

Standard

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

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murrindindibusiness.com.au

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Thank a First Responder Day



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Young people waiting for the truck run from Yarck to Alexandra on Saturday, June 6. -AR

A great crowd at the truck show

THE 29th annual Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show was held on Sunday, June 7 in perfect conditions, surprising given the recent rain.

It was estimated that over 15,000 people attended the event, with trucks coming from as far afield as Coffs Harbour, as well as from Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales and of course Victoria.

Organiser Andrew Embling said following the event, "Truck entries might have been down by 20, but then a lot of trucks didn't enter. They just came and parked up and didn't want to enter the categories. All the food and all the community food still sold out. There were long queues to our businesses. I think all the businesses did well."

The auction raised a remarkable \$28,000, which will support the bushfire and mental health program. The raffle also sold well.

Andrew said, "The music was good, well attended all day."

He said, "That just shows the quality of our truck show being a superior truck show, one of the major truck shows in Australia."

Andrew was also grateful to Murrindindi Shire Council for their support and "The dedication of their workers, cleaning the bins up and down the street all day in among the crowd. The rubbish was gone. They were back in there this morning [Monday]."

He also wanted to thank the committee and the help that came in after the truck show.

He said, "I think the last truck rolled out at 5.15pm, and the street was completely open again by 6.45pm."

He also thanked the local Victoria Police members, saying, "They showed the dedication to jump up on the stage and take bids, just to be community-minded. And the work that they did letting the trucks out was fantastic."

There were no issues at the event, aside from a lady who slipped over, attended to by the First Aid team.

He said of the weather, "We were giving sunglasses away on stage. We haven't done that for 10 years."

Safety review expected at dangerous intersection

MEMBER for Eildon, Cindy McLeish MP says community concerns have finally been heard, following a ministerial commitment to review safety at Alexandra's notorious Grant and Downey streets intersection.

Ms McLeish raised the issue in Parliament after the recent tragedy, calling on the government to urgently investigate improvements championed by the community.

This week the Roads and Road Safety Minister confirmed she had instructed the Department of Transport and Planning to identify both immediate and longer-term safety improvements.

The review will examine a range of measures, including speed through the township, signage improvements and potential traffic-calming treatments, including raised platforms and rumble strips.

Ms McLeish said the response was an encouraging sign that the long-held concerns of the Alexandra community were finally being heard.

"No improvement can undo the heartbreak felt by the family, friends and community following this tragedy, but it is important that we do everything possible to prevent something similar from happening again," she said.

"Residents have been raising concerns about this intersection for years and while we had some improvements a few years back, concerns remained.

"I am pleased the Minister has acknowledged those concerns and appears willing to consider meaningful action."

The Minister also confirmed the department will work with Murrindindi Shire Council on both short and long-term options. Ms McLeish said she would continue to follow the matter closely.

"The council has been a strong advocate for improvements here and I will continue working with them, local residents, and the government to ensure this review makes this intersection safer for everyone," she said.

Alexandra a finalist in Top Tourism Town Awards

ALEXANDRA has been named as a finalist in the 2026 Victorian Top Tourism Town Awards, and people in the town and area, and our lovely visitors, will need to vote to bring the award home.

The Top Tourism Town Awards aim to recognise and reward towns that demonstrate

a strong commitment to tourism and to increasing visitation to the destination, that offer an excellent visitor experience, and exhibit collaboration with tourism operators, local businesses and the community to make their town the best destination it can be.

Alexandra is a finalist in the Tiny Tourism Town category.

The Victorian Top Tourism Town Awards Ceremony will take place on Wednesday, August 12 at the Morwell Convention and Reception Centre.

At a time when our area is continuing to navigate the impacts of the recent fires, the nomination provides a great boost. It celebrates the area's resilience, spirit,

and everything that makes Murrindindi Shire special.

To vote and show your support to our local businesses and community, visit vtic.com.au/toptourismtown

Voting closes at 5pm on June 26.



Letters to the Editor

Fuel reduction burns

I REFER to the recent letter to the editor from Kinglake Friends of the Forest which asks for a cessation of fuel reduction burning in the forests.

Fire is a natural part of the ecology of your forests and in fact is important to the health of the forests. The management of the threat of fire is complex. Asking the government to replace planned burns with investment in rapid detection and suppression technologies is not an answer to a complex issue. We need both, and other strategies as well.

Historically, lightning caused hundreds of fires each year. These naturally caused fires were complemented by Aboriginal burning. The end result was a mosaic of burnt and unburnt country of varying ages and hence varying fuel quantities.

There are a range of parameters which affect how a fire burns following ignition, including temperature, humidity, topography, fuel dryness, wind and fuel type and quantity. In a forest environment, the only one of those parameters which can be controlled is fuel quantity. If fuel quantities are low, then the fire will not burn as intensely, and there is a better possibility of control. The science is clear. No fuel equals no fire, less fuel equals a less intense fire.

Current government policy dictates that all fires should be extinguished. This means fuel quantities are always increasing over vast areas. Fuel reduction burning is one of the strategies used by forest managers to recreate the natural regular occurrence of fire in our forests. It also has the advantage of influencing the rate of spread of fires, particularly those burning under extreme conditions.

To just focus fire policy on rapid detection and suppression policies, as proposed by Kinglake Friends of the Forest, is a recipe for disaster.

Forest fires cannot be extinguished by aerial attack alone. The best aerial attack can do is to 'hold' the fire until ground crews arrive. If fuel quantities are low, the fire will not burn as intensely and this gives ground crews more time to reach the fire, so long as there has also been preparedness in keeping tracks cleared.

It should also be noted that aerial attack is not possible in very windy or smoky conditions.

The Kinglake Friends of the Forest also claim that, "The forest is wrecked by the burns, habitat and wildlife suffers." In fact planned burns are of far lower intensity than wildfires, and any damage to the environment is minimal compared to the alternative option of intense wildfire over large areas, such as those that occurred in the Kinglake area in 2009.

Effective fire policy needs to be a combination of preparedness (ie. rapid detection, good access), prevention (ie. reducing fuel quantity) and suppression (ie. aerial and ground resources).

Authorised by Garry Squires, secretary, The Howitt Society Inc - for better fire management

Labor Party

TO the Victorian Labor Party. We took a short break to Echuca last week. It was noticeable that the roads under control of VicRoads were a disgrace and dangerous, especially when it was raining and dark. We now have a new game to play, it is called count the potholes. It is an easy game to play.

But travelling on the roads that lead to Melbourne there was a hive of activity in repairing the roads. Is it a vote getter for Melbourne voters? Don't you worry about the country cousins you all. And why are we getting a rebate on our car registration? Answer: Votes.

Why does it take an upcoming election to get things fixed that needed doing for years? Remember when we had to have the North to South pipeline, built so Melbourne people could water their lawns and gardens? In doing so they would have taken water away from our fruit growers, market gardeners and dairy farmers.

Eildon Weir was constructed to harvest water (a watershed) for the farmers and water supply for the many country towns. The North-South pipeline has never been used. A lot of its main infrastructure has been removed. We were told it cost the Victorian taxpayers one billion dollars.

The desalination plant, it has to be used. We were told it cost the Victorian taxpayers one billion dollars. And the cost to maintain, millions per annum of Victorian taxpayer's money.

And we get to the Melbourne Tunnel. Cost to the Victorian taxpayers, \$?

The farmers have diesel costs, fertiliser costs, wildfires that take years to overcome, and now they have land tax.

Fair go there must be better way to repay all your debts. Maybe put a tax on Melbourne road users to use their nice roads. Time for a change.

Michael Sundstrom, Eildon

Eildon Splash and Skate Park

WE, the residents of Eildon were advised by council that they would have to sell off some Eildon parkland to assist with the purchase of the proposed Splash and Skate Park. We were told there would be one block of land sold from Twentyfirst Street Reserve and all the land from the park between Seventh and Eighth Streets.

Then the goal posts were moved and all of Twentyfirst Street would be acquired along with Seventh & Eighth Streets. These parcels of land were now going to be used for Key Worker Houses.

At a later residents/council meeting, the council representatives were asked, would council have enough funds to finalise and maintain the Splash Park without the funds from the sale of the park. The reply was yes.

So, why is there a notice on the public toilet doors at the Splash Park asking the general public for a \$5 donation to assist with ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the park? What utter disgraceful pathetic conduct by the council.

Regarding the subject of Key Worker Houses, with six empty shops in the Eildon shopping complex and Darlingford Nursing Home having some 20 odd unoccupied beds, just where are these key workers going to be employed?

We await with baited breath just who will occupy these tin sheds with windows.

Name and address supplied but withheld by request

Alexandra District Health
5772 0900

Yea & District Memorial Hospital
5736 0400

In an emergency dial 000

Standard The Hera Chronicle

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ALEXANDRA NEWS PAPERS

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COMMUNITY DIARY

Alexandra District Health

5772 0900

Non-emergency police assistance

131 444

EMERGENCY 000

Local Radio Frequency

UGFM 106.9 Alexandra / Lake Eildon

UGFM 98.5 Marysville / Lake Mountain

MONTHLY COMMUNITY GROUPS

WEEKLY

Tue	Women's Walk @ 7am @Embassy of Ideas
Wed	Oasis Church, free coffee connection Ph 0408 123 581
Fri	Man Walk @ 7am meet at RSL Hall
Fri	Communita 10am-12pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
Sun	Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training. Ph 0456 583 611
Sun	AA meeting; 7pm St Johns Hall. Ph 1300 22 22 22.
Sun	ALANON meeting; 5.30pm St Johns Hall. Ph 0402 428 086

MONTHLY

1 st Wed	Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318
1 st Sun	Crop/Produce swap 10.30am-noon @ Embassy of Ideas
2 nd Tue	Alexandra District Garden Society Meeting Ph 5772 2285
2 nd Wed	Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
2 nd Wed	Murrindindi Men 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
3 rd Wed	Alex Lions business meeting, rear RSL hall 0427 595 318
3 rd Thu	Alexandra Ladies Probus 10am RSL Ph 0428 976 252
3 rd Thu	Community Potluck dinner 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas
3 rd Sun	Alexandra RSL Ph 0409 950 913
4 th Wed	Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
4 th Thu	Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517



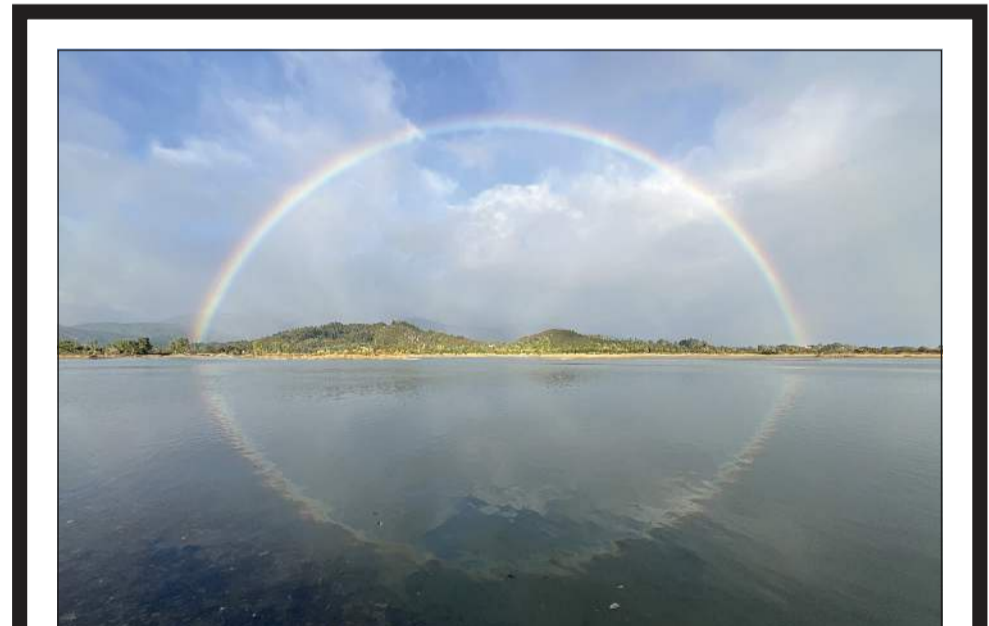
For a \$10 annual fee for one line, your club or organisation's regular meeting dates will be listed each week. Not only is this a reminder to your regular members but also a good source of what groups are available in the community, when they meet and a contact phone number.



THUMBS UP: To the Murrindindi Shire for the introduction of the extra bins for 10c deposit bottles. Well done. I'm sure that my grandchildren will take advantage of the baskets.

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

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



Alexandra local Peter McNair took this rainbow photo while he was on holidays in New Zealand last year. He was fishing in Golden Bay Ward, Takaka, and noticed a rainbow forming so he took a photo and kept fishing. The rainbow got bigger so he took another photo and started fishing again. As he kept fishing, the rainbow fully formed and was casting a reflection on the water which he had never seen before. -Peter McNair

THE ALEXANDRA · EILDON · MARYSVILLE

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DEADLINES

Real Estate	Thursday 5pm
Trades & Services	Thursday noon
Early General News	Thursday 5pm
Classifieds	Monday noon
Editorial	Monday 9am
Sports Editorial	Monday 10am
Letters to the Editor	Monday 9am
Thumbsup/down	Monday 10am

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

5772 1002 or
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We thank you for your continued support

ALEXANDRA NEWS PAPERS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

can be submitted via email to
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or by mail to Alexandra Newspapers
PO Box 5, Alexandra 3714.

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

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

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Standard

The Hera Chronicle

Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club report

by honorary secretary Mike Jennings

THE Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club's week opened with two tables of bridge players on Wednesday. This week the club will be joined by players from Mansfield and Healesville for lunch and a bridge session in the Corner Hotel.

On Friday morning, the committee meeting discussed future activities with Tuesday's Healesville RSL *Morning Melodies* heading the list.

With the AGM being held on July 17, the club is looking for new members for the committee. Annual fees are due at the

beginning of July and they are already looking at constructive ways to spend the money such as Christmas in July lunch at the Rubicon Hotel and excursions to the city.

A business meeting followed the committee meeting and members were able to comment on the deliberations of the committee. John Rouget won the FoodWorks gift voucher and treasurer Dave had everyone smiling in Comedy Corner before the members retired to the tearoom for refreshments and the customary games of UNO and 500.

As always, a reminder that the club welcomes new members so head along and join in. Meanwhile stay safe and keep smiling.

Vulnerable community members left without access to Registration Rebate

NEIGHBOURHOOD Houses Victoria has said that the Victorian Government Registration Rebate program, available only online, has failed to support vulnerable people to access the rebate. The support expectations have been dumped on community organisations, without a cent to support the work.

Neighbourhood Houses Victoria, with 400 member organisations across the state, offered to be an access point for the program on the back of providing similar support through the Power Saving Bonus. However, the government rejected the offer, leaving thousands of vulnerable community members without support.

Neighbourhood Houses are often the first port of call for people facing challenges with digital literacy, digital access, language barriers and more, and with a Neighbourhood House in every local council, it would have filled the gaping holes that have been left in the current plan for regional and rural areas.

"We know people will come to us, as a trusted place, asking for help with getting online and navigating the complex systems to access the rebate," Beth Davidson OAM, President of Neighbourhood Houses Victoria said.

"This lack of government support puts even more pressure on already underfunded Neighbourhood Houses. We know these

organisations don't turn away vulnerable people, and the government's lack of responsiveness towards vulnerable people is shameful, potentially shutting them out of this much needed rebate.

"This is a classic case of a well-intentioned program being undermined by bad processes. Given the lack of dedicated support, we encourage people to contact their local state MP's office to help them navigate the system that's supposed to serve them."

Neighbourhood Houses Victoria helped almost 17,000 concession card holders apply for the recent round of Power Saving Bonus, and ensured they were getting the best energy deal with the Energy Assistance Program.

Neighbourhood Houses Victoria has called on the Victorian Government to rectify the 25 per cent funding shortfall already impacting these organisations, and instead they have received a further unfunded workload.

They said that failure to meet the funding needs of these organisations has already resulted in Victorian communities losing \$230m in additional community value, where programs have been slashed to cover the basic operating costs. The failure to fund community outreach for projects like the Registration Rebate further the gaping hole in access for these communities.

Broadband boost for Yarck with new nbn Fixed Wireless tower

A NEW nbn Fixed Wireless Tower is delivering faster and more reliable broadband connectivity to approximately 293 homes and businesses in the Yarck region.

Funded in partnership with the Victorian Government's Connecting Vic program, the investment is now delivering a faster, more reliable broadband experience, including smoother, higher-resolution video calls, enhanced streaming, faster downloads, and the ability to connect more devices.

This new tower represents a significant step forward for regional connectivity, ensuring that Yarck residents and businesses can take advantage of digital opportunities that support remote work, online learning, telehealth, and economic growth through the nbn Fixed Wireless Network.

Head of nbn Local, Emily Peel, said the launch of the tower demonstrates nbn's commitment to



improving connectivity in regional Australia.

"Strong digital infrastructure helps communities like those in regional Victoria thrive. Access to fast broadband isn't a luxury, it is essential if we are to provide regional communities with the same opportunities as metropolitan areas," she said.

"It is about keeping our communities connected by supporting families, jobs, and the future of our regions."

"This new tower is a significant step forward for regional connectivity. It will help residents and businesses access faster, more reliable broadband, supporting everything from education and healthcare to small business growth," she said.

To find out more about the benefits of nbn full fibre and to check your eligibility for other nbn services and preferred retail service providers, visit nbn.com.au/CheckRegional

Nominate a dangerous country road

RACV has launched its *My Country Road* survey, encouraging Victorians to have their say on the regional roads that RACV has identified as the worst in the state.

RACV has worked with the Australian Automobile Association (AAA) to analyse the safety standards of 19,800 kilometres of Victoria's regional roads. Based on Australian Road Assessment Program (AusRAP) data, crash history and traffic volumes, they have identified 52 dangerous highway sections in regional Victoria, grouping them into five regional areas.

My Country Road participants have the opportunity to provide feedback on up to three of the identified road sections, or nominate their own roads of concern.

RACV Head of Policy James Williams said feedback from past *My Country Road* surveys has played a critical role in identifying safety concerns and influencing government planning and investment decisions.

"Over half of Victoria's road crashes occur on regional roads. RACV's *My Country Road*

survey gives everyday Victorians a direct voice on the condition and safety of roads that have too many fatalities and serious injuries," Mr Williams said.

Previous campaigns have delivered results. The top 20 roads identified in the 2024 *My Country Road* survey have all seen some improvements or have had upgrades planned or announced.

"These improvements are a positive step, but there is still more work to do to ensure regional Victorians and visitors can travel safely and confidently," Mr Williams said.

In North East Victoria, the most dangerous roads listed include Goulburn Valley Highway and Maroondah Highway - Yea to Mansfield; Maroondah Highway - Alexandra to Healesville; and Melba Highway - Yea to Dixons Creek.

To discover more about the 52 most dangerous road sections in country Victoria, and to complete the survey, visit racv.com.au/haveyoursay

The survey closes Friday, July 17.

Have you applied for your rego rebate?

WITHIN 48 hours of opening on June 1, more than one million Victorians applied for 20 per cent off their rego. Money is already being paid to applicants and will continue to be paid over the coming months.

A driver with one car gets up to \$186 back. A family with two cars gets up to \$372 back. You get the full rebate whether you pay yearly or in instalments. Applications close July 31.

To be eligible for the rebate, Victorians need to have paid their registration between 1 July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, for a light vehicle for personal use. You can claim for up to two vehicles in your name.

For more information and to apply, download the Service Victoria app or visit service.vic.gov.au/rego-rebate

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5772 2649
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End of Financial Year Reminder
(for pensioners & soon-to-be retirees)

If you're thinking about getting your affairs in order before 30 June, pre-paying a funeral can be a practical option — and for many people it doesn't count toward the Centrelink assets test. (there are some exceptions)

One option is a secured funeral bond, held with a regulated friendly society where you can set aside money specifically for funeral costs.

The amount that can be exempt is capped at the government-set threshold currently \$15,750

If you'd like a free, no-obligation information pack, contact us at anytime.

General information only — everyone's situation is different. If you're unsure, check with Services Australia or your adviser.

MORE INFO

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PH: 5756 3740
info@finalebracefunerals.com.au

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CHECK YOUR ADDRESS

The risk of hitting an animal on the road increases in winter

IN winter, many people are driving in the dark, plus there are the additional challenges of fog and rain. Combined, this means that there is a greater risk of wildlife collisions.

AAMI data shows wildlife collisions are a major road safety issue, with 41 per cent of Australian drivers having hit an animal and more than 24,000 wildlife collision claims lodged in 2025, most commonly in winter and low-light conditions. May, June and July are the highest months for claims regarding animal collisions.

The impact is costly and dangerous, with over 4500 vehicles written off in 2025, average claim costs exceeding \$9000, and kangaroos responsible for more than 80 per cent of collisions, particularly on regional roads at dawn, dusk and overnight.

Animals are most active at dawn, dusk, and overnight, exactly when visibility is at its worst, leaving drivers with less time to react.

Driver reactions are also increasing risk, with one in five drivers saying they would swerve to avoid an animal, despite expert advice that this can lead to more serious crashes.

AAMI Motor Claims Manager Leah James said, "No one plans to hit an animal, but when wildlife jumps into your path out of nowhere, panic can take over pretty quickly. Swerving may feel instinctive, but it is one of the most dangerous reactions a driver can have.

"When confronted with wildlife behind the wheel it often causes drivers to lose control, swerving to miss the animal and hitting a tree, or crashing into another vehicle, all of which are far worse than the original risk," she said.

The best advice is to slow down, stay alert, and keep a close lookout for wildlife, particularly in signed areas.



"Kangaroos are responsible for more than 80 per cent of collisions, followed by wallabies, wombats and deer. These crashes often seriously damage vehicles and put people at risk," Ms James said.

In case you do hit an animal on the road, make sure that you have the phone number of a local wildlife carer in your phone. Give them a call, even if the injured animal has moved away from the location. If the animal has died, check the pouch and areas nearby

for joeys, particularly kangaroos, koalas, wombats, and echidnas. Always move the deceased animal off the road to prevent other drivers being impacted.

Keep a simple wildlife kit in your car which includes gloves, blanket, cardboard box or pet carrier, and a water bottle.

The best action you can take to avoid animal collisions, particularly in winter, is to slow down.

Minimum wage increase

THE Fair Work Commission has announced an increase to the National Minimum Wage and minimum award wages. The increase applies from the first full pay period starting on or after July 1.

The Fair Work Commission is the national workplace relations tribunal and reviews minimum wages each year as part of the Annual Wage Review.

The Fair Work Ombudsman is working to update their tools and resources with the new pay rates. These updates will be available close to July 1.

The National Minimum Wage applies to employees who aren't covered by an award.

From July 1, the National Minimum Wage will be \$1004.90 per week, or \$26.44 per hour.

What is the Goulburn Murray Solar Savers program?

ARE you thinking about solar, a battery, or upgrading your heating and cooling? Murrindindi Shire Council is part of the Goulburn Murray Solar Savers program, which aims to make it easier for households and businesses to explore their options.

Goulburn Murray Solar Savers is a local government initiative that connects residents with pre-qualified providers of rooftop solar, batteries, heat pumps, and energy-efficient heating and cooling systems. The program is designed to simplify the process by bringing together information, vetted suppliers, and available rebates in one place.

All providers are selected through a public tender process, with consideration given to safety, reliability, and value. After registering, you'll be connected with a provider to arrange a free, no-obligation quote and receive information about any government incentives that may apply.

The program includes a range of products and services, such as solar panels, battery storage, hot water heat pumps, reverse-cycle split systems, EV chargers, induction cooktops, insulation, draught proofing, and home energy assessments.

To learn more or register your interest, visit the Goulburn Murray Solar Savers website at goulburnmurraysolarsavers.org.au

Church Services

ANGLICAN

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

CATHOLIC

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

UNITING CHURCH In Australia

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

OASIS COMMUNITY CHURCH

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

MOUNT CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY

BAPTIST CHURCH

37 Grant Street, Alexandra
Pastor Daniel Kriss
Services 10am every Sunday
Phone 0400 282 536
mccbc.com.au

THE VINE

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

Public recycling basket trial starting in Murrindindi

MURRINDINDI Shire Council is trialling new recycling baskets on public bins across the shire, making it easier for people to participate in Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme while supporting local fundraising and recycling efforts.

A total of 100 purpose-built recycling baskets will be installed in high-use public locations, including near food outlets, parks and activity centres.

These baskets provide a simple way for people to leave eligible drink containers for others to collect and claim the 10 cent refund through the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS).

Since the CDS launched in November 2023, community groups across Murrindindi have already generated around \$90,000 through container refunds, highlighting its value as a practical fundraising and income opportunity.

Based on the container volumes collected through public spaces, the trial could generate an additional \$17,000 and \$25,000 each year for community members, groups and organisations participating in the scheme.

The basket system has been designed to be simple and inclusive, enabling anyone to participate, from children collecting containers for pocket money to community groups raising funds and residents contributing to local recycling efforts.

Early observations from locations where baskets have been installed indicate that significantly fewer eligible containers are being placed in public garbage and recycling bins. This aligns with results from similar programs interstate and in Victoria, where public place basket trials have helped reduce

container litter and improve recovery of eligible drink containers. Council has also observed reduced roadside litter across the shire since the introduction of the CDS.

By capturing containers before they enter the refuse stream, the baskets help reduce contamination in public bins and divert valuable materials away from landfill. Clear signage on each basket encourages simple action: leave or collect 10c containers.

Murrindindi Shire Council Sustainability and Assets portfolio Councillor Paul Hildebrand said the trial demonstrates how small, practical changes can deliver meaningful community and environmental benefits.

"This initiative makes recycling easier, supports participation in the Container Deposit Scheme and creates more opportunities for community fundraising," Cr Hildebrand said.

"Every eligible container collected is one less item going to landfill and another 10 cents returned to the community."

Council will continue to monitor the trial to assess community uptake and performance, and to identify opportunities to expand the program to additional locations.

Residents are encouraged to look out for the recycling baskets when out and about and support the initiative by leaving eligible containers for others to collect.

Container Deposit Scheme refund points in Murrindindi Shire are located at Bourke's Ice Works, 17 Binns McCraes Road, Alexandra; Pheasant Creek General Store and Hot Food, 884 Whittlesea-Kinglake Road, Pheasant Creek; and Kinglake Pub and Pantry, 28 Whittlesea-Kinglake Road, Kinglake.

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.**

SUNDAY, JUNE 14

CFA Molesworth Biannual election and AGM will be held at 8am at the Molesworth Fire Station.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

Murrindindi Shire Council's regular Business Brunch will be held on Thursday, June 18 from 10 to 11.30am at The Pavilion Bar and Grill, 956 Buxton-Marysville Road. To see the full program schedule, registration and resources, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/mbm

SUNDAY, JUNE 21

Don't miss the new musical by Steve Paix. *Mr Pres!!!! The Fake Musical*. 2pm at The Memo, Healesville. yarraranges.vic.gov.au/culturetracks or phone 1300 368 333.

Free Kinder **shapes** young lives.



Kinder shapes the way our children play, learn and grow. That's why Victorian families with three- and four-year-old children can access two years of Free Kinder, saving up to \$2,700 per child, per year.

Free Kinder means families pay no out-of-pocket fees at a standalone kinder, or get a bill reduction for kinder in long day care.



Enrolments are now open. Find your nearest participating kinder at vic.gov.au/kinder



Department of Education



Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

Thank a First Responder Day showcase

TODAY is Thank a First Responder Day 2026, designed to encourage the community to give thanks for the incredible work first responders do and the families that support them.

Thank a First Responder Day was established in 2020 as a way to publicly express gratitude to the hundreds of thousands of first responders who are there for us day in and day out.

Being a first responder can be challenging, for both first responders and their families. Ambulance Victoria's *Annual Report 2024-25* states that there have been more than 1000 hazardous incidents involving AV staff in the last financial year.

Volunteers donate their time, skills and effort, to help keep people safe and healthy, and the power of gratitude can have an extraordinary impact on their wellbeing and mental health.

Cards and mementos can be dropped at stations and messages of gratitude placed on social media. Or you could just say a simple thank you to Victoria's wonderful first responders.

Ambulance Victoria Hume Director Regional and Clinical Operations Narelle Capp said volunteers make a big impact in their communities and to the lives of Victorians.

"At Ambulance Victoria, we are very proud of our hundreds of community-minded, selfless Victorians who give their time to support the vital work of our organisation right across the state," she said.

"To all our volunteers, thank you for your generosity, dedication and passion for your local community. You are the reason we have the amazing community connection, reach and impact that we do at Ambulance Victoria."

Volunteering with a CERT offers a hands-on way to give back to your community and support the emergency response of Ambulance Victoria paramedics in Hume.

A CERT is a volunteer first responder, working in pairs for dispatch to potentially time-critical emergencies at the same time as an ambulance. They are found in less populated and remote areas of Victoria where there is a low ambulance caseload and no ambulance branch.

CERT members respond to traffic collisions, medical cases and other incidents requiring timely emergency medical care, but do not transport patients to hospital.

"Our Hume CERTs are made up of dedicated teams of volunteers who work hard to ensure our communities have the best support possible in the event of a medical emergency," Narelle said.

"They are caring and committed people who sacrifice their time to put their neighbours first. We are looking for more community members who are interested in joining a CERT and making a difference to someone's life and health outcomes.

"CERT members are required to live within 12km of the community they serve. You do not need a medical background to apply, and all initial and ongoing training is provided by Ambulance Victoria."

There are more than 150 CERT members across Victoria, including Deb English, who volunteers at Kinglake as a CERT, and Yea as an Ambulance Community Officer (ACO).

"I've been with the Kinglake CERT for 14 years this month actually. And prior to that, I did four years with the Craigieburn CERT," Deb said.

"When you initially join you have to complete two full weekends of training. That covers multiple modules, like patient assessment and medication and all sorts of things like safety; you'll do an emergency childbirth module. There's so much that gets packed into two weekends.

"When you finish that training, you come out with an authority to practice under supervision. Then for the next few months, there's a number of modules that require completion for a new recruit to achieve their full authority to practice.

"At the Kinglake team, we have three new recruits that have done their two weekends and they've achieved their authority to practice under supervision. If we get any jobs, they come out as a third person with us.

"And because they've not necessarily been exposed to this sort of stuff, they get that opportunity to come out and observe."

The people that Deb met while doing her CERT training have remained friends for over two decades now, through both volunteering and retirement.

"I'm retired from full-time work now but certainly with the Kinglake team when I did my initial two weekends of training, I became great mates from that point in time with a woman named Vicky Dunell," Deb explained.

"Vicky and Ian Dunell, they were members of Kinglake CERT, and Vicky and Ian always said, why don't you come up and join Kinglake? I'm going, no, no, I'm here with Craigieburn, and then I had a break. I decided to go back and I rang Vicky because we'd kept in contact after we did our initial training. And I said, you know what, I think I might come up to Kinglake.

"When I first joined the team for probably the first 18 months, two years, I actually stayed at Ian and Vicky's place when I was on call and would turn out to jobs from there."

Vicky and Ian, along with another of Deb's friends, Bart Wunderlich, are Ambulance Service Medal (ASM) recipients for their volunteering at Kinglake.

"Vicky got hers after the Black Saturday bushfires. Ian received his maybe about four years ago. And then we also had a member, Bart Wunderlich, he's a nurse practitioner as well, but Bart received an ambulance service medal two years ago. I was joining a team of greatness, and they were fantastic," Deb said.

"That whole team thing, that's the rewarding part. You make friends for life. And while the three of them have all retired from CERT after Ian and Bart both served 18, 19 years and Vicky up to 15 years. It puts a big hole into a smaller type of team.

"I saw Vicky just the other day, and Bart has an annual bonfire at his place each year. So I was up there a couple of weeks ago for his annual bonfire. Like I said, you meet some great people and I think everybody's in it for the right reasons."

Deb finished by saying that she has no intention of stopping her CERT work anytime soon.

"I love it. It's really rewarding. I've retired from full-time work now because I'm in my mid 60s



Ambulance Victoria volunteers Kate Draffin and Deb English attending the Craigieburn Anzac Day service this year. -S

and at this point in time, I have no intention of stopping what I'm doing because I just love it," she said.

"As I get older, it gives me something to get up for, even though it's overnight most of the time. But it's just so rewarding and just the friendships I've made over

time, the training that I've had, the knowledge that I've gained over time is something that I wouldn't have had before."

To find out more about volunteering at Ambulance Victoria, visit ambulance.vic.gov.au/become-first-responder

Council special meeting to discuss Annual Budget 2026-27

A SPECIAL meeting of the Murrindindi Shire Council was held last Wednesday to discuss council's *Annual Budget 2026-27*.

Cr Adams and Cr Lording were apologies on leaves of absence. An open forum was held to allow the public to submit their input into the draft budget.

Open forum

Laura Semple from Moving with Clouds pilates spoke about the proposed changes to the regular hire or commercial classification and fee increase of the Marysville Community Centre, which will push programs out of the community centre.

Laura said that under the changes, her hire of the Tree Fern Room will increase from \$80 per day to \$226.10 per day, or a \$28.30 per hour fee. Currently she is paying \$960 per month, and the changes will increase this to \$1471 per month, making it extremely difficult for her to run affordable classes for local community members.

Moving with Clouds was started in December 2025 and runs weekly classes, with 120 members across the Triangle area. Pilates helps people stay fit and healthy as well as connected socially. There are also other groups that utilise the community centre as a meeting place that have concerns around the changes, such as a Taekwondo class and

jerky producer that hires the commercial kitchen.

Laura asked that council pause and reconsider the proposed reclassification and fee increase for the Marysville Community Centre for regular hirers; look at potentially introducing a regular hirer, community benefit or small business startup category with sustainable rates for the local programs that deliver clear community outcomes; if increases must occur, looking at a cap or phasing them into the next 12 to 24 months so programs aren't forced to close immediately; and commit to direct consultation with regular hirers before implementing changes.

Community submissions to the draft Annual Budget 2026-27

Cr Carr spoke to this matter, stating that some submissions were submitted after the agenda was published and are not available online currently but will be updated and reflected in the minutes. However, council has received all the submissions in full, which were formatted into a report.

In terms of engagement, there were 340 downloads of the budget documents from council's website, and there were 484 unique visitors to the budget's exhibition webpage.

Council received 14 responses through the website feedback form, The Loop, or a

letter. Of these, four responses expressed concerns about the proposed reduction in the budget for library books, and three expressed concerns about the proposed fee structure for the Marysville Community Centre.

Council will consider all submissions before the final adoption of the *Annual Budget 2026-27* on June 17. They voted to accept the submissions to the draft budget.

Discussion

Cr Gallagher asked Director of Finance and Integrity Michael Chesworth about the circumstances that gave rise to the proposed fee increase for the Marysville Community Centre.

Mr Chesworth responded saying that consideration is given to all facilities within the Murrindindi Shire, and that council wants to keep things as fair as possible for all businesses operating within this area and not provide advantages to one particular place.

Another part of the circumstances is the change from a community-led committee running the Marysville Community Centre to council taking over the centre's operation, with the committee deciding voluntary not to continue.

Cr Gallagher asked Mr Chesworth to comment on the capital program and the small capital reduction in terms of library

book purchasing, with comparison to the operational budget that will be coming to the library service.

Mr Chesworth responded, stating that the overall operating budget for the library service is increasing this year, augmented by grant funding to replace council's mobile library with a more purpose-built vehicle that will be launched later next year. The operating budget itself has had an incremental increase.

There is no reduction in service, such as what hours the libraries are open, but there will be a slight reduction in the new book stock that can be purchased next financial year. He said this is seen as a one-year impact, in consideration of the unique circumstances council finds itself in (asset recovery post-bushfires).

The priority is to recover the capital budget next year when there is more certainty around funding sources and how council can address the recovery effort. The impact is shared across many elements of the capital budget.

One submission complemented council's response to the bushfires with the reduction of rates and pointed out that a reduction in the emergency services volunteer fund (ESVF) levy might be pertinent. Mr Chesworth responded to that submission, saying that the ESVF levy is a state government fund and council has no control over its implementation.

June 2026

June is Murrindindi Business Month

Murrindindi Business Month is now underway, and there's still time to register and plan participation across the full program. Take part in a month long journey designed to strengthen capability, build confidence and support long term growth.

Our regular Business Brunch will also be held on Thursday, 18 June from 10.00 to 11.30 am at The Pavilion Bar & Grill, 956 Buxton-Marysville Road.

For the full program schedule, registration and resources, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/mbm

LEAPing into Resilience Project survey

Council is inviting residents who participated in the *LEAPing into Resilience Project* to complete an online survey for a chance to win a \$50 gift card.

The survey is open from 1 May to 30 June 2026.

For details, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/leapsurvey

Eildon Key Worker Housing EOIs

Council is progressing Eildon Key Worker Housing, with the first six homes expected to be available for rent from July to August 2026.

The initial release includes four three bedroom and two two bedroom houses, supporting local workforce attraction and retention. An on site information session was held in May and expressions of interest are now open.

For details visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/ekwheoi

National Tree Day Events 2026

National Tree Day is Australia's largest tree planting and nature care event, bringing communities together to grow a greener future.

This year, locals can get involved through activities including the 'Love your Pollinators' webinar on 15 July, a community tree planting event in Alexandra on 26 July, and library programs like the Read, Learn and Win draw running until 31 July. With opportunities for all ages to learn, plant and connect with nature, it is a great chance to support local biodiversity and make a lasting environmental impact.

For details, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/ntd26



Kinglake Memorial Reserve Oval upgrade

Council will begin redevelopment works on the Kinglake Memorial Reserve oval from 9 June, with important upgrades set to support local sport and the wider Kinglake community.

Upgrades will include playing surface improvements, drainage works, and a new irrigation system to improve safety, playability and the long-term sustainability of the oval for local clubs and the broader community.

Learn more about the project on our website at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/kmruupgrade

Free Fire Waste Disposal Extension

Council welcomes the extension of the free bushfire recovery waste disposal program to 30 June 2026.

While the six-week extension is a positive step, Council will continue to advocate for a longer extension.

For details, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/firewaste

Recognising volunteering across Murrindindi

Council would like to celebrate the volunteers who strengthened our communities during and after the January 2026 bushfires.

To acknowledge these efforts Council will host four events to recognise the contributions of volunteers and community members, while also providing an opportunity to connect, reflect on shared experiences, and acknowledge the ongoing recovery journey.

Visit our website to find out more at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/recognition26



Get in touch

5772 0333

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Stay informed

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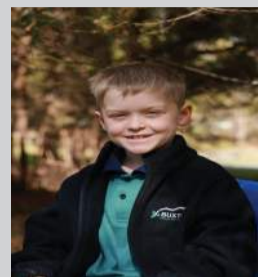
Follow us on Facebook @murrindindishirecouncil

Proudly supporting
Student of the week

Community Bank · Yea & District and Alexandra



BUXTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Students of the Week are are Leo, Nell and Declan for showing respect by caring for school property and belongings.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by
Kinglake branch



Victorian Truck Drivers Memorial ceremony

THE Victorian Truck Drivers Memorial event was held in Rotary Park on Saturday, June 6, a day before the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show. The event was well attended, with family, friends and members of the transport community paying their respects.

The service provides an opportunity to remember and honour Victorian truck drivers who have lost their lives, and to acknowledge the loved ones they leave behind.

The service included the addition of new names to the memorial wall, as well as reflections, wreath-laying and music.

The event was emceed by committee chair Ruth Oakden, with an introduction and Welcome to Country provided by Mayor Damien Gallagher. Teagan Gordon lit the candle of remembrance.

The audience heard from Peter Anderson, CEO of the Victorian Truck Association, and from bereaved family members Teagan Gordon and Khristine Abaya.

Local singer Tahlee Christie performed at the service.



The ceremony in Rotary Park. -AR



Teagan Gordon lighting the candle. -AR



Emcee Ruth Oakden. -AR



Mayor Damien Gallagher. -AR



Watch this 90-second video before you climb another ladder!



 worksafe.vic.gov.au/high-standards





Three children travelled around the lake at Gallipoli Park in a homemade carriage. -AR



Beryl, Joan and Robert. -AR



Glenys Ross and Bruno Torfs. -AR

Marysville celebrates Winterfest with lantern walk



David and Di led the lantern walk. -AR



The audience enjoying the music following the lantern walk. -AR



Travis Winters and the band performing at Marysville Winterfest. -AR

The importance of staying safe in the snow

AS tens of thousands of people prepare to head to Victoria's alpine region this snow season, police will be out in force to help keep roads, resorts and communities safe across the snowfields.

Police will be highly visible on the roads and areas in and around Victoria's key snowfields, including Lake Mountain near Marysville.

Following a bumper snow season last year, an almost 50 per cent increase on the year prior at Mt Hotham alone, Victoria Police is urging visitors to plan ahead.

Skiers, snowboarders and hikers are implored to stick to designated tracks, regardless of their experience, after several people needed to be rescued last year. Police

also responded to 26 search and recovery incidents in the 2025 season at Mt Buller, Mt Hotham and Falls Creek.

Local police will be well supported by dedicated alpine officers, Highway Patrol and the Heavy Vehicle Unit to ensure safety on the roads and respond to any incidents that may occur.

Police and authorised officers will again be testing drivers for drugs and alcohol and conducting vehicle safety checks across key routes in and out of alpine resorts.

The 2025 snow season saw more than 4000 vehicles turned around for failing to carry legally required wheel chains, placing themselves and others at serious risk on icy roads in areas with increased traffic.

All vehicles entering alpine areas during the declared snow season are required by law to carry wheel chains and fit them when instructed. Failing to carry chains may result in a \$407 fine, while failing to fit them when required results in a \$1018 penalty.

Wheel chains provide crucial traction and steering control on steep, icy roads and can be the difference between staying on the road or sliding off it.

Visitors are encouraged to visit the VicRoads and snow resort websites to learn more about snow chain requirements.

Other key safety tips for those heading to the snow include: Never go on hikes solo and have a detailed check-in procedure so people know where you are and when

you're expected to arrive and return. Have a registered Personal Locator Beacon (PLB). Carry enough food and water for more than one day. Have clothing and gear suitable for all weather conditions. Regularly check weather and snow conditions as conditions can change quickly. Ensure your car's radiator is filled with anti-freeze and if diesel use Alpine Mix. Drive cautiously with gradual pressure on the accelerator to avoid wheel spin. Brake gently and avoid unnecessary gear changes. Maintain a safe braking distance from vehicles in front, especially in poor visibility. If lost, stop, seek shelter, call Triple Zero (000) and wait.



Adult Time

for Violent Crime



Offenders aged over 14 who commit violent crimes now face more serious consequences. Crimes like aggravated carjacking, home invasion or serious assault with weapons will now be tried in adult court and face longer sentences.



Learn more



Authorised by the Victorian Government,
1 Treasury Place, Melbourne



Children on the Taggerty fire truck, on display at the Taggerty Market. -AR



The children needed to use the fire hose to put out the 'fire' in the windows of the house. -AR



Keen shoppers at the market. -AR



Many children were keen to try out the fire hose. -AR



Lyn O'Kane at her stall. -AR



Judy from Harmonia Grove. -S



Jackson in the Taggerty Hall during the market. -AR

Opening up the housing market with more affordable homes

We're opening doors with more homes planned in the places you want to live, close to trains, trams and services.

Find out about reduced stamp duty on off-the-plan apartments and townhouses and the \$10,000 First Home Owner Grant for home buyers who are buying or building a new home.

Visit vic.gov.au/openingdoors

Opening Doors

Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne





One of the beautiful old hotrods on display. -AR



One of the old fire trucks forming part of the CFA display. -AR



Utes lined up on Perkins Street. -AR



A truck reminiscent of the truck from Spielberg's first film, *Duel*. -AR



Children writing on the bonnet of a ute. -AR

HUGE CROWD AND GREAT WEATHER AT THE ALEXANDRA TRUCK, UTE AND ROD SHOW



The Australian flag flying above the crowd from the Corner Hotel. -AR



The truck run from Yarck to Alexandra on Saturday, June 6. -AR



People enjoyed viewing the huge variety of trucks. -AR



Children having fun on the inflatable slide. -AR



There were an estimated 15,000 people at the event. -AR



Children enjoying the show rides. -AR



The trucks were lined up on Grant Street right through to Thom Street. -AR



Children welcoming the trucks on the truck run on Saturday, June 6, encouraging the drivers to honk as they passed. -AR



The tree felling event at the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show was well attended. -AR



A Dynaflo on display. -AR



There was plenty of musical entertainment for the audience. -AR



Alexandra Timber Tramway volunteers with a steam engine demonstration. -AR



William at the clown game. -AR

Our history: Lucky man Charlie Jones

CHARLES (Charlie) Jones was a Herefordshire lad, born in 1819. He died aged just 56 in 1875, but fitted a big life into his short years.

Charlie was the eldest of five boys born to Rueben Jones and Christian Holbon. Charlie arrived in Melbourne and married Elizabeth Teakle at St James Church in Melbourne in 1848. Their first son, James Melville Jones, was born a year earlier in Myrtleford. Their other children were born in Melbourne, Castlemaine and Moorabbin.

As many would know, the township of Alexandra grew up around the Mount Pleasant pastoral run. The owner of the run in 1866 was Donald McKenzie. This was the year when gold was discovered near the property.

By the end of that year, quartz mining was underway, and the following year the town was officially named Alexandra, following its previous moniker of Red Gate Diggings.

According to the *Alexandra Standard*, in an historical article printed in April 1935, "In 1865 the only noticeable object within sight of what is now Alexandra was the red gate in the dividing fence between Johnson's and McKenzie's runs. The fence ran close to the UT Creek, and the gate was almost opposite, where the main road bridge now is. The nearest house to the red gate was Jim Fenton's slab and bark hut on Johnson's Creek (Eglington) and in the other direction, Mount Pleasant station (Donald McKenzie, owner).

"One Sunday in the latter part of 1866, two of Donald McKenzie's shepherds (Sandy Don and Alec McGregor) started from Mount Pleasant for Jim Fenton's, where it was generally possible to obtain liquid refreshment. A bullock tray had gone down McKenzie's Pinch overnight, and as Don and McGregor walked up they came to a boulder of quartz that had been crushed by a wheel, and there was the gold sticking all over it.

"After showing the sample to Mr John Downey, a surveyor, a claim was pegged out. In a few days a rush set it, and in a week's time Charlie Jones (on tramp from Woods Point) pegged out the 'Lucky.'"

Another article in 1922 stated, "The nearest gold mining was at Upper Thornton, where Ben Jones had a 'pub'. There were no farmers, selectors, or others than the squatters, who each had 640 acres preemptive right. From Jamieson up, Ten Mile, Gaffney's Creek, Woods Point and Matlock, B.B., Jordan and Jericho were in full swing. On the Big River every creek and gully and bar was being worked: Sailor Bill's, Enoch's Point, and Lucks All (Warner's Creek). There were thousands of miners and gold was plentiful."

This article continued with the tale of the discovery. Sandy and Alec "put some of it in the bag and continued towards Fenton's. Near the road was a surveyor's camp, and they took the samples there. The surveyor, John Downey, agreed to back them, and the first claim was pegged out on McKenzie's Pinch close to Mount Pleasant station, on the east side of the dividing spur. It was called the Eglington and in a day or two a rush set in.

"The following week Charlie Jones, on tramp from 'The Point' (Woods Point was generally referred to as 'The Point') asked young Downey for a job. He got three days work and on the Sunday went prospecting over the spur towards Red Gate and pegged out the 'Lucky'. On the Monday morning young Downey went to Jamieson to register, and, at Charlie's request registered the 'Lucky' for Jones, Downey refused to take a share as that would have meant backing Jones.

"Well, in a week or so, a one-eighth share was worth £10,000. At four feet from the grass the reef was four feet wide and glittering with gold like a jeweller's shop. The big rush was on. Right here it may be noted that the Eglington, first claim pegged, and adjacent claims never paid the cost. The 'Lucky' line and others paid big dividends.

"In fact the various claims from the Eglington to the UT Creek turned out, in about seven years, some 320,000 ounces of gold, worth £4 2s 6d an oz. The Eglington was abandoned at 160 ft deep. The reef or leader was still showing, but sometimes half an inch thick, and at others one eighth of an

New drone fleet strengthens CFA response

DRONES have become CFA's latest eyes in the sky, already proving their effectiveness during the 2025-26 fire season.

CFA embarked on a Remote Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) drone trial a year ago to boost firefighting intelligence from above.

The 12 month pilot program, hosted at Rowville and Edithvale brigades including volunteer pilots from Melbourne's outer east and southeast was used for a range of emergency situations including identifying hot spots, hazmats, rope rescue and urban search and rescue, aerial thermal imaging, impact assessment, fire investigation, searches, among other live video and training benefits.

The success of the trial was proven during the January 2026 fire season on various firegrounds across the state allowing incident controllers and fireground command personnel to make timely and informed decisions.

Incredible vision was captured during a bushfire at Rhyll at Phillip Island on 22 January, on the edge of the Koala Conservation Reserve, where firefighters were seen standing over the top of a hot spot. The RPAS crew informed the firefighters on the ground and they were able to start raking and watering down the hotspot, showing smoke billowing out of the ground.

The Incident Controller Damien O'Connor stated through the ability to have the holistic

view, they were able to find several hot spots outside of the main fire.

"This prevented the fire restarting in unburnt land and gave us the confidence to leave the fireground knowing our suppression techniques were successful," Damien said.

"These hot spots were identified at night, and we were able to guide crews to their location through the use of the drone spotlight as well as by radio communications watching the image on the screen.

"I have no doubt the use of the RPAS program at this incident not only saved the local brigades many hours and potential outbreaks, it also ensured the conservation of the koala program and its continual success to limit the spread of the fire."

Rowville Fire Brigade Captain and RPAS pilot Cien Pereira works as an air traffic controller and said she was keen for CFA to try a new specialty which happened to align with the work she does.

"Drones provide incredible intelligence and there are long term benefits of where this program can go," Cien said. "There are incident controllers out there that don't realise this is an option for them, so we're doing demonstrations across the state to try and get the word out. RPAS provides more accurate, more up to date information and intelligence for better decision making, so this makes everything safer for both the community and our firefighters."

CFA Commander and Manager of Aviation John Katakouzinos AFSM said the 12 month pilot program has been very successful and hopes to roll it out further in the future.

"We've got 21 highly trained drone pilots at the moment who have been responding to a range of incidents across the state, particularly over summer," John said.

"The varying capabilities such as still images, 4K video, HD video, optical zoom and thermal imaging provide invaluable insights to our incident controllers and firefighters."



One of the new CFA drones. -S

inch or just discernible. The ground was very hard and sinking by contract was worth £8 a foot. Of course very little of such ore as there was reached the owners.

"The 'No. 2 Lucky' paid handsomely down to 200 ft. The shaft was finally sunk to near 400 ft. In the sink the reef was from three to four foot wide, white as milk, and not a colour of gold in it. Meantime the gullies on each side of the reef were rich in alluvial. On the north side the lead went right to the UT Creek, but on the south, or, 'Mysterious' side, the lead was lost halfway to the creek. It is there yet somewhere, perhaps under the tail end of Baker's 20 acre block, which was the first selection of the goldfield that was granted (about 1876)."

A September 1922 article said, "Of the original inhabitants when the 'rush' started, few went into mining - McKenzie of Mount Pleasant, Downey the surveyor, and the Johnsons, but they did no good. McKenzie got £10,000 out of the 'Lucky', but lost it all, as well as his station. It cost Downey all he had, and the Johnsons must have lost a lot. Charlie Jones got about £15,000."

As historical data from 1867 predates the modern Australian dollar, calculating its equivalent value depends on whether you are looking at pure currency conversion or adjusting for inflation over time. Adjusted for inflation, £15,000 in 1867 represents a similar proportion of overall economic output (GDP) as \$56.4 million AUD does today, according to Measuring Worth.

The article continued, "The McDougalls of Bendigo were the only ones to make much out of the 'Lucky'. They got hold of half the mine and did well. George Whiting was supposed to have got five or six thousand out of 'No. 2'. He settled out near Thornton, and became a most creditable public man, one of the first to go into progressive stock raising, etcetera. The adjacent squatters held aloof from the mines - Bailey of Whanregarwen, Aitken of Cathkin, James and Willie Bon of Howe Creek, John Bon of Whappan (Devil's River), and Archie Thom of Upper Thornton."

By July 1967, the *Alexandra Times* reported, "On the 'Lucky', the 'No. 2', better known as Charlie Jones's, have, after sinking their shaft deeper, and driving 15 feet, struck the reef again richer than ever. It is four feet thick, and shows gold freely. I have seen also some splendid stone, lately raised from the Adventure Amalgamated Claim, on the Annabella Line, and a dish of rubble was washed in my presence, yielding half a pennyweight of coarse gold. This promises to be a very valuable claim indeed. It is situated about a mile or a mile and a half from the 'Lucky Reef', which must cross the flat and then enter the above claim, and doubtless extends for miles ahead. No. 1, South Eglington, have just finished their first trial crushing, for the splendid return of seven ounces to the ton."

In an article published in 1931, 'F.F.' writes, "They were cleaning up a crushing from the celebrated 'No. 2' at Sabelberg's mill on the day of my arrival in December, 1867, and I was present at the interesting process of retorting the amalgam, which was placed in a thick round-bottomed pot having a lid carrying a long pipe through which the mercury, in the form of vapor, passes, till condensed by cold, caused by a constant stream of water falling on the pipe when it comes spluttering out in little globules of quicksilver, to be received in an open vessel underneath.

"When this spluttering ceased the staples securing the top of the retort were knocked out and the lid removed. For several minutes after this had been done no-one approached the retort for fear of being salivated by the fumes still rising from it, for one breath of it would cause the teeth to loosen and drop out, besides other undesirable effects.

"The first to advance and peep into the pot was a rough sailor-looking chap with one eye. He squirted a lot of tobacco juice on to the red hot cake of gold with the remark, 'a quarter of that is mine, anyhow.' The cake when weighed at the bank proved to be over 400 ounces, which meant a Christmas box of about £500 for 'Charlie' Jones. Jones was the discoverer of the 'Lucky.'"

In 1868, Charlie Jones was also listed as the proprietor of the New York and London Hotel in Alexandra. However this may not have been the best financial investment.

Just seven years later, in 1875, the news broke of Charlie's death. "Charlie Jones, an old resident in Alexandra died on Wednesday last in the Alexandra Hospital from the effects of a recent cold, and general breaking up of the system. He was the principal shareholder in 'No.2 Lucky' reef, and received in dividends and for the sale of his interest over £10,000, and managed to get rid of the money in a very short time, in that liberal off-handed way which was the custom in the prosperous days of mining.

"During the past two years he has been prospecting about under the belief that he would someday drop on another No. 2, but old age, hard work, and bad luck are heavy odds against any man, and were too much for poor Charlie.

"Some of those with whom he spent his money so freely during his days of prosperity might have saved him from a pauper's funeral. There is a moral in this man's latter end that is so plainly written that "He that runneth may read."

In response to this article, his son, Francis Jones wrote to the newspaper, "In your issue of the 8th inst. you notice in a short biographical sketch the latter end of the late 'Charlie' Jones. As he was well known in the district, there is not much therein in which to take umbrage, except towards the end, in a point before the moral, you charitably infer that "some of those with whom he spent his days of prosperity might have saved him from a pauper's funeral."

As such noble actions are nearly impossible, I, a son of the deceased, felt it to be my duty to save a father's name from the stigma generally attached to a 'charity funeral', by defraying the expense of burial myself. I merely write this to show that the sons of old 'Charlie' Jones are not devoid of all feeling and respect to their departed parent."

Disaster alert testing on July 27

AUSALERTS are warning messages sent to mobile devices by state and territory emergency services organisations and the Australian Government. AusAlert is just one of the many ways that the government is helping to keep Australians safer during local and national emergencies and disasters.

AusAlerts can be sent about different types of emergencies, such as natural hazards (ie. bushfires, floods, cyclones, earthquakes or tsunamis), security threats (ie. serious public safety events or terrorism), biosecurity incidents (ie. animal or plant disease or biohazard outbreaks), or health emergencies (ie. pandemics or other major public health issues).

AusAlert will be ready to use in October 2026, but before it launches, the system needs to be tested across Australia.

On Monday, July 27, a test alert will be sent to all mobile devices in Australia. This will be after some testing in localised areas (Murrindindi Shire is not included in these tests). The national time for the test in Victoria will be 2pm.

Alerts will be sent to most smartphones, smartwatches and tablets (but not Apple iPads). At the time of the test, a single Critical AusAlert test will be sent to every mobile device in Australia. Everyone

with a compatible phone or other device in Australia can expect to receive the alert.

Devices will vibrate and play a siren-like warning sound for about 10 seconds. An AusAlert message will appear on device screens. It will clearly say it is a test. Exactly how it appears will depend on your device type and operating system.

You don't need to do anything if you receive a test alert. It is just a test. But in an actual disaster, an AusAlert will tell you the type of emergency, where it's located, how serious it is and what to do. It will also tell you the name of the emergency organisation that has sent the AusAlert and where to find more information about the emergency.

If you *don't* receive a test alert, you don't need to do anything. Your device might not be compatible or maybe it wasn't connected to a mobile tower at the time of the test.

To make sure you're AusAlert ready, always install the latest software updates on your device when asked. Be sure to restart your device after updating.

AusAlerts contain important information and should be turned on to help keep you safe. As the AusAlert national test is a Critical Alert, you can't turn it off via your device settings.



The test message will be similar to the text in this image. -S

The only way to not receive a Critical Alert is to turn your mobile device off or switch it to 'aeroplane mode' for the duration of the test.

If receiving an AusAlert test message will disrupt you or cause you or a family member to feel unsafe, turn off your mobile devices or switch them to aeroplane mode before the scheduled test time in your location and leave them off for at least one hour.

1800RESPECT said that during the test, a loud sound will play on all compatible devices, even if they are on silent or 'do not disturb'. If a device is turned off, the alert will sound when it is switched back on. If you use a hidden or safety phone and are affected by domestic, family and sexual violence it's important you plan ahead. Call 1800 737 732, text 0458 737 732 or visit 1800respect.org.au for online chat and video call services.

Yea Saleyards: Lighter cattle sell better at June store sale

LOWER weighted cattle sold better last Friday at the June Combined Agents Store Sale at the Yea Saleyards. Around 1400 head of cattle were yarded across the four livestock vendors in Yea, down from the bigger numbers of the numerous May sales.

Elders Livestock Agent Andrew Hill provided details on the June sale.

"The better end of the cattle sold well. There was a lot of smaller lots this sale, the twos and fives, which we didn't have last sale," Andrew said.

Cattle averaged \$1772 per head for the sale, with an average weight of 391kg, equalling to an average of 453c/kg. The feedlots were well represented at the sale.

In the steer category, it was predominantly Black Angus. Top weight was 760kg and top price per head \$3100, with smaller weighted cattle selling better.

"The steers sold on par with last week. There's a small number of those heavier cattle, 500 to 600kg cattle, sold at \$3100, which comes out at about 516c/kg," Andrew said.

"The 430 to 450kg cattle come out at an average of about \$2400, which comes out about 540c/kg. And then you come down to those 380kg for \$2080, or about 540c/kg. The 350kg cattle made \$1990, or 560c/kg, and then 300kg cattle made \$1700, which was about the same.

"Then you get to those 200kg cattle and they hit 600c/kg pretty quick. There's a lot of people chasing those smaller black cattle types and they're selling swiftly at \$1300. The 250kg cattle are making \$1400, so they're selling pretty well."

Heifers reached a top price per head of \$2580 with a top weight of 600kg. There were a few Charolais and Hereford pens mixed in among the Angus heifers.

"The best pen of heifers were 420kg and they made \$2180, which brings them out at 519c/kg. Then you come down to 350kg heifers and they come in at \$1750, which is a smidge under five bucks. Then you hit that 300kg heifers and under and they will hit around that \$1500, \$5 bracket," Andrew said.

The first row of cows and calves sold well, reaching a top price per head of \$3450.

The next cattle sale at the Yea Saleyards will be the Combined Agents Store Sale on Friday, July 3.

YEA SALEYARDS		STOCK REPORT 5 JUNE 2026			
Combined Agents Store Sale	Total Yarding	Steers	Heifers	Cows & Calves	
Number of head	1,348				
Average \$ per head	\$1,772				
Average weight per head	391kg				
Top price per head		\$3,100	\$2,580	\$3,450	
Top weight		760kg	600kg		
Turnover	\$2.3 million				



Despite several cattle sales through May, the June store sale was still relatively well attended. -BD



Livestock agents at the sale included Elders, Nutrien, VLP and Alex Scott and Staff. -BD



Clay and Harry from Strath Creek at last Friday's cattle sale in Yea. -BD

KID'S PUZZLES PUZZLES

Colouring Page



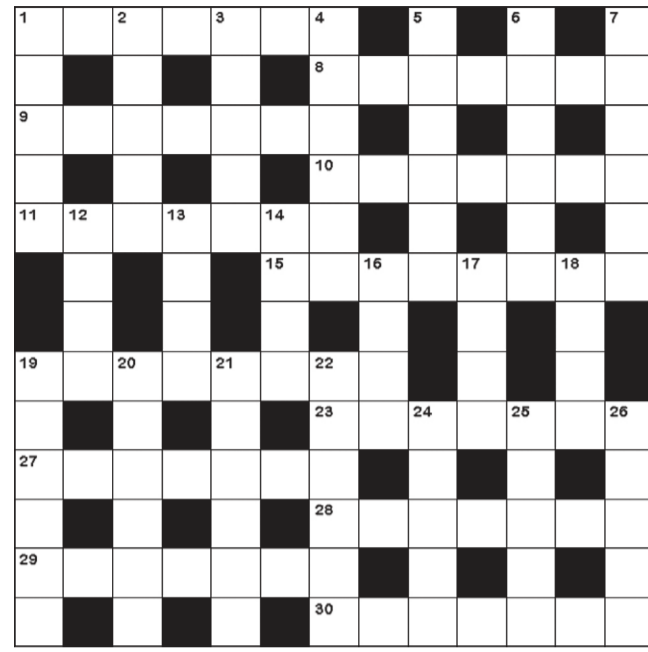
Crossword

ACROSS

- Belonging to the upper layers of the open sea.
- A formal written statement of relinquishment.
- A readily perceived pretence or mockery.
- Iron shaped by hammering with tools.
- A beginner who is being taught the trade.
- Friendship that is free from physical desire.
- At a higher level in knowledge or skills.
- Exposed to the circulation of air for purification.
- Lets saliva drivel from the mouth.
- Speak rapidly and incessantly about trivia.
- Toy dogs with long straight silky white coats.
- Comes back to the place one has just left.

DOWN

- An edging of small loops, as on lace or ribbon.
- South American cud-chewing mammal that spits.
- Seedlike fruit produced by the cereal grasses.
- Loosely twisted yarn used for embroidery.
- Very nearly but not quite enough.
- A blank space that surrounds the text on a page.



- A busy, confused and intensely excited time.
- A highway or byway for vehicles only.
- The main concept you are thinking about.
- Surpassing the ordinary in size or scale.
- An officer who acts as military assistant.
- A plant of the marrow family known as gumbo.
- Run a car at a slow speed or out of gear.
- Accept as true without verification or proof.
- Capable of normal growth and development.
- The daughters of your brothers or sisters.
- When children are given chocolate eggs.
- Act against or in opposition to something.
- A style of architecture in England.
- Apply protective covering to a wound.

Word Search - Words starting with "S"

SAND	Y	D	G	F	V	I	X	G	T	N	R	H	X	R	G
SANDWICH	F	R	N	I	N	O	F	N	V	D	K	C	B	P	S
SEAHORSE	S	X	R	A	Z	Z	U	I	N	Y	G	I	F	T	E
SHOWBAG	U	E	H	E	S	B	O	G	O	L	T	W	X	V	K
SHOWER	F	E	Z	M	B	R	E	N	C	G	O	D	S	O	P
SINGING	Y	S	W	O	E	W	S	I	Z	R	T	N	Q	N	S
SOCCER	H	Q	W	W	H	A	S	K	I	S	A	U	T	G	
SOFT	Z	M	O	I	O	Q	U	R	R	A	T	S	I	H	K
SQUIGGLE	D	H	A	W	N	N	B	U	T	A	X	O	G	Y	I
STAR	S	B	B	D	S	G	F	S	B	S	S	C	G	H	A
STRAWBERRY	Z	A	M	H	S	W	I	M	M	I	N	G	L	B	V
SUNSHINE	G	D	I	T	E	S	R	O	H	A	E	S	E	K	I
SWIMMING	C	N	U	D	V	Y	O	D	C	L	B	F	L	G	C
SWING	E	S	O	C	C	E	R	F	Q	E	V	V	G	U	J
	F	V	Z	N	B	O	V	I	T	A	W	A	S	N	Y

Word Search

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

Meat Dishes

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| BEEFSTIRFRY | MEATBALLS |
| BOLOGNESE | MEATPIE |
| HAMBURGER | PORKROAST |
| LAMBKOFATA | SAUSAGES |
| LAMBSTEW | STEAKANDCHIPS |
| LASAGNA | STROGANOFF |

Math Square

	+		+		18
x		-		+	
	+	8	-		3
-		-		÷	
	-		-	3	-4
3		-11		11	

Fill in the missing numbers.

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

Cryptogram

Meat Dishes

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
				1	17			

J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R

S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
10							

E E E
3 1 1 11 1 2 24

E E S
21 6 5 21 1 7 18 1 10

F
3 26 25 20 13 6 4 26 14 8

F E S
6 2 24 13 5 26 1 2 24 10

Sudoku

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

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 contain each number and letter only once.

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.

4	-		+		11
+		-		-	
	-		-	1	-4
-		-		-	
	-		-		-10
6		-13		2	

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CRYPTOGRAM
A B C D E F G H I J K L M
6 21 15 24 1 13 19 20 26 16 11 14 4
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
2 12 23 7 5 10 25 18 9 3 22 8 17
WEEKEND BARBEQUES WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

CROSSWORD
P E L A G I C A M H
I L R E L E A S E
C H A R A D E M R C
O M I W R O U G H T
T R A I N E E S I I
A O D P L A T O N I C
A E I I K D
A D V A N C E D R L
S I I A E R A T E D
S L A V E R S E U R
U B C T W A D D L E
M A L T E S E C O S
E E S R E T U R N S

MATH SQUARES
7 + 2 + 9 = 18
x - +
1 + 8 - 6 = 3
- - ÷
4 - 5 - 3 = -4
3 -11 11

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

KIDS - MATH SQUARES
4 - 2 + 9 = 11
+ - -
5 - 8 - 1 = -4
- - -
3 - 7 - 6 = -10
6 -13 2

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DEATH NOTICES

Young, Valerie May (nee Hussey)
 14/03/1938-
 29/05/2026
 Beloved wife of Stuart McLaren Young (dec). Proud and loving mum of Andrew and Kathryn. Devoted grandmother of Alycia, Hannah, Hamish and Kira.



N.F.D.A 1800 080 909
 www.mccormackfunerals.com.au

FUNERAL NOTICES

Young, Valerie May (nee Hussey)
 14/03/1938-
 29/05/2026
 Funeral at St Luke's Yea, Wednesday June 10, 1pm, followed by a burial service at Yea Cemetary.



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EPA trialing new roadside acoustic cameras to monitor noise pollution

FOR anyone who has awoken at 4am to the roar of a V8 Commodore heading to work, had their eardrums split by a passing modified sports bike, or heard the rumbling of truck engine brakes while exiting a café, the announcement that the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria is trialing roadside acoustic cameras might be a welcome one.

Minister for the Environment, Steve Dimopoulos, recently announced the \$1.3 million trial of the cameras.

"This acoustic camera trial will help in detecting and reducing the number of noisy vehicles in our streets and suburbs, helping families feel safer," Mr Dimopoulos said.

The cameras will be installed in locations impacted by multiple noise complaints, following consultation with Victoria Police,

and are designed to monitor for vehicles that exceed regulated noise limits.

This information will be used by EPA officers to issue vehicle testing notices to ensure vehicles are operating within regulated noise limits.

If testing confirms a vehicle exceeds regulated noise limits, action must be taken to bring the noise level into compliance.

Failure to act can result in a \$1221 fine for individuals and a \$6105 fine for companies.

How the acoustic cameras work

According to ABC journalist Tony Ibrahim, noise cameras used collaboratively between the EPA and Transport NSW, "use noise meters to pick up sounds above a set decibel limit within a distance of just over 15 metres, while cameras zoom in to scan licence plates."

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)

The ABC reported that four cameras were purchased in the New South Wales trial in 2024, with each one "estimated to cost \$50,000."

The cameras can be installed as permanent roadside infrastructure, or mounted on poles to provide for relocatability, allowing EPA Victoria to target specific zones and sites based around noise complaints.

The EPA will trial seven cameras across the next two years in hot spot locations across the state, and Victorian drivers can expect to see the cameras in operation later this year.

The data: Noise reports statewide and locally

Across Victoria, the EPA received 5404 noise reports in 2020-21. That jumped in 2025 to more than 9100 reports, with almost 5000 noisy vehicle testing notices and 1222 noisy vehicle infringement notices issued in the same year.

According to data sourced from the Environmental Protection Authority, 432 noise reports were called in during 2024-25 in north east Victoria, up from 404 noise reports in the region the year prior and 357 in 2022-23.

For context, that is over eight noise reports per week across the north east of the state. If the increase in the amount of noise reports per year continued at this steady trajectory, north east Victoria could have over 500 noise reports by the year 2027.

Victorian noise limits for vehicles

In November of 1983, 'Uptown Girl' by Billy Joel was the number one song in the United States. When it comes to Victorian noise limits, however, the date of November 1, 1983, carries significant weight.

Section 143 of the *Environment Protection Regulations 2021*, 'Noise emissions – passenger vehicles not approved in accordance with ADR 83/00', states that vehicles manufactured before November 1, 1983, must not exceed a noise limit of 96 a-weighted decibels. Vehicles manufactured on or after this date must not exceed a noise level of 90 a-weighted decibels.

"A person must not use, or permit to be used, on a highway a forward-control passenger vehicle, off-road passenger vehicle, passenger car or passenger car derivative if that vehicle: (a) is not approved in accordance with ADR 83/00; and (b) emits, or is capable of emitting, noise exceeding the noise level specified in subregulation (2)," the regulations read.

Motorcycle noise regulations centre around the years 1985 and 1994.

A motorcycle or motor trike, other than a recreational motor cycle, manufactured before March 1, 1985, must not exceed a noise level of 100 a-weighted decibels. The same category manufactured on or after March 1, 1985, has a noise limit of 94 a-weighted decibels.

Recreational motorcycles manufactured on or after January 1, 1994, must not exceed the noise level of 94 a-weighted decibels.

Section 146 of the regulations lays out the rules around non-compliant devices.

"A person must not sell, supply or install a device used or designed to prevent, limit or regulate the emission of noise which, when fitted to a vehicle in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, fails to reduce the noise-emitting capability of the vehicle to a level that complies with the noise level specified in relation to that vehicle in this Division," section 146 states.

Full noise limits for Victorian vehicles are laid out in the *Environment Protection Regulations 2021*, sections 141 to 147, which can be found on the Victorian Legislation website at legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/statutory-rules/environment-protection-regulations-2021

Have you spotted a black-shouldered kite?

THE black-shouldered kite (*elanus axillaris*) is featured this month in the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority's 2026 Year of the Raptor community awareness campaign.

Raptors are carnivorous birds of prey that hunt and feed on live prey including rabbits, rodents, fish, lizards and other birds.

Goulburn Broken CMA Project Officer, Janice Mentiplay-Smith, said the black-shouldered kite was gull-like in appearance.

"This bird can be seen hovering above open grasslands, paddocks and even grassy median strips on the Hume Freeway," Ms Mentiplay-Smith said.

"As if held by an invisible string, the hovering black-shouldered kite suspends itself mid-flight while scanning for prey.

"Once detected, it drops like a stone to grab its meal then flies away before a larger raptor steals it. Prey is eaten either in flight or from a tall lookout such as a standing dead tree."

Ms Mentiplay-Smith said not all raptors employ the hovering technique. "Many soar and dive but the Black-shouldered kite hovers in style, suspended in mid-air with legs dangling," she said.

True to its name, the black-shouldered kite has black shoulders and wing tips which contrast against its snow-white body. Its distinctive red eye is notable, as is its dark feathers, extending beyond the eye 'Cleopatra style'.

As part of the black-shouldered kite courtship ritual, the female will flip upside-down in mid-air to grab food offered by the wooing male. Together they construct a large stick nest in a tall tree and incubate three or four eggs for 30 days. After just five weeks the chicks are fully fledged and ready to hover and hunt.

"Most raptors need tall lookouts and places to fly to so they can safely eat their catch," Ms Mentiplay-Smith said.



A black-shouldered kite. -Richard Gregson

Is your smoke alarm close enough to wake you?

COUNTRY Fire Authority (CFA) and Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) joined fire services across Australia for Smoke Alarm Action Day on June 1, urging Victorians to test their smoke alarms and check they are correctly installed and in working order.

This year, CFA and FRV asked households to go a step further and consider whether their smoke alarms provide enough warning if a fire starts while someone is asleep.

Fire investigation data shows sleeping areas are the most common points of ignition in residential fires that result in serious injury or death.

A recent fire in Mooroolbark has highlighted why smoke alarm placement matters, after an unattended candle ignited a fire in an upstairs bedroom while an occupant was sleeping.

CFA crews were called to the home about 3am on May 15, with the resident waking to find the bedroom already well alight, before managing to escape unharmed.

Firefighters were able to contain the fire to the room of origin, preventing it from spreading further through the home. The bedroom sustained significant damage.

CFA Incident Controller Kyle Willsher said the resident was fortunate to wake when they did.

"Crews were called about 3am and, thankfully, everyone was already out of the house when we arrived," Kyle said.

"There were smoke alarms operating elsewhere in the home, but there was no alarm in the bedroom where the fire started.

"This is a reminder that smoke alarms need to be close enough to wake you, especially if a fire starts while you are sleeping.

"Candles should never be left unattended, and they should always be extinguished before leaving a room or going to sleep."

CFA Acting Chief Officer Garry Cook said the incident showed why Victorians should not assume one smoke alarm is enough.

"If a fire starts while you are asleep, every second counts," Garry said.

"Smoke alarms should be installed in bedrooms, living areas and hallways.

"Interconnected smoke alarms provide the best protection because when one alarm activates, all smoke alarms in the home sound.

"Use Smoke Alarm Action Day to test your alarms, check where they are installed and talk to your family about your home fire escape plan."

Acting Fire Rescue Commissioner Joshua Fischer said that working smoke alarms are essential for home fire safety.

"In an emergency such as a house fire, seconds can make all the difference. Working smoke alarms give you the best chance to get out safely and call Triple Zero (000)," he said.

"That means every household must have working smoke alarms that are tested regularly and replaced if they are more than 10 years old. It is also recommended to install additional smoke alarms where they will wake you, including inside bedrooms and living areas, to give you the best chance of escape if a fire occurs.

"As we head into winter, Victorians should also reduce fire risks around the home by keeping flammable items away from heaters, never leaving candles unattended and turning off electrical appliances before going to sleep."

CFA and FRV are urging Victorians to test smoke alarms monthly, install smoke alarms in every bedroom, living area and hallway, interconnect smoke alarms where possible, replace smoke alarms every 10 years, keep clothing, bedding and curtains at least one metre from heaters, never leave candles, cooking or heaters unattended, and make and practise a home fire escape plan.

Alexandra's hotels during the gold rush

by AP Downey, *Innisfail Queensland, Alexandra Standard, August 18, 1922*

"THE first building was of stringy bark and saplings, Dick Vining's boarding house and house of entertainment. Lots of hotels started up like mushrooms in a night, commencing near the creek and spreading along both sides of the road up towards the Lucky.

"Cooper and Perkins, Hames and Ashby, W. Cummings, Morris (Corner Hotel), Pat O'Donnell, Kirwin of the Shamrock, Mount Pleasant Hotel (afterwards kept by Peg-leg Cook, who was much liked), the New York and London (Charlie Jones and family, of the Lucky), and the Montezuma, kept by old Jack Levy, uncle of the Thompson's, of sporting fame. He afterwards kept 'The Haymarket' in Melbourne.

"There were a host of 'shanties' more or less reputable. Stores and shops filled the spaces, and there was not a vacant lot on either side of the road for over half a mile from the creek. The storekeepers included Tom Hall, Cronin Bros., Peterkin, and half a dozen others.

"Boulter and Perkins had the butcher's shop opposite the corner hotel. Boulter went away

to northern rushes and eventually died on the road from the coast to the Roper River rush. Harker joined Perkins; then Harry Perkins sold out and went to Thornton and made a splash, built the Thornton Hotel, and went in for agriculture heavily; but came a 'cropper'. Sableburg had 15 head of stamps going on the creek, a hundred yards up from the gate. [15 head of stamps referred to a quartz-crushing mill, often called a stamp mill, which used 15 heavy iron hammers.] Then there were ten head of stamps at The Mysterious and 15 head on the Prospecting claim. It was the sweetest music imaginable. Those batteries in full swing meant the distribution of some £20,000 a month, and together with a good return from alluvial made things fairly hum.

"There was no six o'clock or eleven o'clock closing those days. Every pub had a dance hall, and they danced six nights a week. There was no lack of ladies. A goodly number of dance girls were there, who received regular salaries and had no other duties than to dance and look pretty, all of which they did most successfully. Ninety per cent of them were very respectable, and much more scrumptious than the ordinary flapper of to-day, besides being modestly attired.

"No drunken man, or person that had misconducted in public, would be tolerated in a dance room. Nevertheless etiquette required that at the conclusion of each dance the gentleman should offer his partner some refreshment; and so did etiquette require that the lady should accept something, generally raspberry, lemonade, ginger wine, or something quite harmless. Should a lady get into the way of taking something intoxicating she quickly earned a sobriquet, as for instance, Port Wine Mary, Gin-fizz Lizzie, or something equally unpleasant. Such cases were rare, but other and pleasanter ones were common, as Pretty Cocky (a famous beauty at the New York and London), The Black Angel, Pretty Nelly, Sweet Ellen, etcetera, etcetera. All drinks were 1s, so the custom of refreshing was for the good of 'the house'.

"Among the miners there was quite a number of 'forty-niners', or Californian miners, as well as a sprinkling of professional men from everywhere; also a few aristocratic wasters whose names are best forgotten.

"In the bars and streets there was at night hundreds of men, plenty of them full of liquor. Fighting was freely indulged in; the top

notcher was Tom Waite, a ten stone man, and one Dan Creed was the champion wrestler. You could stroll up and down on Saturday night from fight to fight and back your fancy. One remarkable circumstance was the total absence of lethal weapons. It was just bare fists, with plenty to see fair play.

"Since those days the writer has knocked about Australia from Melbourne to Sydney, and from Sydney to Broken Hill and back, and from Sydney to Thursday Island and back, and has been present at more than one function under the auspices of an aristocratic order, whereat there was more intoxication and unmanly behaviour calculated to give offence to decent womanhood than ever occurred in the dance halls of Alexandra in 1866 or 1867.

"There was a sergeant of police (McCormack) and two or three constables. They did not interfere with the drinking, gambling or fighting, which was generally indulged in by the younger men. Other crime was remarkably rare; in fact, conspicuous by its absence."

New community grant program

BUNNINGS has launched a new Community Grants Program, committing \$1 million across five years to support not-for-profit organisations delivering meaningful local impact across Australia and New Zealand.

Opening for applications from July 1, the program will provide grants of up to \$10,000 to eligible organisations backing practical community projects that make a real difference locally.

Projects supported through the program could include community garden upgrades, improvements to local sporting club facilities, youth wellbeing spaces and regional community initiatives.

For more information, including eligibility criteria and how to apply, visit bunnings.com.au/communitygrants

Parliament Prize on offer for Victorian students

ENTRIES for this year's Parliament Prize are now open for Victorian students from Grade Five to Year 12.

The Nationals' Member for Northern Victoria Gaele Broad said the prize was a great opportunity for young people to learn more about Parliament and have some fun along the way.

The Parliament Prize asks students what they would say to Parliament if they were an MP, and invites them to submit their own 90-second video of a statement they would make.

"A Member's Statement is an opportunity for MPs to make a brief statement of up to 90 seconds in state Parliament on matters of interest or concern to them and those living in their electorate," Ms Broad said.

"I always enjoy visiting the schools in my electorate. It's always interesting to hear students' thoughts and views on matters that are important to them."

The competition has three categories: Grades Five to Six, Years Seven to Nine, and Years 10 to 12.

Last year the Parliament Prize received 1463 entries from students from over 240 schools across Victoria. And, with more than 450 unique topics raised in these entries, Members of Parliament took a great interest in what students in their local areas had to say.

Topics covered included the cost of living, health and mental health, artificial intelligence and education.

Cash prizes are also on offer. Entries close on Friday, June 12, 2026.

For more information and to submit an entry go to parliament.vic.gov.au/teach-and-learn/parliament-prize/



Services Australia bus visiting

SERVICES Australia's Mobile Service Centre, Golden Wattle, will be visiting towns across North East Victoria and the Yarra Ranges in the coming weeks.

The mobile service centre will be offering the community easy access to Medicare and Centrelink services and can provide information about the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Department of Veterans' Affairs services.

The bus will be at Eildon on Tuesday, June 16, in front of the shopping complex on Main Street from 10am to 4pm.

It will be in Alexandra on Wednesday, June 17, adjacent to the town hall on Perkins Street from 9am to 4pm.

They will also be in Marysville on Thursday, June 18, adjacent to the information centre on Murchison Street from 9.30am to

4pm, and in Kinglake on Friday, June 19, near the Kinglake Hotel on Aitken Crescent from 9.30am to 4pm.

The mobile service centres are 20 tonne trucks operated by staff from Services Australia, providing regional and rural Australians with friendly face-to-face services and tailored support.

Staff on board can help with Centrelink claims, payment and services information, updating information, confirming documents and supporting information, myGov services, social work support and referrals, Medicare registrations, and accessing online services through a self-service terminal.

For more information, including upcoming stopping locations and times, visit servicesaustralia.gov.au/mobileoffice

Parks staff industrial action

FRONTLINE rangers and operational staff at Parks Victoria are taking protected industrial action, with the Australian Workers' Union (AWU) calling for a reclassification and pay uplift that reflects the varied, skilled and often demanding work they perform every day.

They build campgrounds and amenities, carry out rescues, and protect and save wildlife. They are the reason Victoria's parks stay pristine and safe for the millions of people who visit them each year.

The AWU believes these workers are currently underpaid and under-classified for the work they do, and that a reclassification and uplift is needed to properly recognise their skills and responsibilities.

As part of the campaign, members will be taking protected industrial action that includes: Displaying campaign material and information in workplaces, making statements in support of and explaining the industrial action including while in uniform, making media statements including while in uniform, placing campaign signage at parks and on employer vehicles, and setting email signatures and auto-reply to messages in support of the action.

The union has warned the action could escalate, from withdrawing duties such as cleaning and maintaining parks right through to locking the public out of parks, if Parks Victoria management fails to recognise the value of the work its members perform.

"Rangers and operational staff do complex, varied and at times dangerous work, and it is time their classifications and pay caught up with the reality of the job," AWU Victoria Secretary Ronnie Hayden said.

"Our members would much rather be getting on with their work, but they are prepared to escalate this action until management commits to the ranger uplift. This is squarely in the hands of Parks Victoria executives. We do not want to see them ruin the weekend for Victorian families who simply want to enjoy our beautiful parks."

AWU Organiser Lisa Pearce said the action reflected how strongly members feel about being recognised for the work they do.

"Our members build the campgrounds and amenities that families enjoy, they carry out rescues, and they protect and rescue our wildlife. They are proud of their work and they do it well," Ms Pearce said.

"They are simply asking to be paid and classified for the skilled work they actually perform, and they are standing together to make that case."

The union says the current offer on the table, combined with a firm commitment to the ranger uplift, would meet the needs of frontline operational staff. The provisions in the offer are the standard provisions found in all Victorian Government enterprise agreements.

The AWU believes its plan is consistent with the government's wages policy, with the savings from improved staff retention helping to offset the cost of the uplift.

"Every time Parks Victoria loses an experienced ranger, it loses years of local knowledge and skill that takes time to rebuild. The cost of that revolving door far outweighs the cost of retaining good people," Mr Hayden said.

"Our position differs from other unions because we represent the frontline rangers and operational staff who do this work on the ground, not the back-office staff in head office. Our priorities reflect the priorities of our members."

Cold weather for ladies winter tennis rounds

by Deb Mims

THE first day of June brought a significant drop in temperature, showing that winter is approaching. All teams across the Euroa District Ladies Winter Tennis Association (EDLWTA) rugged up and played without a drop of rain falling from the sky. Not sure whether anyone actually broke into a sweat but tennis and afternoon tea was enjoyed by everyone at the various home courts.

Wappan versus Terip Terip 4-2, 43-28

Mansfield's Wappan hosted Terip Terip with Anna Speirs and Jenny Bell teaming up for

their first match against Cindy Hayes and Phoebe McDermid, going Wappan's way.

Rhonda Carpenter and Carol Watts were fired up against Terip's Jenny Martin and Suzanne Irvine, and a tight match it was with Martin and Irvine equalling the sets after the first round.

The rest of the sets were a see saw battle, but with Wappan taking four of the six sets, two of them in a convincing way, they came out victors on the day. Knowing how cold it was in Mansfield, that hot cuppa at the end of the day was more than welcomed by everyone along with a delicious afternoon tea.

Moglonemby versus Benalla 0-6, 27-48

Mansfield made the journey across to Euroa where not only was Euroa playing but with Moglonemby's home courts being at Euroa and they being the home team against Benalla, it was a very social day with all four teams joining in for afternoon tea together.

Despite being the visitors, Benalla was not holding back and the team of Peta Kelly, Claire Sharp, Maureen Jewell and Marg Clode took all six sets off Sue Vaughan, Marlene Hanrahan, Robyn Johnson and Lisa Krepp of 'Moggy'.

Euroa versus Mansfield 3-3, 37-33

A very tight match between Euroa's Faye Mollison, Julie Harrington, Triona King and Mary Dewis against Mansfield's Cathie Anderson, Karyn Fraser, Carolyn Murray, Loretta Armitage and Pat Howard with the day finishing up three sets a piece and Euroa pipping Mansfield at the post by four games.

For the first time since the competition started there has not been a tie breaker on any of the score sheets in this round.

Creightons Creek had a bye for the week.



Terip Terip's Suzanne Irvine and Phoebe McDermid alongside the celebrating team of Jenny Bell and Carol Watts of Mansfield's Wappan team. -S

Eildon Golf Club report

by Puttomatic

HELLO everyone and welcome to the Eildon Golf Club's weekly report. Last Saturday the club played a stroke count your putts round. It was good to see 11 players and welcome to one of the club's new members Alex Pelgrim. Also great to see Rosemary Parker and Brad Newton up for a hit.

Winner for last week, Rod Taylor took out the day's competition with a nett 72, with Kerry Power coming in second with a nett 73. Ball-run winners, Leigh Munro 76, Colin Long 78, Rosemary Parker 79 and Marian Williamson also nett 79.

Nearest the pin winner last week, Kerry Power on the 12th, Ken Coller on the 14th, no winners on the other nearest the pin holes and no winners on the birdie drink holes. The super six winner last week was Kerry power with nett 22, swindle winner Denis McDonald and entry draw winner Alex Pelgrim and Rod Taylor won the putting competition with 26 putts.

Next week's competition will be a stableford round and congratulation to all the winners and Eildon Golf Club look forward to seeing you at the club soon. Until next time, take care and happy hitting.

Alexandra Golf Club report

by Dave Silverman

THERE was no golf played at Alexandra Golf Club last Tuesday, as the persistent rain made golfers decide to stay home.

Conditions were a little more benign last Wednesday for the Ladies' Monthly Medal round, and with all players well rugged up, the smallish field teed off at 9am.

Once again, the winner was Rosemary Parker, whose score of 107 net 78 gave her her first Monthly Medal, with second place going to Ruth Worland with a 93 net 79.

Only two nearest the pins were claimed, with two going to Sue Greatorex and 18 to Sandra Morris.

It was a medal round last Saturday, too, and 18 men teed off to compete for the prize. As a result of tied scores last

month, the round also included a playoff for the May Medal between yours truly and Matt Richards, which turned out to be a real non-event. Matt played superbly to record a 71 net 67, which not only left me floundering in his wake, but also gave him the win for the June Medal. Congratulations, Matt, great round of golf.

Mick Holohan came in second, just one shot away, and also had the fewest putts with 28.

Another shot further back was Dan Burns in third, with Corey Jack in fourth with a 72, and John Mosley in fifth, also with a 72.

Matt also picked up nearest the pin on two, which resulted in his first birdie of the day, with seven going to Simon Rouget, 12 to Corey and 18 to Sam Kidd, while five went begging.

Marysville Golf Club report

by Lesley Rundle

LAST Saturday in rather misty and cold conditions the golfers played stroke for the monthly medal at Marysville Golf Club.

The ladies' winner was Gail Leigh (10) with nett 79 followed by Heather Jenkins (21) with nett 81. David Douthwaite (21) with nett 75 won the men's medal on a countback from Richy Clark (14).

The nearest the pins were won by David Douthwaite, Richy Clark, Brian Worcester and Peter Lilley who also won the Golden Shot. Richy Clark won the putting. Members welcomed Dustin Wong from Future Golf to the competition. Next Saturday golfers will play a stroke round and the ladies will be playing the fourth round of the Barton Shield.

Members would like to thank all those who organised and assisted with the inaugural fundraising Hole in One Competition. The weather was not conducive to a pleasant day on the golf course but the club thank all those visitors who braved the weather to support the initiative.

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Alexandra community set to rally for FightMND Round

THE Alexandra Football Netball Club is calling on the community to get behind a special FightMND Round next Saturday when Alexandra hosts Pakenham in what promises to be a day of fundraising, fun and community spirit.

The event has been organised by local community member Scott Ferrier, whose dedication to the FightMND cause has helped bring the day together. With Motor Neurone Disease touching the lives of so many Australian families, Ferrier is hoping the community will once again dig deep and support the fight for a cure.

This year's event is particularly significant following the recent loss of Neale Daniher, whose courage, determination and unwavering commitment to raising awareness for MND inspired communities across Australia and transformed the fight against the disease.

Alexandra Football Netball Club President Kylie Cairns said the club was proud to support both the cause and the efforts of Scott.

"Scott has invested a tremendous amount of time and energy into organising this day, and we're incredibly grateful for everything he has done to make it happen," Kylie said.

"Neale Daniher's legacy extends far beyond football. He brought communities together for a common cause, and we're proud that Alexandra Football Netball Club can play a small part in continuing that work."

One of the major attractions on the day will be the fundraising dunk tank, where spectators can purchase throws for the chance to send a range of surprise guests and familiar faces from the club's junior and senior ranks splashing into the water. A cake stall will also be operating throughout the day, with all proceeds contributing directly to FightMND.



Alexandra Football Netball Club is gearing up for their FightMND Round. Pictured are AFNC President Kylie Cairns and event organiser Scott Ferrier. -S

Adding to the occasion, former AFL star Tom Mitchell will make his second appearance for the club's senior side. With FightMND Round holding special significance for him, Mitchell jumped at the opportunity to support the cause while also lining up alongside close friend Lachlan Nankervis.

Following the senior football match, Mitchell and Nankervis will take part in a relaxed Q and A session at the clubrooms,

giving supporters the opportunity to hear stories from Mitchell's AFL journey, his experiences in elite sport, and their friendship, with no doubt a few funny stories along the way.

Scott hopes the day will be remembered not only for the football and netball, but for the community's willingness to come together and support an important cause.

"Every dollar raised helps," he said.

"We're hoping people come along, enjoy a great day at the club and help us continue the fight against MND."

The Alexandra Football Netball Club encourages all members, supporters and the wider community to attend, support the fundraising activities and help honour Neale Daniher's remarkable legacy while contributing to the ongoing fight against Motor Neurone Disease.

Alexandra Squash Club: Round seven of term two pennant

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition

Funnel Webs versus Red Backs

JIM (coach) versus Matt: Matt showed his skills as Jim applied pressure by hitting the ball deep but still playable length. Matt worked hard to keep the ball in play but also disposed of any loose balls Jim threw up. Matt claimed more points. 56 to 54

Randy versus Sally: There was never very much difference in scores. Both players using good placement and court position. Sally won the match. 65 to 62.

Sam versus Mick: Sam had complete control for the first two games until a 'no let' call against Mick fired him into action and lifting the tempo to win the third game. Sam overall was too good at getting to the ball and had better placement to take the victory. 74 to 54.

Justin (fill in) versus Jim: A battle of wills as to who could set the pace of the game. Both bringing very different styles to the court, Jim was able to hold the court when the points mattered to win the match. 58 to 50.

Orb Weavers versus White Tails

Eric versus Ethan: Eric made a good effort, but Ethan was too good from start to finish winning the match with ease. 65 to 38.

Laura (fill in) versus Liane: Liane won three of four games but a blowout in the second gave Laura enough of an advantage in points to finish on top. 59 to 55.

Chris versus Travis: A great game. Travis played the ball into the back corners well making Chris work to stay in the game. A couple of loose lobs going high cost Travis the match in the final game having used this strategy to gain the advantage earlier. It came down to the wire with Chris winning the final game to win by a point. 59 to 58.

Michael versus Andrew: A hard-fought match all the way. Andrew just had the upper hand winning the match. 65 to 57.

Wednesday competition

Bees versus Mosquitoes

Marty versus Jordan: Expecting an easy match against a 10-year-old opponent, Jordan turned his flippancy levels up to 11. Marty just competed and let Jordans unforced errors do the job for him. The young player pinched the win. 72 to 63.

Justin versus Phil (fill in): Facing an opponent that routed him last time, Justin changed his method and attacked the backhand corner. This took away Phil's short game and it was point-for-point until Phil edged in front. Games two and three were grand theatrics. Mutual pressure caused each player to serve four faults in a row. Phil regained his mojo to win the match. 66 to 54.



Sally reaches to return Randy's shot. -S

Hornets versus Wasps

Nicole versus Matt: Nicole may have expected a kind run, but Matt is a dedicated squash protégé. His ability to pick-off easy shots has improved remarkably. He handed Nicole a harsh lesson in shot-selection and court craft via a 37-point drubbing. Matt won with a commanding lead. 82 to 45.

Kristelle versus Daniel L: It was an interesting sibling battle. Kristelle's serves gave Daniel hell, but with her wrist on the fritz she was having issues making shots in

rallies. The speed that Daniel's shots were moving proved difficult for Kristelle to read and pushed him forward for the win. 66 to 55.

Ben F versus Michael M: A very tight game. Both with some punishing finishers and great chase downs. The low scores show the length of the rallies. Ben had the goods to claim the match. 59 to 50.

The Alexandra Squash Club is hosting a beginners/new player night from 6 to 7pm on Tuesday, June 16. All are welcome.