwood.

Alexandra and Yarra Ranges Crime Investigation Unit detectives arrested five men between December 3, 2025 and February 10 after executing several search warrants.

A 24 year old Yellingbo man was charged with 35 offences including burglary, theft, handling stolen goods and trafficking a commercial quantity methylamphetamine. He was bailed to appear at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court on March 26.

A 35 year old Seville man and a 32 year old man from Launching Place were both charged with burglary, theft and drug offences in January and were remanded into custody.

A 37 year old Narbethong man was charged with handling stolen goods, possessing drug of dependence and theft. He was bailed to appear at the Ringwood Magistrates' Court on April 30.

A 29 year old Healesville man was charged with possessing methylamphetamine, possessing a prohibited weapon, criminal damage and theft. He was bailed to appear at the Mansfield Magistrates' Court on April 1.

Various items of property, estimated at approximately \$250,000, have been recovered and returned to their rightful owners. The generator is one of the recovered items.

Detective Sergeant Flyn Loughlin said, "This is a good example of the results of information sharing among detectives at two local Crime Investigation Units, being Alexandra and Yarra Ranges.

"The investigation remains ongoing with multiple items of property that remain outstanding."

Anyone with information or anyone who may have witnessed any suspicious activity in the area, with dashcam/CCTV footage is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or submit a confidential report online at crimestoppersvic.com.au

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.



Weekly Weather

March 11 - March 17, 2026

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

Yea

DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	15	27 	Wednesday	16	28 
Thursday	12	23 	Thursday	12	22 
Friday	11	22 	Friday	11	21 
Saturday	12	24 	Saturday	12	25 
Sunday	14	26 	Sunday	15	26 
Monday	15	26 	Monday	16	26 
Tuesday	14	26 	Tuesday	15	26 

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

can be submitted via email to
editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au or
reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au
or by mail to Alexandra Newspapers
PO Box 5, Alexandra 3714.

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

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

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Facebook

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

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

Governor of Victoria visits fire-impacted communities across Murrindindi Shire

Governor of Victoria visits fire-impacted communities across Murrindindi

MURRINDINDI Shire Council was honoured to host Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner, Governor of Victoria, for a two-day visit across fire-impacted communities in Murrindindi Shire.

Over Thursday, February 26 and Friday, February 27, the Governor visited Highlands, Yarck and Fawcett, meeting with residents, volunteers, emergency services representatives and council leaders to hear firsthand about the impacts of the January 2026 fires and the ongoing recovery effort.

Murrindindi was the hardest hit community in Victoria in the January 2026 fires. Approximately 144,000 hectares burned in the Longwood fire, with more than 190 homes destroyed within Murrindindi Shire alone, alongside widespread disruption to daily life, livelihoods and wellbeing for many residents who remain deeply affected, on top of the lasting impacts of the 2009 bushfires and 2022 floods.

The consequences span people, economy and infrastructure. Approximately 450 kilometres of roads and dozens of bridges and culverts were impacted, major tourism assets were lost, and there has been significant agricultural and wildlife harm. For many in our community, recovery is about far more than rebuilding property, it is about restoring connection, security and a sense of place.

During her time in Murrindindi, the Governor visited Highlands Community Hall, Yarck Hall and Fawcett Hall, where she listened to residents share their lived experiences and the challenges of recovery, and met with volunteers leading community-led relief hubs. Conversations highlighted the strength of grassroots coordination, the care being shown to neighbours in times of need, and both the resilience of these small communities and the ongoing support still required.

Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said the opportunity for residents to speak directly with the Governor was highly valued.

“This visit was about our community, about listening to people who have experienced profound loss and disruption and recognising the extraordinary volunteers who have stepped forward to support others,” Cr Gallagher said.

“The scale, complexity and cumulative nature of these impacts exceed local capacity. Our community cannot recover alone. Strong, coordinated and sustained partnerships with the State and Federal Governments are essential to meet immediate recovery needs and to build long term protection against increasing climate-driven risks.”

During the visit, Mayor Cr Gallagher provided the Governor with council’s January 2026 Bushfire Advocacy Priorities, outlining key community needs, recovery pathways and policy reforms required to restore critical infrastructure, support local economies, improve emergency management and secure a resilient future for our shire.

The Governor was also accompanied by Emergency Management Victoria Commissioner Tim Wiebusch on Thursday

and Deputy Commissioner Therese Fitzgerald on Friday. Council thanked Commissioner Wiebusch for his direct support during the emergency response and confirmed that council’s Bushfire Advocacy Priorities were provided to the Commissioner and Emergency Recovery Victoria to help shape coordinated recovery planning and implementation.

Council extends its sincere thanks to Her Excellency for her compassion, respect and commitment to hearing directly from our communities. The visit also provided an opportunity to reflect on the strong collaboration between Murrindindi, neighbouring councils and key partners, highlighting a coordinated and collective approach to response and recovery.

Council further acknowledges the extraordinary efforts of local volunteers whose care, leadership and community spirit continue to play a vital role in strengthening communities as recovery progresses.

More information on council’s advocacy priorities is available at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Council/Advocacy-and-Partnerships/January-2026-Bushfire-Advocacy-Priorities



Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner, Governor of Victoria, Mitchell Shire Council Mayor Cr John Dougall and Mitchell Shire Council staff at Highlands Community Hall. -S

Homewood Progressive Dinner returns this March

HOMEWOOD’S much-loved Progressive Dinner will return on March 21, offering locals a chance to come together over good food, music, and the easy camaraderie that defines country life. The evening begins at 5pm with entrees at Barry and Jenny Purvis’ historic property, *Kenilworth*, a home that has long opened its doors to community gatherings. Guests can expect the classic homemade entrees that have become a hallmark of Homewood events.

At 7pm, the night moves to the Homewood Hall for dinner, dessert, and live music. JBL Catering will serve a hearty country-style meal, followed by the hall’s famous homemade desserts. Local band, *No Pressure*, will provide entertainment, adding to the relaxed, neighbourly atmosphere.

Bar service will operate at both venues, with no BYO permitted under licensing rules.

Events like the progressive dinner remain central to small-town life. After years

marked by fire, recovery, and rebuilding across the district, the chance to gather and reconnect feels especially important. These traditions remind us why communities like Homewood endure. People care, they turn up, and help out when it counts.

Tickets are available at trybooking.com/DJMNR

Prices are family-friendly, with adults \$45, high-schoolers \$35, primary-aged children \$20, and under-fours free.

Free Funeral Information Pack

Our Free Funeral Information Packs are designed to assist you with planning end-of-life and funeral services.

Included in the pack is:

- Funeral Planning Booklet
- Pre-Paid Funeral Info & FAQ's Sheet
- Free Legal Will Kit for Basic Estates
- Comprehensive Checklists
- Other Information & Funeral Service Ideas

To order your free pack please call or email us.



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FUNERALS
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info@finalembbracefunerals.com.au

New Pathology Service in Alexandra

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Glucose Tolerance Test (GTT)

Non-Invasive Prenatal Testing (NIPT)

Urea Breath Test – c14

Electrocardiogram (ECG)

24hr Blood Pressure Monitoring

24hr Holter Monitoring

Alexandra Family Medical Centre

114 Grant Street, Alexandra

Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 12:00pm

Ph: 0402 679 150



All Referrals Accepted



Entrees at Barry & Jenny Purvis' beautiful home "Kenilworth" 6552 Goulburn Valley Highway 5pm
Dinner, Dessert & Music at the Homewood Hall 7pm

Dinner catered by JBL catering.

Music by 'No Pressure'

Bar service available at both venues.

Due to liquor licencing no BYO.

Come along and enjoy the famous Homewood homemade entrees and desserts.

To purchase tickets please scan the QR code or visit
<https://www.trybooking.com/DJMNR>
or via QR



Adults \$45

High School Age \$35

Primary School Age \$20

4y & under \$0



A PARLIAMENTARY inquiry into the 2026 summer fires across Victoria has extended the deadline for submissions from the public to Sunday, April 19.

The Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee received feedback from communities and councils still dealing with the impacts of the blazes around the state.

“We’ve listened to members of the community who told us the deadline should be extended,” Committee Chair Ryan Batchelor said.

“Hopefully this extra time means those directly affected by the fires, and those with knowledge of this topic can better share their experiences and insights with us.”

The inquiry is looking at a number of matters related to the fires, including preparation and planning by government, emergency services and community; the causes and circumstances of the bushfires, such as climate change; resourcing of fire agencies, and support for volunteers; the emergency response to the fires; resilience of critical services and infrastructure; recovery efforts in affected communities; and the impact of the fires on the environment.

“We have an extensive Terms of Reference for our inquiry on our website, and I would encourage all submitters to take a look at them as they prepare their submission,” Mr Batchelor said.

The committee intends on holding public hearings once the submission phase ends and is due to provide a report to parliament with findings and recommendations by mid-to-late 2026.

The extension follows requests from fire-affected communities, and Murrindindi Shire Council, highlighting the ongoing recovery challenges faced by communities after the January 2026 bushfires.

Council advocated that the time frame was not reasonable given many residents were still dealing with the immediate issues of seeking relief, shelter and commencing their clean up. The extension will allow more time for councils, communities and organisations to prepare meaningful contributions.

Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said the extension is an important outcome for communities still dealing with the immediate impacts of the fires.

“This is a positive step that recognises the reality our communities are facing. People are still recovering, rebuilding and supporting one another,” Cr Gallagher said.

“Extending the timeline gives Murrindindi residents, businesses and community groups a fair opportunity to share their experiences

and help shape recommendations that improve how Victoria prepares for and responds to bushfires.”

Cr Gallagher said the January fires had a profound impact across Murrindindi, reinforcing the importance of ensuring regional voices are heard.

“Our communities experienced the worst of the fires this summer, and reportedly the worst bushfire on private property in

Victoria’s recent history. Their insights and lived experience are critical to informing the inquiry.”

“Murrindindi Shire Council will continue working with residents, emergency services and government agencies to ensure our community’s experience is clearly represented.”

People who have been impacted by the fires, have been involved in response or recovery,

or have insights to contribute are encouraged to make a submission to the inquiry.

You can make a submission to the inquiry via the committee’s website, *parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/inquiries/inquiry-into-the-2026-summer-fires-across-victoria/submissions*

For local recovery information and support, visit *murrindindi.vic.gov.au/longwoodfire* or contact council on 5772 0333.



CFA rescue brigades lend a hand in Yea

DURING the January fires, the generosity of CFA volunteers was widespread, and when Yea members called for help with road incidents, the assistance that followed was overwhelming.

Road crash rescue volunteers from multiple brigades right across the state did not hesitate to head to Yea to offer their services and cover their rescue response alongside agency counterparts.

On January 7, a devastating bushfire broke out in Longwood, just north of Yea, and it became clear early on that the brigade would be committed to the fire response for some time.

To ensure they could continue responding to emergencies in their local town, the brigade reached out to their fellow rescue brigades to enlist their help covering their road rescue response. This meant members could remain on the fireground protecting the broader Victorian community.

Yea Fire Brigade Captain Emery McCarthy said it was amazing to see so many people eager to lend a hand.

“Local emergencies don’t stop just because there are big fires in the landscape,” Emery said.

“I put the call out for help and within an hour we had people available for three days and within a day we had a roster for the full week.”

Werribee Fire Brigade was one of the brigades that put their hands up to help.

When the call came that Yea needed help, Werribee Fire Brigade Captain Micheal Wells said it was a no brainer to send some of their crew.

“Even though we are an incredibly busy brigade here in Werribee, if there is a chance to help, we will,” Michael said.

“We were able to lighten the load a little bit for Yea, and it was also a good

chance for networking and cross-brigade relationship building.”

Members from Wandin, Monbulk, Nar Nar Goon, Loch, and Plenty also supported Yea with their rescue capability.

Emery said the support meant the brigade was able to continue their rescue coverage for the community while the large fire response was happening.

“Within 10 minutes of the crew arriving there was a call out to a vehicle roll over,” Emery said.

“This just proved how important it was for us to have that help.

“We are so thankful to all the members who made themselves available even when their own brigades were incredibly busy.

“The rescue brigade community is a small one, with just over 20 brigades in the state having a rescue team, so you really felt that support, we are very grateful and I know the community is too.”

Church Services

ST PETER’S MEMORIAL ANGLICAN CHURCH

Cnr Bald Spur/Whittlesea Kinglake Rds,
Sunday Services, 8.30am Communion.
Minister: Rev. Ruwan Palapathwala
0458 113 099

ST LUKE’S ANGLICAN CHURCH OF YEA

Sunday Service time 11am
Prayerful Reflection - held each Tuesday,
10am to 11am - all welcome
Father Mario Hendricks
Ph: 0435 953 777

CATHOLIC PARISHES OF ALEXANDRA AND YEA

Parish Priest, Father Jose Mathew
0459 402 547
St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 5pm
Immaculate Conception Parish
Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am
Sacred Heart Yea, Sunday 10.45am

CATHOLIC PARISH OF KINGLAKE

Fr Martin Ashe, Parish Priest
Ph 9717 6482
St Mary’s Kinglake: Sunday 8.30am

SCOTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, YEA

Station Street Yea
Sunday Service 10.30am
Colin Whiteway
Ph 0457 340 525

UNITING CHURCH

1st and 3rd Sundays 9am, 1050 Main Road,
Kinglake West. 9716 2330

Out&About

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, MARCH 4

Look after yourself and others after the fires. Tonight, 6.30pm at the Alexandra Shire Hall. Council are hosting a recovery session to support those affected by the recent bushfires. Dr Rob Gordon will talk about common emotional responses and share practical strategies to support your wellbeing and those around

you. A light supper and chat time will follow the session.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

Caribbean Cruise Murder Mystery at Trawool. Three course dinner, game and entertainment. \$99 per person, bookings essential trawoolstate.com.au or phone 5792 1444.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

Murrindindi Shire Council presents Business Breakfast Alexandra from 7.30am at On Point Brewery, Alexandra. Registrations open. Scan the QR

code in this edition for full details.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

Alexandra Race Club Cathedral Golf Club 2026 Alexandra Cup. Music, food, racing, big screen and more. Book the bus. country.racing.com/alexandra

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

Alexandra RSL AGM will be held on Sunday, March 15, beginning at noon and followed by a light luncheon.

TUESDAY, MARCH 17

Alexandra and District Open Gardens AGM, starting at 5pm at the Embassy of Ideas in Alexandra. New members are welcome, contact Melinda Jackson on 0418 378 806.

MONDAY, MARCH 23

Alexandra Community Hub AGM at 38A Downey Street, Alexandra, beginning at 6pm. New board members are welcome, the position is voluntary. Email admin@alexhub.com.au to register interest, or call Sue on 5772 1238 for more information.



Dean Kruger recognised as a community legend

BUNNINGS has recognised 50 year old Dean Kruger from Glenburn as a local Community Legend, celebrating his tireless work with the CFA battling bushfires across regional Victoria, as well as selflessly volunteering with the Murrundindi Ranges Wildlife Shelter.

Dean is one of five Community Legends recognised nationally this week as part of the Community Legends Awards, which shine a spotlight on everyday Australians who strengthen pride, inclusion, resilience or wellbeing in their communities.

Inspired by the local spirit of a small community that bands together, Dean joined the CFA to offer his support to the Glenburn community after recognising the profound impact a crisis can have on those who call it home. His commitment to community safety was first demonstrated through his vocal campaigning to improve the safety of the Melba Highway, aiming to address the congestion at the intersection of Maroondah Highway and Killara Road which was causing significant issues for fire brigades during peak periods.

Dean's commitment to the region extends to the Murrundindi Ranges Wildlife Shelter, where he was heavily involved following the devastating damage that bushfires have on livestock and wildlife in the Yea area. He supports the organisation by delivering food, medical supplies, and coordinating donations.

For Dean, country living feels innately different to city life. It comes with a deep sense of responsibility towards those around you. He recognises the importance of showing support when it matters is what holds communities together, and volunteering is a core part of community life.

Over the past two months, Bunnings team members and community partners from across Australia have been nominating local legends within their communities, sharing stories that celebrate everyday Australians who are doing extraordinary things in their

local area. Dean was recognised by a team member from his local store.

Head of Community, Partnership and Events Michelle Walter said, "In every community, there are people quietly going above and beyond to support others, often without recognition," she said.

"The Community Legends Awards are about shining a light on those everyday Australians who make a genuine difference where they live, and we're thrilled to recognise Dean's amazing work both with the CFA and the Murrundindi Ranges Wildlife Shelter."

New national research found Australians deeply value their local legends, yet fewer than one in five can name one in their own

community. At the same time, one in five Australian communities have experienced significant challenges, highlighting the vital role played by volunteers, carers, emergency service workers and community champions who quietly support those around them.

Community Legends are recognised across four categories: Community Pride Legend, Community Resilience Legend, Community Inclusion Legend, and Community Wellbeing Legend.

Dean has been nominated for the Community Resilience Legend award and will go into the running to be one of the five shortlisted Community Legends, culminating in one winner being announced in June 2026.

The overall Community Legends winner will receive a \$10,000 donation to their chosen community group or charity, along with a \$1000 Bunnings voucher and a trip for two to the store's conference.

Each of the four category winners will receive a \$750 Bunnings voucher, a \$5000 donation to a community group or charity of choice, and a trip for two to the Bunnings Conference.

Fifty Community Legends will be recognised in total, as this campaign focuses on recognising and rewarding local legends who are making a genuine difference across Australia.

Livestock Biosecurity Fund grants available

MINISTER Ros Spence last week launched the *2026 Livestock Biosecurity Fund Grants Program*, which funds initiatives that help prevent, monitor and control diseases in animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, swine and honeybees.

"We're making biosecurity management simpler, faster, and more cost-effective," Ms Spence said.

"These grants result in cutting-edge projects that support our farmers and help preserve Victorian agriculture."

This support will make it more affordable for farmers, reducing the financial burden of managing pests and diseases while easing the day-to-day costs of keeping animals healthy.

Last year, \$15 million in grants supported 22 projects equipping farmers with the tools and support to prevent disease and protect their livestock.

The Victorian Farmers Federation used grants over \$1,660,000 to extend their Stock Sense Program to peri-urban areas and ensure owners and hobby farmers know how to keep their animals healthy.

Stock Sense works with local communities to raise awareness of biosecurity issues and preventative measures through educational workshops, webinars and resources.

Agriculture Victoria, together with the state's livestock advisory committees, developed the *Livestock Biosecurity Fund Grants Program* to give farmers practical support against pests and diseases.

Grant program applications close on April 14, 2026.

For eligibility and how to apply, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestockbiosecurityfunds



Australian Government

The Help to Buy Scheme is now here

With the new **Help to Buy Scheme**, the Australian Government can contribute up to 40% of the purchase price of a home.

So you can buy with a smaller deposit and lower mortgage repayments.

It's a pathway to home ownership backed by Government.

To see if you're eligible visit
firsthomebuyers.gov.au



Authorised by the Australian Government, Canberra

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by Yea & District Community Bank® Branch



SACRED HEART SCHOOL

Congratulations to Ebony, Olympia, Zach and Toby for their commitment to living our school values of Respect, Resilience and Safety.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by Kinglake branch



First delivery of Eildon key worker housing for MSC

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has received its first delivery of modular housing at 18 Twenty-First Street, Eildon, marking an important milestone in strengthening local workforce capacity and the broader local economy.

The Eildon Key Worker Housing Project is being delivered with funding support from the Victorian Government’s Regional Worker Accommodation Fund (RWAf). The program supports housing for essential workers in regional communities where limited accommodation can constrain the delivery of critical services.

Council welcomed the opportunity to work with the Victorian Government on housing opportunities for key workers to help drive economic and population growth in towns like Eildon.

Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Damien Gallagher said the project plays an important role in maintaining essential services for the community.

“Access to health care, childcare, education and skilled trades depends on people being able to live close to where they work,” Cr Gallagher said.

“This purpose-built accommodation will help reduce pressure on the private rental market by providing dedicated housing for key workers who might otherwise compete for limited rental properties. That supports local businesses, sustains essential services and strengthens our local economy.”

Cr Gallagher said that, in addition to the Eildon RWAf project, council is continuing to work with the Victorian State Government and recovery partners to address bushfire impacts across the shire, alongside longer-term efforts to increase housing supply and support rebuilding.

“Bushfire recovery and workforce housing address different but complementary needs, and council is progressing both,” Cr Gallagher said.

“Ensuring key workers can live locally helps our communities remain resilient and sustainable. This project is about securing workforce capacity for Murrindindi now and into the future.”

The project is expected to be completed in stages in 2026, with the accommodation available at 18 Twenty-First Street from mid-2026, and at 10 Eighth Street from December 2026.

Further information is available at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/ekwh



The Twenty-First Street site early on February 18, prepared for the arrival of the houses. -S



The first of the houses arriving. -AR



One of the homes about to be put in place. -AR



The homes on trucks. -AR

Why was the key worker housing project delayed?

THE first of the homes in the Eildon Key Worker Housing project were transported to the Twenty-First Street site on Wednesday, February 18. The second site, located at Eighth Street remains empty at present.

Initially, construction was expected to be completed on the project by June 2026, but this has now been adjusted to December 2026.

Murrindindi Shire Council was asked about the reasons behind the delay.

Council responded, “Murrindindi Shire Council is delivering the Eildon Key Worker Housing Project across two sites in Eildon, with funding support from the Victorian Government.

“The six houses at Twenty-First Street remain on track for completion in line with the original June 2026 program.

“The eight houses at Eighth Street were subject to a statutory planning objection process through VCAT, which paused the issuing of the planning permit and delayed council’s ability to finalise contracts and commence construction with certainty.

“During this period, council continued progressing all preparatory work within its control and worked through the required planning and grant funding arrangements. With the objection process now resolved, council has moved forward and a revised

construction program is in place, with completion scheduled for December 2026.

“While objection processes are an important part of the planning system, they can have unavoidable impacts on delivery timelines.

“The demand for key worker housing remains strong, and all houses are planned for completion within the 2026 calendar year.

“We remain focused on delivering high-quality accommodation that supports essential workers living in Eildon and working in the region.”

Free Weekend Travel



Seniors can now **travel free**
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Landcare grants to boost the outstanding work of volunteers

LANDCARE groups and environmental volunteers are receiving more support to care for nature.

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) is inviting applications for the Victorian Government Landcare Grants totaling \$3.55 million to fund projects making a difference to enhance and protect Victoria’s great outdoors.

Landcare and environmental volunteer groups can apply for grants of up to \$20,000 for projects, and \$500 for support, from now until April 23, 2026.

Last year 509 Landcare and environmental groups across the state shared in \$3.56 million in grants, helping fund on-ground works, community education and engagement activities, group development and small grants supporting administrative functions including insurance, incorporation and operational costs.

Grants are available to all Victorian Landcare and environmental volunteer groups, including Landcare and Friends groups, Conservation Management Networks, Committees of Management, Coastcare groups and Traditional Owner or Aboriginal groups and organisations working on Country.

For more information, visit environment.vic.gov.au/grants/victorian-landcare-grants

DEECA Director of Environmental Investment and Programs, Lorna Mathieson, said, “It is so important that we support the significant contribution that Landcare and environmental volunteer groups make to our communities managing projects that restore and enhance our parks, coastlines, nature reserves and waterways.

“These grants continue to be of incredible value to Victoria and we’re proud to support the work of Landcare and environmental volunteers to protect our environment for generations to come.”



Flowerdale Landcare has been working with the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network on the huge volunteer effort, taking down and rebuilding fences. In between, they still found time to be a part of a huge Clean Up Australia Day effort. The members are pictured here taking a well earned lunch break at the Spring Valley Road Recreation Reserve grounds. -S

New government amendment allowing seizure of farmers’ land for transmission lines

THE Victorian Government last week in State Parliament introduced an amendment that would green-light power companies to compulsorily acquire farmers’ land for transmission lines before environmental and planning approvals are even finished.

The proposed amendment to the *Energy and Other Legislation Amendment (Resilience Reforms and Other Matters) Bill 2026* creates a direct bypass around the state’s environmental protection laws. It explicitly allows the government to force through transmission easements while an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is still underway.

The amendment was introduced last Thursday, March 5, and was passed on Friday, March 6.

Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) President Brett Hosking was gutted by the announcement, after VFF called for Members of the Legislative Council to oppose the amendment and stand up for basic fairness.

“The Victorian Farmers Federation is gutted that Parliament has backed laws allowing farmers’ land to be taken for transmission lines before the environmental assessment is even finished,” Mr Hosking said.

“This will pour fuel on the anxiety and uncertainty already gripping communities at the heart of the energy transition.

“Families now face the shadow of compulsory acquisition hanging over them while they are still trying to understand what a project means for their homes and livelihoods, as well as provide comprehensive information to the EES process.

“It tells us that those in charge don’t genuinely understand the sentiment on the ground. It sends a clear and devastating message to regional Victoria that getting towers in the ground matters more than

delivering a robust Environmental Effects Statement and treating people with dignity.

“We thank the members of Parliament who questioned and opposed this change on behalf of regional communities.

“Make no mistake, this is about fast-tracking intimidation of landholders. It gives proponents the power to walk onto a farm and say, ‘sign this substandard agreement today, or the government will just take your land tomorrow’, before landholders have even seen the details of a project, let alone an approval,” he said.

Leader of the Nationals, Danny O’Brien, spoke strongly against the amendment.

“They’re not even pretending to care about consultation, process, or a fair go now. The government is just going to try and ride roughshod over people’s lives and farms and force their projects through,” Mr O’Brien said.

“We opposed this legislation in the parliament strongly, and we will repeal it if elected to government.

“These amendments are a slap in the face to regional people and cannot be tolerated.”

Shadow Minister for Energy, David Davis, said the government continues to try and bludgeon regional Victorians into submission.

“To bring these laws in at the last minute shows Labor will do anything to force through its flawed energy policies,” Mr Davis said.

“This is undemocratic, flies in the face of good planning and environmental process, and should send a shudder down the spine of every landholder in the state, because it says Labor doesn’t care about your property rights, listening to your concerns, or treating you with respect.

“We opposed these amendments, just as we opposed Labor’s VicGrid reforms threatening farmers with fines for defending their own properties.”



All of the four vendors in Yea were present at the March sales, with prices holding the course. -BD

Yea Saleyards: March cattle sale report

THE March Combined Agents Store Sale took place at the Yea Saleyards last Friday, with some 2187 head yarded and a turnover of \$3.39 million.

Average price per head on the day was \$1568, with an average weight of 324.2 kilograms, equalling out to an average price of 484c/kg.

The top heifer pen led the way, with a top price per head of \$2300 and a top weight of 508.3 kilograms, equalling 452c/kg.

Top steers reached \$2850, with a top weight of 635.6 kilograms, equalling 448c/kg.

The next sale at the Yea Saleyards will be the Combined Agents Store Sale on Friday, April 10.

YEA SALEYARDS		STOCK REPORT 6 MARCH 2026			
Combined Agents Store Sale	Total Yarding	Steers	Heifers	Cows & Calves	
Number of head	2,187				
Average \$ per head	\$1,568				
Average weight per head	324.2kg				
Top price per head		\$2,850	\$2,300	\$2,800	
Top weight		635.6kg	508.3kg		
Turnover	\$3.39 million				

Council News



March 2026

Changes to Council services over Easter

During the Easter long weekend (3-6 April), there will be some changes to Council services:

Kerbside Collection: This service will continue as usual over the Easter long weekend.

Resource Recovery Centres (RRCs): Our RRCs will be open as usual, except on Good Friday (3 April) they will be closed.

The Alexandra Landfill will be closed to the public on both Good Friday and Easter Monday.

Visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/RRC for more details.

Library and Customer Service Centres: Our Library and Customer Service Centres in Alexandra, Yea and Kinglake, and our Mobile Service, will be closed from Good Friday and will reopen on Tuesday 7 April.

Urgent Matters: For urgent issues like stock on roads, dog attacks, or unsafe road conditions (including fallen trees), please call 5772 0333 at any time.

Non-Urgent Requests: We will be back to assist you from Tuesday 7 April. You can also lodge a request online at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/request

Sign up for the Fire Recovery e-Newsletter

You don't have to navigate recovery alone. The Fire Recovery Newsletter keeps our community connected with the latest support, resources and local updates following the January 2026 fires.



Register by scanning the QR code or visiting our website at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/recovery-news

Come along to a fire recovery event

There are upcoming events to support our communities who have been impacted by the January 2026 fires:

- **11 March** at 6.30 pm: Looking after yourself and others with Dr Rob Gordon - Fawcett
- **12 March** at 7.30 am: Business Breakfast Alexandra
- **13 March** from 1.00 to 4.00 pm: Fawcett Hall - Council planning, building and environmental health officers
- **18 March** at 5.30 pm: Community Dinner - Highlands
- **19 March** at 7.00 pm: Looking after yourself and others with Dr Rob Gordon - Terip Terip
- **20 March** from 10.00 am to 2.00 pm: Highlands - Council planning building and environmental health officers.

We will be hosting and promoting many more of these types of events on the road to recovery. To find out about these and other events, visit our website murrindindi.vic.gov.au/events



Eildon Key Worker Housing Update

In February, Council received its first delivery of modular homes in Eildon, an important step toward supporting local businesses and essential services.

Funded through the Victorian Government's Regional Worker Accommodation Fund, the project will provide dedicated housing for essential workers who help keep our community running.

The houses at 18 Twenty-First Street, Eildon, constructed by local builder MillBuilt, will be available from mid-2026, with additional housing at 10 Eighth Street, Eildon, ready by the end of 2026.

Learn more at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/ekwh

Advocacy for bushfire recovery

Council continues to push for the support our communities need following the January bushfires.

Recent advocacy has focused on urgent local mental health services, stronger recovery funding, an extension to the 2026 summer fires inquiry deadline, and new data highlighting the need for investment in jobs, farms and tourism.

You can explore Council's current advocacy priorities on our website at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/bushfire-advocacy

Road access and closures

Road conditions in fire-affected areas remain hazardous. Council has introduced a classification system for local roads impacted by the fires to enable residents to access their property.

For full list of road closures, classifications, authorised access details and updates, visit our website at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/fireimpactedroads

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customer@murrindindi.vic.gov.au

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The crowd finding shade around the Yarck Recreation Reserve to stay out of the sweltering sun. -BD



Yarck was packed to the brim with people attending the concert. -BD



Musical talent for the concert, playing country and blues music. -BD

Bushfire relief concert well attended in Yarck

THE Rise from the Ashes Bushfire Relief Concert took place at the Yarck Recreation Reserve last Saturday, drawing a large crowd and raising funds for bushfire relief.

There was live music, food and drink, and raffles and auctions with fabulous prizes for the attendees to enjoy.

Tickets were \$20, and organiser Chris set the goal of raising \$100,000 from the event. With some 1200 people attending, both from inside Murrindindi Shire and out, it looks likely they will reach that goal.

The money raised will be going back into the community.



Just a handful of the raffle prizes available at the event. -BD



The truck with the items to be auctioned at the event. -BD



The truck with the stage set up in the middle of the oval, with attendees milling around. -BD

Vaccination push as measles cases rise in Victoria

VICTORIANS are urged to make sure they are vaccinated against measles, with Victoria experiencing an increased risk of the highly infectious disease that can cause serious illness.

Measles has recently spread in Victoria among people who have not travelled overseas or visited known exposure sites, so vaccination is more important than ever.

The Department of Health has procured thousands of vaccines for local public health units to roll out local initiatives so more people can get vaccinated for free.

Victorian Chief Health Officer Dr Caroline McElnay said there had been 17 notified cases of measles in Victoria this year and vaccination was the best protection.

“Measles can cause serious illness but can be easily avoided through vaccination so it’s important we take steps to stop the

spread of this highly contagious disease,” Dr McElnay said.

“We are working with local public health units to make sure all eligible Victorians know how they can access the free vaccine.

We urge Victorians to make sure they have had two doses of the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, which is required for immunity.

“If you are unsure of your vaccination status, get a catch-up vaccine which is completely safe.”

The MMR vaccine is also widely available at GPs, community pharmacies, Aboriginal Health Services and some local councils. A Medicare card is not required to get this free vaccine.

Free measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccines are available to adults born during or after 1966 who haven’t had two doses of

the vaccine or are unsure of their vaccination status. Many adults aged 20 to 59 years may have only had one dose of the MMR vaccine in line with Australian childhood vaccination schedules at the time.

Children are eligible for the free vaccine under the National Immunisation Program. It is routinely administered at 12 months and 18 months or through a free catch-up dose. Parents can check a child’s vaccination status by using the Australian Immunisation Register.

Victorians travelling overseas are reminded that cases of measles are rising around the world including popular travel destinations such as Indonesia (including Bali), Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Pakistan and India.

“Victorians heading overseas should make sure their routine vaccinations, including

measles, are up to date at least two weeks before departure,” Dr McElnay said.

“Vaccination against measles is safe, effective, and free, and the best way for you and your family to avoid serious illness.”

Infants in Victoria are also eligible for an additional measles vaccine from six months of age if they are travelling overseas, which is six months earlier than routinely scheduled. This state funded MMR vaccine is available through GPs, Aboriginal Health Services and Councils.

Symptoms of measles include fever, cough, sore or red eyes, runny nose, feeling generally unwell, followed by a red rash. Anyone experiencing symptoms should seek medical advice immediately.

For more information about the measles outbreak in Victoria, including exposure sites, visit health.vic.gov.au/health-alerts

PUZZLES

SOLUTIONS
Page 13

KID'S PUZZLES

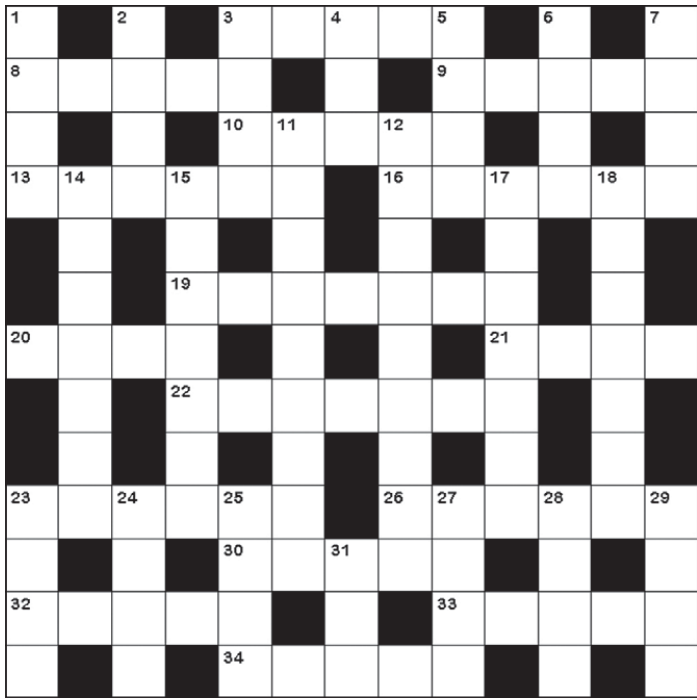
Crossword

ACROSS

- 3. Civilian clothes worn by a military person.
- 8. Japanese verse form of three short lines.
- 9. A woman's crown-like jewelled headdress.
- 10. Sound practical judgment or intelligence.
- 13. A physiological need to drink.
- 16. Compensate for loss, injury or insult.
- 19. Used by a monarch in royal speeches.
- 20. The colored portion of our eye.
- 21. An examination conducted by word of mouth.
- 22. A short filmed advertisement for a movie.
- 23. The fuel that drives your car.
- 26. Move unsteadily, with a rocking motion.
- 30. Special glassware used in cooking.
- 32. Find the solution to a problem.
- 33. Cause to move forward with force.
- 34. The period between sunset and sunrise.

DOWN

- 1. A short informal, light conversation.
- 2. Nocturnal flightless bird of New Zealand.
- 3. A state of confusion and disorderliness.
- 4. Activities that are enjoyable or amusing.



- 5. A separate or distinct piece of information.
- 6. A symptom of some physical hurt.
- 7. An adult male singer with the lowest voice.
- 11. Going on forever without interruption.
- 12. A man-made object that orbits the earth.
- 14. Add water to restore fluid balance.
- 15. An adult male domestic fowl.
- 17. Ensure observance of laws and rules.
- 18. A sudden disastrous collapse or defeat.
- 23. The time that has elapsed.
- 24. A story of real or imaginary events.
- 25. Receptive to new ideas.
- 27. A door by which to leave a building.
- 28. A typographical error in printed matter.
- 29. The normal state of things.
- 31. A floor covering, smaller than a carpet.

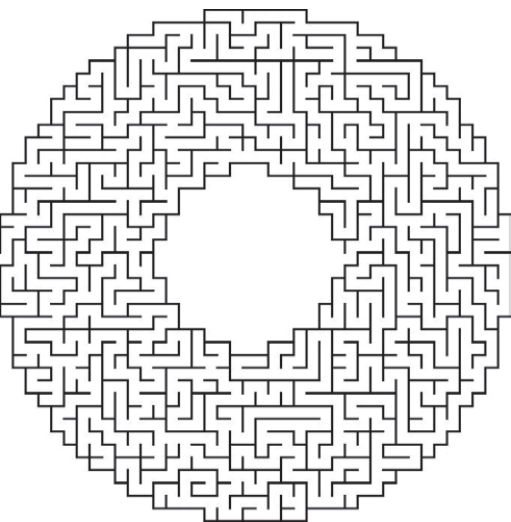
Word Search

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

Colours

- BLACK
- PINK
- BLUE
- PURPLE
- BURGUNDY
- TERRACOTTA
- GREEN
- TURQUOISE
- MAGENTA
- WHITE
- ORANGE
- YELLOW

Maze



Sudoku

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

Difficulty: 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

	-	5	x		-2
+		x		+	
	+		x		7
x		-		+	
	+	7	+		22
35		-2		12	

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.

Colouring Page



Word Search - Words starting with "F"

FAMILY
FANTASY
FATHER
FIFTEEN
FILLING
FILM
FINISH
FLYING
FORTY
FRIEND
FRISBEE
FROG
FROSTBITE
FUNNY

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

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.

7	+		+		17
+		-		+	
	+		+		18
-		-		+	
5	+		+		10
8		-8		15	

Jokes

Q: Why did the mobile phone get glasses?

A: Because it lost all of it's contacts.

Q: Why is a leopard not good at hide and seek?

A: Because he is always spotted.

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**VEAC: report presented,
government seeks to abolish**

THE Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) quietly released their report, Assessment of the values of state forests in the Central Highlands on January 16 with no fanfare and, it seems, no press release. Their consultation was famed for their 'sticky note' process, upsetting many in the community.

It should be borne in mind that a government spokesperson said in July 2025, "We've been very clear that the Great Forest National Park is not and never has been a government policy. Recreational fishing, boating and game hunting supports tens of thousands of jobs across the state, especially in regional Victoria."

With reference to the accompanying image, the new VEAC report states, "A large protected area such as a national park is commensurate with the outstanding natural values of units one, three and four depicted and would link the existing Yarra Ranges, Kinglake, Lake Eildon and Baw Baw national parks and the Bunyip, Cathedral Range and Moondarra state parks. There are relatively few uses that would conflict with the national park designation..."

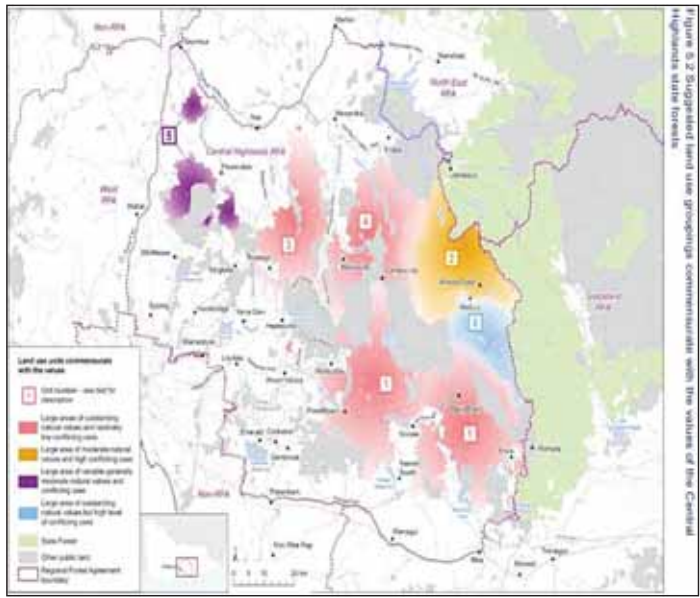
"Unit six is also a sizeable area of outstanding natural values commensurate with a national park designation and provides an additional opportunity to link to the Yarra Ranges National

Park to the west. More detailed consideration is required however due to the potentially high value for uses that would conflict with protected area status such as mineral extraction..."

"Unit 2 in the northeast of the Central Highlands assessment area has moderate natural values and, while it could provide an opportunity to link the Yarra Ranges and Lake Eildon national parks, the area has a high level of uses not generally compatible with national park status such as hunting, and high values for incompatible uses such as minerals extraction. A public land category such as forest park or regional park would be commensurate with the values and allow for these uses..."

"For Unit 5 in the west of the area north of the Kinglake National Park, there are several public land categories commensurate with the broadly lower natural values and lower level and variety of uses that would conflict with protected area designations. More detailed information, including information from community engagement, is required for this unit."

The *Entities Legislation Amendment (Consolidation and Other Matters) Bill 2025*, is currently making its way through parliament, part of which abolishes the VEAC in its entirety.



The units referred to in the VEAC report are outlined in this map. -S

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

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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.

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TRADES ADVERTISING DEADLINE NOON THURSDAY

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

Print Post Approved - PP 100000292.

BARGAINS UNDER \$100

1 x filters for water tank
10" x 4.5" sediment and
10" x 4.5" carbon block.
\$35 for the pair.
Call 0414 718 812.

1 x filters for tank water
20" x 4.5" sediment and
20" x 4.5" carbon block.
\$50 for the pair.
Call 0414 718 812.

BARGAINS UNDER \$100

5 lengths slotted PVC
agi pipe \$100.
Call 0414 718 812.

PEAK over toilet chair.
Excellent condition,
only one month old.
Adjustable legs. \$95.
Call 0407 354 227.

FOR HIRE

FITNESS EQUIPMENT

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

DEATH NOTICES

PURCELL, Harry Joseph

In loving memory of Harry Purcell, who passed away peacefully at Dianella Lodge, Kilmore on March 1, 2026, aged 91 years. Beloved Husband of Mary. Devoted Father to Kieran, Louise, Brendan and Paul. A loving Father-in-law and Grandfather to their families. A cherished and cheeky brother and uncle who will be much missed. Harry was a long-serving and dedicated member of the MFB, SES (Alexandra, Marysville) and Kilmore Men's Shed. The family would like to thank the staff, volunteers and residents at Dianella for all of their amazing care and support throughout his time there. We would also like to thank and acknowledge the wonderful staff of Stepping Stones Medical Centre, especially Drs Callum Lawford, Louise Jarvie and Sue Waygood for their ongoing care as well as the Northern Health staff in more recent times. Rest in Peace.
Livestream Link: vividstream.com.au/live/harry-purcell

MEETINGS

ALEXANDRA AND DISTRICT OPEN GARDENS

Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 5pm at
Embassy of Ideas, Alexandra.

New members welcome.
For information contact
Melinda Jackson 0418 378 806



Annual General Meeting

Monday, 23 March 2026, 6pm
Historic Court House
38A Downey Street Alexandra

New Board Members Welcome (Voluntary)

Are you looking to contribute to your community in another way?

Make a difference, exciting opportunities exist to be part of Alexandra Community Hub.

A not for profit community organisation, supporting and facilitating local opportunities for learning, activities and vital services. Alexandra Community Hub Board meets monthly.

We promise you, you won't be bored on the Alex Hub Board.

Email admin@alexhub.com.au
to register your interest
or call Sue on 5772 1238 (Mon to Thurs)
for more information.



MEETINGS



General meeting for the Alexandra RSL will be held on Sunday, March 15, at noon, followed by a light luncheon.

PETS & LIVESTOCK

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

PUBLIC NOTICES

OPTUS

PROPOSAL TO UPGRADE AN EXISTING
MOBILE PHONE BASE STATION ON STEEL FIRE
WATCH TOWER AT 270 MOUNT GORDON RD
MARYSVILLE VIC 3779

- Optus is proposing to upgrade the existing mobile phone base station on the existing steel fire watch tower at 270 Mount Gordon Rd Marysville VIC 3779.
- In summary, this upgrade will comprise of: Removal of three (3) Optus panel antennas; Removal of six (6) Remote radio units (RRU's); Installation of three (3) new Optus panel antennas on new mounts; The installation of five (5) Remote radio units (RRU's) on new mounts; Installation, removal and reconfiguration of ancillary equipment associated with necessary operation of the facility.
- We invite you to provide your feedback or request further information by contacting us at: Lia Drivas - Ventia, +61 2 8248 6496, lia.drivas@ventia.com, and level 1, 10 Browning St, West End QLD 4101. We will accept submissions until **5pm on 24th March 2026**.
- For more information, please visit www.rfnsa.com.au/3779005.

SITUATION VACANT

Lake Mountain is currently recruiting seasonal casual workers for the 2026 snow season.

We have a variety of positions available across our departments:

- Food & Beverage
- Visitor Services
- Ski Patrol
- Resort Operations

Positions available for both full-time casuals and weekend/school holiday juniors.

**JOIN THE TEAM
THIS COMING
SNOW SEASON!**

**APPLY
NOW!**



PUZZLES SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

C	K	M	U	F	T	I	P	B
H	A	I	K	U	U	T	I	A
A	W	S	E	N	S	E	I	S
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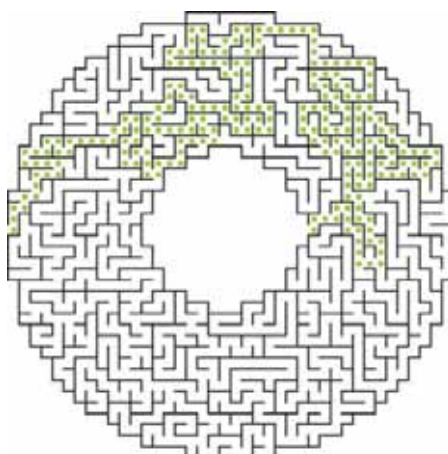
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1	5	7	3	6	2	4	9	8
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3	1	5	2	4	8	7	6	9
4	2	6	9	7	3	1	8	5
8	7	9	6	5	1	2	4	3
5	4	3	7	2	9	8	1	6
7	8	1	5	3	6	9	2	4
6	9	2	8	1	4	5	3	7

MATH SQUARE

8	-	5	x	2	-2
+		x		+	
3	+	1	x	4	7
x		-		+	
9	+	7	+	6	22
35		-2		12	

MAZE



KIDS - MATH SQUARE

7	+	2	+	8	17
+		-		+	
6	+	9	+	3	18
-		-		+	
5	+	1	+	4	10
8		-8		15	

Applications open for Get Active Kids Vouchers

THE Victorian Government is making it cheaper and easier to get kids into the sports they love.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes announced applications for round 10 of Get Active Kids Vouchers are now open, with more than 40,000 vouchers up for grabs.

“We’re providing real support for families in Northern Victoria to make sure kids aren’t sitting on the sidelines because of cost,” Ms Symes said.

Eligible families can apply for up to \$200 per child to help with memberships, registration fees, uniforms and equipment.

The government is investing \$23 million in the popular program, and it’s working with almost 20 per cent of children who received a voucher joining a local sporting club for the first time.

Since launching in 2020, more than 225,000 vouchers have been snapped up.

Get Active Kids is open to kids aged 18 and under named on a Commonwealth Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card, and named on a Medicare Card. A special consideration stream is also available to support children in care, temporary or provisional visa holders, migrants and international students.

Vouchers can be redeemed at a registered Get Active Kids Voucher Program activity provider.

For more information and to apply for a voucher visit getactive.vic.gov.au/vouchers

Three year prison term for burglaries

DETECTIVES from the Alexandra Crime Investigation Unit investigated a series of 12 reported burglaries and thefts at small businesses and sporting clubs that occurred across Murrindindi Shire between November 11 and 25, 2025.

A 41 year old man from Ferntree Gully was arrested and interviewed on November 25, where he was subsequently remanded in custody. The man was re-interviewed on December 17, 2025, before being sentenced in relation to 49 charges including burglaries and thefts.

On March 3 at the Ringwood Magistrates’ Court, the man was ordered to serve a three year term of imprisonment.

Alexandra Crime Investigation Unit detectives would like to thank members of the community that assisted police with their investigation.

Bank representative meeting with locals

RENEE Leslie, branch manager at the National Australia Bank in Mansfield has been spending time in Alexandra lately, meeting with people at the library.

Alexandra is currently without a bank branch, and Renee is seeking to re-establish a NAB presence in the town, although this is unlikely to be a branch. Alexandra’s NAB branch was previously run out of Mansfield, but Renee has only been at the branch for about a year.

Renee noted the impact of the branch closures on the town, creating challenges for businesses, charities and individuals.

She said that while she had heard about the challenges Alexandra faced when she first started, her immediate focus was on getting the Mansfield branch open full time and to get a business banker. These have now been achieved, so the focus is turning back to Alexandra.

Her aim for the visits, last week and over three coming Thursdays, is to “Engage with

the community and find out exactly where are the biggest pain points, and let’s find a way to fix it. Short term solutions, long term solutions as well. Having that community feedback allows me to be your voice as such in the higher levels of NAB and hoping we can create change. My big motto is squeaky wheel gets the oil. I’m very squeaky.”

She added, “It’s been so lovely chatting to customers, chatting not necessarily always NAB customers. Anyone that loves to have a chat and gives feedback and talk about the pain points.”

She has been hearing in particular about the lack of access to cash change and the challenges of storing cash, as well as how the push towards digital doesn’t suit everyone, whether due to skills, access to technology or access to the internet. Travelling to a bank takes valuable time, although Bank@ Post offers some services.

Peta, the new business manager at Mansfield will also be joining Renee next week.

Renee has also been speaking to local real estate agents to find out what buildings are available in Grant Street, as well as what’s happening in farming and residential.

The bank has faced challenges with their ATM outside the post office in Grant Street. Renee said that they are looking into changing the frequency of the Armaguard service, but one of the biggest challenges is that this needs to be done during business hours as it’s not in an NAB branch so they can’t access it 24 hours per day, including for repairs. It was noted that there have also been ATM challenges on key weekends, such as the rodeo and the truck show.

She was keen to note that the NAB has only closed three branches in the last year, all in shopping malls, and that there’s a stop on all branch closures.

She added, “NAB has a big ambition to become the most customer-obsessed business, not just bank business... Through customer service, through getting out in the community,

finding your biggest pain points and finding a way to fix.”

She added, “I was saying to another customer that I was chatting to that change is really hard. It’s risky as well, but it takes one little player to move and hopefully that can affect a change.”

She commented, “I’ve said to the girls in Mansfield, book up my calendar, book up appointments. While I’m here, we can do chats, feedback sessions, if you need any help, banking reviews, account reviews, while I’m here, utilise that time. The busier I am, the more time I get down here. And I guess that also kind of increases the chance of getting something. If I can show that there is demand for it, there’s more backing for me to say, let’s get this, to make a more permanent thing. My motto is that we’ve got mobile home lenders, we’ve got mobile business bankers. We need to have mobile retail bankers as well in order to help these remote communities that can’t get to where they need to go.”

Meet the spotted harrier

THE spotted harrier is featured this month in the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority’s 2026 Year of the Raptor community awareness campaign.

Raptors are birds of prey and includes Australia’s two species of harrier, the spotted harrier and the swamp harrier.

Goulburn Broken CMA project officer, Janice Mentiplay-Smith, said the long-legged, medium-sized spotted harrier (*circus assimilis*) could be seen flying low and slow around the Goulburn Broken catchment’s open woodlands, grasslands and cropping areas.

“The spotted harrier sports an owl-like facial disc with a narrow ruff that gives it the appearance of having a short,

stubby head,” Ms Mentiplay-Smith said.

“Its facial disc is not just for good looks. This circle of stiff feathers helps to direct the sounds of scurrying prey to its ears.

“Spotted harriers can also raise or lower these feathers, which helps to further funnel tiny sounds made by potential prey to their sharp ears. As well, it has long legs that are perfectly designed for swooping and seizing small prey.”

Spotted harriers use sticks and twigs to build their shallow platform-like nest on a horizontal branch, with the female undertaking most of the construction. Once built, she lines it with eucalypt leaves which is a common practice of raptors as the antiseptic properties of eucalyptus helps keep the germs at bay. The male

supplies freshly caught prey to feed hungry chicks.

As cropping areas have a ready supply of rodents, the spotted harrier pair will often nest close to a cropping paddock. Rabbits, lizards and small ground birds are also hunted. Spotted harriers prefer their food fresh and will rarely eat carrion, the decaying flesh of dead animals.

“Never one to let an opportunity go by, it hunts by ‘quartering’ an area, whereby it systematically flies low over the ground, keeping a sharp eye open for anything that moves. It will also take advantage of fenceposts as a handy look-out point,” Ms Mentiplay-Smith said.

Bird watching is an enjoyable way to see the Goulburn Broken catchment’s beautiful birdlife, including its amazing raptors.



A spotted harrier. -S

Fresh round of sporting club grants for Murrindindi Shire

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes has announced that clubs across Northern Victoria will share in \$200,000 through the Sporting Club Grants Program, with a new round also now open for applications.

“We’re backing more clubs, supporting their volunteers and getting behind local sports that are an integral part of local communities,” Ms Symes said.

“Congratulations to our grant recipients. I look forward to seeing a new generation of local champions get their chance to play, or volunteer, even coach, and take their performance to a whole new level.”

The program provides grants of up to \$1000 for uniforms and equipment, up to

\$1500 for resources that improve governance and engagement, up to \$5000 for projects to strengthen volunteering and officiating, up to \$5000 to deliver a new sport or recreation program and up to \$750 to support athlete travel.

Successful recipients in Murrindindi Shire include: Alexandra and District Speedway Inc; Yea Pony Club; and Yea Water Tigers Amateur Swimming Club Inc.

The Sporting Club Grants Program has delivered more than \$19.5 million in support to thousands of community sport and recreation clubs across the state to date.

The program is backed by the *Regional Community Sport Development Fund* that’s

delivering infrastructure upgrades and other programs including the *Regional Community Sport Infrastructure Fund* to help more regional Victorians get active and be part of their local sporting club.

By providing more opportunities for clubs and organisations to build on their capabilities, this program goes a long way towards future proofing grassroots sport and recreation and ensuring clubs have the skills they need.

Applications for the new round of the Sporting Club Grants are now open and will close on April 7, 2026. For more information about the program, latest recipients and how to apply visit sport.vic.gov.au

Alexandra Squash Club: Round five of term one pennant



Michael reaches to return Daniel's shot. -S

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition Crows versus Pelicans

ROBBIE versus Tyler: Great game. Tyler had a better serve and didn't stop running, getting every return. As a result, Robbie was flat footed and often out of position as a result. Tyler claimed the win. 74 to 49.

Laura versus Jess: Laura won the first game though Jess started reading the play and was able to position the ball away from Laura. Jess claimed the match. 57 to 36.

Chris versus Mark: Lots of great rallies, it was some high-quality squash. Mark was too clever and out played Chris. 65 to 49.

Jim versus Michael H: A tight contest but Michael managed to get ahead in the second game to split the difference. This pushed Michael ahead for the victory. 53 to 47.

Cockatoos versus Eagles

Jordan versus Eric: These gents had some good rallies. Eric put in some good work but Jordan was too good, taking home a substantial win. 85 to 44.

Liane versus Sally: A good contest with competitive but friendly banter between the players. Both played well with many tight shots. Sally took home the spoils. 62 to 58.

Ben versus Justin: Ben rushed his shots in the first game and Justin took advantage to claim a solid lead. Flicking his switch to focus, Ben fought back and steadied to take back control, the game and the match by four-points. 55 to 51.

John (fill in) versus Daniel W: A seesawing match where Daniel finished on top by playing good drives combined with great court coverage. John was overrun by the young up and comer. Daniel was victorious. 56 to 48.

Wednesday competition Scanias versus Western Stars

Ben H versus Beth: Ben shot forward to win the first game and followed it with a draw in game two. Beth pushed hard to take the last two games and the match. 57 to 40.

Travis versus Daniel L: A reasonably close match. Travis ran down the ball and took Daniel powerful shots head on. Paired with nice placement, Travis claimed the win. 63 to 51.

Justin versus Ben F: Closing out the first game with an 11-point lead, Ben was firing on all cylinders. Justin fought back with a drawn second game followed by winning games three and four. In the final minute, Ben let loose increase his points and hold onto his lead, winning the match. 56 to 53.

Macks versus Freightliners

Jessica versus Nicole: Jessica shot to an early lead with her extra experience manifesting as better decision making. Both players were up a level in the second game with Nicole working her way back into the game. The contest was even from then on with each winning two games. Jess's deeper serves and lower error count delivered her the victory. 52 to 45.

Kristelle versus Sam: What is normally a close watch was quite one-sided this time. Sam's ability to fake out his shots kept Kristelle guessing. Many unforced errors from Kristelle, boosted Sams lead and by the final game she had run out of steam. Sam went home with a solid win. 75 to 49.

Daniel W versus Michael M: This match was a battle. Michael made some good plays, but Daniel was unrelenting, hitting deep and keeping the rallies going. Daniel won the match. 63 to 43.

Merton cricketers beat Yarrawonga in qualifying final

MERTON cricketers played in a qualifying final last Saturday at Wangaratta on Barr Reserve two ground on a turf wicket. Top

side Merton playing sixth side Yarrawonga with the two sides not playing each other all season due to the leagues heat policy.



The Merton cricketers played against Yarrawonga and won. -S

Yarrawonga won the toss and sent Merton in on a wicket that slightly favoured the bowlers. Merton started well although scoring was difficult early with a slow run rate in the first 12 overs.

Luke Benton and Ross Mackinnon doing the job seeing of the opening bowlers. At the 18 over halfway point with wickets in hand Merton stated to fire, Mackinnon making his way to 41 while Jarrod Mahoney 21 and Luke Berriman 33 really got things moving seeing Merton finish on 8/135 after 36 overs.

Ben Pickering 3/24 Yarrawonga's best bowler. Yarrawonga's opening partnership of 42 with Hargreaves 23 and Josh Vagg 23 setting the foundations for their side however Merton's bowling and fielding really showing why they are the top side making scoring difficult and building pressure with an increasing run rate.

Luke Berriman 1/12 brother Henry 1/13 off eight overs and Harry Craddock 2/19 really put the screws on any scoring opportunities. Jia Learch- Mackinnon 1/26 and Rohan Berriman 2/26 all contributed to a hard fought Merton victory thus ending Yarrawonga's finals hopes finishing on 8/97.

Merton now play for a place in the Grand final versus Ovens Valley United next Saturday at a venue to be announced, either at Wangaratta or Benalla.

Alexandra Cup 2026 happening this Saturday

THE 2026 Alexandra Cup this coming Saturday celebrates community. After several weeks of deep soaking rain, soot has turned to green bringing hope and renewal to local fire affected communities. Following a terrible bushfire that devastated half the shire, the Victorian racing community invites the local community to the Alexandra Cup to wind down and relax.

Racing Victoria (RV) has offered volunteers from various first responder groups like SES, UGFM, CFA, Blazeaid, health care workers and other organisations, free entry, a marquee, and food and drink vouchers at the cup as a way to thank them for their important community work. Also attending will be a group of sportswomen who were invited to the cup in December to celebrate women in sport including racing stars, Michelle Payne OAM and Jamie Melham.

You can take advantage of RV's promotion called a "Mates Bundle" that offers four entry tickets for only \$50. Normal entry tickets are \$25 full or \$20 concession, children 15 and under are free. Tickets can be purchased online or at the gate on the day.

Alexandra race track was fire affected. Railing and turf were burnt. Within days of the fire, RV sent experts, material, seed, fertiliser and equipment to ensure the Alexandra Cup would run.

Last Friday, Country Racing Victoria volunteers from nearby professional country and picnic clubs, joined local club members in a working bee to ensure the inside rail was re-sited and all was in readiness for the cup. The track looks fabulous thanks to wonderful support from the racing community.

If you know nothing about horse racing don't fret. You can come and just soak up the atmosphere or you can try a punt with Sam our Man. Sam will run the Punters' Club. For a small outlay Sam will use his expertise to place bets for the Punters' Club.

He will bet locally and elsewhere to try to turn a little into a lot. Look for Sam near the Judge's Tower. Be early as Punters' Club tickets sell fast. For keen punters, there is a strong bookies ring, Tote Van and Big Screen covering local, Melbourne and interstate races.

Cathedral Golf Club is a very supportive, long-standing cup sponsor. Marysville Golf

Club is also sponsoring a race so, in keeping with that golf theme, Mini Golf will be provided for old and young alike. There are also pony rides and face painting for the kiddies.

The wild boys from Kinglake, "Stoked", will provide rock music. On Point Brewery will run a booth so you can try the local drop and they and others like Twisty Potatoes and Alexandra Lions will offer a range of foods.

Community support in the form of race sponsorship by Reddrops Supermarkets, Darlingford Waters Boat Club, Ernie Hadfield Contacting, Barry Smith's Family and Friends, has been wonderful. Many other sponsors support the club with race book advertising and the Purvis Family support the Riders Award.

TAC will be present. If you plan to drink, TAC encourage you to use the Eildon and Yarrck buses to get to and from the races. Please book bus tickets online at country.racing.com/Alexandra

Gates open from 11am, the first local race will be run just after 1pm.



Racing Victoria made sure repairs were made to the Alexandra track in time for the Alexandra Cup this Saturday. -S

The Chronicle Sport

Sports Editorial: sports@alexandranewspapers.com.au



Jacob Heyen receiving his award. -S

Official opening of the golf season at Yea Golf Club

by Alan Pell

Midweek Competition

LAST Wednesday saw the men play an Irish Stableford event. On the front nine the best score from each pair was recorded, while on the back nine both players' scores counted.

The winners were Jeff Aurisch (23) and Rob O'Halloran (20) with 63 points, finishing two points clear of Tony Ruhl (17) and John Renahan (43) on 61 points.

Third place went to Bob Glenister (10) and Alan Pell (11) with 54 points.

Nearest the pin on the second hole was Luke Gregory, while the Lucky Club Award (\$10) went to Rob Gill.

Opening of the Golf Season

Last Saturday marked the official opening of the golf season, played as a three-person Ambrose. A field of 39 players enjoyed the day.

Results: First went to Anthony La Grutta, Luke Gregory and Bill Dredge with 68 gross, nett 59.83; second went to Kevin Coghlan, Rick Wills and Brendan Chenhall with 68 gross, nett 61.5; third went to Paul Heyen, Rob Gill and Miranda Gill with 74 gross, nett 62.66.

Nearest the pin (second) went to Luke Gregory.

In the four-person Ambrose (two scores to count), Team Dunne returned 65 gross, nett 55.625.

Photos are from last week's Murrindindi Masters competition.



Luke Gregory receiving his award. -S



Vicki Clements and Alan Pell receiving their award. -S



Penny Britton receiving her award. -S



Sharon Grogan being presented with her award. -S



Tony Rule celebrating. -S



Trevor Connell receiving his award. -S