

THE ALEXANDRA · EILDON · MARYSVILLE

Standard

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

P.O Box 5, Alexandra, 3714. Ph: (03) 5772 1002; Fax: (03) 5772 1603; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Wednesday, January 31, 2024 \$2.00 inc. GST

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Cr Karine Haslam (third from left) with Eildon Lions members Syd, Alex, Kevin, John, Ron, Dee, Chris and Wayne, cooking breakfast for everyone at Australia Day in Eildon. -AR

A trucking emergency for firefighters

THERE'S a big difference between roadworthy and safe when it comes to the vehicles used for fighting fires. Older vehicles don't have, for example, ABS brakes, hill start assist or air bags, and in some cases in the shire, firefighters are expected to sit on the back of trucks, in the open air, while travelling to fight fires.

We have all heard stories of fire trucks being overcome by flames in recent Australian fires. On Black Saturday, for example, 25 CFA tankers were caught in burn-overs. No-one was injured in the twin cab vehicles but four were injured on the 17 older style single cab trucks relying on a sprinkler system for safety. It is unreasonable to expect our volunteer firefighters to have such limited protection when travelling on the back of trucks to protect the community.

It is estimated that between 13 and 16 fire trucks in Murrindindi Shire are aged over 25. CFA trucks are meant to be replaced when they reach the age of 25.

There is also a trend within the CFA towards 'cascading'. An ageing vehicle, of, say, 30 years of age, might be replaced with a 20 year old truck from another station. The

30 year old truck might then go to another local station.

In 2006, the CFA had a 20 year replacement policy on vehicles. By 2014, 24 per cent of vehicles were over 20 years of age. This has now been eroded. In 2017, the oldest vehicles were 30 years of age. There are now 193 vehicles in the state which are older than 30.

There was also a feeling among volunteers that the CFA treats stations in smaller areas more poorly than those in larger towns.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) state councillor Paul Denham said, "The CFA fleet is too old, despite what the Chief Fire Officer might say. We shouldn't be driving vehicles without ABS, airbags, and with crews on the back of vehicles, especially given the state of the roads. We should be past that."

Fire Services Implementation Monitor

The Fire Services Implementation Monitor (FSIM) annual report for 2021/22, stated, "As outlined by the independent financial sustainability reviews, CFA's Asset Management Strategy and Fire Rescue

Victoria's (FRV) Capital Planning, FSIM notes that the majority of CFA's and FRV's delivery assets are aged beyond useful life (specifically, stations, appliances and equipment). CFA and FRV have informed FSIM that the aged assets could pose significant risks to CFA's and FRV's future service delivery."

CFA annual report

In the CFA 2022/23 annual report, it states, "The delivery of 50 new crew cab tankers is well underway with 17 completed by June 2023. These vehicles are replacing single cab tankers which will eliminate the need for crew to be on the back while travelling to and from an incident. The remaining tankers should be completed by May 2024."

CFA response to questioning

The CFA was asked to confirm that all CFA tankers will be twin-cab by May 2024, as suggested above, or will some brigades still require crews to travel on the back of the tanker.

A CFA spokesperson responded, "In the last few years CFA has prioritised the replacement of its single cab medium and

heavy tankers because they are the oldest trucks in our fleet.

"There are still a number of single cab tankers in use and they will be replaced as funding becomes available and they come to the end of their life span.

"CFA no longer designs and builds appliances that have volunteers traveling to or from fires on the back of the tanker and in the last 16 years CFA has not procured any single-cab Medium or Heavy tankers. All new tankers acquired have seating capacity for a crew within the cabin."

It was added that from 2006 all new tankers have been manufactured with crew protection systems for protection during a burn-over situation. CFA has retrofitted all pre-2006 tankers with crew protection systems equal to the same performance standards as new tankers, designed to suit each vehicle. All new firefighters are trained in how to use the crew protection systems before they qualify to turn out to incidents and all firefighters responding are required to undertake retraining in utilising the crew protection systems annually.

Continued Page 16

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They downplay your citizenship to a second tier based on their own perceived white guilt, not good enough to recognise

Like most Boomers, I grew up in relatively peaceful times, was educated and worked building infrastructure and providing services. At age 70, it saddens me I'll probably see World War III and unlike the first two World Wars, we won't have the


Chris Petersen, Alexandra



Weekly Weather















January 31 - February 6, 2024


Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication




Alexandra

Yea

DAY	LOW	HIGH		DAY	LOW	HIGH	
Wednesday	12	26		Wednesday	12	25	
Thursday	14	27		Thursday	14	27	
Friday	11	24		Friday	11	24	
Saturday	14	30		Saturday	13	30	
Sunday	17	34		Sunday	16	34	
Monday	14	25		Monday	13	25	
Tuesday	13	25		Tuesday	13	25	





ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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

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

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Standard

The Sun Chronicle

River Heights for the Goulburn Catchment				
Station Name	Time	Height	Tendency	Flood Class
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon D/S	NA			
Acheron R at Taggerty	12.00pm Mon	0.69	steady	below minor
Home Ck at Yarck	10.22am Mon	0.25	steady	
Yea R at Devlins Bridge	11.24am Mon	0.63	steady	below minor
Rubicon R at Rubicon	12.00pm Mon	0.57	steady	
King Parrot Ck at Flowerdale	12.00pm Mon	0.62	steady	below minor
Goulburn R at Trawool	12.00pm Mon	1.51	steady	below minor
Sunday Ck at Tallarook	12.00pm Mon	0.35	steady	below minor
Goulburn R at Seymour	12.00pm Mon	1.83	steady	below minor
Whiteheads Ck at Seymour	10.52am Mon	1.24	steady	
Goulburn R at Ghin Ghin	12.00pm Mon	3.82	steady	

****ISSUED AT 12.16PM ON MONDAY, 29 JANUARY 2024**

DISTRICT RAINFALL	
Alexandra	N/Amm
Buxton.....	28.5mm
Eildon (AWS).....	18mm
Flowerdale.....	23mm
Jamieson.....	36mm
Kinglake.....	20mm
Lake Eildon	32mm
Mansfield.....	26mm
Taggerty	31 mm
Yarck	22mm
Yea.....	27mm
Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday	
LAKE EILDON	
Height above sea level this week.....	288.42m
Capacity as at 9am Monday.....	98.1%
Metres below full supply.....	48cm
Daily inflow	1500ML
Release.....	3000ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change).....	70%

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DEADLINES

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

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

5772 1002 or
reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

We thank you for your continued support



THUMBS UP: A big thumbs up and thanks to Stu from Bedrock Alexandra who again went above and beyond when delivering us a couple of loads of gravel this week to help us fix up some tracks after the recent storms. He took extra time and care to try and let it flow and spread out of the back of his truck as he drove, which saved us a whole lot of time and effort. So nice to deal with someone who is 'can do' when providing a service.

THUMBS UP: To Rotary for the lunch and entertainment to acknowledge Australia Day.

THUMBS DOWN: To our woke council, who quietly held a citizenship ceremony days before Australia Day, and had no input into the celebrations in the park, also left the flagpole locked and without an Australian Flag flying. Most disrespectful. Thank you to the mayor for putting in an appearance.

THUMBS UP: Once again Rotary has helped out. A wonderful occasion for Australia Day. A huge thank you.

THUMBS UP: A fantastic effort by the Rotary Club for getting the Australia Day celebrations together and providing us with an opportunity to come together and enjoy the day and be proud of who we are and what we stand for.

THUMBS DOWN: To FoodWorks as they are very expensive and do not have shopping rewards card for us like FoodWorks have in other areas. Why not?

THUMPS UP: To the organisers of the Epic Eildon Book Sale. Fantastic set up and display of books for sale. Well done to all concerned. You deserve the best outcome for all the hours that were quite obviously put in.

THUMBS DOWN: To the retailer in Eildon shopping centre for taking up premium parking space during the busy holiday period. If every retailer was as selfish as you, there would be no parking spaces for locals, or more importantly tourists, at this time of year.

THUMBS UP: I would like to extend my pollice in an upward direction to Hudson from Country Tech who made a home visit due to our IT issues. Hudson fixed the issue nicely, and in the process we had an excellent and interesting conversation about many things. What a lovely guy. It's nice to know such thoughtful people live in our community.

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

Australia Day honours

Ross Sullivan

CFA Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) Ross Sullivan was recognised in the Australia Day Honours, receiving an Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) for his more than 45 years of dedicated service to CFA and his community.

Throughout his career Ross Sullivan AFSM has exemplified the values of CFA and is well regarded by volunteers and staff alike as an assured, knowledgeable, supportive, empathetic and humble leader.

He has held the role of DCO North East Region since 2018, overseeing 271 brigades and more than 14,000 volunteers within an area stretching from the eastern Melbourne suburb of Scoresby to the northern border of the state.

Ross began his career at Bolinda and Monegeetta brigade in the junior running team before officially joining as a volunteer in 1978 at the age of 16. By his early 20s he knew that firefighting was the career for him.

"Being a volunteer at a small rural fire brigade was about looking after friends and farms around the district," Ross said. "It meant a lot to be part of a service that made such a valued contribution to community. After I finished high school, the lure of working with machinery and equipment and the skills I learned operating vehicles led me to seek a career in the fire services."

"I never thought I would have been able to be a career firefighter with CFA and jumped at the opportunity when the course opened up."

Over the years Ross worked his way through the CFA ranks from a frontline firefighter to his current role as DCO of North East Region.

Ross has been on the frontline and led through many emergencies and large-scale fires and floods including the 2009 fires, the 2014 Hazelwood Mine fire, the 2019-20 fires and the October 2022 floods.

During the 2009 fires, Ross was deployed to Churchill where he was part of the team that led and managed the response in the chaotic first hours of the fire when impacts on life, communities and first responders were not known. After the fires, he supported volunteers and staff in the ongoing response to the fires and subsequent recovery.

His emergency management experience and leadership also extend to post-incident recovery and rehabilitation. During the 2019-20 fires Ross established a process for the rehabilitation and repair of areas damaged by firefighting activity. This received widespread positive community feedback and it is now used as the CFA standard. Ross also provided in-field and on-ground support to the relief and recovery effort after the 2019-20 Upper Murray fires and the 2022 floods.

Damien O'Toole

EILDON resident Damien O'Toole was the recipient of an Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM).

The awards announcement outlined how during his career of over 34 years, Damien O'Toole has demonstrated professionalism, leadership, tenacity, and passion for specialist knowledge and skills within fire and emergency services. He has been involved in executing his leadership, specialist knowledge, and skills throughout Melbourne and Victoria at complex fire, rescue, and emergency incidents including the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires.

Mr O'Toole has recently concluded 10 years as a full-time fire investigator in the State Fire Investigation Unit (SFIU) at Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) and has maintained his training to respond to emergencies. This longevity has been achieved by only a few dedicated fire investigators within the ranks of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) and FRV. Mr O'Toole's prolonged tenure in the SFIU represents a distinguished career as a professional firefighter encompassing many specialist roles which are inherently hazardous in their nature and execution.

During Mr O'Toole's service in SFIU he has worked tirelessly to provide accurate fire cause and origin determination in the pursuit of enhancing fire safety outcomes for the community. He has provided training and mentoring to many of FRV's current cohort of fire investigators and training to Victoria Police Detective Training School in fire investigation.

Mr O'Toole has endured not only hazardous environmental and emotionally distressing conditions during his many fire investigations but has also been subpoenaed to and represented the former MFB and FRV in several court arenas including the Coroners and County courts providing vital evidence from his investigations and in most cases years post-investigation.

Leon Costermans

LEON Costermans was awarded an OAM, and is known in the Alexandra area for his work as a math teacher at Alexandra Secondary College during the 1960s and 1970s, as well as for his publications on native flora, including around the north east part of Victoria.

He received the award for "service to conservation and the environment."

Leon is a botanist, geologist and author, and is a former Senior Lecturer in Science Education and the Outdoor Education Program at Monash University, and Senior Lecturer in Science at the State College of Victoria.

He is a founder and coordinator of the Friends of Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve, active in the organisation since 1988.

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UGFM 98.9	Flowerdale / Hazeldene
UGFM 94.5	Kinglake Ranges

WEEKLY

Tues	Art Group Eildon(Alex Tennis Rooms) 10am-3pm Ph 5773 2306
Tue	Seniors Carpet Bowls 1.15pm
Wed	Social Bowls 11am Alexandra Bowls Club Ph 5772 1150
Thu	Take off weight naturally 5.45pm 5773 2427
Fri	Seniors Social Club 1pm
Sun	AA 7pm Anglican Church, Alexandra Ph 1300 222 222
Sun	Alanon Recovery Phone 0402 428 086.
Sun	Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training. Ph 5772 1057
Thu	7.00-10pm SES, SES/CFA complex Ph 0418 576 666
Fri	Communitale 10am-12pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801

MONTHLY

1 st Wed	Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318
1 st Sat	Alexandra Quilters RSL Hall 10am-4pm Ph 5772 3257
1 st Sun	Crop/Produce swap 10.30am-noon @ Embassy of Ideas
2 nd Tue	Alexandra District Garden Society Meeting Ph 5772 2285
2 nd Wed	Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
2 nd Sat	Alexandra Market - at Station Street Ph 0427 509 988
2 nd Sat	Alex Repair Cafe 1-3pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
3 rd Sat	Murrindindi Men 6-8pm@ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
3 rd Wed	Alex Lions business meeting, rear RSL hall 0427 595 318
3 rd Thu	Alexandra Ladies Probus Club 10am RSL Ph 5772 2946
3 rd Thu	Community Potluck dinner 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas
3 rd Sun	Alexandra RSL Ph 0409 950 913
4 th Tue	Yarck CWA Meeting, 10.30am Yarck Hall.
4 th Wed	Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
4 th Thu	Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517
Last Fri	Carers Group walk 9.45am @ Rotary Park. 0418 402 455



For a \$5 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.

Mayor’s Chair

Cr Damien Gallagher, Mayor, Murrindindi Shire Council

MURRINDINDI Shire Council continues to recognise and celebrate Australia Day and all Australians. In 2024, as it has for many years, council awarded thousands of dollars in funding and in-kind assistance to community groups to deliver unique and engaging events of celebration across our rural setting of 3880 square kilometres.

I attended every event I was invited to as Mayor and I proudly participated in celebrations of our national day respectfully and in line with the wishes of the respective event organisers.

From Flowerdale to Yea, to Alexandra, Acheron and Taggerty, and to Thornton, Eildon, Toolangi, and Kinglake, I have enjoyed a stunning celebration of Australia right across the rugged ranges and river valleys of Murrindindi Shire this past long weekend. I met fellow councillors and council staff at events across the weekend. It continues to be our profound privilege to serve our community.

In the week leading to Australia Day, I celebrated first responders and inter-agency cooperation in the face of a recent local emergency. I’ve stressed the recent Murrindindi flood impacts to state and federal government representatives. After valued conversations with a Taungurung elder, and alongside representatives of local RSL and Rotary Club servants of our community, council staff, and Victorian members of parliament, I presided over the conferring of Australian citizenship upon six Murrindindi residents. The privilege of leading the four citizenship ceremonies scheduled across 2024 is one I will forever cherish.

For some pastoralists, tradies, professionals, volunteers, and councillors alike, there is unease about overt celebration annually on January 26. There are those who’d welcome a change of date to enable a more complete and inclusive celebration of nationhood. This sentiment has manifested in decreasing numbers of people attending events and a lack of engagement, particularly on the part of younger generations, around January 26. For those reasons council has opted to celebrate the Murrindindi Community Awards during Volunteer Week in May, rather than announce the Murrindindi Citizens of the Year winners on Australia Day. Last year this resulted in the largest ever number of nominations of worthy community members and groups, and very well-attended events to celebrate the dedicated work of our volunteers and community groups.

In 2024, council continued to support community-led Australia Day events across Murrindindi Shire, all tailored for residents and visitors by generous local groups, and each as unique as our towns and villages, and as unique as each Murrindindi Australian.

Funding was awarded to every one of the community groups who sought financial support from council for Australia Day events. So, the use of the term ‘shame’ from a handful of divisive and misinformed voices, claiming a lack of support from council on Australia Day is a slur I cannot abide. It’s an unacceptable slight on dedicated volunteers and council staff alike.

Conversely, I am thankful to the people who shared their perspectives with me personally. For reference, I’m contactable on 0419 017 801.

Australia is fortunate in a world of tension and bloodshed. Our freedom, our democracy, our equality before the law, and our shared commitment to a fair-go, make us Australian. I think that we could recognise more often, our shared commitment to these principles and invest less in exploiting differences of perspective to achieve division.

Out&About



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

If you have been impacted by recent flooding and have waste to dispose of, including household and green waste, contact council’s waste team on 5772 0333 or email customer@murrindindi.vic.gov.au

If you are paying your council rates in full, payment is due February 15. The third instalment is due February 29, 2024.

Nominations for council’s 2024 Community Awards

are now open. Volunteer of the Year, Senior Volunteer of the Year, Young Volunteer of the Year and Community Group or Initiative of the Year. Nominations close Sunday, March 24. Visit theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/2024Awards

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

The Alexandra Football Netball ladies committee will hold their AGM at the club room at 6pm. Everyone is welcome. For any information contact Kath on 0438 520 382.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Alexandra Pastoral and Ag Association AGM will be held at 7pm at the showgrounds/caravan park office. All welcome, new

members encouraged. For more details contact the secretary pna.alexandra@gmail.com

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

The next meeting of the Alexandra RSL will be held at noon. This meeting is an Annual General Meeting, followed by the normal monthly meeting with light lunch.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Long Lazy Summer lunch at Holmesglen at Eildon. Noon - 4pm. Three course lunch featuring local produce, free flowing bubbles from Snobs Creek Estate. Spectacular views. Accommodation available. Bookings essential 5774 2631.

The clock is ticking for Narbethong CFA

EVERY country town needs a fire brigade, but Narbethong CFA is at risk of losing theirs. Rob Bean, Captain of the Narbethong CFA for the last six years explained how dire the situation is becoming at the brigade.

“The numbers of brigade members have dwindled off over the last 10 years... The newer people coming to the area are very hard to get engaged. Basically, what we have been doing lately is over the last three to four weeks, we are doing a door knock and talking to Narbethong residents and bringing attention to the situation the brigade is in.”

Times have changed, and the brigade is feeling this. Rob said, “We are having trouble responding with the truck during the day as everyone works out of the area now. The reality is that we probably only have four active members, so it’s left up to four or five people to run the show. We are trying hard to engage with people and encourage community members to share the load and get involved.

“We are at the point that the brigade will cease, and we don’t want to do that. We have a long history in the area, and we are trying hard to keep it going. The worst case scenario is that they shut the brigade, and we will have to merge with other brigades. We want to keep it going, but just need people

interested. There is no use people joining up and not getting involved. We need people genuinely keen and lending a hand.”

The door knock to community members has been a new strategy for the brigade to recruit members. Pamphlet drops in the past and local news advertisements haven’t really been successful.

Rob said, “I think it’s been a good response, by physically going up in your uniform and talking to residents and saying how it is. No one has officially signed up to join yet but with a bit of luck that will change.

“The CFA has given us a bit of a deadline to work to before we have to shut the brigade and merge. The truck won’t disappear out of Narbethong but it will be renamed. We just have to wait and see what happens.

“The reality is, all of us have been in it for 15 plus years or more, and I’ve been on brigade management team during that time. We previously had a succession plan where others can step up, but things change and people have sold and moved and we need to do something,” said Rob.

It’s the 11th hour for the brigade and they need help. If you’re interested in joining the Narbethong CFA call Captain Rob Bean on 0402 041 170.

Eildon toilet access during redevelopment

MURRINDINDI Shire Council announced last week that work on the Eildon Reserves Redevelopment will commence in February, with completion planned for October.

Council were contacted after a member of the public expressed concern about the distance people will need to travel to access toilets during the redevelopment. The closest toilets will be at Lions Park next to the Pondage while the public toilets across the road from the shops are out of action.

There are concerns for old people, children, pregnant women, people with disabilities, people without cars, etcetera. There will also be an influx of people in the area during Easter.

Council was asked whether they have considered installing portable toilets in the park, in addition to making the Lions Park toilets available. What decision was made and why?

A council spokesperson responded, “The Lions Park public toilets are the closest alternative and I believe they are approximately 400 metres away. Council is not providing Portaloo toilets, or similar in the area.

“The new public toilets are expected to be ready for use by the end of June, weather depending.”

Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club report

by honorary secretary Mike Jennings

IT is hoped that all of the Alexandra and District Seniors Club members had a lovely Australia Day Long Weekend and are ready to enjoy a new year of club activities.

After a week of well-supported card playing, we have the committee meet-up on Tuesday to plan upcoming activities, and then on Friday, we have the first business

meeting of the year starting at 1pm in the Bayley Street club room.

Two card players are still missing this week, with Ron and Louie still in hospital. The members wish them well and hope to see them back in action soon.

If you would like to join in, please come along to the meetings on Fridays. You will be made most welcome. Meanwhile stay safe and keep smiling.

Church Services

ANGLICAN

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

CATHOLIC

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

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Contact: Ps Steven Turner
Ph: 0413 127 283
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 of the Baptist
Union of Victoria Sunday 4.30pm service
Kids program during school term
St Andrew’s, 37 Downey Street,
Alexandra
Pastor - Geoffrey Johnstone
0481 472 152

Australia Day in Eildon



Cr Karine Haslam speaking at the Eildon event. -AR



Eildon Primary School Principal Jai Harrington delivering the Australia Day address. -AR



The Eildon Lions Club Citizens of the Year were Helena Sneddon and Alan Layton, for their work looking after the Eildon Cemetery. -AR

Darren Gilbert open studio

An open art studio of organic metal sculptures and pen & ink artworks of Australian animals.

Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th February 2024

10.00am to 4.00pm each day

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Council facing challenging financial times

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has said that they acknowledge the Victorian Government's recent announcement of the rate cap of 2.75 percent for 2024/25, a decrease from the last year's rate cap of 3.5 percent, under the Fair Go Rates system.

A spokesperson from council said, "The announcement of the rate cap is an important step in the process of developing council's Annual Budget for 2024/25, which will be released for community feedback in early April, with feedback considered by council in May. The Annual Budget outlines the funding required to deliver services and maintain community infrastructure.

"As a small rural council, funding sources are limited to rates revenue and government grants to fund operations and works, and like many councils in Victoria, Murrindindi is facing significant financial pressures.

"While council supports the government's efforts to ease cost of living pressures on households through the rate cap, Murrindindi will face considerable challenges in maintaining service standards and ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

"Recent cost increases, which have exceeded the rate cap, coupled with additional expenses stemming from natural disasters such as the floods in October 2022, October 2023, and January 2024, as well as challenges related to skills and labour shortages, have created financial strain.

"This situation is further compounded by the transfer of certain costs from the government to local councils. Consequently, council is facing the demanding task of providing more services each year to an expanding population, while simultaneously dealing with a decrease in real-term revenue.

"Unlike larger or metropolitan councils, Murrindindi has limited avenues to raise additional revenue, such as through car parking fees. We are actively exploring various internal efficiencies and opportunities for automation to reduce the impact of cost increases. In line with this, we are investing in a new information management system, developed in collaboration with three nearby councils. This initiative is aimed at improving our operational efficiency and service delivery.

"We are fully aware of the cost of living pressures faced by various sections of our community and are committed to managing our resources responsibly to address these challenges.

"We understand that any rate rises will have an impact on our community. In preparing our Annual Budget we will carefully consider the revenue needs of council to continue to provide the services needed by our community, and balance this with the cost pressures being experienced by all."



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AUSTRALIA DAY IN ALEXANDRA



Cate Caswell participating in the thong throwing competition. -MP



Abi Caswell getting her face painted. -MP



Part of the crowd enjoying the Australia Day celebrations in Alexandra. -MP



Mal and Graeme cooking up a storm. -MP



An impressive music performance by Mark Robinson. -MP



Anne and Yvonne having a snag and enjoying the atmosphere. -MP



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Paul with his dingoes taking part of the Australia Day celebrations. -MP

Australia Day in Marysville



The flags of the world led the Australia Day parade in Marysville. -AR



The Marysville Saddletamps. -AR



Some of the vintage cars in the parade. -AR



Tallan, Grace and Xanthia, with Lachlan at the front. -AR



Cr Sandice McAulay raising the Australian flag in Marysville on Australia Day. -AR



Emergency services vehicles in the Marysville parade. -AR

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The health check providers from the Yea and District Memorial Hospital. -S



Free health checks were provided to the attendees at the Yea Saleyards on January 19. There will also be free health checks available on Friday, February 2. -S



Blood pressure checks. -S

PHOTO COMPETITION with twice the prizes...

For the month of January we are running our photo competition with the theme, 'Alexandra Pro Rodeo'. To enter simply send in your name, address, phone number with your photo to manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au (files cannot be smaller than 1mb or exceed 10mb and must be of printable quality), or PO Box 5 Alexandra Vic 3714 or you can drop it off at *Alexandra Newspapers* located 43 Grant Street Alexandra. Two winners will receive either a \$50 voucher from *Dindi Country Clothing* or a \$50 voucher from *Embling Rural* in Alexandra. Entries need to be received by January 31, 2024. Photos must be taken by you, taken in the last 12 months, unedited, and taken within the Murrindindi Shire area. No more than three entries per person and professional photographers, employees of *Alexandra Newspapers* and their family, are ineligible from entering.



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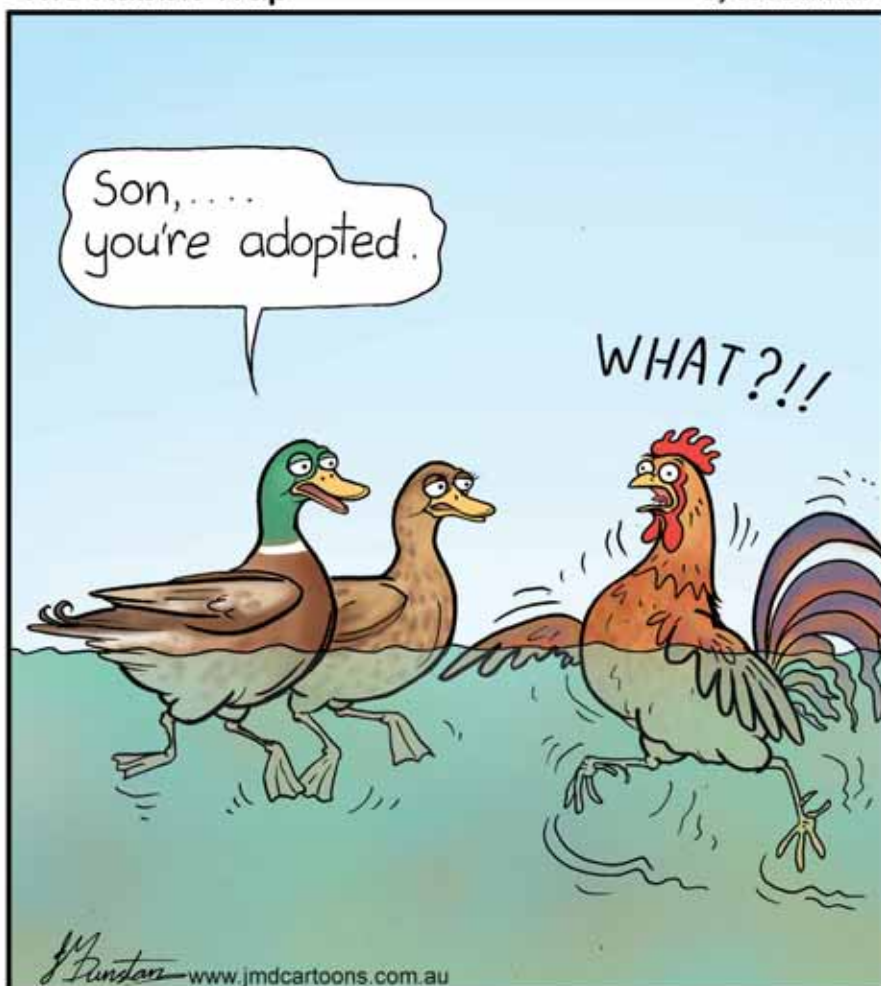
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A farmer having a cholesterol check done at the Yea Saleyards. -S

The Rabbit Trap

By Jed Dunstan



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Recipe kindly
submitted by the
Yarck Branch
of the CWA

LICORICE ALL SORTS SLICE

INGREDIENTS

Melted butter, to grease
125g butter, chopped
160ml (2/3 cup) sweetened condensed milk

1 tbsp golden syrup
1 x 250g pkt plain sweet biscuits (such as Marie), crushed

45g (1/2 cup) desiccated coconut
1 x 375g pkt Licorice Allsorts, coarsely chopped

200g dark cooking chocolate, chopped
30g copha

METHOD

Brush a 19 x 29cm lamington pan with melted butter to lightly grease. Line the base and sides with non-stick baking paper, allowing it to overhang slightly.

Combine the butter, condensed milk and golden syrup in a medium saucepan over low heat. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until butter melts and mixture is smooth.

Transfer to a large heatproof bowl. Add the biscuits, coconut and Licorice Allsorts and stir until just combined.

Press the mixture into the base of the prepared pan and set aside for 30 minutes to set.

Place the chocolate and copha in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan half-filled with simmering water (make sure the bowl doesn't touch the water). Use a metal spoon to stir over low heat until chocolate melts and mixture is smooth.

Pour the chocolate mixture over the slice in the pan. Place in the fridge for 1 hour to set. Cut into squares to serve.

**Yarck CWA meet on the fourth
Monday of each month at the
Yarck Hall at 2pm.
Contact Margo on 0403 309 502.**

SAVE THE DATE

February 2 - Yea Saleyards

Combined Agents – Store Sale
FREE Skin Checks

March 1 - Yea Saleyards

Combined Agents – Store Sale

April 5 - Yea Saleyards

Combined Agents – Store Sale

GET IN TOUCH

Phone 0419 722 570
saleyards@murrindindi.vic.gov.au

CATTLE SALES

Auction start time 9.30am

Feb 2: Store sale

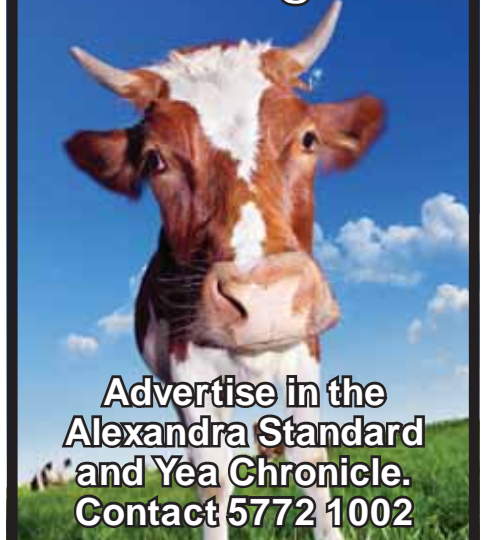
Mar 1: Store sale

April 5: Store sale



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NUTRIEN Yea Livestock Agents pulled together the first Weaner sale for the year at the Yea Saleyards on Friday, January 5.

A large crowd witnessed quality weaners with a great run of both steers and heifers, averaging approximately 315kg across the yarding of 2764 head.

Representatives from Crime Watch were in attendance to answer questions any queries local producers may have regarding stock and equipment theft in the district.

Representatives from Agriculture Victoria (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action) were also in attendance to answer questions regarding recent flooding events and stock or property management.



Tyson Bush from Nutrien Ag Solutions welcomes the large crowd and congratulates the vendors on the outstanding line-up of weaners. -S



Judi and Ian Marshman with their pen of EU Hereford steers. -S



Best presented pen of heifers, 18 Angus sold by the Fern family in Highlands. -S



Local police in attendance on Crime Watch stand, Leading Senior Constable Chris Cummins, Senior Constable Sam McCaffrey and Acting Sargeant Kat Mills. -S



Packed to the rails. -S

Elders 37th Annual Blue Ribbon Weaner Sale

THE Elders Yea 37th Annual Blue Ribbon Weaner Sale, held on January 19 yarded 3912 cattle. It was a magnificent yarding of weaners, an absolute credit to the breeders who annually supply cattle in this sale.

Continued rain has increased re-stocker interest and this was seen in the sale driving the dearer trend across all weights and categories.

The sale saw strength from local purchasers, bullock fatteners in Gippsland, backgrounders in northern NSW and southern Queensland, and feedlots including Australian Food and Agriculture.

The top priced steers were A/C The Lily Pastoral, 407.5kg and made \$1580.

The top priced heifers were A/C SJ & GK Clifton, 349.8kg and made \$1590.

Yea's next Combined Agents Store Sale will be held on Friday, February 2.

STOCK REPORT 19 JANUARY 2024			
Elders Yea 37th Annual Blue Ribbon Weaner Sale 19 January 2024	Total Yarding	Steers	Heifers
Number of head	3,912	2,643	1,269
Average \$ per head	\$1,224		
Average weight per head	323kg		
Top price per head		\$1,580	\$1,590
Top weight		426.1kg	373.6kg
Turnover	\$4.78million		



Local ladies Sue Spagnolo and Miranda Gill. -S



Helen Hauser in front of their best presented pen of Charolais steers. -S



The crowd at the Elders sale. -S



Peter Rollason (Elders Pakenham branch manager) and Bruce Elliott (Elders Yea Livestock branch manager). -S

PUZZLES

SOLUTIONS
Page 13

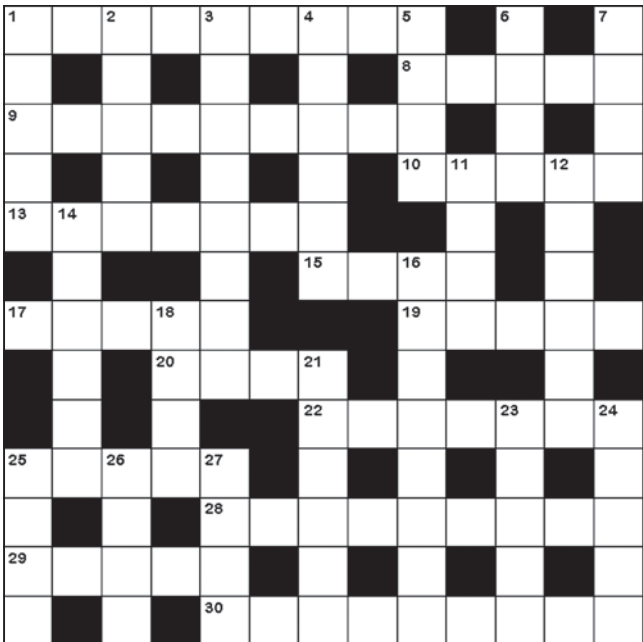
Crossword

ACROSS

1. Season of peace and goodwill.
8. Striped gemstone.
9. Wildly excited with joy.
10. A light yellowish-brown colour.
13. Any woven cloth.
15. Divided in two.
17. Make up for.
19. A thick sweet sticky liquid.
20. The first man.
22. Arrangement in a straight line.
25. Surrenders possession of.
28. Cuts off a limb.
29. In the company of.
30. Takes too many doses.

DOWN

1. A military trainee.
2. Become less tense.
3. Twisted to cause swelling.
4. Tied up a boat.
5. Ribbon worn around the waist.
6. Big band dance music.
7. Meat from a calf.
11. A friendly nation.
12. Dig up a dead body.
14. The whole lot.
16. Gave help to.
18. The central area of a church.



21. Common black-and-white bird.
23. Scribbled messages.
24. Schoolroom furniture.
25. Water soaked soil.
26. An unpleasant fate.
27. An old fashioned pudding.

Word Search

Puzzles Day
January 29

- ANAGRAM
CHESS
CROSSWORD
CRYPTOGRAM
JIGSAW
KAKURO
MAZE
RIDDLES
RUBIKSCUBE
SCRABBLE
SOLITAIRE
SUDOKU



Double Puzzle

CEBALEETR

3 9 1

RTDIGUATE

4 10 11 2

DISENNKS

8

PPEARICTEA

12

TDETAIEM

7

RXEESPS

13

NDAOTE

5

RPOTPUS

6

F 1 2 3

4 5 6 7

F 8 9 10 11 12 13 Y

Maths Squares

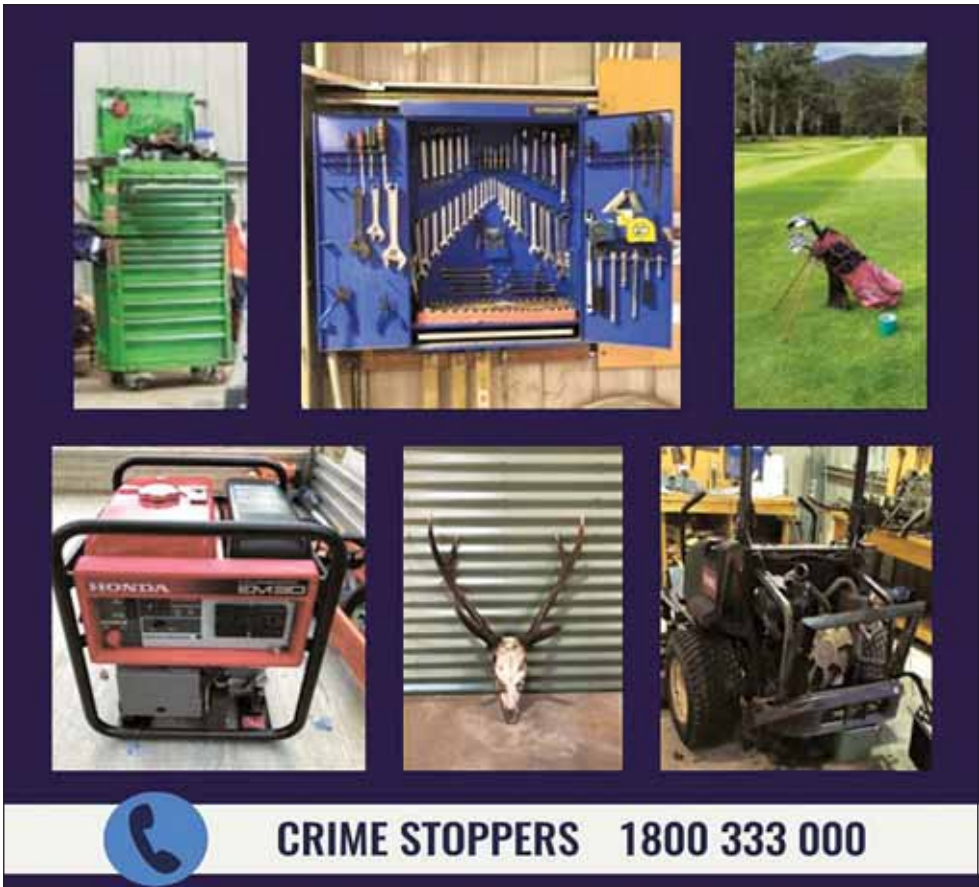
Fill in the missing numbers.
The missing values are the whole numbers between 1 and 9. Each number is only used once. Each row is a math equation. Each column is a math equation. Remember that multiplication and division are performed before addition and subtraction.

	+		÷		9
×		-		-	
1	-		+		4
+		×		-	
3	-		×		-25
8		-34		-11	

Sudoku

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

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



Some of the items stolen. -S

Tools and equipment
stolen in Marysville

POLICE are investigating a burglary in Marysville where a large quantity of items including tools, equipment and sporting goods were stolen. Police have released images of some of the items stolen in the hopes that witnesses may come forward with information.

If you saw anyone acting suspiciously in the Maryville area between 7.30pm on Saturday, January 13 and 10am on Sunday, January 14, know the whereabouts of the stolen items or have information that may assist the investigation, please contact the Alexandra Criminal Investigation Unit on 5772 1667 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Final call for community participation
in Innovation Workshops

WORKSHOPS are being held in Murrindindi Shire throughout February for community members to discuss several innovation opportunities for the region and local industries.

The workshops are being delivered as part of the Shaping Murrindindi's Future Project, which is focused on assisting communities who are directly affected by the transition away from native timber harvesting, particularly the areas of Marysville, Taggerty, Buxton and Alexandra, to identify and develop opportunities for economic diversification.

Since the project first launched in May 2023, Project Manager Allisha Milestone has facilitated events and conducted many one on one interviews with the local community about the local impact of the cessation of native timber harvesting, and to identify strengths and competitive advantages in the region that could support new jobs and an economic sustainable future. Following these discussions and meetings, a Regional Context Analysis has been developed to solidify innovation opportunities that can be worked on further. To read the Regional Context Analysis, visit shapingmurrindindisfuture.com.au

Project Manager for Shaping Murrindindi's Future, Allisha Milestone, said, "The community interviews and desktop analysis data collected during stage one of the project have identified six innovation opportunities for the region, which have been recommended for further investigation.

"These opportunities will be reviewed in the upcoming workshops held in February, where we will look closer at the ideas and assess their viability. The ideas recommended for further investigation will then progress to the next stage of the project, which involves establishing working groups to further test the ideas and develop the project scope."

Community members are invited to participate in one or more of the upcoming

full day workshops, where each day will focus on the following innovation areas, identified in the Regional Context Analysis. These areas include, Advanced Manufacturing Farm Forestry Renewable Energy and Circular Economy Health, Aged Care and Social Assistance Tourism Sustainable Agriculture, Aquaculture and Horticulture.

To learn more, or to register for the above workshops please contact Allisha Milestone on 0458 758 379 or by emailing amilestone@murrindindi.vic.gov.au

This project is made possible through funding from the State Government's Victorian Forestry Plan and is supported by Murrindindi Shire Council, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and RMIT University.

New initiative
for burning
coals in
Marysville

RECENTLY Murrindindi Shire has installed a 'Hot Coal Bin' in Lions Park, Marysville, for visitors using charcoal barbecues to dispose of coals safely.

Caroline Lintott, Interim Director Assets and Environment from Murrindindi Shire said, "Leaving hot coals unattended, including coals from campfires, poses a significant bushfire risk. This initiative aims to enhance the safety of all park visitors and our community, as well as protect the environment.

"All visitors using charcoal barbecues must dispose of their hot coals safely and responsibly, using the new bin."

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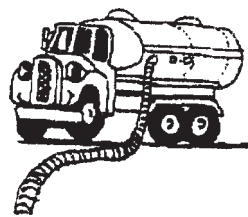
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Blue Green Algae warning lifted

GOUBLURN Murray Water (GMW) has removed the blue green algae warning for Lake Eildon following a significant decline in algae levels.

GMW issued the warning for Lake Eildon in December 2023. The warning was in place for 47 days. GMW will continue to undertake water quality monitoring and if blue green algae reach levels deemed unsafe by national health guidelines, a warning will be issued.

People looking to visit one of GMW's lakes, dams, or reservoirs are encouraged to check for blue green algae warnings beforehand.

Blue green algae occur naturally in waterbodies but contain toxins harmful to humans and animals. Contact with it can cause rashes, sore eyes, ears, and nose or if swallowed, nausea or vomiting.

To keep up to date with current blue green algae warnings, phone 1800 013 357 or visit the GMW website at g-mwater.com.au/bga

Customers are reminded water supplied by GMW is not suitable for human consumption without first being properly treated.

Take care with your campfires

FOREST Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) is asking visitors to stay safe with their campfires during peak camping times, especially in summer.

"It's the middle of summer, and the fire risk remains high, so if it's hot and windy, use common sense and don't light a campfire," Forest Fire Management Victoria, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Aaron Kennedy said.

"If you light a campfire, it's your responsibility to know the rules and regulations, and to ensure that it is attended at all times.

"Before you leave, make sure it's fully extinguished with water, not soil, if it's cool to touch it's safe to leave.

"All it takes is one ember from an unattended campfire to start a bushfire which could then threaten people, property and the environment," Mr Kennedy said.

Already this summer FFMVic firefighters have extinguished 70 unattended campfires in north east Victoria, all of which had the potential to become bushfires.

"Any fires that start this weekend could spread quickly, so people should monitor the conditions and use the VicEmergency app and listen to local emergency radio stations in case of bushfire, storms or flooding

"We are asking visitors to be extra careful when visiting our parks, forests and reserves given the impacts of recent heavy rainfall and flooding.

"Please take care, drive slowly and follow any closures. Before you travel, check the FFMVic and Parks Victoria closure pages," Mr Kennedy said.

Authorised officers from Conservation Regulator, Parks Victoria and FFMVic will patrol areas so everyone can have a safe and enjoyable weekend, but they can't be everywhere.

Report unattended campfires to 136 186 and call 000 to report a bushfire.

For more information on campfire safety rules and forest regulations, visit ffm.vic.gov.au/permits-and-regulations/fire-restrictions-and-regulations.

PUZZLES SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	J	V
A	E	P	O	A	G	A	T	E		
D	E	L	I	R	I	O	U	S	Z	A
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MATHS SQUARES

5	+	8	÷	2	9
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1	-	6	+	9	4
+		x		-	
3	-	7	x	4	-25
8		-34		-11	

SUDOKU

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

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BARGAINS UNDER \$100

TROPICAL ice box, 52 litres. Excellent condition. Very little used. \$50. Phone 0407 354 227.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ALEXANDRA Timber Tramway and Museum Inc. Any person who has personal assets on site at the museum is asked to contact the secretary with details by calling 0427 509 988 or email at info@alexandratramway.org.au by COB February 16, 2024.

SITUATION VACANT



Reporter/Journalist

Part time position (30.2hrs per week)

About us:

Alexandra Newspapers Pty Ltd is an award winning community newspaper; publishing *The Alexandra Standard* and *The Yea Chronicle* for 156 years.

A position has become available with our busy editorial department.

About you:

- successful completion of a formal qualification in journalism
- have news gathering initiative
- outstanding communication skills
- excellent writing and organisational skills
- be a team player and a people person
- knowledge of Microsoft programs is an advantage
- need to be available on weekends and after hours when required on a roster basis
- be able to work under the pressure of weekly deadlines
- drivers' licence essential

The job:

- creating community interest stories
- feature writing
- engage with reliable community sources
- present factual and unbiased stories
- follow our established newspaper style
- system training will be provided
- proof reading
- attention to detail

Email your resume and cover letter addressing the above criteria to Karen Morrison manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au

DEATH NOTICES

HALL, Ronald Keith 25/11/1938 - 22/01/2024
Loved and loving husband of Val for 64 years.
Loved father of Karyn, Glenn and Rhonda (dec).
Devoted pop to Luke (Mickey) and Louise (Minnie).
Friend to Liam.
Always there for us all.
No more pain.
Safe in the arms of Rhonda. Loved son of Alice and Keith (both dec).
Brother to Ken (dec), Pat, Barry (dec), Faye (dec) and Dennis.
We will always love and miss you pop.
Sleep tight.
Private Cremation.

IN MEMORIAM

SAVAGE, Laurie, 02/07/1948 – 03/02/1994.
Dad, little did we know that day God was going to call your name. In life we loved you dearly. In death we do the same. It broke our hearts to lose you but you didn't go alone. For part of us went with you the day God called you home. We're left with beautiful memories.
Your love is still our guide, and though we cannot see you You are always at our side. Our family chain is broken and nothing seems the same, but as God calls us one by one the chain will link again.
It's been 30 years and our hearts are still broken.
Love and miss you. Laurinda and Lana xoxo

MEETINGS

The Alexandra Football Netball Club Ladies Committee AGM will be held at the Club rooms at 6pm on Tuesday, February 6, 2024. Everyone welcome. Any queries please contact Kath Hedger on 0438 520 382.

ALEXANDRA PASTORAL AND AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION. AGM. Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 7pm at the Showgrounds/Caravan Park office, 17 William Street. All welcome and new members are encouraged. Enquiries to the secretary at pna.alexandra@gmail.com

YEA, First house, Racecourse Road. Neighbourly super clearance sale. Saturday, February 3, 8am onwards. Cash only. Items include household, garden, camping, preserving jars, new bicycle helmets and carriers, furniture, brewing, tools, golfing, Australiana, irrigation. Come and join the treasure hunt.

GARAGE SALES

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Slow down, school is back

WITH school starting this week, it's a great reminder to slow down. New research has revealed a third of Australians have owned up to speeding through school zones, with some even excusing the reckless behaviour because they couldn't see any children at the time.

AAMI and Australian Road Safety Foundation (ARSF) say the statistics are shocking and are urging Australian drivers to slow down and pay attention to signage and lowered speed limits.

According to research, a third of drivers admit to speeding through a school zone because they didn't notice the signs.

A third (29 per cent) of Australian drivers have also admitted to being confused about school zones, including speed limits, times and signs and one in 10 have sped through a school zone because there were no children in sight.

Even though school speed signage is at all schools, 13 per cent say they don't even know what time school zone rules apply.

A further one in 20 drivers have been involved in a car accident or near miss around a school zone.

The research also reveals that 72 per cent of Australian drivers admit to exceeding the speed limit in general. And two thirds of Australian drivers say they admitted to speeding because they didn't notice the signs.

The excuses in the study as to why drivers speed in general include, 65 per cent of people don't notice the signs indicating a change in speed limit.

When asked why they adhered to the speed limit, almost half (48 per cent) of drivers fear getting caught by police and don't want to pay a fine or accrue demerit points and lose their license. Concerningly, only one in five fear injuring others on the road, which shows people are more concerned about paying a fine rather than putting others' lives at risk.

A pedestrian crossing the road has an 87 per cent chance of survival when hit by a vehicle travelling at 40km/h or less. This drops dramatically when the speed is higher.

School aged children, particularly those starting prep or under 10 years of age have limited road safety experience and can behave unpredictably. The onus is on us as adults to protect their lives and ensure they can get to and from school safely every day.

AAMI has analysed more than 350,000 motor insurance claims across the country in the past financial year and found Fridays were the worst day of the week for crashes, while afternoons between 1pm and 4.30pm during school pickup proved the most dangerous time.

Statistics released from the Australian Road Safety Foundation showed that in 2023, there were 1266 people killed on Australian roads (up 7.3 per cent from 2022).

Of those fatalities, nine per cent were children under the age of 18 years. 16 pedestrian children were killed on Australian roads last year.

School zones are in place to protect lives and prevent fatalities but are only effective when adhered to.

When it comes to Back to School Road Safety it always pays to expect the unexpected. Children have limited road safety awareness and experience and can behave unpredictably.

Always look out for children disembarking from buses or cars and if you're dropping off or picking up your children, follow your school's safety directives, and of course, avoid driving distracted and follow all road rules and signage.

Women's health issues are finally highlighted

VICTORIAN women's health issues have been highlighted and confirmed that woman are living with pain, with the release of a landmark survey that was undertaken by the state government.

Results show that close to half of all women are impacted by issues related to their periods, pregnancy, birth and post natal care, or conditions like endometriosis and other gynaecological conditions.

Nearly 60 per cent of participants reported having had positive healthcare interactions, but one in three said they'd experienced insensitive and disrespectful practitioners who left them feeling dismissed and unheard.

Sharing the findings, Premier Jacinta Allan and Minister for Health Mary Anne Thomas also announced the new *Inquiry*

into *Women's Pain* which is the next stage of the Victorian Government's nation leading \$153 million women's health transformation.

The inquiry will examine systemic issues and solutions and hear directly from women across Victoria. Led by a panel of experts and overseen by the Women's Health Advisory Council, submissions are earlier this week on January 30.

Putting women's voices at the heart of the government's reform, the *Listening to Women's Voices* report comprises the insights of more than 1700 Victorian women who shared their personal experiences of our health care system.

Findings from the survey include four in 10 Victorian women live with chronic pain, and around half of participants reported that period related conditions such as heavy periods, cramping and PMS affected their health and wellbeing.

Similarly, about 50 per cent said that pregnancy and birth complications continued to impact their health.

Around 30 per cent said they were affected by the symptoms of perimenopause or menopause, and 30 per cent said conditions

such as endometriosis, menopause and chronic pain led to poor mental health.

These issues are having affect in the workforce with one in three woman have health conditions that affect their ability to work and keep a job, and sadly, 20 per cent said they missed out on social connections because of their health.

The report also includes participants personal stories. In an all too common occurrence, one woman said she was prescribed antidepressants when she had acute pelvic pain that was stopping her sleeping and working, but was later diagnosed with advanced endometriosis.

Victoria has a proud track record of work to improve women's health outcomes, from establishing Victoria's first clinic for women's heart health, delivering 11 sexual and reproductive health hubs, and launching the state's first ever sexual and reproductive health phone line. But after these results have been released, clearly, there is still more to do.

Work is underway to establish 20 new comprehensive women's health clinics, which will be crucial to overcoming some of the barriers women face in accessing

healthcare. Offering free, wide ranging care and support, the clinics will allow women to see specialists gynaecologist, urologist, specialist nursing and allied health, in one spot, making it easier and faster to access the world class care for conditions like endometriosis, pelvic pain and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS).

The Victorian Government is also doubling the number of endo and associated surgeries, delivering around 10,800 extra laparoscopies over the next four years, as well as providing scholarships for 100 more women's healthcare specialists.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas said, "The survey results have highlighted that sadly, a systemic gender pain gap still exists."

"It's why we are transforming our health system, delivering new women's health clinics, recruiting more women's health specialists and establishing more dedicated sexual and reproductive health hubs across the state."

Submissions can be made to the *Inquiry into Women's Pain* from January 30 at health.vic.gov.au/public-health/inquiry-into-womens-pain

Great numbers for Macquarie Perch to enhance recovery

IT'S all looking up for endangered Maquarie perch with nearly 80,000 fingerlings stocked into Victorian waters to re-establish wild populations across the state.

The Minister for Outdoor Recreation Steve Dimopoulos announced more than 78,000 Macquarie perch produced at the Victorian Fisheries Authority's (VFA) Snobs Creek hatchery near Eildon have been stocked into nine rivers and lakes to fast track the recovery of the once prominent native fish.

The production and release of the 'Macca' fingerlings has been supported by the Victorian Government's \$96 million Go Fishing and Boating Victoria plan and recreational fishing licence fees, and boosted by the VFA's record breaking fish stocking program which has its sights set on stocking 10 million fish for the second time in three years.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes said, "Rivers across the north east are already showing positive signs from recent years of stocking, the future looks bright for the Macquarie perch."

More than 20,000 Macquarie perch fingerlings have been stocked in the King River while the Goulburn River has been boosted with 13,100 fish.

Cudgewa Creek received 12,800 fingerlings, the Ovens and Buffalo rivers have each been stocked with 10,000 fish and Broken River welcomed 5000 fish. Dartmouth Dam was topped up with 3000, while Seven Creeks gained 2800, and 2000 went into Hughes Creek.

This year of production is the first to benefit from a three year, multi million dollar research project led by the federal and state governments to crack the code on breeding Macquarie perch.

With collaboration across community and educational organisations, catchment management authorities, research partners and recreational fishers, the project ensures we learn more about the best nutrition, hormones and breeding conditions for Macquarie perch to thrive in the hatchery environment.

The recovery of Macquarie perch is also supported by significant upgrades at the VFA's Snobs Creek and Arcadia fish hatcheries, with \$15 million invested in world class infrastructure. Snobs Creek now features a new captive breeding centre with leading aquaculture technology.

The VFA is also protecting wild populations of Macquarie perch with new rules for recreational fishers across Vic-toria. For more information visit vfa.vic.gov.au/recoveringmaccas

Council road repairs following recent flood events

MURRINDINDI Shire Council have announced the start of road repairs following the October 2022 floods. They were asked whether there is a schedule or plan for the October 2023 and January 2024 flood road damage, or whether the council road damage following these flood events was limited.

A council spokesperson responded, "Works are underway to repair roads across Murrindindi Shire which were damaged during the October 2022 floods.

"Long-term repairs to flood-impacted roads were recently approved by state and federal governments, who are responsible for providing funds to councils, to assist with the costs associated with infrastructure repairs and reinstatement following declared disasters.

"Council experienced large-scale damage to its roads and infrastructure from the October 2022 floods, and it wouldn't be possible to fund these repairs from the existing budget, without support from state and federal governments.

"For the full list of roads being repaired under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/floodrepairs

"Further flooding in October 2023 did not see as much damage to council roads or infrastructure compared to the 2022

floods. The local farming communities were most impacted by flooding that inundated their pastures and crops, which many had only recently re-sown or re-seeded following the October 2022 floods.

"The January 2024 floods caused extensive damage to roads, bridges and culverts in the western areas of our shire, particularly in Yea, Strath Creek, Limestone, Murrindindi, Glenburn, Flowerdale and surrounds. Some of council's assets were damaged again after recently being repaired from the 2022 flood event and council is working with the Department of Transport and Planning to rectify these locations as a priority, while still progressing the repair works related to 2022.

"Council is currently inspecting and assessing the damage to its road network, with support from neighbouring councils. It is expected this work will be completed in the next two to three weeks.

"When we have a more accurate understanding of the impacts, we will apply for further funding support via the DRFA to help our communities recover from this event and to support long term repairs to Council's roads and infrastructure damaged by the floods. Once funding is approved and received, repair works will be scheduled.

"Council's Operations staff have been primarily focused on emergency works, including clearing debris and temporary urgent repair works to our roads, however we continue to attend to community requests, and we are prioritising unsealed road maintenance such as grading and drainage repairs.

"In addition to responding to works requests, council is delivering its Sealed Roads Major Patching Program and Gravel Roads Resheeting Program, with works underway. We will also commence our Sealed Roads Resealing Program this summer."

For the latest information on council's annual road maintenance programs, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/projects

They added, "We thank the community for their understanding and for their patience, while we navigate our way through the aftermath of these flood events. Please allow us some additional time if your request has not yet been attended to. We are getting through the backlog of work and all requests are being scheduled for completion. If you'd like an update on timeframes for your request, we encourage you to give us a call in the first instance on 5772 0333 and ask to speak to someone in our Operations team."

Great news for Murrindindi Food and Wine Inc.

MURRINDINDI Food and Wine Inc have announced that they have secured funding for a 12 month program of business support.

The Murrindindi Business Resilience Project focuses on collaboration, empowerment, and support for all businesses across Murrindindi Shire.

There will be a variety of online and in person events and activities held over the next 12 months, focusing on recovery, networking, and capacity building.

It has been funded via the Business Groups Flood Recovery Grants Program, which is jointly funded by the Australian and Victorian governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

President Rob Mitchell said, "There are three main projects, including an all year round, shire-wide *Buy Local* campaign, Put Murrindindi on your table all year and in

your Christmas stocking in the lead up to Christmas 2024.

"There will be networking, online training, and connection activities. The first networking activity will kick off on February 20, which is a business breakfast in Alexandra, the first in a series of shire wide business activities.

"The Murrindindi Jobs Expo, which will be held in early May. The project will deliver a program of business support and capacity building events and activities to support members and other businesses in Murrindindi Shire to reactivate, recover, and be more resilient. Our businesses are recovering from the impacts of the pandemic, flooding, and the cessation of native timber harvesting. This has a flow on effect on many businesses that are not directly impacted.

"The project will offer a variety of ways to connect, foster learning, and encourage collaboration. The proposed activities will encourage business skill development, networking, and resource sharing and encourage collaboration between businesses, groups, and organisations."

Rob said, "Connections are vital to building capacity and resilience by sharing ideas, connections, and understanding of the resources and opportunities available. Many times, businesses are working in isolation just to stay ahead, and collaboration will bring a sense of I am not in this alone, offer up new opportunities, and build those vital business connections. One thing our group does well and that is working collaboratively with other like minded groups and organisations."

Visit murrindindifoodandwine.org.au for more information.

A trucking emergency for firefighters

Continued from Page 1

Minister for Emergency Services

When asked about what had changed in the past three months since the CFA Annual Report was tabled, a Victorian Government spokesperson said, “Our CFA volunteers put their lives on the line every day to protect Victorians and we are incredibly grateful for the work they do.

“We have delivered record funding for the CFA since we came to government, including more than \$46 million recently for new tankers, trucks, equipment and station upgrades. This includes almost \$13 million in 29 brand new ultra-heavy tankers, which can carry 10,000 litres of water into rural areas, more than some water bombing aircraft.

“With more than 3,000 CFA vehicles and tens of thousands of volunteers ready to tackle this season, Victorians can be assured they’ll be well protected no matter where they are.”

The government said they provided \$126 million over five years to CFA to deliver volunteer leadership and capability, additional training, and new infrastructure. As part of this year’s Victorian Emergency Service Equipment Program, CFA received more than \$10.8 million to support the purchase of modern operational equipment, vehicles and appliances and minor facility improvements to ensure Victoria’s volunteer fire service is well-equipped to carry out its critical work.

Shadow Minister for Emergency Services

Shadow Minister for Emergency Services Richard Riordan said, “Unfortunately the Labor government has run out of money and there is simply not enough money to fund the required amount of new tankers, thus we have a fleet of increasingly old vehicles in excess of 20 and 30 years. Brigades across Victoria are expected to fight fires in vehicles over 30 years old. It is just not good enough.

“What I want is to ensure brigades have a believable and appropriate replacement plan that brings down the average age of tankers and provides the best possible outcomes for firefighters and communities.

“We know that many of the 1941 tankers in Victoria are over 20 years old and despite repeated questions in Parliament to the Allen Labor Government I have, to date, been unable to get a complete breakdown of the age of all the vehicles in the CFA Fleet. Sometimes they give an ‘average’ age of the fleet but this also includes nearly 800 light vehicles which can skew the figures.

“I have two chief concerns: One is that CFA vehicles are the safest they can practicably be for our firefighters. The other is that they perform to the best standards possible to protect our community. This clearly isn’t going to happen with 20 and 30 year old tankers.”

VFBV

Adam Barnett, CEO of (VFBV) added, “Under-funding is handicapping Victoria’s volunteer firefighters, with volunteers expected to use Australia’s oldest fleet of front line fire trucks... Hundreds of these old trucks are without ABS, electronic stability control, emission controls, three point seatbelts, modern steering and suspension, ergonomic improvements and modern pumps and foam systems.

“On many of these trucks, half the crew of volunteer firefighters are expected to travel on fibreglass benches on the outside of the truck unprotected from toxic fumes and smoke. Volunteers are expected to use old trucks that paid firefighters refuse to use, simply because there are no other trucks available.

He also pointed out the increased maintenance requirements and reliability issues for older fire trucks and said, “Volunteers are putting their lives on the line to serve Victorian communities, they deserve to be equipped with safe and modern equipment. They should not have to beg, borrow and fundraise for the very equipment they need to keep Victorians safe.

“Successive Governments have sat back and watched CFA’s emergency service fleet get older and older with no plan in sight.

Every day the fleet gets older and there is no plan in place to arrest the decline.

“In 2014 VFBV called on all parties to guarantee a minimum investment of \$29 million a year to ensure the CFA fleet age did not get any older. Those calls have been ignored.

“For those that brush the ageing age of the fleet aside and state that these trucks are well maintained, consider that these are emergency service vehicles sent to the most extreme fire conditions in the country. Firefighters need these vehicles to operate reliably every single time. Would you want to trust a thirty year old truck with your life?

“VFBV calls out the hypocrisy of a policy that replaces public service government owned vehicles every three years on the basis of reliability and meeting emission and safety targets. Why do Victoria’s volunteer firefighters deserve any different? We don’t expect new trucks every three years, but we do expect a properly funded replacement program that progressively replaces aging fire trucks and gets these old trucks out of our service.”

He added, “VFBV restates its call for CFA to be provided adequate base funding that will support volunteer firefighters with adequate capital funding for proper asset replacement and renewal.”

Good news for people with peanut allergies

THE state government has invested in a local biotechnology firm that will bring peanut allergy sufferers around the world one step closer to a new treatment that could save lives.

Minister for Economic Growth Tim Pallas announced Victoria’s \$12 million investment into Aravax as part of a \$66 million funding round to develop a novel peanut allergy treatment.

Aravax is a clinical stage biotechnology company focused on revolutionising food allergy treatment through its product, PVX108. The immunotherapy uses synthetic peptides to mimic key parts of peanut proteins with the potential to retrain the immune system to tolerate peanuts without causing allergic reactions.

Early research at Alfred Health and Monash University has developed this unique treatment, requiring a monthly dose rather than a daily dose required by current treatments.

These trials are a step forward in bringing cutting edge healthcare to the more than five million Australians living with food allergies.

Aravax has received approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Australia’s Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for phase two trials in both countries. Phase one clinical trials were successfully completed for adults in Victoria in 2018.

Phase two trails, which will evaluate the treatment’s effect in children aged four to 17, will take place in clinics in Australia and the United States.

Health technology is one of the fastest growing sectors in Victoria, generating \$3.02 billion in exports and supporting more than 30,000 jobs.

Investment into Aravax builds on the the health technology industry, which is driven by Breakthrough Victoria and the \$20 million Australian Medtech Manufacturing Centre.

Recent rainfall may have put your hay at risk

FARMERS need to be mindful that even well-made hay can still be prone to spontaneous combustion.

Agriculture Victoria Program Manager for Dairy, North, Brett Davidson said spontaneous combustion is usually caused by excess moisture at baling.

“Fires can also start due to heavy rainfall events which has soaked into stacks. Intense rainfall could compromise even well covered stacks, as water can pool at the base of a stack, seep into gaps or could be blown under covers.”

Mr Davidson said for those with moisture meters, ideally hay moisture levels should be in the ranges below for safe storage of hay.

The recommended moisture content ranges for baling hay is small square bales 16 to 18 per cent, large round bales 14 to 16 per cent, large square bales 12 to 14 per cent and export hay over 12 per cent.

Even at two to three per cent above the maximum moisture contents, hay will start to lose dry matter (DM) and nutritive value

due to plant respiration or mould growth, resulting in heating of the bale or stack.

Higher moisture contents, well above the maximum (under four per cent), could lead to more mould and heating, possibly resulting in spontaneous combustion.

Mr Davidson said it’s vitally important to regularly monitor the stack from one week after rainfall for signs of heating.

He said the signs of heating are dampness on the tops of bales, steam rising from the stack, moisture build up on roofing iron or under tarps of outside stacks, unusual odours such as a pipe tobacco, caramel, burning, musty smell, sometimes the stack may slump in places and corrosion on underside of tin roof.

Mr Davidson said unfortunately, much of the heating will occur in the stack centre which is difficult to pick up.

“To try and get an idea on how hot a stack has become, use a crowbar pushed into the stack as far as possible and after a couple of hours, remove the crowbar and feel how hot it is.”

A rough guideline to check a haystacks temperature using a crowbar, is as follows if you can handle the br without discomfort its over 50 degrees, and check the temperature daily.

If the temperature is around 50 to 60 degrees, you can handle the bar for a short time, you must check temperature twice daily

For a temperature of 60 to 70 degrees, you can touch bar only briefly. Check temperature every two hours and move hay from top layers to improve air flow.

For 70 degrees and above the bar is too hot to hold and there is a potential for fire, avoid walking on top of stack.

Mr Davidson said an alternative monitoring method can be achieved by using thermal couplings, which can be placed into various areas of the stack at stacking and monitored simply and regularly.

For more information vist agriculture.vic.gov.au

Lithium ion battery risks

VICTORIAN fire agencies are reminding residents to be cautious when charging lithium ion battery operated devices following an e-scooter house fire in the state earlier in the month..

The e-scooter was on charge at the time of the call and exploded inside the kitchen and dining area.

The e-scooter scare is a wake up call for residents right across Victoria, with Victorian fire services responding to lithium-ion battery fires almost every day.

Acting Assistant Chief Fire Officer Community Safety Kieran Lenehan said Victorians who are considering buying a product with rechargeable batteries should only buy from reputable suppliers and only use chargers supplied with the device.

“When lithium-ion batteries are damaged, misused or fail to meet compliance standards, they pose a serious fire risk, particularly while they are connected to chargers,” ACFO Lenehan said.

“We’re now seeing an increase in the uptake of e-scooters and e-bikes, power tools and general charging devices, so residents must remember to always enact the appropriate safety measures.

“Do not overcharge electric devices, only charge them when required and the safest option is to switch them off overnight before you go to bed. We recommend charging them in the garage, on their own power point.”

More free TAFE courses on offer for 2024

FOUR new courses in hospitality, youth work, kitchen management and tourism are now available through the Victorian Government’s Free TAFE initiative, giving Victorians more opportunities to learn new skills and grow their careers.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney encouraged prospective students to look at courses on offer through Free TAFE, providing Victorians with more access to vocational training.

Since the program was introduced in 2019 it has grown to include more than 80 TAFE qualifications and short courses. This has helped more than 156,000 students who have saved almost \$423 million in tuition fees since the program began.

The program has seen thousands of Victorians embark on a new career pathway, including a quarter of all Free TAFE students based in regional Victoria, more than 44,500 from multicultural backgrounds and more than 90,000 women.

With enrolments now open, students can kickstart their careers or upskill to gain new experience or qualifications across a range of sectors like nursing, building and construction, community services and cyber security.

The Free TAFE program is helping Victorians get the skills they need for the job they want, including in growth areas like clean energy, building the state’s future workforce as we transition to net-zero.

The government is also backing the development of new clean energy skills and courses through the \$50 million Clean Energy Fund, including projects at Federation TAFE in Ballarat, TAFE Gippsland in Morwell and South West TAFE in Warrnambool.

Free TAFE courses are available to all Victorians, regardless of their existing qualification level. The program allows thousands of students to enter an in-demand career without the worry of the cost of tuition fees. Students can also enrol in more than one Free TAFE course provided it’s within the same priority pathway.

For the full list of Free TAFE courses visit vic.gov.au/free-tafe

Bagpipes and tartan at the Yea Art Show

by Glenda Woods

THE 38th annual Rotary Club of Yea Art Show opened with a flourish of bagpipes and tartan on Thursday evening with one of the best opening night crowds ever. It was wonderful to have so much support.

The bagpipes played by Rotarian Lachie Cooper, together with his brother Callam and his dad Jim, were an absolute hit especially when they played from the Yea Shire Hall balcony prior to the official opening. Lachie, Callam and Jim looked sensational in their full Scottish matching kit and sounded fantastic as well.

The show was opened by Juliet Risely, a past District Governor for District 9810. Juliet spoke of the importance of art shows to both the artists and to the communities who host them and of the pleasure that they bring to so many people.

Opening night attendees had the opportunity to enjoy a drink and finger food, while being the first to purchase if they found something to their liking. Many did, as 20 paintings were sold, including Best Work on Paper, *Eucalyptus crenulata* by Helen Miles. A big plus to Helen as this prize earned her an extra \$1000.

This year's judge was Drew Gregory. Drew is widely recognised as an outstanding professional artist with over 40 years of experience, and a winner of many prestigious national awards. Drew has held over 60 solo shows and been involved in numerous group exhibitions and is well qualified to make the difficult decisions of judging art work.

Winners of all the categories are as follows: Best in Show - *Moorings* by Mary Hyde; Second Best in Show - *The Wanderers* by Sam Bruere; Work on Paper - *Eucalyptus crenulata* by Helen Miles; Hargrave Award - *Service Please* by Di King; Traditional Work - *Large Poppy* by Ann Neate; Contemporary Work - *Luna*

Park by Wendy Webster; Best Miniature - *Hanna Loves Reading* by It Hao Pheh; Local Work - *High Street - Shire Hall* by Nina Volk; Emerging Artist - *Travelling Light* by Doreen Backway; Portrait - *Margaret Ollie* by Yvonne de Valle; Nature - *Bovine* by Diane Harris; Junior Secondary - *Firing up Imagination* by Rhys Morden; Junior Primary - *Portraits* by Olivia Frazer; Most Popular - *The Homestead near Wilcannia* by Drew Gregory.

The art show is the result of a lot of dedicated work over many months by a hardworking committee, led by art show director Marj Hamilton, ably supported by artist Julian Bruere who again curated the show. As well as committee members, during show week, all Rotarians and Friends of Rotary are called upon to lend assistance in some way. Also, many thanks to the Yea Football Netball Club, who assisted with the setting up and packing up of the screens. It was a big job.

Sponsors play an enormous part in the overall success of the show, especially the Frank Hargrave Family Trust for the many years of support provided to the club. This support has ensured the continuing growth and development of the show.

The raffle was drawn at 3pm on Sunday and the prize winners were: First prize of a Julian Bruere painting - Kyla Dowling; second prize of \$100 voucher to the Royal Mail Hotel - Glenda Woods and third prize of a hamper of local goodies - Lily Gibson.

Attendances were steady over the course of the four days of the show. Due to everyone's generous support, with over 50 paintings being sold, the club has once again raised valuable funds to put toward both local and international projects.

Thanks to everyone for their support and a big thank you to all the artists who are so willing to exhibit, as without those talented artists, where would we be?



The most popular painting in the show. -S



Mary Hyde was the winner of Best in Show with her piece, Moorings. -S



Attendees at the Yea Rotary Art Show, with the officials on the stage. -AR



The bagpipers on the balcony. -AR



Tony and Sonja. -S



Glenda, Darryl and Julie. -S



Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish with Paul Hildebrand. -AR

SPORT



The athletes who received multi event awards or medallions, as well as Levi Campbell with a centre record in the under 13 discus. -S

Perfect weather for little athletics

by Elissa Page

ON Saturday morning under gorgeous weather conditions Murrindindi's little athletes and their families gathered at the track for an exciting day of sports. The lineup included race walk events, 800m, 200m, and 100m sprints, high jump, and javelin, creating an atmosphere of energetic competition.

The morning kicked off with participants breaking into four groups for a lively warm-up session. Each group navigated through a circuit featuring race walk practice, skipping rope exercises, leg workouts in hoops, and crawling through tunnels. The final activity of the circuit was shot put practice using amusing toys, adding a playful twist to the warm up. Celebrations echoed throughout the presentations as members acknowledged

recent achievements. A new discus record was set by Levi Campbell, and there were numerous gold and silver medals awarded for outstanding personal best performances this season and some the multievent day placing for earlier in the season. The barbecue and juice boxes proved to be a hit yet again, offering a delightful refreshment post program. The event also welcomed back more participants from their

holidays, visibly reinvigorated and ready for the challenges ahead. A special mention goes out to those heading to regionals in a fortnight. They are encouraged to attend Thursday night training sessions at the track. The clubs community came together, making the day run smoothly, and a big shout-out is extended to all the parents who not only cheered on the young athletes but also contributed to the seamless execution of the event.



Abi enjoying throwing the javelin. -S



Sienna giving it her all in the under 11 javelin. -S

Modular update for regional Big Build projects

THE Victorian Government has said that they are delivering new homes for people in regional Victoria faster than ever before, thanks to a unique offsite construction model. Minister for Housing Harriet Shing said new modular social homes for regional Victorians are being built in partnership with Haven Home Safe. Once completed, the homes will be transported to Horsham to house up to 47 people on the Victorian Housing Register. The homes will be modern, energy-efficient, and include heat pump hot water services, making them cheaper to cool

in summer and heat in winter and more comfortable all year round. Delivered as part of the government's Big Housing Build in partnership with Haven Home Safe, the \$10.1 million project is also creating more than 70 local jobs. More than 80 social housing modular homes have already been built by Victorian manufacturer ARKit and a further 25 are under construction at the Sunshine warehouse. Modular homes can be constructed quickly, are easily transported and are placed permanently on vacant land in

areas of high demand, providing an innovative solution to increasing social housing supply. Since the start of the Big Housing Build, the government said they have invested more than \$1 billion in projects in regional Victoria, with 3000 homes completed or underway. They are also investing \$1 billion in a Regional Housing Fund to deliver more than 1300 new social and affordable homes across regional Victoria, designed with councils, regional partnerships, and local communities.

Victoria's *Housing Statement* outlines a vision to build 800,000 new homes across the state over the next 10 years, including 152,000 new homes in regional and rural Victoria. It is understood that Homes Victoria has previously met with Murrindindi Shire Council to encourage them to identify opportunities, such as on underutilised council land, to work with community housing providers to develop partnership proposals. Community housing providers are key delivery partners and can work with local governments to develop projects and seek funding for these through Big Housing Build funding streams.

SPORT

Small field for Alexandra Stableford round

by Elizabeth Goss

THERE was only a small field at Alexandra Golf Club for Tuesdays Stableford round. The winner was Brendan Smith with (seven) 37 points well ahead of the runner up Brad Newton (10) 30 points. Third place went to Russell Purcell (18) 29 points. Leo Dynes was nearest the pin on the seventh, and Russell Purcell on the 18th.

The ladies are now on the fourth round of the Summer Cup just one more to go. The A grade winner was Deb Richardson (13) 36 points and the runner up Julie Lyon (23)

31 points. The B grade winner was Helen Findlay (27) 34 points and the runner up Judy Pearson (26) 33 points. The C Grade winner was Anne Gunton (45) 29 points and the runner up Pauline Brooks (33) 26 points.

Brenda Lopez won the nine holes with 27 points. Nearest the pin on the second was Marg Fahey, on the seventh Sue Greator, and on the 18th, Helen Findlay. Wednesday, February 7, is Stroke, Monthly Medal and count your putts.

A 4BBB Stableford round was played on Saturday. Very much a family effort. The

winners were Graeme Emmerson (24) and Nick Emmerson (21) with 46 points on a count back from the runners up Ben Jack (19) and Dylan Jack (9) with 46 points. Next were Brad Newton (10) and Trevor Biffin (16) with 43 points. Nearest the pin on the second was Jason Krijt, on the fifth Dylan Jack, on the seventh Matt Richards, on the 12th Brad Kidd and on the 18th John Norfolk. Raffle winner was John McDonald.

Saturday, February 3, is Alexandra's turn to host the third round of 2024 FoodWorks Murrindindi Masters.



The January Monthly Medal winner Michael Lynch. -S

Eildon golf is back

by Puttomatic

HELLO everyone and welcome to the start of the 2024 weekly Eildon Golf Club report. The Australia Day long weekend attracted 22 players to contest a stroke round in fine warm conditions to find January's monthly medal recipient. Saturday's round also incorporated the fourth round of the Summer Cup.

Congratulations Michael Lynch on taking out B grade and overall honours with a net 71, just one stroke ahead of Kevin King who finished with 72 and a further two shots away was Dennis Seamer.

A grade winner was Grant Walters coming in with a net 73 with John Monteath, John Rachcoff and Leigh Munro one behind on 74.

A visiting non-members Josh Trembath finished with a net 71 and also secured a birdie on the par four, eighth to secure his playing group a round of drinks post game. There were no birdies recorded on the 15th.

Nearest the pins went to Allan Mackwell on the par four, third (second shot), Rob Toth on the fifth, Rod Taylor the 11th, John Rachcoff the 12th and Mark Mackwell the 14th.

Entry draw was won by John Duff. Tony Grayson was successful in the swindle draw with Grant trying his luck with the elusive joker draw.

It was great to see some visitors from Melbourne and the club hopes you and everyone else enjoyed the day.

There will be no Saturday competition for the next two weeks at Eildon as Alexandra will be hosting the next round of the FoodWorks Murrindindi Masters followed by Yea the week after. Good luck to everyone. Until next time, take care and happy hitting.

Merton outplayed by Milawa

by Rohan Berriman

MERTON cricketers travelled to face second placed Milawa on Saturday, with the home side securing victory in a competitive match on a slow outfield.

Merton won the toss and batted first making 6/117 with Luke Benton again top scoring with 43, his son James 25 not out and Ross MacKinnon 16 were the top scorers.

Merton's batters have struggled all season finishing off an innings with the

side lacking some power hitters in the latter overs. It was good to see young Jack Lockhart play for Merton, being the third generation to play for the club; like his father Andrew and grandfather Red.

Merton struggled to take wickets early with both openers seeing off the young pace attack. The introduction of spin saw instant success with father and son combination Rohan and Henry Berriman, taking all five top order batsmen. Led by young Henry taking 4/24 off eight overs, saw Milawa a little nervous at one

point, however their experienced lower order batsmen got the job done, passing Merton's total in the 32nd over.

J Papworth and D Radeski, both with 45 the top scorers. Merton will really have their work cut out for them in the coming weeks due to unavailability and injury. If there is anyone, young or old, wanting to play, please come to training Thursday night at the MCG and have a game Saturday from 1.30pm versus Wangaratta Magpies.



-S

Busy Australia Day weekend for golfers

by Lesley Rundle

LAST Saturday members of Marysville Golf Club welcomed to the competition a number of visitors who were holidaying in the area for the Australia Day weekend. In excellent playing conditions both the men and the ladies played a stroke round. The ladies winner was the in-form Heather Jenkins (18) with 72 nett and Heather's round included 25 putts which was the best of the day. The runner up was Sabrina Stow (23) with nett 75. The men's winner was Peter Lilley (16) with nett 69 on a countback from visitor Lionel Fernandez (25). The nearest the pins were won by Adam Littlejohn, Peter Lilley, Steve Coker and Sabrina Stow who also won the Golden Shot.

On Friday, January 26, four pairs of Marysville players played in the 4BBB event at Seymour Golf Club. There were no winners among the Marysville players, but Helen Howard was presented with the

2023 Dalhousie Player of the Year trophy which she won jointly with Broadford member Mary Campbell. They were awarded their trophy by a representative from the Bendigo Bank in Wallan, Kilmore and Romsey who sponsor the Player of the Year event each year. Congratulations to Helen and Mary.

Last Saturday an evening of Barefoot Bowls was held on the Marysville bowling green. About 40 people enjoyed a friendly evening of Barefoot Bowls in glorious conditions. The bar was open and some free nibbles were provided. Thanks to Jody Doran and Duncan Talbot for organising the gathering and appreciation goes to all those who supported the event. The all-weather floodlit bowling green can be hired by local or visiting groups. Enquiries can be made by contacting the golf club on 5963 3241.

Unfortunately, on Saturday, January 13, the club was broken into overnight and a

substantial number of tools and equipment including chainsaws, brush cutters, and golf clubs were stolen. The perpetrators, for access, cut through a boundary fence on the Buxton Marysville Road and drove around the course before breaking into the sheds. This is a major setback for the club and if anyone saw any suspicious behaviour that night would they please report it to the local police. There were other properties broken into around the same time including at Lake Mountain, The Marysville Cemetery, and a local contractors home.

On Saturday, February 3, the third round of the FoodWorks Murrindindi Masters will be held at Alexandra and the fourth round will be played at Yea the following week. There will be no competition at Marysville on those two Saturdays. The next Saturday game at Marysville will be on February 17, when a stroke round will include the February monthly medal and

round one of the Barton Shield for the ladies.



Helen Howard and Mary Campbell receiving their Player of the Year Trophy from a representative of the Bendigo Bank (left). -S

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Rodd Petersen, John Blamey, Clive Murphy and Mark Stone in division six. -S



First in the division four Pennant games were Malcolm Gill and Scott Ferrier. -S



The division six best winning rink, Christine Murphy, Anne Gunton, Roselyn Livy and Karen Jackson. -S



Best winning rink in division four, Greg Gilmore, Lauren Gilchrist, Marie Evans and Larry Scott. -S

Successful weekend of Pennant bowls

by Marie Evans

ALEXANDRA Bowls Club had a successful weekend of Pennant. Division four defeated Tatura Hilltop and division six in the upset of the round defeated Mooroopna. Division three Midweek were defeated by Seymour VRI.

Division six played Mooroopna who were in second place and despite playing at home, it was going to be a tough ask to defeat them. Mooroopna were sitting comfortably in second place prior to the game. But beat them they did, in what was a tremendous upset. Great wins from two rinks ensured an overall victory.

Best winning rink was the 'girl power' side, Roselyn Livy (skip), Karen Jackson, Anne Gunton and Christine Murphy who won 26 to 15.

John Blamey (skip), Mark Stone, Clive Murphy, Rodd Petersen had a 22 to 13 victory. Congratulations to John Blamey who was skip for the first time. A debut victory, so a good sign for the future.

Ray Mathieson (skip), Trevor Stewart, Pauline Gilmore and Rob Roach lost 16 to 22 but the overall was Alexandra 64 to 50. Mooroopna have slipped to third. The

ladder is Yea, Euroa, Mooroopna, Violet Town, Shepparton Park, Dookie, Alexandra and Shepparton Golf. Alexandra plays away to Dookie next week.

Division four played on some fast grass greens at Tatura Hilltop. They defeated Tatura 102 to 78, with three winning rinks and a draw. The best winning rink was Greg Gilmore (skip), Larry Scott, Marie Evans and Lauren Gilchrist. Some accurate consistent leading by Lauren Gilchrist set most ends up for an Alexandra win. Alexandra led for the entire game and won 17 out of 25 ends and the game 30 to 13.

John Cujic (skip), Doug Cooper, Scott Ferrier, Ben Gilchrist trailed three to seven on end eight but picked up a five on end nine and end 11 to lead 13 to nine. Tatura regained the lead on end 15 to be 15 to 14, but Alexandra won the next three ends to lead 18 to 15. Four out of the last seven ends went to Alexandra and the game 23 to 18.

David Nicklos (skip), Bob Mayfield, Andy Tobias and Christine Mayfield were six to five up on end seven but lost the lead until end 16 when a five shot win on end 16 had them leading 15 to 12. Tatura regained the lead by end 22, but Alexandra played some

excellent bowls to win the last three ends and win 21 to 19.

In the closest game, Graeme Matthews (skip), Ken Argent, Ann Argent and Malcolm Gill were 11 to two down on end eight, 19 to nine down on end 15. However, Alexandra reduced the margin after winning the next two ends to trail 14 to 19. It was back to 14 to 24 down by end 19, but in what was a major win of seven shots on end 20 and Alexandra only trailed 21 to 24. Three out of the last five ends went to Alexandra and the game resulted in a tie, with 28 all. A brilliant recovery by this rink in what looked a one-sided game up until end 15.

Alexandra plays at home to Shepparton Park next round. The ladder is Eildon 179, Euroa 157, Alexandra 128, Dookie 124, Shepparton Park 105, Seymour 104, Tallygaroopna 103, East Shepparton 94, Tatura Hilltop 86.

Midweek played at home against Seymour VRI. Despite losing all rinks there was a close game. Bob Mayfield (skip), Trevor Stewart, Coby Petersen and Christine Mayfield were six all on end seven, nine all on end 11. Alexandra led 18 to 11 by end 16, but VRI had reduced that to one shot down,

20 to 19 by end 22. It was 20 all on end 23. VRI won the last two ends to win 23 to 20.

Ken Argent (skip), Ann Argent, Pauline Gilmore and Bob Benghamy were five to 22 down on end 14 but won the next four ends to only trail 14 to 22. VRI won five out of the last seven ends to win 31 to 18.

David Nicklos (skip), Doug Cooper, Denise Chisholm, and Marty Manning began well and were nine to one up on end four. VRI won three out of the next four ends to lead 11 to 10. It was 11 all on end nine. VRI won eight of the next nine ends to take the lead out to 28 to 12. The game finished with a win to VRI 35 to 16.

The overall was VRI 89 to Alexandra 54. The ladder is Mooroopna Golf 106, Shepparton Park 106, Seymour VRI 103, Avenel 100, Kyabram 80, Nagambie 79, Alexandra 71 and Numurkah 59. Alexandra plays away to Numurkah next round.

The Champion of Champion Singles are being played on Sunday, February 3. Alexandra's Club Champion, Lauren Gilchrist, is playing at Tatura. Bob Mayfield, the Men's Champion, is playing at Shepparton Golf. The members wish both, good bowling.