



Edwards saw a chance to blind audition and took it Page 2



Garden Giveback to restore fire-affected gardens Page 5

BESS but no solar panels in Rubicon

SAMSUNG C&T Renewable Energy Australia (SREA) has announced that they are pivoting their proposed Rubicon Solar Farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) hybrid project to a standalone Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).

They said in their newly-released Project Information Sheet that they have “made the decision to place the solar generation component of the original hybrid project on hold. While the option to explore solar remains open for potential future assessment, the immediate focus will shift to the standalone BESS facility.”

They said that the project change will “By focusing solely on a BESS, SREA can support grid reliability while keeping long-term generation options open as market conditions evolve.

“SREA acknowledges the range of community views and feedback on the proposal to date, which has been considered in making this decision. SREA has also considered council’s Guidelines for Successful Renewable Energy in Murrindindi Shire and the Victorian Access Regime’s Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects.

“A Planning Permit Application (PPA) for the BESS is being prepared. The submission timing of the PPA is subject to further consultation, investigation and design development but anticipated to occur in late 2026 or early 2027. Should solar generation be considered in the future, it will be subject to a separate PPA.”

■ Continued page 11



A WELCOME DONATION

Komatsu recently donated \$10,000 to the Yarck CFA Brigade. Pictured are some of the members of South Morang, Yarrambat, Diamond Creek and Yarck Brigades at the presentation.

MORE ON PAGE 17

Hospital merger approved

VICTORIAN Minister for Health, Ingrid Stitt MP, has approved the voluntary amalgamation of Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health.

The press release states that the announcement marks “a significant step toward strengthening access to care closer to home for the Alexandra and district community, from November 1. A voluntary amalgamation will create a more sustainable local health service in Alexandra and support more connected care across the rural-metropolitan catchment, building on

Health Minister approves voluntary amalgamation

an established partnership already benefiting local patients and staff.”

Alexandra District Health Board Chair Kim Flanagan welcomed the Minister’s decision, saying that the announcement on Friday, August 28 “is a positive outcome for the Alexandra and district community. It will strengthen local health services and includes safeguards to protect local identity, leadership and community involvement.

“We will now work closely with

Eastern Health to implement the Minister’s decision and ensure the benefits of the voluntary amalgamation are realised for our community.”

Once implemented, the following service improvements will be delivered, as identified in the business case: Expanded local access to specialist care, with new and increased specialist clinics delivered at Alexandra District Health, including general medicine, geriatrics and paediatrics, reducing the

need for patients to travel long distances for routine specialist review;

Increased low-complexity surgery services to better utilise existing beds and theatre capacity to safely deliver more care locally;

A three-chair dialysis service at Alexandra District Health, operating as part of Eastern Health’s renal hub-and-satellite model;

Improved access to imaging (X-ray) and diagnostic services, addressing current service gaps that

limit the ability to deliver and coordinate care locally;

Stronger workforce sustainability, supported by expanded training and career pathways across rural and metropolitan settings, including access to Eastern Health training programs, commencement of an allied health graduate program from 2027, extension of learning management and scholarship programs, and opportunities for post-graduate education and specialist supervision;

■ Continued page 11

WORKING FOR REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

We’re making progress on national issues that help regional Australia. From cheaper home batteries to cut power bills, more investment in regional housing, and paid placements for allied health students. **Scan the QR code to see what’s been delivered and what’s next.**



Helen Haines MP

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

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



ADVERTISEMENT

CFA researchers seeking interview participants re Longwood fire

FOLLOWING the Longwood bushfire in January, researchers from Queensland University of Technology and RMIT University will be conducting interviews with people in Ruffy and Euroa in mid-September on behalf of the CFA.

The interviews will take place between September 12 and 15, will take approximately an hour, and each participant will receive a gift card in recognition of their time and contribution.

Participation in the research project is voluntary, and participants must be 18 years of age or older.

CFA are looking for participants that live, work or were involved in the Longwood fire case study location to share their experiences and challenges.

All information collected, including any quotes used in research findings, will remain confidential and will not include identifying details.

For more information or to register, visit tinyurl.com/26mgy8n7

To contact the research team for further information, email Louisa Brain at louisa.brain@qut.edu.au

According to the CFA website, "The Longwood East Fire in Janu-

ary 2026 was one of Victoria's most significant bushfire events in recent years, occurring during catastrophic fire danger conditions across the state.

"Igniting on January 7 near Longwood, the fast-moving fire spread rapidly through central Victorian communities, including Longwood East, Ruffy and surrounding rural areas, destroying homes, farmland and critical infrastructure.

"More than 140,000 hectares were eventually burned, with hundreds of firefighters and aircraft deployed in response. Tragically,

the fire claimed at least one life and resulted in extensive property and livestock losses, while thousands of residents were forced to evacuate under emergency warnings.

"This event demonstrated how quickly bushfires can escalate under extreme heat, strong winds and dry conditions. It reinforced the importance of acting early on emergency warnings, having a clear evacuation plan, maintaining a fire-ready property, and understanding local fire danger ratings before travelling or working in high-risk areas.

"On behalf of CFA, researchers

from Queensland University of Technology and RMIT University, are seeking participants to share their experiences of and challenges during the significant fire event of earlier this year."

Social research of this kind is important for fire agencies and organisations involved and the community. This allows areas to learn from these events to improve understanding of the process and impact of information provision as well as community comprehension and use of bushfire information before, during and after a bushfire.

The mystery of the Eildon camera solved

CONCERNS around a traffic monitoring camera in Eildon were recently raised by the community, but the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) says it is a temporary measure to "better understand vehicle and pedestrian movements around school crossings."

The temporary low-resolution traffic data collection camera was installed near Eildon Primary School at the Centre Avenue and High Street intersection to capture vehicle and pedestrian movements and was active between August 18 and 20. It is now offline.

The information collected will be used by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to inform recommendations on future network planning.

These cameras do not capture the identity of pedestrians or vehicles and are only activated to detect movement during peak morning and afternoon periods.

The survey has been commissioned by DTP with the support of the associated school as part of a state-wide safety audit on children's crossings.

Similar traffic safety surveys are being carried out over 2300 children's crossing sites across 78 Victorian local government areas (LGAs).

According to a DTP spokesperson, "a traffic monitoring camera was temporarily installed in Eildon to better understand vehicle and pedestrian movements around school crossings.

"The information collected will be used to inform future network planning. The low-resolution camera does not capture the identity of pedestrians or vehicles."



ALICE ANDERSON TRIBUTE: A photo from the 2025 Maling Road Auto Classico. This year, the team will be doing a 'Team Alice Walk' at the end of the fashion show. PHOTO: Lance Wilson

ALICE ANDERSON FUNDRAISING COMPLETE

MEMBERS of the Alice Anderson Memorial Project have proudly announced that the fundraising for the project is complete, having raised a spectacular \$165,000.

The funds include \$48,300 from more than 90 donors through the Australian Cultural Fund, \$100,000 from foundation donor, the Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce, and \$15,000 from Community Bank Inner East. Project partner, the City of Boroondara is also contributing \$100,000

towards the statue and landscaping.

They have now entered the artist selection stage to bring the vision for Alice's statue to reality.

Alice Anderson grew up in Narbethong and was a trailblazing Australian mechanic and entrepreneur who founded Australia's first all-female motor garage. Despite her life being tragically cut short at just 29 years old, she became a national icon of female independence and

technical skill during the 1920s.

To mark the centenary of Alice's death on September 17, 1926, the City of Boroondara is hosting the *A Spanner in the Works* free photographic exhibition at Kew Court House from September 16 to October 27, as well as other events which can be found at boroondara.vic.gov.au/boroondara-arts/creative-community/art-community/public-art/alice-anderson-public-art-project/alice-anderson-events

New early learning centre for Alexandra

THE state government is opening two Early Learning Victoria centres in Northern Victoria from 2029, including one in Alexandra, build at the Alexandra Primary School.

The two locations will provide more than 200 places for children, with integrated kinder and long daycare programs. Families will also be able to access Free Kinder as part of the kinder offering.

They'll have consulting rooms for maternal and child health, plus community spaces for other programs.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes said, "Local families have been asking for more childcare places and Labor is delivering, saving parents time, cutting costs and giving children the best start.

"Families can count on quality programs backed by Free Kinder at every centre, saving families up to \$2700 per child."

Protecting your pets

WHILE the risk of H5 bird flu in pets is extremely low, it's best to take precautions.

If you're out walking your dog or spending time outdoors, keep dogs on a lead in areas with native wildlife, don't allow pets to investigate or eat dead animals, and stop cats from roaming and hunting wildlife.

These simple actions help protect pets, wildlife and curbs the spread of disease.

If you suspect H5 bird flu in birds, mammals, poultry or other captive birds, report it immediately by calling the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888 or to DEECA online.

Find out more at agriculture.vic.gov.au/birdflu



THANK YOU: The Eildon Op volunteers people enjoying an appreciation afternoon tea, put on by Eildon Events Inc and Eildon Bowling Club.

THUMBS UP

THUMBS DOWN

THUMBS UP

To Murrindindi Shire Council workers who did a great job updating the two public parks in Taggerty. Well done.

THUMBS DOWN

Where are the wonderful Menzies Support people who have done such a wonderful job in cleaning and caring for many local people, of whom I am one? Bless Lucy, Sharon and Lauren to name a few. Their wonderful care was superb. I miss their care and wonderful effort. We miss them so much for the particular care and finer detail. So sad that local people were not employed by the new company. Bless you girls, you are sadly missed.

THUMBS UP

To Yea and Limestone Fire Brigades for their quick response to the house fire at Limestone on Sunday evening. Thanks also to Yea ambos for looking after our family members. We are very grateful for their services.

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

COMMUNITY DIARY

LOCAL RADIO FREQUENCY

- **UGFM 106.9** Alexandra / Lake Eildon
- **UGFM 98.5** Marysville / Lake Mountain
- **UGFM 88.9** Yea / Highlands
- **UGFM 98.9** Flowerdale / Hazeldene
- **UGFM 94.5** Kinglake Ranges

COMMUNITY GROUPS WEEKLY

- **Tue** Women's Walk @ 7am @Embassy of Ideas
- **Wed** Oasis Church, free coffee connection Ph 0408 123 581
- **Thu** Town Club, RSL Hall, 6-8pm. Ph 5797 2179
- **Fri** Man Walk @ 7am meet at RSL Hall
- **Fri** Communita 10am-12pm @ Embassy of Ideas PH 0422 225 801
- **Sun** Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training. Ph 0456 583 611
- **Sun** ALANON meeting; 5.30pm St Johns Hall. Ph 0402 428 086
- **Sun** AA meeting; 7pm St Johns Hall. Ph 1300 22 22 22.

MONTHLY

- **1st Mon** St Luke's Seniors, St Lukes Hall, Ph Jenny 0407 972 099
- **1st Wed** Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318
- **1st Thu** Yea Hospital/Rosebank Aux 2pm. Ph 5797 3057
- **1st Sun** Crop/Produce swap 10.30am--noon @ Embassy of Ideas
- **2nd Tue** Alexandra District Garden Society Meeting Ph 5772 2285
- **2nd Wed** Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
- **2nd Wed** Murrindindi Men 6-8pm@ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
- **2nd Thu** Yea Garden Club Yea RSL Hall 1.30pm Ph 0439 870 315
- **2nd Sat** Alex Repair Café 1-3pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
- **3rd Wed** Alex Lions business meeting, rear RSL hall 0427 595 318
- **3rd Thu** Alexandra Ladies Probus 10am RSL Ph 0428 976 252
- **3rd Thu** Community Potluck dinner 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas
- **3rd Sun** Alexandra RSL Ph 0409 950 913
- **4th Wed** Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
- **4th Thu** Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517
- **4th Thu** Yea CWA Yea RSL Hall, 1.30pm Ph 0400 424 888
- **Last Fri** Yea-Kinglake RSL, 11.30am RSL Hall, Ph 0409 819 040

Contact Alexandra Standard and Yea Chronicle to add your event on 5772 1002 or [email reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au](mailto:reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au). 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.

Council's fire funding challenges continue

MURRINDINDI Shire Council was asked for further information around the bushfire funding they have received from state and federal governments.

Andrew Paxton, Director of Community and Development at council responded, "Recovery from the January 2026 bushfires will be a long-term effort, and council remains committed to walking alongside our communities as they rebuild.

"Recovery activities are being supported through a range of Victorian and Australian Government disaster recovery programs, alongside investment of council staff time, resources and operational capacity.

"Given that Murrindindi Shire experienced 48 per cent of the total bushfire impact across Victoria in 2026, we look forward to the ongoing support from both the commonwealth and state governments in rebuilding lives, assets, businesses and communities.

"Councillors and staff continue to advocate strongly on behalf of affected communities and work closely with recovery agencies and all levels of government.

"As at June 30, the main funding provided directly to council comprised the \$750,000 Council Support Fund and the \$1.3 million Community Recovery Officers and Recovery Hubs program, a combined total of \$2.05 million. While this support has been invaluable, both programs have specific eligibility requirements, need prior state approval and are directed to particular recovery activities.

"Council is also able to seek reimbursement of eligible disaster expenditure through the Australian Government's Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), primarily for the restoration of essential public infrastructure such as roads and bridges damaged by the fires.

"These arrangements operate on a reimbursement basis, requiring council to fund works upfront before claims can be assessed and paid, with repairs authorised only to reinstate the prior condition and function of the assets. The funding arrangements do not extend to building back climate resilient infrastructure or assets to a contemporary standard for future generations.

"Under DRFA, council is eligible to claim under Category A and Category B measures. Category A supports immediate relief and recovery activities, including recovery centres, temporary accommodation, debris removal, and personal support services.

Category B supports emergency works and the repair and reconstruction of essential public infrastructure.

"So far, council has incurred more than \$15 million in bushfire-related expenditure. Approximately \$5 million in DRFA claims has been approved, with a further \$8 million under assessment. While council expects to be reimbursed for eligible works, the requirement for council to carry these costs in advance, along with the need to and navigate complex claims and reporting processes, place significant resource, financial and cashflow burden on a small rural council.

"By way of comparison, Mount Alexander Shire Council has publicly reported receiving approximately \$2.3 million in state and federal recovery funding to June 30. As the same date, Murrindindi Shire Council had received \$2.05 million in direct council recovery funding through the Council Support Fund and Community Recovery Officers and Recovery Hubs Program," he said.

In the Harcourt area, 66 homes were destroyed and 36 damaged to the extent that they were no longer habitable in the January 2026 fires. 4500 hectares were destroyed.

In Murrindindi Shire, 217 houses were destroyed and 10 damaged. 58,175 hectares of feed and pasture lots were lost.

This is not intended to minimise the devastation suffered in the Harcourt area, but rather to explore the funding inequities.

"Since June 30, council has welcomed the announcement of a further \$920,000 in recovery funding, bringing total direct council recovery funding to approximately \$2.97 million.

"While this additional funding is appreciated and will assist council's ongoing recovery efforts, it is noteworthy that Murrindindi experienced just under half of Victoria's structural losses from the January 2026 bushfires. As at June 30, council had received around 8.3 per cent of council-directed recovery funding, increasing to approximately 10.6 per cent following the recent funding announcement.

"This highlights the scale of the recovery effort being coordinated by Murrindindi Shire Council and reinforces council's ongoing advocacy for recovery funding arrangements that more closely reflect the level of impact experienced by affected municipalities with equitable and proportionate funding," he said.

COFFEE CONNECTION A CHANCE FOR A CHAT



THE COFFEE CONNECTION: Attendees sharing a cup of coffee and some delightful conversation at last Wednesday's event. PHOTO: Bailey Dixon

THE Coffee Connection provides a welcoming space for community members to meet for a chat over a cup of coffee or tea every Wednesday morning from 10am to 12pm, bringing joy and connection to the area.

The first meeting was held at St John's Anglican Church on September 4 last year, with the goal to create a space that was welcoming and people could meet for a friendly cuppa and a chat.

The Oasis Church building was decided as the venue, and each of the churches take turns catering for the event.

The Coffee Connection is free and open to all. People come from Alexandra, Eildon, Marysville, Buxton, Yea, Yarck, and sometimes even further afield. Sometimes there are visitors from Melbourne who drop in for a chat, coffee and scones.

If you haven't dropped into the Coffee Connection, it's worth giving a shot. The team over there would love to meet you.

At last Wednesday's Coffee Connection, Murrindindi Shire Council attended to chat with attendees and gather feedback around the Grant Street precinct, which a plan is currently taking shape for.

Time running out to have your say on Grant Street

HAVE you submitted your feedback regarding the Grant Street precinct in Alexandra?

The Grant Street Safety and Streetscape Improvement Plan is about understanding what is working well, what could be improved and what priorities should guide future investment.

Many suggestions have already been made, with pins and comments scattered across the precinct map.

On Nihil Street, two speed bumps have been suggested to slow vehicles down.

Behind FoodWorks, someone has suggested that the parking area be one-way. In the large vacant area accessible via Bayley Street, people have suggested that it be made into a formalised car park, potentially with shade sails. It's also been requested that trucks be banned from accessing the Grant Street shopping area.

Other ideas include seating improvements, better signage to overflow parking, pedestrian right of way at the roundabout, removal of the red brick paving at the roundabout replacing with concrete finishes, the removal of centre parking on Grant Street, acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners, information about the history of the gold-mining in the area, reducing the speed limit at the shops to 20km per hour, angle parking, adding greenery and planter boxes as well as planter baskets on lamp posts, streetscaping to indicate that it's a shared zone, protective bollards, planting native plants, raised crossings, replacing the slippery red bricks on Bakers Lane, new line marking in the Bakers Lane carpark, contemporary seating, moveable planter boxes, consideration for wheelchair and elderly access, bench seats and tables under the shade trees, fairy lights in the trees, colour and greenery, working with the traders on themed windows, and heritage colours on heritage buildings.

At the intersection of Grant and Downey Street, a well-known dangerous location and the location of a pedestrian death in April, several people suggested traffic lights be installed, while others were keen to see pedestrian crossings and better line marking.

A pedestrian crossing has also been suggested outside the Alexandra Shire Hall, and beautification of the UT Creek Bridge as the entrance to town. It was also suggested that there be a pedestrian and cyclist underpass beneath the UT Creek bridge, an improvement to the Leckie Park entrance from Grant Street, and improved signage for oversized vehicle parking and caravans.

On Webster Street, it was asked that council use the block next to the post office for car parking, as intended. The council-owned land up from the roundabout on Grant Street could also be used for overflow parking.

Feedback from the community will help shape the longer-term vision for the precinct, support Murrindindi Shire Council's advocacy to other levels of government and strengthen future funding applications.

In addition to putting your 'pin' on the map with your ideas, there is an option to provide direct feedback via Q&A and free form boxes, or you can speak with council staff at one of their pop up events.

Submissions close on Sunday, September 6. More information can be found at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/grantstreet

Local man set to be sentenced

A LOCAL man is set to be sentenced at Mansfield Magistrate's Court on November 24 after pleading guilty to some crimes and being found guilty of others.

One of the crimes was the theft of the UGFM generator from Marysville's Mount Gordon Fire Tower on January 5, two days prior to the Longwood fire starting.

The generator was a back-up generator used to power communications for emergency broadcaster UGFM radio, CFA and DEECA when mains power cannot be utilised.

On the morning of January 9, power was lost to the Marysville

area. The official alert to 'leave immediately' due to the Longwood fire occurred at 5.39pm on the same day.

In chronological order, the charges include that that at Coldstream on November 10, 2024, the man drove a motor vehicle while methylamphetamine was present in his oral fluid. An oral fluid sample was sent for analysis and the drug found to be present. The vehicle was also unregistered.

On February 9, 2025, the man was found to have entered as a trespasser into a facilities shed located on Buxton-Marysville Road in Marysville with intent to steal.

On the same date in Marysville the man stole five Husqvarna chainsaws, two Dewalt circular saws, a Dewalt angle grinder and two Dewalt batteries, a pair of Kinesis hiking boots, a set of keys and various other tools and outdoor equipment, belonging to Marysville Outdoor Education Group. He dishonestly undertook in the retention of goods knowing the goods, a key to the Outdoor Education Group buildings, to be stolen goods.

On February 21, 2025, the man entered the DEECA Depot situated in Marysville, as a trespasser with

intent to steal therein. He stole nine Stihl chainsaws, a Honda portable pump, various Milwaukee power tools and batteries being property belonging to DEECA.

On July 5, 2025, the man trespassed into the Taungurung Land and Water Council depot in Alexandra with intent to steal. The man stole five Stihl chainsaws, a Stihl hedge trimmer, a battery Stihl blower, a Makita tool bag, chainsaw accessories and various other tools and equipment.

Between December 16 and December 30, 2025 the man stole a white Isuzu D Max belonging to the

Yarra Ranges Council, and attempted to commit an indictable offense, namely burglary.

On January 5, 2026, did steal a Khola brand generator being property belonging to UGFM Radio from Mount Gordon. On the same date, he intentionally and without lawful excuse damaged fencing belonging to DEECA.

On February 10, 2026, in Marysville, the man was in possession of a drug of dependence, namely methamphetamines, and possessed a prohibited weapon without an exemption, namely knuckle dusters.



GARDEN GIVEBACK TO RESTORE FIRE-AFFECTED GARDENS

FOLLOWING the horrific Longwood bushfire in January that tore through Murrindindi Shire and surrounds, a Garden Giveback weekend is being organised to be held at the Embassy of Ideas in Alexandra on September 12 and 13.

In the Murrindindi Shire, including Alexandra, impact assessments by Murrindindi Shire Council estimate that 217 houses and 520 sheds/other structures were destroyed, over 7500 livestock (both cattle and sheep) were lost, and 486 beehives destroyed.

As these stories now emerge, the communities are working together to assist with support, both financial and emotional, to those who feel the painful

loss of so much framework that holds people together.

Some have experienced the loss of stock, sheds housing the important machines of their farming existence, gardens once planted with love and pride and sadly homes with priceless memories forever destroyed.

To celebrate recovery, gardens and community spirit, especially towards those who are looking to reestablish their gardens, Bunnings are donating plants and other garden essentials at a Great Garden Giveback weekend.

There will be free garden giveaways, garden workshops, coffee and a sausage sizzle, children's activities and more.

This is an opportunity for fire affected residents to head down and accept what could be the beginnings of their garden reconstruction.

This is a combined community project designed to welcome all residents, supported by Embassy of Ideas, Sisterhood Womens Travel, Alexandra Rotary Club, Buxton Primary School, Menzies Support Services, and Mozzie Mosaics.

The event will run from 10am to 3pm on Saturday, September 12 and Sunday, September 13, at the Embassy of Ideas, 3 Bayley Street, Alexandra.

For more information contact Sasha on 0422 225 801.

Spring firewood collection now open

VICTORIANS can prepare for next winter by collecting free firewood for personal use from state forest collection areas from now until November 30.

Free firewood for domestic use from state forests comes from fallen trees and forest and fire management works. As a result, the amount that is available will vary.

Maps for this spring season's designated collection areas are available at ffm.vic.gov.au/firewood

Mr Hayse said people could collect up to two cubic metres per person per day with a maximum of 16 cubic metres per household per financial year as long as they collected

it from designated firewood collection areas during a firewood season. Most firewood will take longer than 12 months to dry.

It is illegal to collect wood outside designated areas or to chop down or damage any dead or standing trees. It's also an offence to take vehicles off formed roads to collect or load firewood.

Authorised officers will be patrolling state forests and can issue on-the-spot fines of up to \$814 to those caught breaking the firewood collection rules.

More serious offending can result in maximum penalties of \$10,175 and/or 12 months in

prison. Authorised officers can also seize chainsaws, trailers, vehicles, and equipment used in firewood offences.

Suspected illegal firewood collection can be reported to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Financial support includes the Energy Assistance Program, the Non-Mains Energy Concession and Non-Mains Utility Relief Grant Scheme.

For more information about financial assistance for people on low incomes who buy firewood, visit ffm.vic.gov.au/firewood/energy-concession-and-support



Student of the week

Yea, Alexandra and Kinglake Disticts

Proudly supported by Bendigo Bank

Delilah V

St Mary's Primary School

CHURCH SERVICES
- ALEXANDRA

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 4.30pm
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

CHURCH SERVICES
- YEA

ST PETER'S MEMORIAL
ANGLICAN CHURCH

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

ST LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
OF YEA

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

CATHOLIC PARISHES
OF ALEXANDRA AND YEA

Parish Priest, Father Jose Mathew
0459 402 547
St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 4.30pm
Immaculate Conception Parish
Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am
Sacred Heart Yea, Sunday 10.45am

CATHOLIC PARISH
OF KINGLAKE

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

SCOTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
YEA

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

UNITING CHURCH

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



KEEN TO HELP: Alex and Peter.



SO DISAPPOINTING: Rubbish collected at the site.



SO MUCH RUBBISH: Keen helpers on the day.

Lookout for the rubbish

MURRINDINDI Shire is well known for its spectacular views, with tourists coming from far and wide to enjoy the serenity. Sadly, many refuse to ‘leave only footprints’ and instead leave their rubbish behind, creating an unsightly mess in a place which all should be able to enjoy.

At one particular location on the western side of the shire, there is a lookout which few people have heard of, however in recent weeks, social media influencers have been posting about the location, leading to a sharp increase in visitation and sadly rubbish. We have chosen not to name the location here to avoid even higher visitation.

Alex Whitford and Peter Wroblewski feel a strong connection to the area and were keen to ensure that the lookout continues looking its best. Alex grew up in Broadford and has lived in and around the area for most of her life. Peter works as an outdoor educator and wilderness guide and is in the area with Alexandra quite frequently.

Alex explained, “It’s a place that I’ve been going to for many, many years, whenever I’ve needed some time to think or to breathe. It’s a beautiful lookout that has beautiful sunrises and wonderful sunsets and complete surrounding views. It’s a very quiet little spot that has recently blown up on social media.”

Peter commented on the increase in visitation and rubbish, saying, “It’s really unfortunate to see such a beautiful location has unfortunately been disrespected. We want nature to be available to everyone and to help people feel connected to those places.

“I think with its growing popularity and lack of broader support and systems in place to help people feel connected to nature and to understand nature, has unfortunately led to people just not really knowing how to look after the place and treat it right.”

They were keen to take action and do something about the situation rather than just complaining about it, so they put a post on the local community page saying that they would be doing a cleanup at the location the following day and asked whether



KEEP IT CLEAN: ALEX WHITFORD.

others would like to help.

They ended up collecting 12 large garbage bags full of rubbish at the site and at another nearby lookout.

Alex added, “We just wanted the spot to be beautiful for everyone to enjoy and we want everyone who visits to share that same sentiment.”

On Monday, August 24, they went to the site, armed with garbage bags, joining some local community members who decided to pitch in and help, including a wildlife carer, a mother and two children, and a CFA member.

The site is a mixture of private property and public land, and sadly people have also been graffitiing trees at the site.

Moving forward, Peter said “In the short term, we’d really love for there to be more education and support for local communities in understanding how to

feel more connected to a place. I guess the motto and philosophy I like to adopt is if you feel more connected to nature and a part of nature, you’re going to respect it a lot more.

“I think some broader education and support for the community, but ideally long term, you know, we’d love to see the council get engaged and even just put in some really simple facilities up there.

“We don’t want that location to be taken away from the community. We want everyone to enjoy it. But ideally, you know, there’s infrastructure and support put in place on a multitude of fronts to ensure it’s looked after, not just putting in reactionary measures... Putting in more education around nature and taking more of a proactive approach is a more sustainable, long-term solution,” he said.

Due to the recent popularity of the area, Alex and Peter contacted three local governing bodies and they have acknowledged how concerning the situation is. Alex has also been put in touch with a local ranger keen to chat about working together with the groups to ensure the area is preserved.

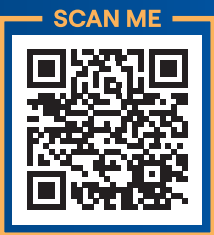
The rubbish issue at this lookout is not an isolated incident. Murrindindi Shire Council has been contacted for their thoughts on the situation with rubbish at lookouts across the shire, however nearby residents may need to run similar working bees at their favourite local lookouts to keep everything looking perfect.

While previously, council has made the decision to remove rubbish bins from these sites to encourage people to take their rubbish home, perhaps more signage is needed.



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Day three of the Longwood fire fight

By ANNE RICHEY

CFA District 12 Commander Stephen Keating spoke about the Longwood fire at length in a wide-ranging interview, including some of the local concerns. This is the third article in the series.

People in some of the smaller fire-impacted communities have raised concerns about why the fire trucks were located in Alexandra and Yea, particularly on Friday, January 9.

Stephen said, "It's the hardest thing in the world to tell smaller communities our state control priorities. Firstly, we're protecting human life, that we're giving timely and accurate warnings, and the third one is that we're controlling the fire around critical infrastructure and assets. The critical infrastructure and assets are those things that we need after an emergency to rebuild a community.

"Some of those things we can do before the fire gets there. The communications towers we did some work on Thursday before they got impacted to make sure they were okay so they survived.

"How do we protect human life? We tell people don't be there. For how dynamic this fire was and the size of the area that covered, I think we were, and I'll use the word, lucky, that we didn't have more either serious injuries or worse, because of the speed that the fire ran on the Friday and because of how intense that fire was on and how difficult it was on the Thursday.

"We had people trapped at their homes on the Wednesday at the evening from the fire. We had people trapped around their homes on the Thursday and on the Friday. My mind says that the good engagement helped people have properties that were either prepared or had a place that they could go if they couldn't get themselves away from their properties.

"But the hardest decision is to tell the community, sorry, we are focusing our efforts. How I'll explain it is our efforts were focused on where the critical infrastructure was, so the bigger communities, more so where the vulnerable people in the communities were located. We know where people will congregate in emergencies and we have the Neighbourhood Safer Places, the idea that that's where we have to put our efforts to ensure the protection of life because that's the highest.

"The communication's been very clear prior that the safest option is to leave, and people who have very well prepared properties and have okay fire knowledge and equipment still can be at high risk if they stay during a fire."

On the Friday afternoon of the Longwood fire, there seemed to be quite a number of different incident controllers listed in the emergency messaging. Stephen was asked why this might be the case.

Stephen said, "When an emergency message is released, it's released by the incident controller. There would be a point in time where things get busier, that responsibility specific for the messaging might change to one person. So that's their sole job is to do messaging. As it gets bigger, it gets more subdivided, so



that may be what's occurred.

"The other is, at a point in the evening, there is a shift change. The day shift would have changed over to the night shift. How busy the Friday was, I know that occurred a bit earlier than normal to help bring an extra set of resources in there. Rather than the day shift finishing and the night shift starting, the night shift come in a bit early and they both work together for a while. So then that may have been during that period."

He added, "I'm really proud of the community's reactions to the messaging, more so from the Thursday... You couldn't buy a coffee in the main street... The streets were empty and people were leaving.

"I couldn't be prouder of that community in Alexandra and in Yarck and Molesworth and Yea, and even up in the Highlands and Terip Terip space, they took notice, and I've got no doubt in our smaller communities as well... They did what we asked them to do, and that makes our job easier because we're not dealing with the traffic, and we're not dealing with more people in the fire area.

"We certainly had a lot of phone calls, triple zero calls for people who were caught at their own properties, and people stuck at a dam, and things like that we had to try to respond to... Our ability to get into some of those became very difficult and it took sometimes a couple of days to be able to get to people to find out that they're okay. That's something that becomes a non-issue when people evacuate."

For people still considering staying to defend their property in a fire, Stephen said, "The only thing I'd say is what's your life worth? Is it worth risking your life or losing your life trying to defend your property or your farm?... The best thing you can have is well-prepared property. Whether you're there or not is not the most critical factor. It's the fuel that's in and around the home and property. Preparation starts now.

"The first part of preparation is writing a plan down on what it's going to be and how you're going to enact it. We're going to do the Get Fire Ready campaign again this year with

the fire brigades... We've got some kits that will help people do that.

He added, "I'm of the view that on one of those catastrophic days the best thing is just not to be there. You don't want to put yourself and your family at risk."

Asked how are the CFA members coping in the wake of this fire, Stephen said, "We've got a lot of support mechanisms in place for our brigade members, not just those who have been personally impacted, but there's a lot of other people who have had significant experiences over the year, over the fire and subsequently. So certainly there's members out there that had some really traumatic experiences on the day and the days after. We've got welfare teams and some psychological support programs in place for people, and that's ongoing.

The first plan we wrote after Friday was our welfare plan. We sat down and put that together and put it into place as quick as we could. That's probably going to be the longest plan that runs for this fire. It'll go for years. We've connected people with others that have been through a process and come out the other side, because we think that's important as well, that people understand that there is a pathway through this."

Stephen was pleased with the increase in the number of people joining the CFA following the Longwood blaze.

District 12, which covers the Murrindindi and Mitchell Shires, along with the greater northeast area, were found to have the highest conversion of people who have expressed an interest to becoming a member to joining and becoming operational firefighters.

Just in Whanregarwen CFA, six new members joined and began their training. Alexandra, Yea, Molesworth and Yarck have also had new members join.

Stephen said that for some of the new members, it's because of their own personal experience and for others it's because they become aware that their brigade had a need that they weren't aware of previously.

He added, "For anyone who is interested in not just joining the fire

brigade but learning more for their own benefit about fire and helping others, one of the most selfless things you can do is to put your hand up to help others and our organisation.

"I've been a member and I've been a member as a volunteer for over 35 years. It's an amazing community within a community and we have people from all walks of life and all different ages... We're always really keen to build diversity because the best represented fire brigade should be a cross-section of community, whether that's male, female, whether that's old or young, farmers or professional workers, it shouldn't matter. But the best represented brigade, the one that understands its community best, is the one that's got a diverse background of people that are involved."

Of the upcoming year, Stephen said, "This year is going to be a difficult year for us because we're going to have to go back to the communities and talk about fire again. And that's the community south of the Longwood footprint, as well the communities in the Longwood footprint.

A lot of grass is coming back out there and again not everybody's got fences up and not everybody's got stock, so we're going to have a lot of grass fuel again this year.

"The other part of it that concerns me personally this year is we've got a lot of people who are living in alternate arrangements that don't have really good landscaping around them and preparation around them to be a safe place to be should we end up with another grass fire.

"The other concern I've got is the way we approach communities this year because what we don't want to do is upset anybody in the community when we come in to talk about fire. We are working really closely with all our brigades to make sure that we tailor the approach for community engagement, for each of our communities. We've got some communities who are saying, we think we're okay, we'll be right to discuss that in a normal fashion, and other communities that were hit, and it's a pretty tough thing to talk about preparing your farm and your house when it was hit last year."

Replacement of damaged repeater station needed

MEMBER for Eildon Cindy McLeish has called on the Victorian Government to urgently fund the replacement of the Mount Concord repeater station destroyed in January's Longwood fires.

Ms McLeish raised the issue directly with the Minister for Emergency Services recently, warning the loss of the station had left a gaping hole in communications coverage across the northern part of her electorate.

The Mount Concord UHF CB repeater provides coverage for Yarck, Molesworth, Gobur, Cathkin, Kanumbra, Yea and surrounding communities.

"This is critical infrastructure in an area that knows only too well how quickly communications can fail during bushfires, floods, storms and power outages," Ms McLeish said.

"When mobile phones and power go down, you need an alternative, another way to communicate when other systems fail, another way to warn emergency services, get the message to the public.

"The cruel irony is that the 30 year old station had received a major refurbishment through a Victorian Government grant only 12 to 18 months before it was destroyed."

The January fires destroyed the communications hut, antennas, solar panels and batteries, while the tower and supporting guy wires have also been compromised.

Ms McLeish said these communities had endured more than their share of natural disasters and should not be left entering another fire season without the tower.

"Seventy per cent of the Longwood fire footprint was in Murrindindi. There is still an enormous recovery task ahead," she said.

"Replacing Mount Concord is essential to that recovery.

"Residents and emergency volunteers know how important this repeater station is - the Minister should know too.

"I shouldn't have to make the case for it in Parliament.

"We need the funding now, and we need the work done as quickly as possible."



The value of eating seasonal produce

WHEN you walk into an Australian supermarket today, you could be forgiven for thinking the seasons no longer matter.

Strawberries appear in winter, asparagus can be found long after spring has passed, and tomatoes are available almost year-round. Modern food production has given us remarkable choice, but it has also disconnected us from one of the simplest rhythms of eating.

Eating seasonally means choosing fruit and vegetables that are naturally harvested at a particular time of year, preferably from growers relatively close to

where you live. In Australia, that calendar varies considerably between regions. What is in season in tropical Queensland may be completely different from what is being harvested in Victoria.

But wherever you live, eating seasonally has some obvious advantages.

Fruit and vegetables harvested when they are naturally ripe often have a freshness and intensity that can be difficult to replicate when produce has been transported long distances or stored for extended periods. A ripe

summer peach or tomato hardly needs anything added to it.

When a crop is plentiful, increased supply can mean lower prices. Seasonal produce is therefore often among the best bargains in the fruit and vegetable aisle. Buying what is abundant can be a particularly useful strategy for households trying to keep grocery bills under control.

Rather than buying the same vegetables throughout the year, the changing seasons provide a constantly shifting menu.

Summer brings tomatoes, stone fruit, berries, grapes, melons,

zucchini and sweet corn. Autumn brings apples, pears, grapes and pumpkins.

Winter offers an abundance of broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, leeks and sweet potatoes. Then spring arrives with asparagus, peas, broad beans, strawberries and an increasing range of fresh greens.

Out-of-season produce may require long-distance transport, refrigeration or extended storage. Buying locally grown seasonal food can reduce some of those demands, although the environmental impact of food

depends on much more than seasonality alone.

Seasonal food also gives us something modern supermarkets have largely removed, anticipation.

The first cherries of summer mean more when you haven't eaten them for months. The arrival of asparagus announces spring. Winter mandarins become a small pleasure precisely because they belong to winter.

Eating seasonally isn't about giving up choice. It is about discovering what is good now.

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T&Cs: One entry per household. Original entry form required; photocopies will not be accepted. Venue of choice must be selected or entry is invalid. Winner drawn at random from valid entries. Voucher valid for one purchase only and cannot be combined with other vouchers. Staff and immediate family of Alexandra Newspapers are ineligible to enter.

Council News



September 2026



ELF Reading Day

For one special morning each year, Alexandra's Grant Street transforms into a giant storybook, where community members come together to share a love of books and to support literacy development.

Everyone from near and far is invited to dress as their favourite book character and join the adventure on Friday 18 September 2026 from 10.00 to 11.00 am.

For more information, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/elf26

Movies, Meals and Meaningful Connections for R U OK? Day

In support of R U OK? Day, Council invites you to free community events featuring films, food and meaningful conversations.

Join us Friday 4 September at Alexandra Shire Hall, 55 Grant Street, Alexandra for the following program:

- 1.00 pm - Matinee screening of Sketch (PG)
- 4.30 pm - Community BBQ (courtesy of Alexandra Events)
- 5.30 pm - Evening screening of Tinā (M). Light supper served following the screening (courtesy of Ladies Auxiliary Pastoral and Agricultural Society).

Registrations are free but required for safe venue capacity and catering. Please review content themes and warnings before attending. Screenings will also be held in Kinglake and Yea.

For more information about events, meals and to register your attendance, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/ruok26

Council thanks all the community groups, volunteers and individuals that provided their time and resources to these events.

This event is supported by a Look Over the Farm Gate grant provided by Agriculture Victoria under the Victorian Government's 2025 Drought Support Package.

2026/27 Rates have been posted

We know this time of year can be busy and stressful, so we encourage anyone needing extra support to contact us by emailing rates@murrindindi.vic.gov.au or calling (03) 5772 0333.

We can tailor payment plan options to suit your situation, help update your details including getting your notice via email process a payment. All enquiries are treated confidentially.

For more information about your rates including ways to pay, a breakdown of fees and charges, updating your details and more, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/rates

Have your say on the Murrindindi Municipal Recovery Plan

We're inviting the community to provide feedback on the Draft Murrindindi Municipal Recovery Plan for the January 2026 Bushfires. It builds on actions and activities already undertaken by our communities, government and agencies over the past six months and now sets out priorities and actions for medium and longer-term recovery.

Come and have a chat with us at:

- Yea Foodworks - Thursday 3 September, 1.00 – 3.00 pm
- Yea Saleyards - Friday 4 September, 9.00 am – 11.00 am
- Alexandra Library - Monday 7 September, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm
- Yea Library - Thursday 10 September, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm
- Kinglake Library - Tuesday 15 September, 1.00 – 4.00 pm

Or you can register for an online information session on Wednesday 9 September, at either 1.00 pm or 6.00 pm.

Visit our website to find out more and have your say at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/draftrecoveryplan



Kinglake Ward vacancy / by-election

Following the resignation of Cr Jodi Adams from Murrindindi Shire Council, a by-election will be held on 5 December 2026 to elect a new Councillor to represent Kinglake Ward.

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) will manage the by-election process, including confirming key dates and providing information for prospective candidates and voters.

Once available, Council will share information with the community through our website and other communication channels. The latest official election information, including important dates and voting arrangements, will also be available directly from the VEC.

For the latest information about the Kinglake Ward vacancy and by-election, visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au or our website at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/kinglakeelection

Free Mulch at Alexandra Resource Recovery Centre (RRC)

Mulch generated from hazardous tree removal works is now available free of charge at the Alexandra RRC.

Bring your trailer, wear closed-toe footwear and note that you will need to load the mulch yourself while supplies last.

Council staff will be available to load mulch for residents between 10am and 4pm on Saturday 5 September and Saturday 4 October.

Find out RRC opening hours online at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/rrc

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5772 0333

murrindindi.vic.gov.au/request
customer@murrindindi.vic.gov.au

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Concerns over potential quarry on Killingworth Road

DURING last Wednesday's August meeting of Murrindindi Shire Council, the issue was raised about a development plan application for a quarry at 1327 Killingworth Road, Molesworth. Residents of Killingworth Road turned out to voice their opposition to the application, and the developer also spoke and answered questions from the councilors.

Greg Conlan represented the Kinglake Road residents' group, which has 66 objections to the application for a proposed quarry at 1327 Killingworth Road, Molesworth. Residents have concerns as to whether an industrial scale operation is appropriate for this location and whether it would affect the road safety of Killingworth Road.

The quarry is being presented as being used for on-farm use, but there are a number of questions about it around dust, noise, heavy vehicle usage, etcetera. Residents also asked

council to refuse the application and request an independent review of the impact of the quarry on Molesworth.

Mayor Gallagher said the councilors were not briefed on this issue and it is currently before council's planning officers.

Molesworth residents Charles Spanjer, Therese Bradshaw, Raelene Mold and Jennifer Walden spoke against the quarry application, reinforcing the points made by Mr Conlan and asking council to refuse the application or request much more information, including geological reports, heritage overlays, etcetera.

Nick Anderson audio-linked into the council meeting to answer questions and provide justification for the quarry application.

He's been working on it with his team since February 2023.

The development plan stage is the initial stage, but it's been a lot of work to reach this point. Should they

have their application approved, Mr Anderson's client intends to submit a subdivision application before the end of the year with development of the site to be commenced in 2027 if supported by council.

Mr Anderson outlined what has been undertaken, leading to the development plan. They undertook the necessary vegetation and bushfire assessments to determine the lot layout and had a land capability assessment done that led to the relevant water authorities advising it should run on sewer.

"What we've got now is a development plan that we feel probably complies with the requirements of the CFA from a bushfire point of view, DEECA from a vegetation management and protection point of view, VicRoads in terms of no additional access points to the Melba Highway, and the requirements of the water authorities for that low pressure sewer system. It's a rela-

tively straightforward process from this point on if we can get council's support," Mr Anderson said.

He also talked about road access allowing emergency services to attend the site, which was a previous issue.

Mayor Gallagher asked Mr Anderson how he felt about the requirement for an addition of pedestrian access connecting to Meadow Lane. Mr Anderson responded, saying that he wasn't across this issue but he's sure it could be facilitated and incorporated in the subdivision stage.

Mayor Gallagher followed up by asking Mr Anderson how he would feel about screening planting along the boundary with the Melba Highway, and development that's consistent with the adopted residential design guidelines. Mr Anderson agreed with the first point, saying that if council required some screening planting they would be happy to do it.

Hospital merger approved

■ From front page

Clearer, more integrated care pathways, supported by unified clinical governance and, over time, shared patient information systems, making it easier for patients to move between local and metropolitan services when escalation or specialist care is required;

More sustainable use of shared systems and support services, including emergency and disaster response, allowing Alexandra District Health to focus resources on frontline care while maintaining a strong local presence.

The press release states that the Minister for Health's decision follows a comprehensive business case and a joint recommendation from the Boards of Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health, informed by structured engagement with staff, stakeholders and the community.

It says, "Feedback from this engagement highlighted strong support for sustainable local healthcare and expanded access to services, alongside the importance of protecting Alexandra District Health's strong rural identity, maintaining essential services and ensuring local voices continue to be heard."

Mr Flanagan said, "Alexandra District Health will retain its name. All locally raised funds and donations will continue to support services for the local community. Local leadership will remain in place, and the Community Engagement Committee will continue to play a formal role in ensuring community perspectives inform service planning and decision-making. We are proud of the process we undertook and grateful to the many staff, community members and stakeholders who contributed to the structured engagement process."

Eastern Health Board Chair Eugene Arocca said the approval reflects the strength of a partnership that is already delivering for patients.

"Around 40 per cent of hospital care for people living in the Alexandra catchment is already provided through Eastern Health. This decision allows us to plan and deliver services in a more coordinated way, and to build on what is already working."

"Our organisations share a commitment to delivering safe, high-quality, connected care and voluntary amalgamation is the strongest platform to do that," Mr Arocca said.

More information is available at connectingcare.net

1000 TROUT RELEASED INTO EILDON PONDAGE

ON Tuesday, August 25, Eildon Primary School students had the incredible opportunity of working alongside the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) to release 1000 trout into Eildon Pondage, ahead of the upcoming Goulburn Fishing Festival.

The students were excited to get up close to the trout and carefully release them into the water. This hands-on experience provided a wonderful opportunity to learn more about our local waterways, the fish that call them home, and the important role the VFA plays in managing and protecting our local fishery.

The experience also helped students understand the importance of caring for our local environment and enjoying our waterways responsibly. Sustainable fishing practices help ensure that our beautiful waterways continue to support healthy fish populations and can be enjoyed by our community for many years to come.

With 1000 new trout now swimming in Eildon Pondage, there's never been a better time for keen anglers to cast a line and enjoy all that our local waterways have to offer. Eildon Primary School hopes the students will remember their experience and continue to appreciate and care for the amazing natural environment right here in our own backyard.

The school is grateful to the Victorian Fisheries Authority for including their students in this fantastic community experience. It was certainly a memorable day for everyone.



FISH IN A BUCKET: Eildon Primary School students helping out.

BESS but no solar panels in Rubicon

■ From front page

People opposed to the project have welcomed Samsung's decision not to proceed with the solar component of the proposed Rubicon renewable energy project as part of its current planning application.

Samsung has advised that findings from environmental studies and a lack of suitable land mean the solar component is no longer

financially viable. While the solar proposal could potentially be revisited in years to come, it will not form part of the current application.

However, the community remains strongly opposed to the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), which has increased from 200MW to 300MW.

People opposing the project con-

tinue to raise concerns about bushfire risk, potential contamination of local waterways, visual impacts on the valley and the potential for noise and lighting impacts on surrounding properties.

The planning application is expected to be submitted towards the end of this year or early next year. Samsung has also indicated that, if approved, it has not yet determined

whether it would own and operate the BESS, sell the project or partner with another group.

While the removal of the solar component is being seen as a significant win for people opposed to the project in the area, they say they will continue to oppose the BESS proposal and advocate for the protection of the local environment, landscape and community.



Free workshop about buying livestock with confidence at the Yea Saleyards

LAST Friday the Victorian Farmer's Federation (VFF) Stock Sense team hosted a workshop on buying livestock with confidence, using the Yea Saleyards facilities for the presentations and practical component.

Representatives from Agriculture Victoria attended, handing out information booklets and raising awareness around biosecurity. Lachlan King from Agriculture Victoria presented about biosecurity, regarding how to protect your property from disease, and what diseases currently exist in the livestock sphere, etcetera.

Tim Gibson, a livestock agent from Alex Scott and Staff, covered choosing livestock to suit your property and what things need considering when purchasing stock.

A morning tea and lunch was provided to attendees, and a practical aspect took place after lunch, inspecting cattle in real time.

Topics such as property identification codes (PIC) and livestock production assurance (LPA) in relation to the red meat industry were discussed and questions were fielded from the audience.

To find out more about the work that the VFF's Stock Sense project undertakes, visit vff.org.au/stock-sense/



FARM SAFETY: Presenters spoke about biosecurity and farm safety, as well as handling livestock in a manner that is good for selling. PHOTO: Bailey Dixon

Shaping our water future

FROM priorities and projects to services and future investment, Goulburn Valley Water (GVW) is asking customers to help shape what comes next.

Every five years, GVW prepares a pricing submission for Victoria's independent water regulator, the Essential Services Commission. The submission outlines the services GVW proposes to deliver, the infrastructure it needs to invest in, and what customers may pay.

Customer values will be at the centre of the development of the pricing submission, which will help inform GVW on balancing service reliability, affordability, water security, growth, climate pressures and the need to renew ageing infrastructure.

A major customer engagement program is now underway, giving people across the region the chance to have their say through GVW's online Water Matters engagement hub or in person at local water café pop-ups.

Goulburn Valley Water General Manager of Customers and Growth Jonno Bellette said hearing from customers early was essential to making sure the pricing submission reflects what communities value most.

"We're planning for the services, infrastructure and investment our region will need, while also considering the cost-of-living pressures affecting many households and businesses," Mr Bellette said.

"Our operating environment has changed significantly over the past five years, and we know we will need to respond to challenges including a changing climate, population growth and an ageing infrastructure network.

"We need to understand how we fund essential services and long-term infrastructure after sustained period of stable prices, and how we make this fair for current and future customers.

"That means making choices about how we balance service levels, affordability and long-term reliability, and we want customers to help inform those choices."

Mr Bellette said reaching as many people as possible through engagement opportunities during the year was key in ensuring all customer voices are heard.

"What we hear now will influence the next stages of our engagement and planning, ensuring it is meaningful, inclusive and reflects the realities of our customers and communities."

You can share your thoughts by visiting the Water Matters website and take a quick survey, visiting one of the pop-ups, drop into the Fryers Street Shepparton office, or invite them to chat to your community group/organisation.

The local pop-up water café locations are at Alexandra's Grant Street Market on Sunday September 6 from 9am to 1pm, and at Eildon Grocery on Thursday, September 10 from 11am to 1pm.

Find more information, visit watermatters.gvwater.vic.gov.au

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Yea area has highest number of kangaroo collisions in shire

NEW RACV Insurance claims data reveals Victorian motorists experienced a collision with a kangaroo nearly 20 times a day on average last year, with crashes becoming more frequent, costlier and more severe.

RACV members lodged almost 31,000 kangaroo-related collision claims between January 2021 and June 2026, peaking in 2025 with 7232.

The average claim reached almost \$9000 in 2025, up 48 per cent since 2021, while one in six kangaroo collision claims resulted in a write-off in 2025, compared with one in nine in 2021.

Locally, between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2025, RACV members lodged 127 kangaroo-related collision claims across Alexandra, Eildon, Kinglake, Marysville and Yea, with Yea recording the highest volume.

RACV General Manager Insurance and Roadside Bill Bloodworth said "We tend to see higher claims volumes in the cooler months, when claims from April to August

run more than 20 per cent higher than the rest of the year.

"The risk is greatest at dawn and dusk, so motorists should slow down, stay alert and scan the roadside, particularly where kangaroos are most active."

To avoid a kangaroo collisions, avoid driving at dusk, night and dawn when kangaroos are most active, slow down in areas with wildlife signage or when visibility is poor, watch both sides of the road and the tree line for movement, if a collision is unavoidable brake firmly in a straight line as swerving can cause a worse crash, and use high beams when safe and there's no oncoming traffic to help you spot animals sooner.

Mr Bloodworth said while hitting a kangaroo could be distressing, drivers should prioritise safety.

"Pull over safely, turn on your hazard lights and check on your passengers. If anyone is injured, call 000, and if the animal is injured, contact local wildlife services via Wildlife Victoria on 8400 7300," he said.



Duck, it's a magpie

THE angry birds are back again as swooping season begins.

As Victoria heads into spring, people are being reminded to take simple steps to stay safe around magpies and other swooping birds.

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) Manager Wildlife Emergencies and Welfare Services, Tony English, said swooping occurs during the breeding season for some native birds.

"Swooping is a natural and temporary behaviour that some native birds use to protect their eggs and chicks during the breeding season," Mr English said.

"Swooping is their way of telling you to keep your distance."

While being swooped can feel unsettling, it is rare for birds to make contact, with incidents occurring in urban and rural areas, including parks, gardens, playgrounds, roadsides and shared walking and cycling paths.

Mr English said some birds within a species are more aggressive than other.

"The presence of magpies or other birds commonly

associated with swooping does not necessarily mean you will be swooped," he said.

"The behaviour is usually short-lived and ends once young birds have left the nest."

Victorians can reduce the risk of being swooped by avoiding known swooping hotspots, moving quickly and calmly through the area rather than running, wearing protective head and eye coverings when needed, avoiding harassing birds which can increase defensive behaviour, and not feeding birds or disturbing nests.

People can help others stay informed by reporting swooping incidents to Victoria's interactive swooping bird map at wildlife.vic.gov.au/managing-wildlife/swooping-birds

All native wildlife is protected under Victorian law. Harassing, harming or disturbing native birds and other wildlife is illegal and penalties apply.

Anyone who witnesses wildlife crime, including the harassment, harm or disturbance of native wildlife, can report it to Crime Stoppers Victoria on 1800 333 000.

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Council invests in community ideas, events, sport and heritage

MURRINDINDI Shire Council invested \$182,416 through its 2025-26 Grants and Sponsorships Program to support projects, events and initiatives that strengthen communities across the shire.

During the 2025/2026 financial year council supported 73 projects through the Program's six funding streams, with successful projects reflecting the breadth of locally led ideas and activities taking place throughout Murrindindi.

Funding has supported a diverse range of initiatives, including upgrades and equipment for Alexandra Junior Soccer Club, the Buxton Community Fun Day, the relocation of a historical storage building for Kinglake Historical Society, Yea Rotary Club's Garden Expo 2026 and work to restore Strath Creek's iconic historic water wheel.

Council also backed larger community celebrations, including Triangle Arts Group's Marysville Music Weekend, and sponsored Alexandra Football Club's ANZAC Day 2026 Commemoration Service.

While each project is different, together they help people connect, participate and



contribute to community life, fostering a sense of belonging, resilience and wellbeing.

Mayor Councillor Damien Gallagher said the diverse range of successful projects highlighted the initiative and dedication of local volunteers and organisations.

"Behind every successful application is a local group, volunteer or individual with a vision for their community and the commitment to make it happen," Cr Gallagher said.

"Whether it helps young people get involved in sport, brings neighbours together at a local event or preserves an important part of our history, each project contributes to a stronger and more connected Murrindindi Shire.

"We have seen time and again that strong communities are built by local people. Council is proud to support the volunteers, organisations and individuals who help make our towns vibrant, connected and resilient."

Funding is available through

six streams: Quick Response, Sponsorship, Community Projects, Local Events, Special Purpose and Events of Major Significance. These streams support initiatives that improve liveability, health and wellbeing, community participation, environmental outcomes and future planning.

Community groups and individuals are encouraged to explore funding opportunities available in 2026-27. For details and applications, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/grants

Kealy introduces bill to protect prime agricultural land

SHADOW Minister for Agriculture Emma Kealy has introduced a private members bill, The Planning and Environment Amendment (Agricultural Land and Food Security) Bill 2026, in the Victorian Parliament, aimed at protecting the state's most strategic agricultural land from being permanently lost to poorly considered development.

Nationals Member for Northern Victoria Gaelle Broad said the bill would ensure agriculture is treated as the important asset it is.

"Victoria produces about 28 per cent of Australia's gross value of agricultural production, and Northern Victoria has some of the best agricultural land in Victoria," Ms Broad said.

"Farmers are concerned that the planning system does not take into account what is actually being lost when these developments are approved on prime agricultural land."

The Bill would set up a system to identify Strategic Agricultural Land and require Agricultural Land Impact Assessments for prescribed developments. It would also ensure Agriculture Victoria is consulted before significant decisions are made, as well as requiring agricultural expertise on advisory committees and Environment Effects Act inquiry panels.

The Bill would strengthen rehabilitation requirements through mandatory bonds and ongoing monitoring and create a public register to give Victorians greater transparency about the cumulative impact of development on agricultural land.

The Bill passed its first reading in the Legislative Council on August 11.

Separately, The Nationals have committed to removing the Emergency Services Tax, stop VNI West, review Victoria's Transmission Plan, repeal laws that remove a farmer's right to say 'no entry' on their land, cancel fines issued by VicGrid and tackle farm crime.

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CFA

Notice is hereby given that it is the intention of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action to grant a licence under Section 138 of the Land Act 1958 to Yea Country Fire Authority over Crown Allotment 2, Section 30 Parish of Yea for the purposes of CFA training.

Further information or comments can be lodged with the Property Officer on adminhub@deeca.vic.gov.au within 14 days.

Ref: 3005522

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Murrindindi Shire Council’s August meeting

There were no requests for planned leave and no apologies.

Public participation

A number of attendees spoke at the meeting about their opposition to a quarry being developed on Killingworth Road. See the separate article.

Ruth Huffett addressed council’s concerns about the proposed subdivision plan for her property at 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn, explaining that there is no capacity for her to move the proposed dwelling, and that there will be no impact to the local ecology by clearing the land because there is minimal ecology. She also spoke about a 14-metre firebreak being reinstated on her property for protection. She was asking for a paper-based subdivision simply to reflect what has been the case with her property for the past 30 years or so, given that her property is already divided by council road. There is no physical division required.

Terry King shared a safety concern around the Grant Street and Downey Street intersection. His concern is the bushes on the corner of the intersection that impede the vision of pedestrians and motorists. He proposed removing the bushes. Council responded, stating that intersection is state-managed.

Trevor Johnson spoke about the inconsistency of pothole repairs by council maintenance crews in Kinglake. He said that some potholes were overfilled, some underfilled, and some missed entirely. He also said that the pothole filling washed out of the potholes during the next rainfall after the maintenance. He requested that council reconsider what pothole filling they utilise and conduct some studies.

Grants and sponsorships quarterly allocation

This report presented applications received between May and July 2026, seeking council endorsement of recommended grant allocations and noting grants awarded under delegation.

Quick Response grants awarded under delegation included: \$646 to the Flowerdale Men’s Shed for a wifi upgrade; \$1800 to Eildon Golf

Club for replacement of chairs and furniture; \$1500 to Yea Rotary Club for their Garden Expo 2026; \$650 to the Thornton Eildon District Football and Netball Club for their end of season sponsors function; \$500 for the Kinglake Ranges Rotary Club for a Youth Showcase Night; \$2500 to Alexandra Primary School for the Boite Choir performance opportunity; \$2000 to Alexandra and District Dog Obedience Club for shipping container storage; \$2000 to Yea Arts Inc for the Sarah Belkner Artist in Residence weekend; \$1000 to Alexandra Secondary College for their production ‘I’m Big, You’re Little’; \$1000 to the Buxton Progress Association for a disabled parking space at Buxton Hall; \$2500 to the Marysville Information and Regional Artspace for the Marysville Art Show 2026; and \$500 to the Flowerdale Community House for the 2026 Flowerdale Quilt Show.

The report recommended that council endorse the allocation of funding for project grants recommended by the Grants and Sponsorship Assessment Panel, including: \$5000 to Mange Management Inc to support their efforts to protect Murrindindi’s wombats from the suffering and fatal impact of sarcoptic mange; and \$4000 to the Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House for their food share.

The report recommended council endorse the allocation of funding for a \$3500 sponsorship grant to the Triangle Arts Group Inc for their 2027 Music in the Park event.

It also recommended the allocation of \$10,000 to the Rotary Club of Alexandra for their Community Events Program for Alexandra and Murrindindi under a local (multi) event grant.

Council noted the grants made under delegation and approved those recommended.

Planning scheme review 2026

Council is required to undertake a review of their planning scheme for alignment with current state government policy. The review was completed by an independent consultant and presented to council for

consideration. The report found that the local planning scheme is generally performing well and can be further improved by a range of actions over the coming period. Initial implementation by a planning scheme amendment will bring the Murrindindi Planning Scheme up to date.

Council approved the Planning Scheme Review and requested authorization from the Minister for Planning to prepare an amendment to implement the recommendations of the Planning Scheme Review Report 2026.

Planning application – 6489 Melba Highway, Yea

A planning application was presented to council for the site at 6489 Melba Highway, Yea, some 1.5 kilometres south of the Yea township and with an area of 11.84 hectares. The development plan included in the application proposes the construction of a new internal road. The site will provide up to 22 lots. Adjoining landowners and relevant authorities were consulted with no written submissions received.

Council voted to approve the development plan and the application.

Planning application – 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn

This report presented to council recommends that a refusal to grant a permit be issued for a two-lot subdivision (house lot excision), use and development of land for a dwelling and removal of native vegetation at 30 Malaraway Road, Glenburn. The land is in the Farming Zone and is subject to the Bushfire Management Overlay. The application fails to meet various objectives of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme, which includes limiting house lot excision, is inconsistent with the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone (stating that lots have to be a minimum of 40 hectares) as well as inconsistent with the Bushfire Management Overlay and the native vegetation objectives within the Planning Policy Framework.

After discussion, council voted to refuse the planning application as per the officers’ recommendations.

Planning scheme amendment C79 – Yea Structure Plan

The Yea Structure Plan was adopted in October 2025, with a resolution to commence the process for a planning scheme amendment to implement some key recommendations in the report. Amendment C79 has been prepared, authorised and exhibited. Five submissions were received, which were resolved through engagement with the submitters and a second minor change to the amendment recommended.

Council voted to adopt Planning Scheme Amendment C79 as exhibited, with two minor changes, and submit the amendment to the Minister for Planning for approval.

Capital works quarter four report

The report provided a summary of the delivery of the Capital Works Program for the 2025-26 financial year and seeks approval for the carry forward of projects to be included in the 2026-27 Capital Works Program. Council adopted a budget of \$17.21 million for the 2025-26 capital works and delivered \$14.43 million in works despite the bushfire disruptions, equating to 84 per cent of the adopted budget. Major projects re-phased into the 2026-27 financial year include: Eildon Key Worker Housing Phase B, worth \$1.95 million; Thornton Recreation Reserve lighting and scoreboard, worth \$635,000; Alexandra Landfill capping works worth \$694,000; and road reconstruction and road safety improvements impacted by the bushfires worth \$903,000. A separate carry forward of \$2.12 million is also proposed.

Council noted the June 30, 2026, Capital Works Report and endorsed the rephasing and carry forward adjustments.

Councillor reports

Cr Carpenter introduced the Healthy Foundations Murrindindi program, which will be progressing soon. Funded by a state government grant, it aims to improve health outcomes for the community, particularly children. She spoke about the exciting opportunities for growing and housing the shire’s

population, both in Alexandra and Yea.

Cr McAulay spoke about the support offered by council to local businesses.

Cr Hildebrand said that Eildon Key Worker Housing Phase One is nearing completion and the Kinglake Memorial Reserve restoration is on schedule, with completion planned for October. He congratulated the Yea senior women footballers on their premiership victory.

Cr Lording said that the current wet weather is delaying road grading, pit and drain cleaning programs are planned, and the line marking program is due for commencement towards the end of the calendar year. The roadside slashing program will be open for quoting soon with commencement in mid to late spring. He suggested community use Snap Send Solve if required for quick response.

Cr Carr said 2026-27 rates notices are on their way to residents, with notices being distributed last week. She said that the Emergency Services Volunteer Fund (ESVF) is included in the rates charge and reminded people that this is a state government charge that council is required to collect on their behalf.

Cr Gallagher spoke about council being recognized as a finalist for the Municipal Association of Victoria’s MAVLabs Innovation Awards for their key worker housing initiative. Council participated in meetings of the Hume Region Local Government Network, working collaboratively with regional councils on shared challenges.

CEO report

Murrindindi Shire Council CEO, Livia Bonazzi, said that council will be holding a number of events for RUOK Day, to provide mental health support. Homes Victoria is progressing temporary accommodation solutions for fire-affected residents. The majority of roadside tree works has been completed. She said that a by-election will be held for the Kinglake Ward councillor position following the resignation of Jodi Adams, with voting occurring on December 5.



TAKING A BREAK: A welcome cuppa to finish the morning’s work. Linden, Monika, Glenn, Denise, Linda and David. Absent from photo Elaine. Five wheelbarrows and willing workers moved a mountain of mulch.



No lone hydrangeas at Yea Garden Club

ABOUT 18 months ago, Yea Garden Club organised a huge working bee to clean up a badly neglected old garden at Yea Pioneer Reserve. Many of the plants were dead and the surviving natives badly overgrown, weeds were rampant and

everything was covered in a thick blanket of eucalyptus tree litter.

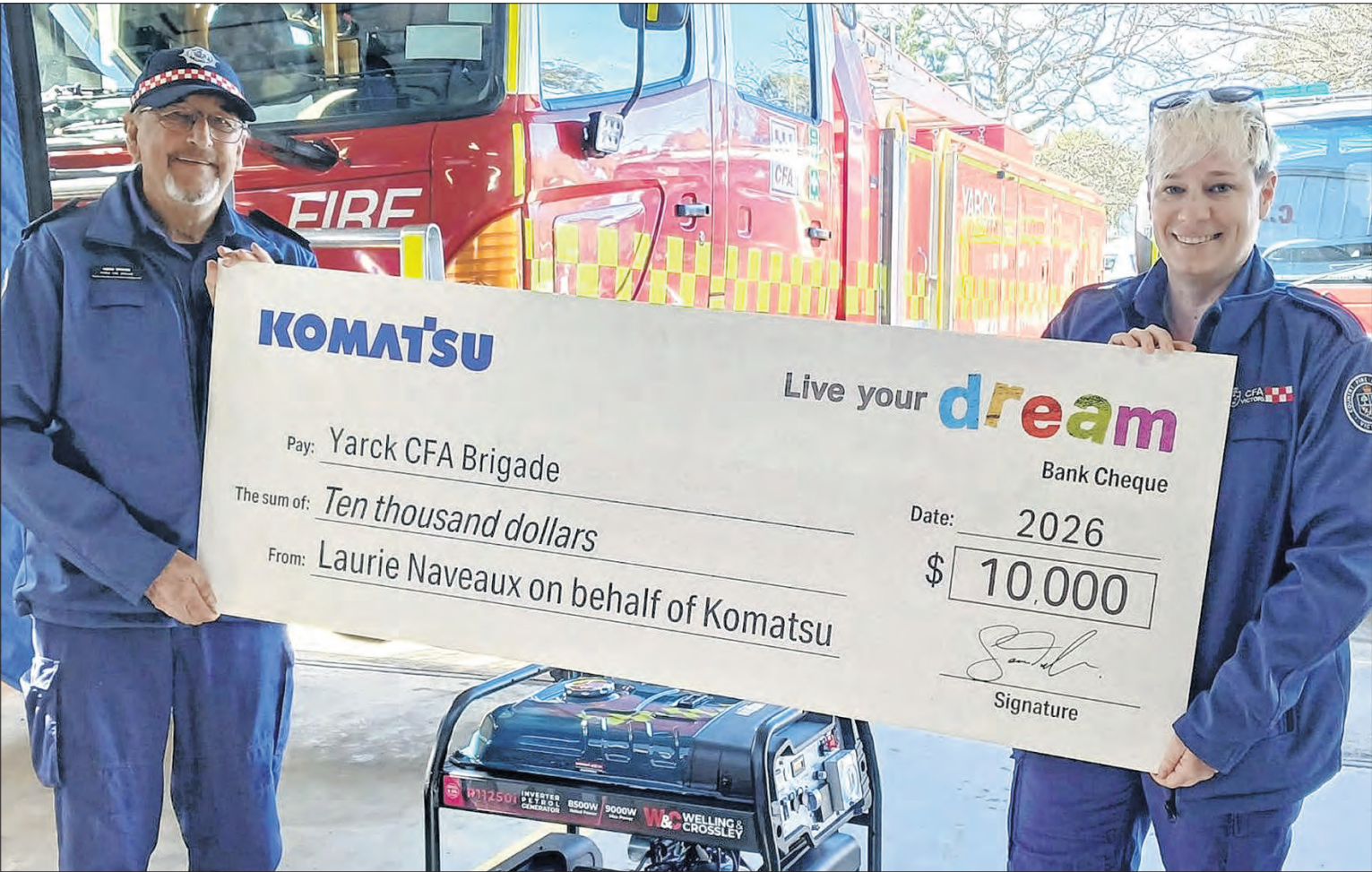
With many keen gardeners in Yea benefitting from the piles of mulch being generated by Ausnet clearing trees growing too close to power lines, Yea Garden Club also benefit-

ted, organising for three enormous truck loads to be delivered to the Pioneer Reserve last week. A working bee was held last Thursday to spread the mulch and fill in the gaps with many new plants. Barrowing uphill was a huge job, but many

hands make light work and the Pioneer Garden now looks great.

Yea Garden Club planted and maintains the gardens and roses at the Yea Lawn Cemetery, planted and trims the rosemary hedge at the Yea RSL Hall, and also has the

small corner garden on the eastern corner of the Triangle public gardens in the main street. One of the members provides a lovely show of geraniums every summer in the Bill’s Horse Trough also in the Triangle Gardens.



Laurie Naveaux (right) presenting the cheque to Yarck Captain Norm Stokes.

A wonderful donation for Yarck CFA Brigade

YARCK Rural Fire Brigade recently hosted members of the South Morang, Yarrambat and Diamond Creek brigades in an event that recognised a \$10,000 contribution to the brigade by Komatsu, a major excavation and earth moving company in Campbellfield, Victoria.

During the Longwood fire in January, strike teams from across Victoria, New South Wales and other states came to assist local brigades in combatting the fire.

Laurie Naveaux was a South Morang firefighter attached to the Yarrambat tanker and based at the Yarck Fire Station for part of their deployment. She is also the Regional HSE Manager with Komatsu Australia. Originally from Oyonnax, France, Laurie has been involved in fire services for over 20 years, starting as a junior cadet as a teenager. She later became a part-time firefighter in France, continued in New Caledonia, and joined CFA after moving to Australia.

Over those years, Laurie has attended many challenging fires and emergency incidents. While every fire is different, one thing she has seen repeatedly is the impact that resources, equipment and capability can have on the people working on the ground. Her connection with the Yarck Brigade developed during the Longwood bushfire response, where she worked alongside crews operating around Yarck. Like many small rural brigades, Yarck relies on local volunteers who give their time to protect their community and surrounding areas, often during long and demanding bushfire operations.

During that deployment, seeing the Yarck crew continue to support the response while dealing with equipment challenges reinforced something Laurie had seen many times before. Volunteers will always find a way to keep helping, but the right equipment can make a significant difference to how safely and effectively they can do it.

Through Komatsu Australia's Live Your Dream program, Laurie successfully applied for a \$10,000 grant to support the Yarck Fire Brigade. The funding was to be used for equipment identified by the brigade itself, ensuring the investment goes towards something practical that will strengthen its operational capability and support its volunteers.

For Laurie, after more than 20 years in firefighting, this project was a way of giving something back to the people she stands beside on the fireground and to a small rural brigade that plays an important role in protecting its local community.

On Saturday, August 29, a presentation was made to Norm Stokes, Captain of the Yarck Brigade of the \$10,000 cheque by Laurie, on behalf of Komatsu. In attendance were the captains and brigade members of the South Morang and Yarrambat brigades and members of the Diamond Creek

brigade, all of whom had contributed during the fire emergency. The Yarck Brigade and members had welcomed them to Yarck and all enjoyed a morning tea with the presentation.

In accepting the cheque from Laurie, Norm made mention of the fact that this generous contribution from Komatsu makes an immediate difference in the brigade's operational readiness.

"The new generator will be invaluable in keeping our station online, plus the purchase of a Thermal Imaging Camera for Tanker 2 ensures our firefighters have the tools they need to protect our local community.

"Komatsu's support proves that no matter how large a company is, they can still hold a deep commitment to grassroots community safety. We thank Komatsu, Laurie and the neighbouring brigades who stood with us through our hour of need in January and for that, we are truly humbled and thankful," he said.

Sad update regarding missing kayaker

HUMAN remains have been found at Ghin Ghin, six weeks after kayaker Shane Wilson fell into the Goulburn River while fishing.

The remains were found by another kayaker at 11.30am on Sunday, August 30, who contacted emergency services.

It's understood that the missing kayaker had become engaged in tree roots near the bank, and that the water level in the river had recently reduced. The remains are yet to be formally identified.

The death is not being treated as suspicious.

Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club report

by honorary secretary Mike Jennings

AFTER last week's COVID-19 scare things returned to normal with the Bridge players in action on Wednesday and a social meeting on Friday. There were some discussion on future activities but no decisions were made. The club is planning a trip to *Morning Melodies* and an in-house club lunch. Watch this space for details.

Treasurer Dave advised that the club has enough funds for activities and had everyone smiling in Comedy Corner. More smiles from Mary, Bev and Elvie after the chocolate raffle. The usual games of 500 and UNO followed refreshments.

The club welcomes new members so come along and join in on a Friday afternoon. Meanwhile stay safe and keep smiling.

Eildon electorate: Cindy McLeish to recontest

CINDY McLeish is the incumbent Member for Eildon in the Legislative Assembly. She has announced that she will be recontesting for the role.

Cindy is the Liberal Party's Shadow Minister for Prevention of Family Violence, Women, WorkSafe and the TAC. She has previously held many other shadow portfolios, including education, small business, tourism, crime prevention and environment.

Prior to being elected to parliament, Cindy worked as a management consultant in organisational development specialising in leadership, organisational effectiveness and change management.

She worked across many industries including finance, health, mining and construction. Cindy consulted to large nationals and multinationals, the public sector and to smaller and family-owned businesses.

Cindy holds an MBA from Melbourne Business School, a Bachelor of Science and qualifications in education and counselling.

She began her working career as a secondary science teacher, then moved into the allied health industry after gaining registration as a psychologist. Cindy was at WorkCover for 10 years, was the CEO of a sporting organisation and had six years as a Director of Golf Victoria.

Cindy was first elected as the Member for Seymour in 2010, then as the Member for Eildon in 2014 following a re-distribution. She was re-elected in November 2018 and November 2022. Cindy lives sustainably off-grid on the family cattle farm near Yea.

EILDON HOSTS AWARD WINNING PERFORMERS

ON Saturday, August 29, Eildon Events and Regional Arts Victoria hosted award winning singer-songwriters Charles Jenkins and David Cosma at the Eildon Bowls Club.

The live show celebrated the uniqueness of country Victoria and its towns. Charles' witty and amazing songwriting along with David's upside guitar style were the highlights.

The performers had previously visited Eildon to engage, get inspiration and gain insight from locals, resulting in an amazing, humorous song written for Eildon.

There was humour, banter and a lot of crowd participation and laughter resulting in a very memorable night that the attendees will remember for a long time.



Charles Jenkins and David Cosma.



NETBALL TEAMWORK: The Under 17 netballers in action against Emerald, working closely together.



STRONG DEFENSE: Marli Coler defending for Alexandra.



MOVING UP THE COURT: Koa Parker from the Under 17 netball side attempting to progress the ball to Emerald's defensive side.



FLYING HIGH: Alexandra's Fletcher van Lierop from the Under 18 squad contesting the ball with Emerald.

THE ACTION AT
ALEXANDRA'S
FINALS GAMES



A TOUGH FIGHT: Alexandra Under 18 player Matt Wal bringing down an Emerald player while the team close in.

BRINGING DOWN EMERALD: Seniors player Peter Cairns throwing an inescapable tackle on this Emerald player.

Junior Rebels best and fairest at league presentation day

THE Goulburn Murray Junior Football Netball League Presentation Day was held in Shepparton last Sunday, with the Alexandra Football Netball Club proudly represented by a number of talented junior footballers and netballers.

It was a fantastic day for the Junior Rebels, with several players featuring prominently in the League Best and Fairest counts across both football and netball.

A huge congratulations goes to Jaidyn Dimech, who was crowned the Under 16 Football League Best and Fairest, and Tilly Miljkovic, who took home the 15 and Under Netball League Best and Fairest award.

Alisha Fitri also had an outstanding season, finishing runner-up in the 11 and Under Netball League Best and Fairest.

Alexandra continued to be well represented at the top end of the voting, with Bella Twitchett finishing third in the 15 and Under Netball count, closely fol-

lowed by Harper Williamson in fourth place. Ruby Birmingham finished fifth in the 13 and Under Netball Best and Fairest, while Eli van Lierop also secured a fantastic fifth place finish in the Under 14 Division One Football count.

To have so many Alexandra juniors recognised among the League's best players is a wonderful achievement and a great reflection of the talent coming through the club.

Congratulations to Jaidyn, Tilly, Alisha, Bella, Harper, Ruby and Eli on their outstanding results. The Alexandra Football Netball Club is incredibly proud of each of you and the commitment, sportsmanship and effort you have shown throughout the 2026 season.

LEAGUE PRESENTATIONS: A number of junior players from the Alexandra Football Netball Club walked away with awards for their sportsmanship this season.



Course reopens and Dan Burns claims victory

By DAVE SILVERMAN

THE author sincerely hopes that all of you have something other than this Alexandra Golf Club report to fill your days, because it's not going to take long to get through last week's offering. With the course closed for the early part of the week, the Tuesday and Wednesday competitions

were non-starters, so it is straight on to last Saturday. In contrast to the earlier part of the week, last Saturday was fine, warm and sunny, the course was re-opened on Thursday evening, and nine members signed in to tee off in a Stableford round, which was sponsored by Alexandra Tyrepower. The winner was Dan Burns,

who scored 34 points, with yours truly in second on 31, just pipping James Kidd on a countback. As it happens, the three place-getters were also the only ones to claim a nearest the pin, with Dan on 18, me on seven and Jimmy on two. As most of our members will know, the course is going to need some serious mowing in the com-

ing weeks, and the club is currently in the market for people who are prepared to spend some time sitting on a mower and help to get the spring growth under control. Obviously, you all have jobs and families, but if you spare even an hour or so here and there, it would be a huge help. If you're able to pitch in, give Shane a call on 0419 571 581.

Rod Taylor in the zone at Eildon

By PUTTAMATIC

WELCOME to last week's Eildon Golf Club match report. Another small field contested a Stableford round at Eildon last Saturday in fine conditions, albeit still a little wet under foot. In a three-way count back Rod Taylor prevailed to take first place honours, in second place was Colin Long followed by Leigh Munro with all three players finishing on 28 points. Rod was successful with two of the five nearest the pins on offer taking the prize on the third par four (second shot) and the 14th. The fifth, 11th and 12th went unclaimed as did the two birdie holes on offer.

Marion Williamson was the secret six winner last week with Brad Newton being the lucky entry draw winner. There was no swindle or joker draws due to the small numbers. The course is quickly drying out but with some rain forecast please keep an eye on your texts and email for the latest updates. Next Saturday will see the club host September's monthly medal in a stroke round. Don't forget the Wednesday Chook Run competition every Wednesday with a nice plump frozen chook on offer to the winning player, tee time 11am with booking in from 10.30am. Hope to see a few familiar faces out there.

Tony Rule takes out AH Smith competition

By ALAN PELL

WITH no golf last Wednesday at Yea Golf Club, 16 men participated last Saturday in the second round of the AH Smith. Conditions were still heavy with little roll but that didn't slow Tony Rule (17) who produced a brilliant round of 38 points to win the day by four points and the AH Smith by three points. Second on the day was Phil Armstrong (18) with 34 points from third Mic Spagnolo (10) 33 and fourth Ric Wills (10) on 32 points. Mic Spagnolo was nearest the pin on the 10th for two and the lucky \$10 winner of the Club Award was Rob Gill. AH Smith top results were: Tony Rule 64, Rick Wills 61, Phil Armstrong 60, Mic Spagnolo 60, Paul Heyen 58 and Alan Pell 58. In the Ladies' Competition Sharon Grogan took the honours with 27 points.

Found flippers at Marysville Golf Club

By LESLEY RUNDLE

FIRSTLY a 'Mystery Discovery on the Golf Course' at Marysville Golf Club. No, not the title of an Ann Cleeves novel but as shown in the photo, a pair of flippers were found dumped in a rubbish bin on the 16th tee. After play there were many creative thoughts as to how, why and when they came to be there. 'Maybe someone lost them when snorkelling in the river'; 'a golfer forgot his golf shoes so wore his flippers until he or she could no longer keep up with the group'; 'while someone was fishing a pair of flippers floated down the river and they were disposed of in the bin.' Maybe the mystery will never be solved? Better call Vera. Last Thursday the nine holers played stableford on the back nine holes. The winner was Heather Jenkins (12) with 18 points followed by Keith Atwell (9) with 17 points. Nearest the pin on the 11th was Peter Lilley who sank the putt for a Birdie and Gail Leigh won on the 18th. The Saturday golfers in perfect weather conditions played a stableford round for the Neil Murphy Trophy. The winner was Hayden Heath (14) with 36 points and Justin Ruddock with 34 points was the runner up on a countback from Peter Lilley. Peter did however have success

with two nearest the pins, the ninth and 18th, and won the Golden Shot. Hayden's excellent round included the nearest the pin on the fourth hole. Next Saturday a stroke round will be played for the September monthly medal. Members are reminded to please return their raffle books to Steve Coker as soon as possible and the raffle will be drawn on September 12 during the club AGM. The annual Standpipe Cup generously sponsored by Goulburn Valley Water will this year be played at Mansfield Golf Club on Saturday, October 3. It is a four person men, ladies or mixed Ambrose event for all clubs who are customers of Goulburn Valley Water. Marysville members are asked to contact Richy Clark if they would like to play in this event and two Marysville teams have already entered. Due to the date of the Standpipe Cup the men and ladies championships dates will be changed, and members are asked to please note that the Men's Championships will now be on October 10, 17 and 24 and the ladies' event will be on September 26, October 10, 17 and 24.



AQUATIC ADVENTURES: A PAIR OF FLIPPERS WERE FOUND IN A BIN ON THE 16TH TEE AT MARYSVILLE GOLF CLUB.

Speculated longest rally of the season for Jess and Travis at Alexandra Squash Club

By ANDREW BROWN

Monday competition
Team One versus Team Three
Eric versus Tyler: Tyler played a strong game. Although Eric fought valiantly to almost take the third game, Tyler dominated to win 80-41. Randy versus Will: Will has adapted quickly to a sport new to him. His agility and speed gave him an edge over Randy and he won every game to take the match 80-45. Will (fill-in) versus Sam: A great match with some terrific rallies. However, Will was filling in two divisions above his usual grade and Sam's experience prevailed 68-46. Phil versus Jim: Phil jumped out

to a strong lead of 13 points in the first game. However, Jim adjusted his game, abandoning short shots and playing to the back corners. This strategy won Jim the next three games and enabled him to claw his way back to take a close win 50-48. **Team Two versus Team Five**
Lachie versus Bec: In a game described by the referee as "a slapstick comedy" it was Lachie who had the last laugh, gaining an advantage by driving strongly to the back of the court and on to victory 79-56. Sally versus Jessica: A very close match early, Sally taking the first game by one point and Jessica taking the second by two. Thereafter, despite some wonderful rallies, Sal-

ly pulled away, especially strongly in the final game. Final score 65-46. **Stuart versus Mick:** In a hard-fought but friendly match, Mick worked hard chasing hard to stay in points. But Stu's form and craftiness are returning, catching Mick off-guard with some serves to the body. Stu running out the winner 69-46. **Wednesday competition**
Team Two versus Team Five
Tyler (fill-in) versus Jordan: Good friends Tyler and Jordan played as though they didn't want their opponent to lose, nor did they want to win any points themselves. In the end Tyler came out in front by a single point 63-62. Liane versus Matthew: Matthew

brought his A-game and got on roll. There was little Liane could do against some perfectly placed serves. Matt cruised to a 74-44 win. **Ben (fill-in) versus Michael:** Filling in, Ben was playing his second match in a row. His fresher, left-handed opponent was hitting more cleanly and had Ben wrong-footed. Ben worked his way back into the match with effective deep shots, however Michael's ability to stay in rallies and place winners along the side walls saw him take the victory 66-50. **Team One versus Team Three**
Nicole versus Marty: Marty shot out to a seven-point lead in the first game. From there on, the game was remarkably even, with both play-

ers impressing with a variety of strokes. In the end Marty's initial seven-point buffer became the final margin: 65-58. **Jess versus Travis:** Travis won the match 64-37 but this contest will be remembered for an outstanding rally in the second game. Spectators speculate that it may have been the longest rally of the season. Many of Travis's shots hit the back wall but Jess just kept returning them. **Michael versus Ben:** Mawso started possessed by the unforced error demon, while Ben started in sublime form, with great placement and a commanding short game. Although Mawso worked hard to catch up, Ben refused to falter and took home a 16-point win 64-48.

**Junior
Rebels
best and
fairest**

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THE ALEXANDRA · EILDON · MARYSVILLE
**Standard
Sport**



Senior team advance

ALEXANDRA SENIORS THROUGH TO PRELIMINARY FINALS WHILE UNDER 18 AND UNDER 17 ELIMINATED

**Alexandra 14.16-100
defeated Emerald 7.6-48**

ON a beautiful spring day, the Alexandra Rebels Senior team took to the expansive Healesville ground to do battle against Emerald with a place in the preliminary final awaiting a winner.

In an evenly contested first quarter Emerald went to the break with a five-point lead after goals to Rebels Ben Cooper and Josh Edwards.

The Rebels came out full of running with their midfield giving the forwards plenty of opportunities and they did not disappoint with the dangerous Edwards kicking two goals and Sam Critchley beginning to insert himself on the game with his strong marking and two goals resulting in a five goals to two quarter for the Rebels.

The third quarter saw the Rebels break the game wide open with a dominant quarter scoring 4.3 with Critchley continuing to dominate with two goals and the Rebels rock solid in defence lead by Scott Heveren and Bart Wallace restricting Emerald to three behinds.

The last quarter saw the Rebels' small brigade lead by Mitch Parker, Cameron Bishop, Peter Cairns, Riley Frankcombe, and Callan Howell putting their opponents under pressure with their running and creativity outscoring their opponents 3.7 to Emerald's two goals.

Lachlan Nankervis' lone effort in the ruck, the Rebels defence restricting their opponents to four goals in three quarters, and Sam Critchley and Josh Edwards in offence were highlights of a most impressive team performance considering six players were unavailable for selection through injury.

Goal kickers: Critchley, Edwards four each. Stewart two, Nankervis, Cooper, Kappa and Coventry one each.

The Rebels now travel to Yarra Junction to do battle with Seville in the preliminary final with the winner to play Pakenham in the Grand Final.

Under 18 football

Alexandra's Under 18s gave it everything against Yarra Glen in their final match of the season. The Rebels started strongly, leading 14 to seven at quarter time, before Yarra Glen responded in the second term with 2.2 to Alexandra's five points.

The third quarter was an even contest, with both sides kicking two goals apiece, before Yarra Glen finished the stronger in the final term, holding Alexandra to just one point while adding 1.1 themselves.

While their finals campaign has now come to an end, it has been a fantastic effort from the young men after a long season. Coach Sam Kidd and the entire Under 18 group have done the Rebels proud, and they should hold their heads high after everything they have achieved this year.

Under 17 netball

The Under 17 Netballers took on Emerald in their first Semi Final, with the opening half a great back-and-forth contest as both teams worked their way into the game. At half time, the Rebels were just four goals down and right in the contest.

Emerald lifted in the third quarter, scoring 11 goals to Alexandra's five, which ultimately proved to be the difference. To the girls' credit, they fought the game out strongly and matched Emerald in the final quarter, losing the term by just one goal.

Unfortunately, Emerald's strong third quarter was enough to see them take the win 35 to 24, bringing Alexandra's finals campaign to an end.

A huge congratulations to all the Under 17 girls and coach Nat Stewart on a fantastic season. The team has shown plenty of determination, improvement and Rebel spirit throughout the year and should be extremely proud of their efforts.



**SHRUGGING OFF
COMPETITION:
Despite Emerald's
best efforts, they
couldn't bring down
the Alexandra Senior
team, who are
advancing to the
preliminary finals.
Pictured is Sam
Critchley.**

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