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Eildon gum tree set for removal



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Weekend sport



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Shire and Rotary unite against family violence

AT the end of November, Rotary Alexandra and Murrindindi Shire Council are holding a 'Purple Weekend' to raise awareness of family violence and provide ways in which the community can assist.

On Thursday, November 27 there will be information available in Grant Street from 9am at FoodWorks.

On Friday, November 28, there will be a community walk around Rotary Park starting at 11am. Tee shirts will be available and dogs are welcome on leads. This will be followed by a CFA barbecue.

On Saturday, November 29, enjoy free sausages at Yenckens Hardware from 9am and chat to the volunteers.

The Rotary Club is very grateful to the shire for the grant of \$2500 which provided the wonderful purple tee shirts. Together they are promoting safety, equality and respectful relationships in the shire.



Rotary president John Allcock and Mayor Damien Gallagher. -S

Metro predator stalks small rural hospital prey

by Alexandra and District Traders and Tourism Association

IT seems some things never change. When things turn for the worse in Melbourne it is country Victorians who end up paying the price. Whether it is road funding, access to banking or water shortages, people in regional Victoria are the ones who suffer most from pot-holed highways, bank closures or the threatened transfer of agricultural water back to metropolitan Melbourne.

This time it is health care. It is just over a year since the regional communities made it abundantly clear they wanted to retain their local health service boards and leadership. To its credit, the Victorian Government listened. It rejected outright a Health Services Plan recommendation for amalgamation of health services.

It seems at least one metro conglomerate health service failed to comprehend what the government decided and is displaying a tin ear when it comes to hearing what the community said.

Eastern Health is a large metro conglomerate, based in Box Hill and operating at 10 major sites across Melbourne's eastern suburbs.

On November 6, the Eastern Health board announced it was in an advanced stage of amalgamation planning with Alexandra District Health.

In proposing the amalgamation, Eastern Health is intimating Alexandra will receive a significant uplift in surgical and other health services. Advantages such as a major increase

in patients, nursing staff and specialist medicos, most of whom will be sourced from Melbourne, are being spread like fairy dust. These benefits may be attractive but are vague and unsubstantiated.

What really lies behind this is a huge funding shortfall. Eastern Health has a budget in excess of \$1.7 billion. Alexandra's budget is around \$14 million. Last financial year Eastern Health reported a budget deficit of over \$100 million. While reporting a small surplus in 2024/25 Alexandra sees itself as financially vulnerable.

The price the Murrindindi community would pay for the touted increase in services is the loss of local leadership and autonomy over what services are or are not provided at Alexandra. Decisions about what is best for the largely rural community will be made by city-focused executives. Given this, it is highly likely any savings achieved through amalgamation will eventually find their way to Eastern Health's existing operations.

Most worryingly, when major natural disasters occur, Murrindindi is one of the most fire and flood prone areas in the state, the ability of the local health service to respond to immediate and explicit community needs will be lost as decisions will have to be made in the air-conditioned executive suites at Box Hill HQ.

Eastern and Alexandra health boards are treating community views with disdain. The proposal for amalgamation is accompanied by sketchy supporting material. A consultation program is limited to a 15 day period that

started at a time when the community was unprepared to consider and respond to the proposal. A flawed community survey process almost guarantees that anyone responding will be deemed in favour of amalgamation. Supporting material implies a formal proposal for amalgamation will be made to government in December regardless of community response.

The bloody mindedness, and seeming senselessness, in this is that on July 1, the Victorian Government established local health care networks with a mandate specifically to deliver the benefits now being proposed. Eastern Health and Alexandra District Health are part of the one network. Each has signed formal agreements undertaking to deliver improved services closer to home explicitly along the lines with what is now being offered. Through the network process, the Murrindindi community can secure improved access to expanded services closer to home without surrendering autonomy of a health service that has served its community for over 140 years,

This is yet another example of metro-centric rationalists believing they know what is best for their country cousins. Every time this happens it is regional Victorians that feel the pain and pay the price.

The proposed amalgamation of Alexandra District Health with Eastern Health must be seen for what it is. A cash-strapped metro health behemoth seeking to wrest control of a vital health service from a small regional community for its own advantage.

ADH: Will the community's view have an impact on the decision?

At the ADTTA meeting on Tuesday, November 11, attendees were invited to ask questions of Alexandra District Health CEO Jane Poxon, Eastern Health CEO David Plunkett and ADH board member Alan Studley.

They were asked by this newspaper as the last question of the night, "It's obviously up to the community to decide how they feel about [the proposed merger]. If they decide that it's a bad idea, what response will come from the board based on that?"

Alan Studley responded, "I think the response will be that if the community think it's a bad idea, if the business case came back and said 'this is a good idea', then before we proceeded with the business case, we would want to understand what the reasons were that the community didn't want it. That means that, it's almost a T-account, advantages, disadvantages. And at the moment, I'm not sure what those disadvantages are, those specific hard disadvantages are, but I am reasonably sure what a lot of advantages could be. So if that is how it pans out in the next three or four weeks, we will have to take that reaction on board, and we would have to explain very clearly why it was a good idea."

"So it would have an impact?"

"We'd certainly have to consider it."

Have your say on the future of local health care in Murrindindi

ALEXANDRA District Health and Eastern Health are exploring a voluntary amalgamation.

To ensure community perspectives are fully considered, Murrindindi Shire Council has developed a complementary survey focused on local priorities, expectations and concerns.

This is your opportunity to share what matters most to you about the future of health services in the shire.

The feedback will be provided to the ADH and Eastern Health boards and will help inform broader discussions about local health care.

The survey is anonymous and takes just a few minutes to complete.

You can access the survey by visiting the website, murrindindi.vic.gov.au/healthsurvey

It can also be found by visiting either the Yea Library and Customer Service Centre, Alexandra Library, or Alexandra Customer Service Centre to pick up a paper copy.

Council will also be distributing paper copies of the survey to businesses in the Yea and Alexandra townships.

Your voice matters, please take a moment to share your thoughts and help shape the future of health care in our community.

Alexandra District Health
5772 0900

Yea & District Memorial Hospital
5736 0400

In an emergency dial
000

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

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ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS

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Letters to the Editor

Hospital merger survey

AS a rural health researcher, I want to highlight the survey currently being promoted by Alexandra District Health as a way to ‘share your feedback’ on a possible voluntary amalgamation to ‘strengthen local healthcare’.

Public organisations, including healthcare providers, should be transparent and follow good governance when seeking community input. Unfortunately, this survey does not genuinely ask for opinions on the amalgamation itself. Instead, it focuses on healthcare priorities and implicitly assumes that all priorities will be met if an amalgamation occurs, making it positively slanted toward the proposal.

The survey does not ask about community understanding of amalgamation, potential risks and benefits, or views on local leadership.

Supporting the survey by completing it could be interpreted as a vote in favour of amalgamation, regardless of your actual opinion.

If you want your voice heard through a validated process, the Murrindindi Shire Council survey (available via their Facebook page) is the proper channel for giving feedback on the proposed amalgamation.

*Dr Jennifer Keast, University of Melbourne,
Department of Rural Health*

Amalgamation by Stealth

KIM Flanagan and the entire Alexandra District Health (ADH) Board should have had the courage to attend each and every one of the information sessions on the ‘proposed’ amalgamation by choice between ADH and Eastern Health (EH).

Machiavelli would be truly impressed with the surreptitious way this process is being administered, from the mere speed at which the board is determined to push this through, secrecy of who has been engaged to conduct the business case not to mention timeframe for completion by December. The survey is skewed as you will assess for yourself should you be bothered to complete it.

Four thousand Murrindindi citizens (approximately two thirds of the population) signed a petition not 18 months ago clearly demonstrating their objection to an amalgamation.

I attended one of the ‘Tea Talks’ and had two A4 pages of questions, most of which we didn’t have time to discuss. Since that session I have many many more pages.

An offer was extended to me to contact Jane for a one on one which I declined to take up as, the majority of my questions can only be answered by the board chairs and CEOs from both ADH and EH. Therefore, I challenge Eugene, Kim, David and Jane along with their directors to hold an open meeting inviting all shire residents to attend.

I urge you to contact our local member Cindy Mcleish, as I have.

The ADH is my local hospital, and this local resident has not heard any assurances that services will be extended.

On a positive note well done Jane and Clare for having the temerity to deliver a truly unpalatable message which will see the loss of their roles, as they know them. They will be restructured under the EH umbrella therefore, no ADH CEO or Director of Clinical Services.

Lastly, why wasn’t this posted on Engage Victoria?

*Name and address supplied but withheld
by request*

Proposed Rubicon Solar and Battery Farm

ON Tuesday, November 11, Samsung held a community information session at Thornton Hall regarding the proposed Rubicon Solar and Battery Farm.

At first, Samsung representatives were unwilling to speak with affected residents as a group, only doing so after being pressured. What came to light during that meeting was deeply concerning. Not only had Samsung failed to notify all affected residents, but it also appeared that they were operating in a ‘divide and conquer’ manner, discouraging residents from supporting each other as a community.

What I witnessed at that meeting was the level of mental stress and anguish being felt by local residents as they realised how this proposal would impact their lives, their amenity, their peace, and their financial wellbeing due to the devaluation of their properties.

I asked the Samsung representatives what mental health support would be offered to those affected. Their response? Silence.

I find it appalling that the greed of an international company is causing such distress to hardworking Australians who simply want to live a quiet and simple life. The last thing any of us want is to lose a neighbour due to the mental toll of a reckless development such as this solar farm proposal in our foggy valley.

If anyone requires support, please contact Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636.

Greg Salter, Rubicon Valley

Continued Page 11

Alexandra District Health
5772 0900

Non-emergency police assistance
131 444

EMERGENCY 000

Local Radio Frequency

UGFM 106.9 Alexandra / Lake Eildon
UGFM 98.5 Marysville / Lake Mountain

MONTHLY COMMUNITY GROUPS

WEEKLY

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

MONTHLY

1st Wed Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318
1st Thur Murrindindi Men 6-8pm@ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
1st Sun Crop/Produce swap 10.30am–noon @ Embassy of Ideas
Alexandra District Garden Society Meeting Ph 5772 2285
2nd Tue Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
3rd Wed Alex Lions business meeting, rear RSL hall 0427 595 318
3rd Thu Alexandra Ladies Probus 10am RSL Ph 0428 976 252
3rd Thu Community Potluck dinner 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas
3rd Sun Alexandra RSL Ph 0409 950 913
4th Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
4th Thu Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517
Last Fri Carers Group 10am Grant Street Grocer. 0418 402 455

ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS

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



Weekly Weather



November 19 - November 25, 2025

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

Yea

DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	9	21	Wednesday	8	21
Thursday	7	18	Thursday	7	18
Friday	4	22	Friday	5	21
Saturday	7	24	Saturday	6	24
Sunday	14	26	Sunday	14	27
Monday	15	28	Monday	15	28
Tuesday	15	26	Tuesday	15	27

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

can be submitted via email to
editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au or
reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au
or by mail to Alexandra Newspapers
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Letters **must be 300 words or less**. We will
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edited before going to print.
All letters must contain writers name,
address and contact number. (not necessarily
for publication). Letters without these details
supplied cannot not be published. Deadline
for Letters to the Editor is 9am Monday.

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Facebook

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT				
STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	11.00AM Mon	1.58	steady	
Rubicon River at Rubicon	11.00AM Mon	0.68	LGH	steady
Acheron River at Taggerty	11.00AM Mon	0.81	LGH	steady
Home Creek at Yarck	10.46AM Mon	0.16	LGH	steady
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	07.54AM Mon	0.63	LGH	steady
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	11.00AM Mon	0.49	LGH	steady
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	12.00PM Mon	1.17	steady	
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	11.00AM Mon	3.68	LGH	steady
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	11.00AM Mon	0.29	LGH	steady
Goulburn River at Trawool	11.00AM Mon	1.29	LGH	steady
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	11.00AM Mon	0.31	LGH	steadyl
Goulburn River at Seymour	11.00AM Mon	1.58	LGH	steady
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	11.00AM Mon	1.15	LGH	steady
*ISSUED AT 12:42 PM AEDT MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2025				

DISTRICT RAINFALL	
Alexandra.....	11mm
Buxton.....	47mm
Eildon (AWS).....	15mm
Flowerdale.....	14mm
Jamieson.....	20mm
Kinglake.....	21mm
Lake Eildon.....	20mm
Mansfield.....	N/Amm
Taggerty	15mm
Yarck	11mm
Yea.....	8mm
Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday	
LAKE EILDON	
Height above sea level this week.....	275.83m
Capacity as at 9am Monday.....	56.1%
Metres below full supply.....	13.07m
Daily inflow	2500ML
Release.....	2500ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change).....	57%

Standard

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



Workers at the gum tree in Moore Park, Eildon. -S

Controversial Eildon gum tree set for removal

FOLLOWING concerns from Eildon residents about the removal of a large gum tree in Moore Park, Murrindindi Shire Council was contacted for comment.

Caroline Lintott, Director of Assets and Environment at Murrindindi Shire Council, stated that the decision to remove the tree was made due to a number of factors.

“Murrindindi Shire Council received a request from Telstra to address the issues with signal coverage for the Eildon Police Station, which involved the removal of part of a tree at Moore Park in the Eildon Reserve,” Ms Lintott said.

“Before any work commenced, council’s arborist inspected the tree (a Manna Gum) and found significant dieback in the crown, indicating the tree’s health was already in decline. The assessment concluded that the tree would not survive the level of pruning needed for Telstra’s project.

“In addition, the tree’s roots had also been damaging the park’s irrigation system. Taking these factors into account, the decision was made to remove the tree rather than leave it in a compromised state.

“Works began on Friday, November 7. We understand that the removal of a large tree can be concerning, and some community members reached out for clarification.

Councillors and council officers took the time to explain the reasons behind the decision, including the tree’s declining health and the impact on park infrastructure, to ensure the community understood why this action was necessary.

“If you have any further questions, please contact council on 5772 0333.”

The tree in Moore Park has been the subject of controversy multiple times in the past.

In 1995, it was discovered that the tree was blocking transmission between the Eildon telephone exchange and a translator opposite. Members of the public made efforts to protect the tree.

The July 19, 1995 edition of the *Alexandra Standard* reads, “the tree, growing in Moore Park, has been the centre of attention since last Friday, when it was discovered it was blocking transmission.

“Early yesterday morning, the dishes were moved on to another pole and the problem solved, but not before a group of concerned Eildon residents joined forces and tied a ‘HELP’ sign around the three metre in circumference trunk.”

The issue arose again in 2007, when work was undertaken to trim the top of the old gum tree, seemingly without public knowledge, adding to the controversial history of this tree.

Redgate Alexandra CWA outlook for the rest of the year

by Jane Laws

THE next Redgate Alexandra CWA monthly meeting will be held on Thursday, November 27 at 1pm at the CWA rooms on Perkins Street, Alexandra. There are no competitions and hostesses are Marion and Pam. Guest speakers will be Sasha and Robyn from Alexandra Food Share. Club members will transport themselves to the food share shop for the information talk. They will also have a shared afternoon tea with the guest speakers.

At the Annual General Meeting office bearers were elected. President is Martine Sloan, Secretaries Marion Biemont and Holly Wal and Treasurer is Maureen Holohan.

Club members are organising a drink station for the Walk with Respect at 11am on Friday, November 28 at Rotary Park.

Redgate Alexandra will be having a decorated Christmas Tree at the Community Festival.

Their Christmas Lunch is on Thursday, December 18 at Alexandra Hotel at 12pm. They have invited Tuesday CWA Craft Ladies to be part of the fun and games Christmas Party.



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Kellock Lodge residents took part in the Adult Colouring Competition at the Alexandra Show and were thrilled with the result. Rita Walker won second place, and on the right Margaret Hunt and Graham Cherry won first place. -S



Have your say on the future of local health care in Murrindindi

Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health are exploring a voluntary amalgamation. Murrindindi Shire Council wants to ensure our community’s voice is heard.

Share your priorities, expectations and concerns in our short, anonymous survey. Your feedback will be provided to both Boards to help inform future decisions about health services in our Shire.

Complete the survey:

- Online: murrindindi.vic.gov.au/healthsurvey
- Pick up a paper copy at Yea Library & Customer Service Centre, Alexandra Library, or the Alexandra Customer Service Centre
- Scan the QR code below

Your voice matters, please take a moment to share your thoughts and help shape the future of health care in our community.



For more information, scan the QR code visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/news or call 5772 0333

Attention Farm Forestry and Plantation Owners in the North East

Agriculture Victoria has launched the Trees on Farms Utilisation Program to help unlock the commercial potential of existing farm forestry plantations.

The program is kicking off in North East Victoria and will expand to Central, Western Victoria, and Gippsland from early 2026.

Apply to receive a free assessment and market appraisal of your trees – with potential for further support for plantation management post assessment.

Applications close **19 December 2025**



Learn more and apply for your free assessment

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

Church Services

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

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

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

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

**MOUNT CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY
BAPTIST CHURCH**
37 Grant Street , Alexandra
Pastor Daniel Kriss
Services 10am every Sunday
Phone 0400 282 536
mccbc.com.au

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

THE ALEXANDRA • EILDON • MARYSVILLE

Standard

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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.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27

Murrindindi Shire Council invite residents to the Breakaway Bridge Community

Briefing session. At the Alexandra Shire Hall from 5-6pm. This session will not be live streamed. Visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/breakawayupdate.

Darlingford Nursing Home are holding their AGM in the North Lounge Room at Darlingford. The meeting commences at 1.30pm. Applications for a position on the board of management are invited, please

contact Darlingford on 5774 2711. Please RSVP for the AGM by November 24.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28

You are invited to join council and Alexandra Rotary for the Walk for Respect at Rotary Park. For more information visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/walkforrespect



ADH CEO: Survey now has more than 200 words available

EASTERN Health were asked a series of questions about the short engagement process and the ADH survey which asks no questions around the proposed merger.

Alexandra District Health CEO Jane Poxon responded, “Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health have applied the principles of the Victorian Public Engagement Framework to guide the engagement program for the exploration of a voluntary amalgamation between the two health services.

“The purpose of the engagement program is to share information and gather feedback from staff, stakeholders and community members about a possible voluntary amalgamation between the two health organisations. This process is about listening and learning, and no decisions have been made.

“Both Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health operate complex health services and have chosen a focused, two week engagement period to balance day-to-day health service delivery with genuine opportunities for staff and the community to share their feedback. This approach allows both organisations to complete engagement, review feedback and, if appropriate, prepare a business case for the Minister for Health in December.

“Although the engagement period is concentrated, there are multiple ways for community members to participate and provide feedback, including more than 20 hours of in-person Tea Talk / community engagement sessions, an online and hard copy survey and a dedicated feedback email

address. These options ensure that the process is accessible and flexible, allowing people to have their say in a way that best suits them.

“Details of all engagement activities have been promoted through social media, local newspapers, printed materials and a dedicated website, which also houses resources such as the media release, fact sheet and FAQs. Hard copy surveys and posters have been distributed to local businesses and community venues.

“To date community participation has been strong. The Chairs and CEOs of both health services have met with more than 100 stakeholders, including local Members of Parliament, council representatives, neighbouring health services, community groups, donors, volunteers, and clients. Five Tea Talks held on November 10 and 12 in Marysville, Alexandra, Yea, Eildon and Yarck as well as a meeting with the Alexandra and District Traders and Tourism Association drew more than 130 attendees, with positive feedback about the openness of discussions and the accessibility of board members and CEOs.

“The online survey has received more than 110 responses, and in direct response to feedback, the previous 200 word limit guide was removed.

“Importantly, while the formal engagement period concludes on November 21, staff, stakeholders and community members are welcome to continue providing feedback at any time to both health services.

“Following the engagement period, a summary of feedback will be published to highlight the key themes and insights gathered,” she said.

[It should be noted that ADH’s Facebook posts about the proposed merger have had their comments switched off. -Ed]

ADH CEO: the proposed merger is ‘led locally’

ALEXANDRA District Health (ADH) CEO Jane Poxon was asked a series of questions via email. The questions were: Which organisation raised the concept of a merger, Eastern Health (EH) or ADH? What role will you have in a merged organisation (in either ADH or EH)? Will there be a pay rise? What assurances will be put in place in the merger legal document/s? Will there be guaranteed minimum service levels? What commitments are there for capital investment? Has ADH been threatened with a budget cut (or budget stagnation) if they don’t amalgamate? Where is the 2024/5 annual report? Why is it not on the ADH website? Why is there no mention of a possible merger in the ADH Statement of Priorities 2025/6? And why is this not available on the ADH website? Why is the merger being explored when virtually the entire community expressed opposition to amalgamations a couple of years ago? ie. large and unanimous town hall meetings opposed to a merger, and 2000 plus people signing a petition. [It was later pointed out by a member of the community that across Alexandra, Yea and Mansfield, 15,000 signatures were gathered. -Ed]

Ms Poxon responded, “ADH initiated the exploration of a voluntary amalgamation with Eastern Health, following discussions about how the two organisations could work more closely together to strengthen local healthcare.

“Both organisations have already partnered successfully on several initiatives, including local oncology and infusion services and shared graduate training programs, which have delivered tangible benefits for patients, staff and the wider community.

“Building on that foundation, the boards of Alexandra District Health and

Eastern Health jointly agreed to explore whether a voluntary amalgamation could deliver even greater benefits for the communities we serve. This process is entirely voluntary, board-led and not directed by government.

“No decisions have been made. The current stage is about exploration and engagement to understand what opportunities may exist, identify any risks, and assess whether a voluntary amalgamation would deliver sustainable, high-quality healthcare for the long term.

“Questions about future structures, service commitments or investment would only be addressed in a business case developed by both boards.

“This process is not driven by funding pressures or government direction.

“The 2024–25 Annual Report has been tabled in Parliament and will be formally presented at the Alexandra District Health Annual General Meeting on December 4, after which it will be published on the Alexandra District Health website.

“Matters such as exploring a voluntary amalgamation are confidential board matters and therefore not included in public planning or reporting documents such as the Statement of Priorities.

“We acknowledge that people care deeply about their local health service, and that past concerns about amalgamation in relation to the Health Services Plan were strongly expressed. This voluntary amalgamation exploration process is different. It is being led locally and with a clear commitment to protecting what defines Alexandra District Health while exploring how to strengthen local healthcare for the long term.

“We will continue to keep staff, patients and the community informed as this work progresses.”

Has a conflict of interest been declared?

ALEXANDRA District Health board member Michelle Fleming works at Eastern Health as their Deputy Director of Operations, Community and Integrated Care.

She is obviously having a very successful career in health, however should she be voting on the board of Alexandra District Health about a merger with Eastern Health while working for Eastern Health?

The question was asked, and ADH CEO Jane Poxon responded, “Michelle Fleming has formally declared a conflict of interest in relation to the exploration of a possible voluntary amalgamation between Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health. In line with good governance practice she is not participating in any discussions, development of the business case, or decisions related to this process.”

Letter to the community from ADH board member Alan Studley

ALAN Studley has provided the following letter for publication.

DEAR community, As someone who has lived and worked in this district, I know how important our health services are to the people of Alexandra, nearby towns and right across Murrindindi. Alexandra District Health has always been more than a hospital. It’s a part of the story of this town and the people who built it.

That’s exactly why our Board is taking planning for the future so seriously. We’ve been looking at how we can make sure our local health service stays strong, sustainable and local for years to come. That’s what our exploration of a voluntary amalgamation with Eastern Health is all about.

I want to be clear, this is not a takeover and it’s not being forced on us. It’s about protecting what matters and improving what we can. We’re already working closely with Eastern Health, and it’s been paying off. Because of that partnership, people can now get cancer treatment and blood and iron infusions right here in Alexandra instead of having to travel over the hill. Our nurses and doctors have access to training and support that smaller hospitals often can’t provide on their own. That’s a big win for patients and staff alike.

But the truth is, small health services like ours are under continuing and growing pressure. Despite the hard work of Alexandra District Health leaders, staff and the Board, it’s getting harder to attract medical staff, keep up with rising costs, and offer the range of services people need as our community gets older and health needs get more complex.

The simple fact is, we can’t do this on our own anymore. If we stand still, things will only get tougher, and the services we rely on such as urgent care and specialist care might start to slip away. That’s why we need to tap into the strength and scale of a bigger health service, so we can keep caring for our communities well into the future.

A possible voluntary amalgamation means we’d come together by choice, as equals, to strengthen what we have. Alexandra District Health service would keep its name, its staff, its fundraising. Every dollar raised here would stay here and be used to support local care. The health service would still be here for urgent care, acute patients and community health. What would change is our ability to do more. This could mean more visiting

specialists, enhanced local services such as X-ray, ultrasound and infusion care, expanded hospital-based treatment, and greater career opportunities for staff. It could also support nurses and allied health professionals to broaden their skills and scope of practice to provide enhanced care.

Some people have said they’re worried we’ll lose our local voice. I understand that completely. The board and I want to make sure local people continue to have a say in how our services are run. We’ve all seen what happens when decisions get made from afar, and that’s not what this is about. If a voluntary amalgamation ever did go ahead, there would still be local people leading the health service at the executive level and at the decision-making table. The Minister for Health would appoint a new board for the new entity, and it’s expected that it would draw on the experience and local knowledge from both existing boards. Our Community Engagement Committee would also keep playing an active role to make sure community voices continue to guide how services are run. It’s about keeping local input strong, not losing it.

Some in the community have said they value the partnerships we already have with other services

and wonder if that could be enough without voluntary amalgamation. It’s a fair question. The truth is, partnerships only get you so far. They rely on goodwill and short-term projects, not long-term certainty. A voluntary amalgamation could bring stronger accountability and clearer decision-making, one structure, one plan, and a shared commitment to our communities. It could let us move faster to expand local services like oncology and dialysis, grow our workforce, and make sure we can keep delivering quality care close to home for years to come.

And then there’s the question about what this means for nearby health services. Each board has to make the decisions that are right for their own health service or hospital. Our job is to plan for the future of Alexandra District Health and the communities it serves. Other boards will make the choices that best suit their own services, just as we’re doing now. Whatever the outcome of this voluntary amalgamation exploration process, Alexandra District Health will continue to play an active role in the East Metro and Murrindindi Local Health Service Network.

At the end of the day, our job as a board is to protect and enhance our community’s health

services. Protect the things that make Alexandra District Health special, our people, our culture, and our care. Enhance what we can offer through new services, new specialists and better, connected healthcare.

I know even talking about possible change can feel uncomfortable, and people will have different views, and that’s okay. But I do ask that people take the time to learn the facts about what’s really being explored, not proposed. Visit connectingcare.net, attend a local Tea Talk, ask questions, and share feedback via email at feedback@connectingcare.net or by completing this short survey. This is about protecting quality health care and enhancing it, not losing it. Like most of you, I want to know that if my family or neighbours need care, it will be there for them, close to home, delivered by people who know them. That’s what this voluntary amalgamation exploration process is about, making sure we can keep that promise for the long haul.

Alan Studley Proud Taggerty community member and Board Director, Alexandra District Health

GMW seeking expressions of interest for commercial developments at Lake Eildon

GOULBURN-Murray Water (GMW) is inviting expressions of interest (EOI) for commercial developments at Lake Eildon that will help unlock the full potential of the region. EOIs are being sought for commercial land lease or licence opportunities for 16 parcels of land at the lake.

The parcels of land offer developers, investors and commercial operators opportunities to establish long-term ventures that support biodiversity, recreation, renewable energy, telecommunications, tourism and workforce accommodation.

GMW General Manager Water Storage Services Jon McKeown said EOIs that provided sustainable development and positive outcomes for the region were being sought.

“Lake Eildon is one of Victoria’s most visited recreational areas, attracting around 200,000 visitors a year,” he said.

“We’re eager to explore a range of commercial opportunities with interested parties which will help unlock the full potential of the region.”

Mr McKeown said it was important that EOIs aligned with existing land uses, the surrounding environment and the strategic objectives of the Activating Lake Eildon Masterplan.

“We are committed to supporting projects that deliver community, economic, and environmental benefits,” he said.

“We also acknowledge and respect the Taungurung Land and Waters Council as Traditional Owners of the Lake Eildon region

and will ensure all developments align with cultural heritage and environmental values.”

EOIs can be submitted for individual sites, combinations, or the entire portfolio, allowing flexibility to suit a range of commercial concepts. The EOI initiative aligns with federal, state, and local priorities, aiming to enhance natural assets and support sustainable development in partnership with local communities.

All EOIs will be evaluated on price, organisational capability, business plan, community benefit, and experience.

Interested parties must register via GMW’s eProcure portal, app.eprocure.com.au/gmwater/home/public

The closing date for EOIs is 5pm on January 30, 2026.



Brain Hub

Yea
Tuesday, 2 December 2025

If you are impacted by dementia, Dementia Australia’s Brain Hub can connect you to the information, education and support you need.

This **free Brain Hub** is available to anyone who wants to learn about dementia, including local residents and health care providers.

Through the information provided and connections formed, the Brain Hub serves as a gateway to a wide range of Dementia Australia services, giving communities access to long-term, ongoing support and information.

This Brain Hub is funded by the Federal Government and enables Dementia Australia to reach more people living in regional and remote areas, providing greater equity of access to our services.

Supported by:



When: Tuesday, 2 December 2025
9.30am-12.30pm

Where: Yea Shire Hall
7 High St,
YEA VIC 3717

Cost: Free

Additional information:
9.30am – Doors open, Registration & Morning Tea
10am – Worried about your memory: Dementia Australia
11am – Planning Ahead: Senior Rights Vic
12pm – Light Refreshment & Expo
12.30pm – Wrap up

Find out more

For further information please contact Amy Webb via email Amy.Webb@ydmh.org.au

National Dementia Helpline **1800 100 500**

Find us online **dementia.org.au**



For language assistance call **131 450**



Brain Hub

Alpine Outreach Van:
Eildon & Kinglake - 4 Dec 25

If you are impacted by dementia, Dementia Australia’s Brain Hub can connect you to the information, education and support you need.

This **free Brain Hub** is available to anyone who wants to learn about dementia, including local residents and health care providers.

Through the information provided and connections formed, the Brain Hub serves as a gateway to a wide range of Dementia Australia services, giving communities access to long-term, ongoing support and information.

This Brain Hub is funded by the Federal Government and enables Dementia Australia to reach more people living in regional and remote areas, providing greater equity of access to our services.

Supported by:



When: Thursday 4 December 2025

Where: The Blue Alpine Outreach Van will be traveling to:
Eildon: 9.30am - 11am
Kinglake: 2pm - 3.30pm

Cost: Free

Additional information:
Locate us in the following area:

Eildon: In Central Eildon down the main street.

Kinglake: The corner of Aitken Cres & Kinglake Rd, opposite the Nook.

Find out more

For further information please contact Christine Wasley via email christine.wasley@adh.org.au

National Dementia Helpline **1800 100 500**

Find us online **dementia.org.au**



For language assistance call **131 450**

Alexandra commemorates Remembrance Day

ALEXANDRA RSL President Bob Benghamy led the Alexandra Remembrance Day ceremony on Tuesday, November 11.

Henry Andrews laid the first wreath, on behalf of the Alexandra RSL. It is likely to be his last time at a service in Alexandra as he soon moves to Melbourne.

Wreaths were also laid by Bob Pearson on behalf of the Vietnam Veterans, Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish, Gerry Laws on behalf of the Peacekeepers, and Damien Gallager on behalf of Murrindindi Shire Council. Students from Alexandra Secondary College, Alexandra Primary School and St Mary’s Primary School.

Cindy McLeish was the guest speaker at the event. She spoke about visiting the Somme and walking the Kokoda Track. She emphasised the importance of people finding out more about relatives and townspeople who fought in the wars.

Bob Benghamy spoke about poppies on Remembrance Day, signifying blood, new life and hope for the future.

After *The Ode* and *The Last Post*, the *Australian Anthem* was played and the Australian flag raised.

Despite the overcast skies, the rain held off for the event.



Alexandra RSL President Bob Benghamy. -AR



Henry Andrews laying a wreath on behalf of the Alexandra RSL -AR



Bob Benghamy and Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish. -AR



The Australian Flag being raised in Alexandra on Remembrance Day. -AR



Attendees at the Alexandra Remembrance Day service. -AR

Nicole to launch new children’s book

NICOLE, a beloved storytime favourite at Alexandra Library, tells stories and invites little ones on wonderfully bookish adventures, singalongs and hands-on craft, all while wearing her swishy rainbow coat.

Completely enchanted by the delight and wonder experienced by small children, reminded of the magic of learning through play, Nicole’s passion was sparked to create

a picture book to celebrate imagination, creativity and joy.

Nicole is delighted to present her debut picture book, *Forever Sammy*. Readers will be enchanted by this sentimental tale told by Sammy the sheep.

Follow along on his epic adventures and memorable moments with his bestest friend. Together they will overcome their fears and struggles, learning that love and

support in tricky times helps us to reach for the stars.

This book delves into themes of friendship, learning, overcoming fears and anxiety, and the importance of care and support in difficult times to build resilience and perseverance.

Please join Nicole for her book launch of *Forever Sammy* at the Alexandra Library on November 27 at 10am.



Nicole with her book, *Forever Sammy*. -S



Real help. Right now.

The Victorian Government is delivering real help, right now with **over 90 different savings benefits**. Like saving families up to \$200 per eligible student with Get Active Kids Vouchers. As well as boosted school camps, sports and excursion payments, with savings of up to \$400 per eligible student from January.

Find out what you're eligible for on the Service Victoria Savings Finder today.

 **Savings Finder Victoria**



Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

Proudly supporting
Student of the week

Community Bank · Yea & District and Alexandra

Bendigo Bank

ALEXANDRA PRIMARY SCHOOL



Logan Heard -

Logan is a positive role model both in and out of the classroom. He has a 'can-do' attitude and does not get deterred easily. Logan can be relied on to help, particularly with PE sessions - his true passion. We are proud to have you in our learning community, Logan. You are a star.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by
Kinglake branch

Bendigo Bank

Fire restrictions start November 17

THE CFA has announced that the Fire Danger Period will commence at 1am on Monday, November 17 in Murrindindi Shire.

Residents are encouraged to ensure their properties and families are well prepared ahead of the FDP.

This includes cleaning up grass, leaves and other flammable materials. Residents should also have a fire plan for high-risk fire weather days.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer for CFA District 12, Stephen Keating, said any private burn-offs must be fully extinguished prior to 17 November.

"We've already seen several burn-offs get away in recent weeks, so it's really important that people conduct their burns safely and make sure the fire is fully out before they walk away," Stephen said.

"This year we will see fine fuels drying off at a faster rate due to drier soils. The heavier fuels are also more likely to be involved in fire due to the prolonged rainfall deficit.

"If you have a large burn off pile or bigger stumps or logs, it is too late for you to burn them off.

"All burn offs are the responsibility of the landowner

to ensure that they are out and can't flare up later."

For more information on preparing your property and understanding local fire restrictions, visit cfa.vic.gov.au

Those conducting burn-offs must notify authorities online at the Fire Permits Victoria website (firepermits.vic.gov.au) or by calling 1800 668 511. Registering your burn-off helps emergency call takers prioritise people who need urgent assistance.

Once the Fire Danger Period begins, no burning off is permitted without a Permit to Burn, which can be applied for through Fire Permits Victoria.

Fire Danger Period information

A written permit is required to burn off grass, undergrowth, weeds or other vegetation during the FDP. Apply at firepermits.vic.gov.au

Lighting fires in the open without a permit can attract penalties of more than \$21,800 and/or 12 months imprisonment.

Farmers can find legal guidelines and practical advice at cfa.vic.gov.au/farms

For a full list of restrictions, visit cfa.vic.gov.au/can or call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226.

Local artist a finalist in prestigious art prize

ALEXANDRA local, Ruth Selover, was delighted to find out that she had become a finalist in the prestigious Luxembourg Art Prize. The international award aims to discover talents, amateur or professional, regardless of age and nationality.

Each year, 24 finalists are selected by the museum and three laureates are designated by an independent jury. The prize money is €20,000 for first place, €10,000 for second place, and €5,000 for third place. The winners will be named on the prize website on December 1.

Ruth explained that the entrants had to enter a whole collection, "to

prove that it wasn't an accident." Her 20 works were supplied as photos of the artworks.

Her sister Cornelia has encouraged her to enter the competition, and Ruth said that as soon as she entered, she forgot about it, until an email arrived which she initially thought was a scam. She was a finalist.

She said of the final announcement, "I haven't really taken any notice because I'm assuming I won't win. But I'm pretty tickled."

She added, "The funny thing is I had a few of these paintings up at the art show. They didn't sell. I don't really like selling my paintings

because I'm emotionally involved with them."

She said that the series of paintings are all about her family and friends, having champagnes, coffees, Pimms and lemonade, or glasses of water in various locations.

There is often black space around the drink, and asked whether this is thematic, Ruth responded, "That just looks good. I'm a graphic designer, so I like things to look good."

She's been painting for her whole life, but didn't attend art school. She instead studied graphic design at RMIT, but she was taught pencil rendering and life drawing.



Ruth Selover with the painting selected as a finalist in the Luxembourg Art Prize. -AR

The machete amnesty ends 30 November

Possession after this date carries a fine of more than \$47,000 or jail time.

Safe disposal bins are available at select police stations across the state.



Scan to learn more



Authorised by the Victorian Government,
1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

Inferno Marine wins apprentice awards at Melbourne Boat Show

INFERNO Marine's Kobe Gogoll took out the Boating Careers KGM Apprentice of the Year Award for marine craft construction at the Melbourne Boat Show in October, while Tim Ewert from Inferno Marine was labelled apprentice employer of the year.

Jayden Arnett was runner-up apprentice of the year, also from Inferno Marine.

Inferno Marine is an Eildon-based boat building company that does custom work, including sports boats, boat restorations, maintenance and sales, and houseboats.

Boating Careers, the organiser of the awards, congratulated the winners through a statement on their website.

"Special congratulations to our apprentice winners, Will

Seddon and Kobe Gogoll. You should both be incredibly proud of your achievements and the professionalism you've already shown so early in your careers," Boating Careers said.

"Your hard work, skills, and attitude reflect the bright future of the Australian marine industry.

"We also extend a big congratulations to Tim Ewert from Inferno Marine, winner of

the Apprentice Employer of the Year Award. Tim has been an exceptional supporter of young talent, dedicating countless hours to mentoring and teaching his apprentices.

"His commitment to helping them grow into skilled, confident tradespeople is something he, and the entire industry, can be proud of."



Inferno Marine's Tim Ewert, crowned Apprentice Employer of the Year, Jayden Arnett, runner-up Apprentice of the Year, and Kobe Gogoll, Boating Careers KGM Apprentice of the Year. -S

Council secures AusNet grant to boost local energy resilience

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has received funding through AusNet's Energy Resilience Community Fund for the purchase of a trailer-mounted mobile generator. This new generator will strengthen emergency preparedness and community resilience across the shire, so that communities are better equipped to respond to and recover from severe weather events, natural disasters and prolonged power outages.

Recent storms and floods have highlighted the vulnerability of our region, with many communities experiencing extended outages and isolation. From early next year, the mobile generator will provide flexible, reliable backup power for Emergency Relief Centres helping keep essential services running when they are needed most.

Unlike fixed generators, the mobile unit can be deployed wherever it is most needed in a timely manner, making it a flexible solution for our geographically diverse shire. It will support lighting, heating, refrigeration, communications, phone charging and other essential services at Emergency Relief Centres, town halls, recreation reserves, community hubs, and during emergency situations.

Murrindindi Shire Council Sustainability and Environment Portfolio Councillor Sue Carpenter was optimistic about the improvement to council's ability to support our communities during emergencies.

"This grant means our shire can respond more quickly and effectively during emergencies. The mobile generator will help keep our relief centres open, support vulnerable residents, and ensure our emergency teams have the power they need to coordinate relief and recovery efforts. We thank AusNet for their support and commitment to regional resilience and the Murrindindi community," Ms Carpenter said.

"AusNet's major grants are currently open, and we encourage all eligible local groups, organisations, and community leaders to apply. If you're considering an application or need support, such as advice, letters of support, or help strengthening your project, please reach out to council. We're here to help you succeed and to work together for the benefit of our region."

Learn about the AusNet Energy Resilience Community Fund and how to apply on the AusNet website at ausnetservices.com.au/about-us/community/energy-resilience-community-fund

Speaking in Parliament, State Member for Eildon, Cindy McLeish MP asked the Minister for Environment directly to explain the decision to close the popular Fraser block campgrounds, including Devil Cove, Candlebark and Lakeside during the busiest time of year, from January 7 to April 3, 2026.

Ms McLeish said, "Many local residents and businesses find this decision unbelievable, particularly given last year's debacle of the state government's ghost booking saga, people booking out sites and not turning up."

Tens of thousands of visitors attend these campgrounds each summer, with tourists bringing revenue to the regional townships of Alexandra, Thornton and Eildon.

These regional townships rely heavily on tourism and will surely feel the pinch as their major tourism drawcard is removed.

"Surely the city centric Labor Government must not know that campers at these sites have a significant and important positive impact on the surrounding towns.

"Locals cannot make heads or tails of why the public closure isn't occurring during the off-season," she said.



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Development Opportunities - Commercial Land Leasing at Lake Eildon

Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) is Australia's largest rural water corporation. We manage, store and deliver water to more than 25,000 active customers in northern Victoria.

We are inviting Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for the lease or licence of 16 individual parcels of land around Lake Eildon aimed at complementary commercial developments. Focus sectors include but are not limited to; biodiversity, hospitality, renewable energy, telecommunications, tourism and workforce accommodation.

Each site offers unique features and development potential. Key sites include: Upper Eildon Pondage, Centre Avenue and Girdwood Parade, Lower Pondage, Karalika Heights, Jerusalem Creek Road, and Mount Pinniger, among others.

Expression of Interest Process

The EOI is the first stage of a two-stage process. EOIs must include a detailed development proposal, timeline, preferred tenure, economic and environmental benefits, and company profile.

Shortlisted respondents may be invited to participate in a subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP).

How to Apply

- Register and download full EOI documents via the GMW Tender Portal: www.eprocure.com.au/gmwwater/
- EOI Closing Date: 5:00pm, 30 January 2026

Contact

For further information, visit the eProcure website or phone 1800 013 357.

Lake Eildon National Park campsites closed during peak time

THE upcoming closure of the Fraser camping area at Lake Eildon National Park, from January 7 to early April, the majority of the summer period, is expected to have a major impact on the economy of the region.

The local economy relies heavily on peak summer tourism, and this removes a large portion of those numbers. Campers tends to spend on items such as groceries, fuel, and eating takeaways or at cafes and restuarants.

The parks are being closed so that new non-flushing toilets can be installed. This is very important, but the timing couldn't be worse.

According to the Lake Eildon Master Plan business case, in 2018 the Fraser camping area had around 132,000 visitors, who spent approximately \$153 per person per trip. This amounts to approximately \$20M in economic yield per annum from this area alone. These are visitors who shop in our supermarkets, visit our tackle shops, eat at our cafes, buy our fuel, and explore our towns. While this is annual data, the bulk of visitation occurs during the summer period.

Alexandra and District Traders and Tourism Association (ADTTA) are concerned that the extended closure of Lakeside Campground, and the subsequent loss of overnight stays in the region will have a significant impact on local businesses through Alexandra, Eildon, Thornton and surrounding towns. These are communities who were just getting back on their feet after the complications of the last few years. This impact is significant enough that businesses may need to reconsider their staffing or scheduled activities for the season ahead.



Letters to the Editor

Continued from Page 2

Breakaway Bridge

As a long-term resident and rate payer, I am contacting you as the spokesperson for a growing number of people with mutual concerns.

You may be unaware of the ongoing situation regarding the proposal to re-build the decommissioned Breakaway Bridge. Council has proposed the construction of a dual lane bridge with no weight limitations. Council have not explained or addressed numerous issues that are a likely outcome of their proposal.

The rebuilding of that bridge will result in a substantially greater volume of traffic (including heavy trucks) into Grant Street; previously trucks were unable to use the old bridge because of the weight limit applicable to it. This increased volume of traffic, 24 hours a day, will use Grant Street in both directions including the main shopping precinct.

Currently, large numbers of shoppers, the elderly and infirm and children frequent and cross the street. For example, many of our residents frequently visit both the supermarket and pharmacy located on opposite sides of Grant Street with no pedestrian crossing. If heavier traffic volumes, trucks and distracted drivers were to be added the potential for significant adverse events is created.

Other adverse impacts on our community are likely to include: Safety for the users of the Scout Hall and the McKenzie Flora Reserve and the residents of the homes in Grant Street; The ambience of the main street. This must be nurtured because it is a vital component to both the social and emotional well-being of our community; people walking their dogs, having a coffee, sitting and chatting; Pollution especially noise and exhaust fumes; Traffic diversions into residential streets when Grant Street is closed for other activities, e.g. Sunday markets, etcetera; and the financial cost to the community. While the council may be able to secure funding for a reconstructed bridge, there are likely to be major costs associated with addressing the impacts of traffic flow, signage, diversions, road upkeep, etcetera. These are costs that will be passed on to the community through an increase in rates.

Please come along to the Alexandra Shire Hall on Thursday, November 27 at 5pm to hear the council explain their position and next steps. Bring your questions and comments.

If you would like to discuss this further please feel free to contact either myself, Michael Purcell on 0457 097 335 or on David Wells 0418 370 141.

Michael Purcell, Acheron



Buxton Primary School students paying their respects. -S

Buxton Primary on Remembrance Day

LAST Thursday, the students at the Buxton Primary School placed commemorative poppies at the base of the flagpoles in the Memorial Garden at the Buxton Memorial Hall.

Each Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, local resident and returned Gulf War veteran, Carmel Denham, provides knitted poppies for the children to attach messages to and place in the garden as part of their school commemorations.

Principal Sarah Irving supplied photos of the students with their poppies along with some of the placed poppies. The poppies will remain in place for a week or so, pop down and check out the messages from the children.



The knitted poppies. -S



You're Invited

Yea and District Memorial Hospital ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM is an opportunity to reflect on the hospital's achievements over the past year and to acknowledge the ongoing commitment and contribution of our dedicated staff.

We are also delighted to welcome our guest speaker, **Warren Davies** – "The Unbreakable Farmer."

Warren is far more than your average farmer. His remarkable journey has been defined by resilience, persistence, and determination in the face of significant challenges that impacted his family, relationships, and finances.

Through these experiences, Warren has become a powerful advocate for mental health and wellbeing, engaging audiences with his authentic storytelling and the valuable life lessons he has learned along the way.



Monday, 1st December 2025 – 5:30pm

Country Club Hotel – 18 High St, Yea

Supper provided, Drinks at bar prices

RSVP by Friday 21st November : (03) 5736 0400

Sandra.Bray@ydmh.org.au



Department of Health



Board director opportunities at Yea & District Memorial Hospital

The Minister for Health, the Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas MP, is pleased to invite applications for part time board director positions at Yea & District Memorial Hospital. The positions start on 1 July 2026, for up to three years.

These positions provide an exciting opportunity for persons with an interest in making a difference in the health sector and have the knowledge and skills for ensuring health care is delivered safely and effectively, with public money used to the benefit of all Victorians.

As a director you will be doing more than just contributing your time or knowledge. Being appointed to a hospital board places you in a position of trust. You will play an important role in providing leadership, accountability and integrity in the delivery of healthcare across Victoria.

Applicants are selected for their capabilities, including personal and professional experience, knowledge, and skills that contribute to the strategic leadership and oversight of healthcare for the Victorian community. It is preferable that applicants reside in Victoria or, within the border community of those hospitals near the New South Wales and South Australian borders.

While Victorian public health boards are based on capabilities, boards are more effective when these capabilities also represent the richness of the diverse voices of Victorian communities. We encourage First Nations people, people living with a disability, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, people who identify as LGBTIQ+, gender equality, and upholding human rights.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate the capabilities identified in their applications.

Applications close at **Midnight Sunday 23 November 2025.**

Further information about Victorian health service boards and how to apply, please go to the following website: www.health.vic.gov.au/board-applications

FRRR (Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal) and the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation (ARLF) have launched the Future Drought Fund’s Communities Program, funded by the Australian Government.

The Future Drought Fund’s Communities Program will empower people in agriculture-dependent communities across remote, rural, and regional Australia to prepare for drought by building and maintaining their social resilience.

As the Honourable Julie Collins MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) announced earlier this year, the program will see \$36 million in support delivered to regional communities over the next three years.

This investment builds on the Future Drought Fund’s Helping Regional Communities Prepare for Drought Initiative, Networks to Build Drought Resilience program and the Drought Resilience Leaders program.

The program will offer a mix of grants and capacity building activities, including

AI brings water challenges

ACCESS to water has always been a primary concern, not just for farmers, but for life in Australia more generally. Lake Eildon is currently at about 56 per cent capacity, and there are concerns that the country is entering another drought. This comes at a time when artificial intelligence (AI) has entered common usage.

According to the United Nations, nearly two-thirds of the world population experiences a severe water shortage for at least one month each year. This is predicted to become worse in the next five years.

Data centres to process AI are part of the AI economic boom, but at what cost and is Australia the right place to be installing such data centres?

Computer GPU manufacturer, Nvidia, has estimated that AI will generate over \$100 trillion (US) in economic opportunities, including automotive, healthcare, science, manufacturing and business.

Concerns have been expressed from the federal Opposition that without quick action, the opportunity to capitalise on having local data centres will be lost, however extremely large amounts of electricity, water and space are needed to host such centres.

Around the world, data centres already use about 3.5 percent of the global electrical output, and this is expected to grow to 13 per cent within five years.

If we’re keen to use AI to generate videos and to source information from platforms including Google and ChatGPT, then perhaps it’s time for Murrindindi to play its part as well. After all, if we’re using it, shouldn’t we also be contributing to the renewable energy infrastructure? Such infrastructure would however need to be located appropriately.

An article in *The Conversation*, written by Leo S Lo, Dean of Libraries, Advisor to the Provost for AI Literacy and Professor of Education at the University of Virginia, provides a chart outlining the water usage per Chat GPT prompt.

500ml of water is used for 13 medium-length queries on ChatGPT and 100 litres of water is needed for 2564 queries.

It’s estimated that at present, there are about 2.5 billion prompts each day on ChatGPT alone, requiring around 105 million litres of water per day. There are of course a great many other AI platforms, many of which are more data-heavy, such as image and video generation.

While at present, this is only a small proportion of water usage, the demand is growing exponentially.

Proposed data centres in the north and west of Melbourne are projected to consume huge amounts of water, enough to supply 330,000 residents annually, according to an ABC report.

The ABC also said, “Greater Western Water was assessing 19 applications from data centres to use up to 20 gigalitres of water a year” and “Yarra Valley Water has received seven applications to draw water from the

leadership development, across the country. In total, there are three grant elements, each available to specific Local Government Areas (LGAs), as well as National Mentoring and additional capacity building activities.

The first two granting elements, Small Network Grants and the Regional Drought Resilience Plan Social Outcome Grants are now open. Planning is also underway for the Community Impact Program, which will kick off in early 2026.

Small Network Grants

Small Network Grants are available in 314 LGAs to develop and deliver local events or initiatives to strengthen the social capital, wellbeing, and connectedness of communities to prepare for and build social resilience to drought.

In total, there will be \$3 million available for Small Network Grants, each up to \$50,000, with around \$1 million available per round. Funding can support locally-based not-for-profit organisations to undertake

Aquatic facilities still free, but contributions welcome

IN light of the extreme financial challenges being faced by Murrindindi Shire Council, council was asked about why entry to the shire’s swimming pools has been free since 2021, and why there is no entry fee for Eildon’s Baanh ba Djila Splash Park.

Council responded, “Murrindindi Shire Council continues to provide free entry to its aquatic facilities, a decision introduced in 2021 to encourage greater community participation and ensure these spaces remain inclusive and accessible. Evidence showed that when entry fees were applied, visitation dropped by around half, so removing fees was critical to support the social, health and economic benefits of recreation.

They added, “Charging would generate far less revenue and lower visitation. Collecting user fees would incur the expense of setting up and managing fixed payment systems and require lifeguards to handle payments, rather than focus entirely on safety.

“Since introducing free entry, our pools have seen record visitation and engagement. Last summer season, more than 28,000 people visited council’s pools, the highest on record. This reflects the importance of these facilities as inclusive, safe and accessible spaces for families, children, visitors and young people across our shire.

“The \$280,000 figure in the 2023/24 Annual Report refers to the capital works costs of council’s aquatic facilities.

“Operating costs for pools and the splash park are significant and have continued to rise, which is one of the challenges council faces in balancing financial sustainability with community benefit. To illustrate the level of subsidy, the cost per visit in 2024/25 was approximately \$18.40. Even if council charged \$5 per visit, it would cover only a fraction of the true cost. Improved accessibility has reduced the cost per visit compared to previous years, but aquatic services remain heavily subsidised because council prioritises the social, health and

municipal supply to cool proposed data centres, according to Freedom of Information documents seen by the ABC.”

Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) said, “In Melbourne alone, 45 facilities are currently operating using approximately 50 litres of water every second. That’s the equivalent of filling an Olympic swimming pool in under an hour. With 25 more facilities proposed to be built, that number could skyrocket to between 100 and 500 litres per second.”

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action was asked what policies have been put in place regarding water usage by data centres used for AI. Is there an emphasis towards non-potable or recycled water usage? Is there a requirement for closed-loop cooling, rainwater harvesting or air-cooled systems?

activities that strengthen professional, social or community networks; host community events; run training workshops; upgrade small-scale community infrastructure or facilitate professional, personal or leadership development.

Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) Social Outcome Grants

These grants are specifically designed to help bring to life the social resilience activities and projects already outlined in an RDRP, in up to 50 eligible RDRP regions. Like Small Network Grants, the funding can support locally based not-for-profit organisations to undertake projects that strengthen community networks; host community events; run training workshops; upgrade small-scale community infrastructure or facilitate professional, personal or leadership development. There is a maximum of \$100,000 available per RDRP region over the life of the program. In total, there will be \$5 million available through this stream, with around \$2 million available in the first round.

Both Small Network Grants and RDRP Social Outcome Grants programs are available to not-for-profit organisations that have an ABN or Incorporation Certificate and support remote, rural, or regional communities in agriculture-dependent areas.

National Mentoring Initiative

In addition to grants for organisations, individuals in any agriculture-dependent community can apply to be part of a National Mentoring Initiative, delivered by ARLF.

As part of the Initiative, people will be paired to share experiences, perspectives, and knowledge in a supportive virtual environment, with 12 sessions offered over 12 months.

Anyone interested can learn more and express their interest in being involved by going to rural-leaders.org.au/national-mentoring-initiative/

Find out more about these programs at frrr.org.au

Make a splash this aquatic season

MURRINDINDI Shire Council is excited to welcome the community back to their outdoor pools this summer. Pools in Alexandra, Yea and Eildon are now open. The Marysville Pool and the Baanh ba Djila Splash Park will open next week as preparations are finalised.

Council is proud to continue offering free entry to all their aquatic facilities. They know how important these spaces are for community connection, health, and wellbeing, especially for young people and families.

This season, council are introducing an easy, optional way for those who wish to support the pools: a voluntary \$5 contribution. Every dollar will go directly towards helping maintain and operate these much-loved facilities, so they remain safe and welcoming for everyone.

The new tap-and-go system will be rolled out over the next few weeks. Payments will be entirely digital, surcharge-free and completely at the discretion of patrons.

Council is reminding everyone to stay safe, supervise children closely and be kind and respectful to staff throughout the season. Active adult supervision remains the most effective way to prevent accidents around water.

Council’s Community Wellbeing Portfolio Councillor Jodi Adams said the start of the pool season is always a highlight for local families and visitors.

“Our pools are some of the most loved spaces in our shire. By keeping entry free and offering an easy, optional way to contribute, we’re helping ensure these facilities remain accessible and sustainable for years to come. We look forward to seeing the community enjoying these spaces right across summer,” Ms Adams said.

“Council operates four outdoor pools in Alexandra, Eildon, Marysville and Yea, along with the Eildon Baanh ba Djila Splash Park, which will all again be a popular destination for families this summer.”

For the latest opening information, visit council’s website at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/pools

capacity to support the requests. If a request cannot be accommodated, the applicant is advised of the network upgrades they can fund to supply their requested demand.

To ensure transparency for water usage, any non-residential water user that uses over 100 megalitres a year will be publicly reported by their water corporation and identified if they are participating in a water conservation program.

An expert review is being undertaken by DEECA, with VicWater the industry peak body, to ensure existing water use policies for large industrial users, including data centres, keep pace with this rapidly emerging sector.

Use of recycled water and stormwater harvesting are part of the Victorian Government’s broad efforts to ensure secure water supplies into the future.

Small rural water customers set to fight GMW and ESC in court

‘COUNTRY Victoria, Goulburn-Murray Water Catchments’ is a group of small rural water users appearing before the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) on November 27 to challenge the fees charged by Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) and approved by the Essential Services Commission (ESC).

This will be only the second time the ESC has faced a legal challenge from consumers over its pricing decisions and the first time a challenge will have proceeded to a full VCAT hearing.

The applicants, representing many of the over 2000 small domestic and stock customers across the region, argue that they

have been charged for services that do not exist. They rely on unregulated waterways, creeks and springs with no GMW operated dams or infrastructure, and yet saw their annual water fees almost double between 2015 and 2020. This has since been compounded by rises in licence renewal fees. These are set to rise from \$700 in 2023-24 to around \$1100 in 2027-28.

Cameron Reid, spokesperson for the group, said, “Year after year, our fees have increased far beyond inflation, for no service, no infrastructure, and no benefit. For most of us, water comes from small local creeks. We maintain our own pumps, pipes, and filtration. GMW provides no service beyond enforcing

compliance fees, yet continues to charge as if it does.”

The group has been advocating for fair treatment since 2018, forming a collective known as GMW Concerns after previous attempts by an earlier group, Justice for Domestic Users, to hold the regulator accountable failed.

The hearing will focus on three specific errors of fact the applicants argue were relied upon in setting charges. Beyond the numbers, the group emphasises the broader issue, that recognition and fairness for small rural customers is often overlooked because of their relatively low revenue contribution and dispersed existence.

“We are not asking for special treatment,” Mr Reid said. “We are simply asking that the fees applied to us relate to services we actually receive. This is about fairness, trust, and respect for small rural Victorians who have been left out of the system.”

The applicants acknowledge the important work GMW does for large irrigation customers but stress that the business model does not extend to small unregulated water users. They are calling for clearer accountability, independent regulation, and a fee structure that reflects reality.

They are arguing that GMW does not conduct annual site inspections, although this is a cost included in the fees. They are also arguing that ‘use estimation’ doesn’t apply to unmetered domestic and stock users, who do not need or benefit from it, and that deeming costs are almost entirely linked to irrigators. Thirdly, they are arguing that the Access Fee is based on false assumptions. They stated that data from the Victorian Water Register shows irrigators account for about 95 per cent of all licensed water on unregulated streams, while domestic and stock users hold barely five per cent, yet both groups are charged as if they create the same costs.

When contacted about the upcoming hearing, the ESC stated, “The commission is aware that an application for review has been lodged at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal in relation to its final decision in relation to the Goulburn-Murray Water’s prices. The commission respects the review process and therefore we do not comment on matters currently under review.”

A GMW spokesperson said, “GMW tariffs are approved by the Essential Services Commission and reflect GMW’s costs of managing water resources. The tariffs subject to this case decreased in 2025-26 to their lowest amount since 2021. The tariffs include an amount that reflects GMW’s costs of protecting customers’ access rights and the environment. This benefits all customers.

“GMW will always ensure that water use is managed sustainably, efficiently, safely and consistently with legal rights.”



The Gobur Cemetery gates. -S

Gobur Cemetery Trust: More than custodians

Cool burns at Gobur Cemetery

AS custodians of Gobur Cemetery, the voluntary trustees take seriously their role to ensure perpetual maintenance but believe that their stewardship extends further than record keeping, mowing, tidying and maintaining fences, roadways and infrastructure.

The trust believes that managing the land to reduce the risk of bushfire, sustain and preserve the native grasses, wildflowers and vegetation indigenous to the district, is just as important.

For over 60 years, the trust has been practising ‘cool burns’ to reduce the fire load before summer, and stimulate fresh growth of the native kangaroo grass, yam daisies and other wildflowers with great success. The wildflower displays in spring are widely appreciated.

Praise for past and present achievement, was received from Phil Hawkey, fire investigator and retired CFA management officer, and Cathy Olive, development manager of the Euroa Arboretum, after the latest successful cool burn, held on August 3. The burn resulted in almost 100 per cent of the five acres being burned.

Success would not be possible without support from CFA members attending with Yarck, and Terip Terip tankers, interest and support from expert groups, trust members and community members who turn up to voluntarily give of their time and energy. A union of community support which is gratefully accepted and acknowledged by the trust.

New memorial walk

Proud to build on the work of the previous trusts, forward planning is essential, as Gobur Cemetery Trust attempt to anticipate future needs and provide the services required by the community.

There are two memorial niche walls at Gobur Cemetery. One has been filled, the other filling up quickly. Forward planning has recognised that demand for cremated



The cool burn at the Gobur Cemetery. -S

remains interment is increasing, and another niche wall will be required in the not-too-distant future.

An expensive option to build, niche walls are also limited in the number of spaces that can be provided.

An ambitious plan has been developed to place a drain to divert water that has made the lower western boundary area unsuitable for graves and create a memorial walk where memorials only, or cremated remains with memorials, can be placed.

To commence at the main drive, the wide crushed gravelled walk, will wind 37.5 metres along the western boundary fence on the northern side of the cemetery. A one metre wide garden will edge the entire landscaped walk, with shady trees and memorial plaques interspersed along both sides and around the end.

A wider section of the walk at the main driveway end, will eventually house a rotunda and a screened water tank. The far end will be a wider roundabout with a central garden feature. It is anticipated that between 80 and 100 memorial plaques will be created in this fashion, at a fraction of the cost that it would take to build walls for that number.

Gobur Cemetery Trust has developed a plan and will undertake the project in stages. The first stage, to consist of drainage, levelling the walk, some landscaping, and placement of the crushed gravel will cost around \$6000, a large sum for a small cemetery trust to find.

Trusts are not permitted to use perpetual maintenance funds to repair damaged pioneer memorials and headstones. A Heritage Fund Account, specifically for donations only, was created several years ago, to achieve this after gaining permission from the holders of Right of Interment, and for new projects and infrastructure of benefit to the community. Several pioneer headstones have already been repaired.

Donations towards the first stage of the new Memorial Walk may be made by direct transfer to BSB 633000, GCT Heritage Fund, Account number 160001012, with ‘Donation’ as the description. Gobur Cemetery Trust would greatly appreciate support for this project and thankfully acknowledges past donations.

Outside School Hours Care grants for Buxton and Yea

THE Victorian Government is expanding outside school hours’ care (OSHC) services across Victoria. Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes announced that funding would be provided to 30 small and regional schools in northern Victoria to support OSHC operations during 2026.

The \$3.14 million initiative is intended to support schools across the state with OSHC services where there is demand, but the service is not yet commercially viable without some additional funding support.

The services care for students after hours, helping their parents and carers get back into the workforce, study or training.

Locally, these schools receiving funding are Buxton Primary School and Yea Primary School.

The grants are part of a \$14.67 million Outside School Hours Care Establishment Grants Initiative from 2024 to 2028.

In 2024, 113 schools received funding for 2025 operations support under the Small and Regional Schools Grants program. A further funding round will take place in 2026.

Schools eligible for funding under the program were all previously part of the \$81.7 million four-year Outside School Hours Care Establishment Grants Initiative, that ran from 2021 to 2024.

Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes said, “These grants will provide a huge benefit to our schools and busy working families in northern Victoria. By supporting outside school hours care services in small and regional schools, we’re helping more parents and carers get back to work, study, or training.”

NFF statement on United States tariff removal

by NFF Interim Chief Executive Su McCluskey

THE National Farmers' Federation (NFF) welcomes the decision by the United States to remove tariffs applied to a range of global agricultural goods, including from Australia.

The NFF has long championed free and fair trade, not just for agriculture but all industries, recognising its role in global economic growth, stability and food security. Australian agriculture is unwavering in its commitment to this.

The US is a key trading partner for Australian agriculture, particularly for beef, wine and sheepmeat, and is central to global trading frameworks.

While the sector's exports have shown resilience over the course of the past months, the recent announcement is a sensible step that brings us back into line with the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement, which provides for zero tariffs on two-way trade.

The US and Australia have a deep and multifaceted agricultural relationship spanning goods and services trade, deep investment, two-way flows and people-to-people links.

Farmers and Australia's interests are best served by a free, fair and predictable global trading environment.

CFA urges hay safety after thousands of bales lost

A SPATE of haystack and hay shed fires are a reminder for farmers to take extra care in preventing haystack fires.

Hay season has been in full swing across the west and north-west in the past weeks but is now beginning across the rest of the state too.

This warning comes after three significant haystack fires in the north-west of the state where thousands of bales were lost.

On Sunday, November 9, CFA responded to a hayshed fire in Towaninny South, near Dumosa, at about 1pm.

Firefighters arrived to a large hay shed well alight, impacting over 1000 bales.

The incident was handed back to the land owner within a few hours but the bales can burn for days and cause a lot of smoke in the area.

Crews have also responded to four other major hay fires this week in Patchewollock, Robinvale, and Bagshot.

Between June 30, 2024, and July 1, 2025, CFA responded to 73 haystack and hay shed fires in regional areas.

Haystack fires are often caused by spontaneous combustion when hay is baled with excess moisture. High moisture levels, combined with the compact nature of hay bales, can create internal heat, leading to ignition.

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan reinforced that early preparation and proper storage are essential in reducing the risk of haystack fires.

"Farmers who have decided to carry on with hay production need to be extra vigilant this year to make sure conditions are right for making hay and for the future storage and transport of the product as well," he said.

"Hay fires are a real threat to properties and stock in farmland areas. Whether you're a seasoned hay grower or switching to hay this year, it's important to take care of your hay and crops this fire season.

"Use technology to monitor your haystacks regularly, temperature probes can provide an early warning, detecting heating hay and alerting.

"Haystack fires can have far-reaching effects beyond individual properties, impacting neighbouring farms and emergency services.

"Make sure you store your hay in separate stacks or in sheds away from farm equipment and other buildings to prevent the spread of fire."

For more information, visit CFA's website or contact your local CFA brigade for advice on haystack safety.



Hay bale fires can lead to a lot of damage. This was a large shed for storing hay. -S

The Trap

By Jed Dunstan

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The science behind hay fires

by Andrea Henry, Dairy Industry Development Officer, Maffra

SPONTANEOUS combustion in hay occurs when internal heat builds up to the point of ignition as a result of microbial activity and chemical reactions.

Unlike fires caused by lightning or machinery, spontaneous combustion is insidious: it starts deep within a haystack and can smoulder unnoticed until it erupts into flames.

How do spontaneous combustions happen?

Hay is an organic material rich in sugars, proteins, and moisture, all ideal conditions for microbial growth. When hay is baled too wet or stored before it has fully cured, bacteria and fungi begin to break down the plant matter. This microbial activity then generates heat.

What are the risk factors?

High moisture content: hay baled with more than 20 per cent moisture is at risk. Mould growth and fermentation occurs when moisture levels are between 20 and 35 per cent.

Dense packing: tightly packed bales trap heat and moisture, accelerating microbial activity.

Poor ventilation: lack of airflow prevents heat from dispersing. Environmental conditions: warm, humid weather. Storage practices: storing hay in enclosed barns or sheds without monitoring.

What to look out for: Early detection is crucial. Farmers should regularly inspect haystacks for signs of heating; steam rising from the stack; musty, caramel, or tobacco-like odours; mould growth on or inside bales; condensation or corrosion under roofing; slumping or deformation of the stack.

Using a temperature probe or inserting a metal rod (like a crowbar) into the stack can be used to detect internal heat. If the rod feels hot to the touch after removal, the hay may be dangerously warm, and action should be taken.

How to prevent heating hay: Curing hay thoroughly. Allow hay to dry completely before

balancing and monitor moisture levels using a moisture meter. Ideal moisture content for small square bales is 18 to 20 per cent, large square bales: 12 to 15 per cent, and round bales: 15 to 18 per cent. When making sure hay is cured properly, also test plant nodes and leaf sheaths for hidden moisture.

Monitor temperatures. Use temperature probes or wireless sensors to track internal bale temperatures. If temperatures exceed 55 degrees, monitor closely. At 71 degrees, consider separating bales and increasing ventilation.

Improve ventilation. Store hay in well-ventilated areas. Avoid stacking bales too tightly. Separate risky bales. Store damp or suspect bales separately. Monitor them more frequently and avoid placing them near dry hay.

Limit stack size. Smaller stacks reduce heat accumulation. Leave space between stacks and walls for air circulation. Protect from moisture. Ensure roofs, spouts, and drainage systems prevent water from reaching hay. Cover stacks with breathable tarps if stored outdoors.

Use technology. Modern sensor systems can provide real-time data on hay temperature and humidity, helping farmers make informed decisions and prevent fires before they start.

What to do if you find heating hay: Pull apart the stack to release heat and moisture; move bales outdoors if possible; call 000 if smoke or fire is visible; keep fire suppression tools (hoses, extinguishers) nearby.

Never attempt to extinguish a hay fire alone. Fires can reignite and spread rapidly.

Spontaneous combustion in hay is preventable. By understanding the biological and chemical processes involved, farmers can take proactive steps to protect their property and livestock. Proper curing, monitoring, and storage practices are the keys to safe hay management.

Find more information about drought support at agriculture.vic.gov.au/drought or call 136 186.



John Sharwood, Kellock Lodge CEO Tania Hunter, President of Friends of Kellock Jan Fallon, Manager of Corporate Services at Kellock Maria Price, and Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Damien Gallagher, officially opened the new Kellock Lodge Sensory Garden last Wednesday. -BD



Kellock Lodge CEO Tania Hunter thanked everyone involved in the project for all their hard work in creating the new sensory garden. -BD



Residents of Kellock Lodge and members of the public gathered in the new sensory garden to celebrate its official opening. -BD

New Kellock Lodge sensory garden open

RESIDENTS of Kellock Lodge, members of the public and various community organisations gathered to celebrate the official opening of the new Kellock Lodge sensory garden last Wednesday.

The garden came to fruition thanks to over 30 contributing volunteers, the support of numerous organisations, and more than a year of work.

President of Friends of Kellock Jan Fallon, Kellock Lodge CEO Tania Hunter, Board Chair Ian Gibb, John Sharwood and Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Damien Gallagher all said a few words to the gathered crowd at the opening.

Residents will now be able to fully enjoy the sensory garden, which provides a number of beautiful colourful flowers to look at, and has a number of calming sounds like water features to savour.



The sensory garden at Kellock is vibrant and full of calming sounds. -BD

Total Fire Ban Day campfire fine

A DANDENONG North man who lit a fire on a Total Fire Ban day last Australia Day long weekend was recently fined \$1000 in Seymour Magistrate's Court.

The magistrate imposed the fine without conviction after the man pleaded guilty to lighting the fire at the Murrindindi Scenic Reserve. The \$1000 fine will go to the CFA as a donation.

Lighting fires on a day of Total Fire Ban is illegal and puts lives, property, and the environment at serious risk.

Victoria's fire restrictions exist to prevent bushfires and protect communities, and breaching them can lead to significant penalties.

The Australia Day long weekend is a time when there are large numbers of visitors to forests, reserves and regional areas, making fire safety more critical than ever. One careless act can have devastating consequences.

The Conservation Regulator continues to work with the CFA and Forest Fire Management Victoria to ensure fire safety rules are followed and that people are held accountable if they don't obey the law.

Before you go camping always check fire restrictions, including whether a Total Fire Ban is in place. Download the VicEmergency app or go to emv.vic.gov.au

Chief Conservation Regulator Kate Gavens said, "Bushfires can have devastating consequences and campers are responsible for making sure they are aware of the fire risks and restrictions, especially a Total Fire Ban. No excuses."

"An escaped fire, particularly on a day of Total Fire Ban, has the potential to have significant consequences for the environment and can put people's lives at risk."

CFA purchases more tankers

CFA has purchased truckloads of tankers "to ensure it is stocked up ahead of the manufacturer discontinuation of the model," according to a press release from the organisation.

The 50 cab chassis are lined up in CFA's State Logistics Centre, where they will be sent off in small batches to a local specialist body manufacturer Bell Environmental, to be turned into Light Tankers.

CFA's Head of Fleet and Protective Equipment Dan Jones said, "We expect the process of the build into firetrucks for each tanker to take around six months, with the rollout to brigades to start in mid-2026."

"These light tankers will come equipped with the latest safety features and new firefighting equipment."

"They're a low-profile emergency response vehicle with 4x4 maneuverability which

assists with navigating through busy urban streets or rugged rural terrain.

"It's also lightweight with the capacity to hold 2000 litres of water, so they're a vital asset to our firefighting fleet."

"It was important to ensure we had the stock so we can continue delivering these vital firefighting vehicles to our brigades across the state over the next couple of years," he said.

The first seven of these new Light Tankers will be delivered next year to Echuca Village, Ellerslie, Greendale, Kingston, Bulart, Corinella and Jamieson brigades.

All seven brigades helped fund those trucks through local community donations and funding grants through the 2024/25 Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program (VESEP).

Just in time for the upcoming fire season, CFA is also celebrating the completion of its Radio Replacement Program.

As one of the biggest investments ever made to CFA, the \$138 million dollar program saw the delivery of 18,000 devices across the state, including all mobile and portable devices, bag radios and local bases.

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan said the new radios include additional functionality for CFA including GPS on the portable radios and multiband capability to allow direct communication with partner agencies.

"The new radios have great coverage and improved capability in buildings and structures," Jason said.

"Our volunteers have reported that the new radios have provided a significant uplift in the way they have been able to communicate with each other, and other emergency services, both in Victoria and border areas with interstate fire services."

"It's great to see this project come to fruition and I know they'll be valuable pieces of equipment for many years."



SOLUTIONS
Page 18

Crossword



Word Search

Cryptogram

Words starting with “AG”

AGAIN	AGILE
AGAPE	AGITATED
AGAZE	AGO
AGED	AGONIZED
AGENCIES	AGONY
AGGRAVATE	AGREED
AGHAST	AGROUND

Math Square

Fill in the missing numbers.

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

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.

1		2		3		4		5		6		7
						8						
9												
						10						
11	12		13		14							
								15		16		17
						18						
19		20		21								
						22		23		24		25
26												
						27						
28												
						29						

7. Lets sit in boiling water to extract the flavour.
12. A common skin problem of the adolescent.
13. State of deep prolonged unconsciousness.
14. Freedom from difficulty or effort.
15. Just a slight wetness.
16. Something that will inevitably happen.
17. Pieces of thick fabric used to cover floors.
19. Cook a sauce until very little is left.
20. Became occupied with various activities.
21. Pestered customers persistently.
22. Assists, usually in some wrongdoing.
23. Shaped and dried dough, such as spaghetti.
24. Someone who is very highly skilled.
25. Was taken into the mouth for consumption.

Little things

Little things

ATOM	ELF	PEBBLE
BABY	FLEA	SMIDGEN
BUTTERFLY	KITTEN	SPECK
DOT	LADYBIRD	THIMBLE

3	-		-		-11
+		-		×	
	-		-		-7
-		+		+	
7	×		+		46
-2		3		13	

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.

Little things

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I

J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
		9			25			

S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
	7						

		O				L		T	T	L	
4	21	25	16			9	1	7	7	9	13

$$\frac{T}{7 \ 11 \ 1 \ 26 \ 18 \ 23}, \quad \frac{\quad}{15 \ 1 \ 18}$$

T		O
7 11 1 26 18 23		18 21 25 5

Sudoku

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

Difficulty: Medium

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.

Q: Why did the student eat his homework?

A: Because the teacher said it was a piece of cake.

Q: Why don't elephants use computers?

A: Because they are scared of the mouse.

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C	O	A	D	E	F	E	R	S	
N	M	S	P	A	A	U			
R	E	B	A	T	E	M	T	G	
E	U	O	A	P	P	E	A	S	E
D	I	S	T	U	R	B	A	D	A
U	I	T	E	A	S	I	E	S	T
C	L	E	M	E	N	T	T	P	E
E	D	D	S	M	A	R	T	E	N

MATH SQUARES

3	-	5	-	9	-11
+		-		x	
2	-	8	-	1	-7
-		+		+	
7	x	6	+	4	46
-2		3		13	

SUDOKU

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

CRYPTOGRAM

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

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3	-	7	+	6	2
+		+		+	
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11		-4		6	

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

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TRADES ADVERTISING DEADLINE NOON THURSDAY

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Print Post Approved - PP 100000292.

MEETINGS



Registration No: A0018756R

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the **34th Annual General Meeting** of Darlingford Upper Goulburn Nursing Home Inc will be held on **Thursday, November 27, 2025 commencing at 1.30pm in North Lounge Room.** Video conferencing available, please email request to darlingford@dugnh.com.au

Business of the Meeting:

- to confirm the minutes of the previous annual general meeting
- to receive and consider:
 - the annual report of the Committee on the activities of the Association during the preceding financial year
 - the financial statements of the association for the preceding financial year
- to elect the members of the committee;
- Appointment of Auditor

Applications for a position on the Board of Management are invited. Please contact Darlingford on 5774 2711.

ALL WELCOME

Please RSVP by November 24, 2025.

PUBLIC NOTICES

DECLARATION

Fire Restrictions

CFA and Forest Fire Management Victoria will be introducing fire restrictions (Fire Danger Period and Prohibited Period, respectively) for all private land within the municipalities listed below.

The Fire Restriction Period will commence at 0100 hours on the date shown and unless varied by a subsequent declaration, will end at 0100 hours on 01/05/2026

Municipality	Date of Commencement
Mitchell Shire	17/11/2025
Murrindindi Shire	17/11/2025

Certain restrictions on the lighting of fires are in force during the Fire Restriction Period. Information about fire restrictions within the Country Area of Victoria can be obtained from www.cfa.vic.gov.au, your local CFA District Office or Municipal Fire Prevention Officer

Information about fire restrictions within the Fire Protected Area can be obtained from www.ffm.vic.gov.au, or your local Forest Fire Management Victoria Fire District Officer

Jason Heffernan
Chief Officer

Chris Hardman
Chief Fire Officer



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This new position is offering 10 hours per week onsite (days negotiable), focusing primarily on HR and regulatory compliance.

Must hold an Early Childhood Education qualification (minimum Diploma / ACECQA equivalent), along with knowledge of industry Frameworks and Legislation. Also have current WWCC / VIT and Child Protection Training.

For further information, please email alexandra.kin.president@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Applications close Friday 28/11/2025.

PUBLIC NOTICES



PROPOSAL TO UPGRADE AN EXISTING MOBILE PHONE BASE STATION AT 3365 MAROONDAH HIGHWAY, TAGGERTY VIC 3714

- Telstra is proposing to upgrade an existing mobile phone base station on the existing monopole at 3365 Maroondah Highway, Taggerty VIC 3714. RFNSA: 3714005.
- In summary, this upgrade will include replacing the headframe at the top of the existing monopole, removing six (6) existing panel antennas, installing six (6) new pane antennas (each 2.53m long) at a height of 15.94m and installing and relocating ancillary equipment including tower mounted amplifiers, remote radio units, GPS antenna, mounts, cables, etc and internal work within the equipment shelter.
- We invite you to provide your feedback or request further information by contacting us at: Ben Lavery, Planning Consultant on behalf of Telstra at telstra.submissions@servicestream.com.au, 0497 833 252 or by post to: Service Stream (Wireless) - Level 3, Tower B, Zenith Centre, 821 Pacific Highway, Chatswood NSW 2067 by 5pm Thursday 4 December 2025.
- For more information, please visit www.rfnsa.com.au/3714005.

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Department
of Health



Board Director opportunities at Alexandra District Health

The Minister for Health, the Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas MP, is pleased to invite applications for part time board director positions at Alexandra District Health. The positions start on July 1, 2026, for up to three years.

These positions provide an exciting opportunity for persons with an interest in making a difference in the health sector and have the knowledge and skills for ensuring health care is delivered safely and effectively, with public money used to the benefit of all Victorians.

As a director you will be doing more than just contributing your time or knowledge. Being appointed to a hospital board places you in a position of trust. You will play an important role in providing leadership, accountability and integrity in the delivery of healthcare across Victoria.

Applicants are selected for their capabilities, including personal and professional experience, knowledge, and skills that contribute to the strategic leadership and oversight of healthcare for the Victorian community. It is preferable that applicants reside in Victoria or, within the border community of those hospitals near the New South Wales and South Australian borders.

While Victorian public health boards are based on capabilities, boards are more effective when these capabilities also represent the richness of the diverse voices of Victorian communities. We encourage First Nations people, people living with a disability, people from culturally diverse backgrounds, people who identify as LGBTIQ+, gender equality, and upholding human rights.

Applications close at midnight Sunday, November 23, 2025.

Further information about Victorian health service boards and how to apply, please go to the following website: www.health.vic.gov.au/board-applications or contact Executive Assistant and Board Secretary, Jennifer Creed on 5772 0924.

IN MEMORIAM

FOX, Doris Edna (nee Aldous). Passed away on 18/11/1985. Loved and loving mother of Rhyl and Sharon, mother in law of Richard and dearest grandmother of Anna, Katie and James. Always remembered.

MEETINGS

ALEXANDRA AND EILDON GEM AND LAPIDARY CLUB.

AGM on November 25, at club rooms at 2pm. All welcome.

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DEATH NOTICES

ZERBE
Douglas Roland
13/01/1926 –
15/11/2025
Passed away at home.
Loved husband of Patricia; loving father of Catherine, Richard, Andrew and Susan; loving father-in-law of Maria; devoted grandfather of Sarah, Rebecca, Emma and Ben and Kate. He will be sadly missed.

FUNERAL NOTICES

Zerbe. The funeral service to celebrate the wonderful life of Douglas Zerbe will be held at St Luke's Anglican Church, 1 Pelissier Street, Yea, on Tuesday, November 25, 2025 commencing at 11am. Followed by a private cremation. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Royal Children's Hospital.



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



Yarck CWA closes after 92 years

ON Monday, November 17, the Yarck CWA members took their leave for the last time, with the organisation disbanding after 92 years. Many of the members will join nearby clubs, including Alexandra, as they continue their CWA journey.

The organisation started in 1933, and one member, Norma Hodson, has been a part of the club for the last 71 years. It's a fine effort.

The members met for the last time at the Corner Hotel for lunch, but not before dropping off some Christmas hampers for distribution via the Alexandra Community Hub.

The club's remaining funds, over \$1000, will be donated to Foundation Murrindindi.

Best wishes to all who have been a part of the Yarck CWA journey.



Rosemary Langmaid, Sue Blachko, Corry Moss, Chris Williams, Tina Williams, Catherine Wherry, Bron Britton, Kaye Ashe and Nola Wernicke. -AR



Graeme Hodson, John Mollard, Barbara Mollard, Patsy Rouget, Sharon Fox, Colin McDonald, Lorna McDonald and Joanne Legg. -AR



Karina Noblett, Margo Galloway (treasurer), Alan Ashton, Margaret Ashton (secretary) and Norma Hodson (president). -AR



Sue Sedelies from the Alexandra Community Hub and Yarck CWA treasurer Margo Galloway. -AR

Australia Post warns customers of Christmas scammers

AUSTRALIA Post is warning customers to be on high alert as scammers accelerate fake delivery messages and emails in the lead-up to Christmas.

Scammers are taking advantage of the festive rush, targeting groups such as Facebook Marketplace users. They often pose as interested buyers and send links or QR codes via Messenger to fake 'Australia Post courier service' websites.

These sites claim that payment will be processed online and that a courier will collect the item once payment is made when, in reality, these fraudulent sites are designed to steal personal and financial information.

This trend reflects a broader national issue with research from Australia Post showing more than 90 per cent of Australians have received a scam text or call, and nearly three-quarters reporting that scams most commonly impersonate shipping and parcel delivery services.

Adam Cartwright, Australia Post Chief Information Security Officer advised customers to track parcels through the official AusPost app and ignore any message requesting personal or payment information.

"As the pre-Christmas sales ramp up and more Aussies are expecting deliveries, scammers are exploiting that anticipation and urgency to trick people into clicking fake links or handing over personal information," Mr Cartwright said.

"If you receive a message asking for personal or payment details, you can be confident it's not from us. In fact, the safest way to track your item is through the official AusPost app."

Key advice for customers

Download the official AusPost app and enable push notifications for parcel tracking. This is the most secure and reliable way to receive genuine delivery updates. Australia Post will never ask for personal or financial details via phone, text or email-including passwords, credit card, or bank details. Don't click on suspicious links in text message or emails.

Australia Post is also seeing a resurgence of sophisticated phishing ahead of Christmas, including the global 'Darcula' operation, which rents scam toolkits to criminals that mimic trusted delivery brands. By sending messages via end-to-end encrypted channels such as iMessage and Rich Communication Services (RCS), Darcula can bypass traditional filters, making these scams harder to detect and block.

To sign up for a free MyPost account either visit auspost.com.au/receiving/mypost or download the AusPost app from the Apple Store or Google Play.

For more tips on how to navigate parcel and delivery scams visit the Australia Post website at auspost.com.au/ScamAlerts

It's always best to buy locally whenever possible. It helps our local economy and helps spread the Christmas cheer in our towns and regions.

Concerns over invitation-only federal grants

THE Local and Major Community Infrastructure Program is a \$560 million dollar federal fund, and it seems to only be open to councils and community organisations which have been invited. It appears that the funds relate to election promises in hand-picked seats.

Member for Indi, Dr Helen Haines said, "After contact from local organisations, I asked the Minister in Question Time how communities in Indi could secure an invitation to the \$560 million [Local and Major Community Infrastructure] program. The answer confirmed my concerns, this program appears to be yet another case of pork-barrelling.

"The Local and Major Community Infrastructure Program is set up to fund hand-picked Labor election commitments. They were selected during the election, and now a program is set up to tick off funding.

"When public money isn't allocated fairly and transparently, we see waste, cost blowouts and communities missing out on the infrastructure they actually need.

"Political parties have, for too long, treated taxpayer money like an election fund, trading grants for votes instead of funding projects on merit. I'll be holding the government to account for how this fund is distributed, because pork barrelling must end."

When contacted about the program, the media representative from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts said, "The Australian Government is delivering on its community infrastructure commitments from the 2025 Federal election and 2025-26 Budget and Pre-Election Fiscal Outlook through a one-off funding round of the Major and Local Community Infrastructure Program.

"This is a common process whereby governments deliver on their election commitments. For example, the Priority Community Infrastructure Program and Investing in Our Communities Program delivered Labor's 2022 election commitments. The Community

Development Grants program delivered the former government's commitments.

"Organisations with eligible commitments have been invited to submit an application for funding consistent with the requirements in the program guidelines. Applications are then assessed against eligibility and assessment criteria to determine value for money. This process is consistent with best-practice grant administration."

A National Anti-Corruption Commission spokesperson said, "The Commission has provided general advice in relation to grants schemes through several corruption prevention and education resources, for example, our open letter on corruption risks and vulnerabilities in the context of an election, and our guide to the NACC for MPs and their staff.

"Corruption risks can arise in relation to grants if they are designed and delivered to targeted voters or electorates for predominantly personal or partisan political purposes, rather than the public benefit. Approving and announcing grants for such purposes could involve a breach of public trust or an abuse of public office, which may be corrupt conduct under the NACC Act.

"All government grants must comply with the requirements of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014, with a particular focus on the proper use and management of public resources, and the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024. If they do not, this could involve the unauthorised expenditure of public funds for a purpose for which they are not given, which may also be corrupt conduct under the NACC Act.

"Department officials should clearly communicate any risk that a proposed grant may be non-compliant with the proper use and management of public resources to the relevant minister.

"It is inappropriate for the Commission to comment on any particular grant scheme, and the above comments should not be understood as directed to the schemes mentioned in your inquiry."

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Eildon swings into action for charity



Leanne, Geoff, Jane and John. -AR



Players out on the course. -AR



The Eildon Golf Club was looking magnificent and the weather was perfect for the event. -AR



The raffle prizes. -AR



Ron Maroney, John Hughes and George Wilson. -AR



Liz Lucas, Karine Haslam and Sue McLaurin making the wraps. -AR



Gina Wittingslow and Kerrie Malley selling raffle tickets. -AR

Squash: Round six of term four pennant

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition

Camembert versus Feta

JESS (fill in) versus Tyler: Tyler's opponent was a no-show, so Jess filled in two levels down to give him a hit. Jess dominated with good placement for an expected commanding win. 76 to 25.

Kristelle (fill in) versus Jess: Three very close games until Kristelle used her experience in the final game to run away with the game and match. 62 to 53.

Chris versus Lucas: Lucas led with great placement, but Chris chased down the ball with a vengeance. Chris's court coverage kept him in the hunt, and he played exceptionally well in the last game, winning game four and the match. 63 to 54.

Derrick versus Andrew: A match of two halves. Derrick conceded too many points in the first two games. Andrew held control in the first half before Derrick turned to take the second half. Holding onto points, Andrew claimed a close victory. 57 to 51.

Gouda versus Mozzarella

Robbie (fill in) versus Eric: It was close throughout the match. Both players had good thoughtful placement of shots, but Robbie

stayed ahead to win. 67 to 58.

Laura versus Randy (fill in): Laura played strong for three games and held the lead going into game four. Winning only the final game, Randy crawled back into the lead for a surprising triumph. 66 to 60.

Justin (fill in) versus Matt: Matt ran hard as always, but Justin was playing well and had too many tricks. Justin had a solid win. 76 to 57.

Michael H versus Jim: This match could have gone either way. Jim made few errors while controlling the point, which tipped the balance in Michael's favour. Michael went home with a four-point win. 56 to 52.

Wednesday competition

Orcas versus Piranhas

Sam versus Travis: A very casual Sam controlled the first half, ending up with a decent lead. Travis switched it up to reduce his point deficit, but it was too late. Sam took the win. 65 to 61.

Michael M versus Justin: Both put in great effort and went into the last game all tied up. Justin had the composure to take the win in the end. 62 to 54

Barracudas versus Hammerheads

Matthew versus Jessica: Fresh off the basketball court, Matthew was warmed up and ready to go. Jessica didn't have her eye in tonight which helped Matthew surge forward to an early lead. As the games went on Matthew started to run out of juice, allowing Jessica to win the last two games, but still losing the match. 58 to 41.

Daniel K versus Michael H (fill in): Michael filled in as the latest guest in Daniel's house of horror and torment.

The first two games ran like the script to a Saw movie as Daniel played a game with Michael, hitting any spot he wished leaving his opponent behind. Michael was on target in game three to make a comeback. However, he couldn't get past Daniel who put a stop to his hard work, to run away with the last game and the match. 76 to 36.



Travis is trapped against the wall while Sam lines up his backhand. -S

SPORT

First round of 2025/26 Murrindindi Masters at Alexandra Golf Club

by Dave Silverman

LAST Tuesday at Alexandra Golf Club the only winner was the weather, as nobody ventured out to brave the conditions.

Last Wednesday was a much better day, and nine ladies teed off in a stableford round. The winner, with 35 points, was Deb Richardson, with both Marion Williamson and Ruth Worland hot on her heels with 34 apiece.

Ruth also claimed the nearest the pin on five, with Sue Greateorex the closest on 12 on her way to being the nine hole winner, and Barb Doyle took 18.

Last Saturday saw Alexandra host the first round of the 2025/26 FoodWorks Murrindindi Masters, and a huge field of 110 turned out to take on the course.

The Mens' Mini Master winner was Jonathon Fisher with 40 points, and the Ladies' Mini

Masters went to Alexandra's very own Donna Meggitt, who carded an excellent 42 points, with seven pars and two birdies to her credit.

The day winners and runners-up were as follows. Mens A Grade, James Kidd and Mick Holohan, B Grade Simon Rouget and Drew Koempkes, and C Grade, Sam Gregory and Allan Mackwell.

In the ladies' event, A Grade, Heather Jenkins and Vicki Clements, and B Grade, Di Elliot and Penny Britton.

Nearest the pins went to Travers Stow, five to Vicki Clements, seven to Allan Mackwell, 12 to Donna Meggitt and 18 to James Kidd.

All the awards were presented by Cathie Harper, on behalf of the FoodWorks Group and the Reddrop family, whose generous ongoing support of the community is greatly appreciated.



Mens A Grade winner James Kidd with Cathie Harper. -S



A Grade runner-up Mick Holohan with Cathie Harper. -S



Ladies Mini Masters winner Donna Meggitt with Cathie Harper. -S



The essential elves of Sandra, Barb, Mor and Judy, working hard to help make the day a success. -S

Marysville Golf Club report

by Lesley Rundle

IT has been a busy time at the club and during the presentations at the recent events grateful thanks were extended to all those who contributed to the success of each competition.

On Sunday, November 9, the annual mixed tournament was held and 36 players enjoyed playing on the beautiful course described by one guest as "a stunning country course but quite tricky with treed fairways and small greens but I will be back to try and improve my score".

The men's A Grade was won by Mount Macedon member Patrick Doyle (2) with 75 nett. Sam Hills (7) from Euroa with nett 69 won the handicap section. The winner of the B Grade handicap was Brian Simmons (14) from Yea with nett 69 and his wife Christine won the ladies section with 32 stableford points.

The C Grade winners, both from Marysville, were Colin Davies (25) with an excellent 37 points followed by Peter Doery (33) with 31 points. The nearest the pins were won by Travers Stow, Mark Fountain, and Sam Mills. Vicki Clements from Yea won the straightest drive and Jack McDonald from Strathbogie won the longest drive.

Last Thursday the nine holers played stroke on the front nine holes. Gail Leigh (6) won with an impressive nett 34 followed closely by Glen Rattay (5) with nett 35. Gail also won the putting with 13. Keith Atwell was the



Heather Jenkins at the Murrindindi Masters. -S

nearest the pin on the ninth hole. Yet again club legend Bob Emblin played the shot of the day with a chip in on the ninth to save par.

Also, on Thursday four ladies travelled to Seymour to play in their annual tournament. The ever-consistent golfing lady Heather Jenkins (18) won B Grade with nett 76 and last Saturday at the FoodWorks Murrindindi Masters at Alexandra Heather won A Grade with 34 points. Members congratulate Heather on a very successful week on the golf course.



Greg Clements from Yea and Travers Stow from Marysville at the mixed tournament. -S

The first round of the FoodWorks Murrindindi Masters was held at Alexandra with a record-breaking field of 110 players. Marysville winners were Drew Kaempkes, Travers Stow and, as mentioned, Heather Jenkins.

The Yea golfers won a number of trophies and Marysville members congratulate Jonathon Fisher from Yea and Donna Meggitt from Alexandra for winning the Mini Masters titles. Their thanks also to FoodWorks for

their ongoing generous sponsorship and to the Alexandra volunteers for organising such an enjoyable day. Hopefully these numbers will be replicated at Yea on January 10, at Marysville on January 31 and Eildon on February 14.

Next Saturday all players will play a stableford round and the ladies round will include the Norman Trophy. All Dalhousie Veterans are invited to attend the game hosted by Marysville on Thursday, November 27.

Pennant divisions at home for Alexandra Bowls Club

by Marie Evans

SOME great results over the weekend for the Alexandra Bowling Club who had both pennant divisions at home. Division Three had their first win for the season, defeating Shepparton Golf and Division Five only missed out on their third win of the season by two shots. They played Nagambie. Midweek Division Four had a washout last Tuesday and shared the points with East Shepparton.

Unfortunately, the good results were overshadowed by the discovery last Sunday morning of a break-in at the club. There was theft and significant damage to the security grate on the bar.

Good news for Division Three who played at home and had three winning rinks. David

Nicklos (Skip), Scott Ferrier, Bob Mayfield and Christine Mayfield were the best winning rink. They won 14 out of 21 ends. They trailed four to five on end six, but a five shot win on the next end gave Alexandra the lead which they kept for the remainder of the game. They won the last seven ends to win 29 to 16.

Doug Cooper (Skip), Andy Tobias and Ben Gilchrist had an equally impressive game. They won five shots on ends four and six to lead 11 to three. They weren't troubled by Shepparton Golf who trailed for the rest of the game. Though golf did pick up four shots on end 10 which left them 10 to Alexandra 12. However, Alexandra won seven out of the last 11 ends to win comfortably 23 to 15.

Greg Gilmore (Skip), Larry Scott, Graeme Matthews and Lauren Gilchrist had a six shot pick up on end five to put them in front eight to six. By end 10 Alexandra was leading 16 to six. Golf won the next four ends to trail 16 to 11. Golf's Skip took several shots off Alexandra by using the 'run at the head and hope' method. It was successful in reducing the shots held by Alexandra but not enough to win the respective end. Alexandra won four out of the last seven ends to win 23 to 17.

Ian Harper (Skip), Tim Langmead, Ken Argent and Saxon Langmead had a slow start to the game and trailed three to 14 on end 10. They had reduced that margin to be 12 to 15 down on end 16. Golf won three out of the last five ends to win 25 to 17.

The overall score was Alexandra 92 (16 points) Shepparton Golf 73 (2 points). The ladder is Euroa (70 Points), Shepparton Park (66), Rushworth (50), Mooroopna Golf (46), East Shepparton (45), Alexandra (31), Eildon (28) and Shepparton Golf (24). Alexandra plays away to Mooroopna Golf next week and will be looking for back-to-back wins.

Division Five had a particularly close game across the three rinks and either Alexandra or Nagambie could have won. Nagambie took home the cards for both sides so only a summary is available. John Blamey (Skip), Stephen Kirby, Anne Gunton and Warren Nelson had a great game to win 21 to 17. Bob Benghamy (Skip), Denice Chisholm, Ray Mathieson, and Peter Collyer played a draw with the game finishing 18 all. Clive Murphy (Skip), Mark Stone, Craig Parkinson and Rob Roach had a close game but their opposition picked up six shots on one end and sealed the game 21 to 15.

The overall was Nagambie 56 (13 points) to Alexandra 54 (three points). There are 11 sides in Division Five and Alexandra is sitting eighth. Alexandra has a BYE next round.

Midweek Division Four play away this week to Murchison who are sixth on the ladder.

Club games have begun. In the Men's singles, in the games so far, David Nicklos is into the next round after defeating Ben Gilchrist, Graeme Matthews defeated Craig Parkinson, and Ian Harper defeated Malcolm Gill.

In the Men's Pairs, Graeme Matthews and Ian Harper defeated Bob Benghamy and Ken Argent and Greg Gilmore and Larry Scott defeated Scott Ferrier and Saxon Langmead.

Reminders, Members Day is November 30, and the Christmas Party is December 7. Check the club notice board for details.



Division Three best winning rink of Scott Ferrier, Bob Mayfield, Christine Mayfield and David Nicklos. -S



Division Five best winning rink of Anne Gunton, Warren Nelson, Steve Kirby and John Blamey. -S

Strong start to season at Murrindindi Little Athletics

IT was a great morning at Murrindindi Little Athletics last Saturday, with athletes of all ages turning out for an energetic and enjoyable session. The day kicked off with a fun, music-filled warm-up that tested everyone's coordination and got spirits high from the start.

The first event on the track was the 1500-metre race walk, where the Hilder brothers put on an impressive battle to set the

tone for the day. Senior athletes then moved through a busy program, taking on discus, triple jump, the 100 metres and the 400 metres. The sprint events were real highlights, with rising athlete Harish Balansag and local talent Levi Campbell both pushing their limits and achieving new personal bests.

Junior athletes were just as busy, completing shot put, high jump, the 100 metres and the

800 metres, showing great improvement and enthusiasm across the board.

A reminder to families that a few key parents will be away over the next couple of weekends. If you haven't yet had a go at helping with measuring, timing or the barbecue, please lend a hand next Saturday. Every bit of help keeps the morning running smoothly.

After the regular session wrapped up, senior boys Levi, Chase, Declan and Harish stayed on for some strong relay practice. The team will travel to Albury on Sunday to compete in the regional relay event and are aiming high, hoping to qualify for state again this year.

Murrindindi Little Athletics wishes them the best of luck.



Under six 70 metre sprint. -S



Harish Balansag making the sand fly in the triple jump. -S



Zoe Collier completing her triple jump on Saturday. -S



Sonny Crouch jumping to great heights. -S



Little Athletics is not just about events, just hanging out with your mates is a big part. -S

THE ALEXANDRA • EILDON • MARYSVILLE

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Eildon swings into action for charity

UNDER perfect skies and with spirits high, the Eildon Community Charity Golf Day teed off last Friday at the Eildon Golf Club, hosted by Eildon Events Inc. With just over 90 enthusiastic participants, the course was alive with laughter, friendly competition, and a shared purpose of raising funds for local initiatives.

The day began with the comforting aroma of egg and bacon rolls, expertly prepared by Ron, John, and George, fuel for a day of fun ahead. As players mingled and stocked up on raffle tickets for the ever-popular

Monster Raffle and scratchie tree, the buzz of community connection was unmistakable.

The Ambrose-format tournament launched with a shotgun start, thanks to Don Reid's coordination. Midway through, golfers enjoyed a hearty lunch on the course, featuring a sausage sizzle courtesy of Eildon Boat Club, alongside fresh wraps and fruit provided by Eildon Events Inc.

As the sun dipped lower, the culinary highlight arrived: a spectacular paella cooked by Scott, drawing rave reviews and

empty plates. The evening's presentations followed, celebrating not just golfing prowess but creative flair. Best dressed ladies' team went to the delightfully themed Minions, while the men's title was claimed by the cheeky Fourplay Fanatics. The overall tournament winners were Bunno's Birdies. Congratulations to them.

Behind the scenes, a tireless team of volunteers made the day possible, from early planning to post-event pack-up. Eildon Events Inc. extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed, whether through donations, raffle

prizes, sponsorship, or simply showing up to play. Special recognition goes to Kerrie, whose knack for attracting sponsors helped make the event such a success.

It was especially heartening to see new members joining the Eildon Golf Club, a sign that events like these not only raise funds but strengthen local ties. With laughter echoing across the fairways and generosity flowing freely, the Charity Golf Day was a true celebration of Eildon's community spirit. Eildon Events thanks the Eildon Golf Club for use of their facilities.



The Minions competing in the Eildon Golf Club Charity Day, with teams M1 and M2. More images on page 21. -AR

Pickleball comes to Alexandra and Thornton

U3A Murrindindi East has Pickleball up and running at the Alexandra Gym every Tuesday afternoon from 4 to 6pm and at the Thornton Hall every Wednesday morning from 10.30 to 12.30 and Thursday afternoon from 1 to 3pm.

Pickleball is enjoyed by people of all ages and skills, if you would like to give it a try to pop along to any of the sessions during November.

U3A supply the paddles and balls along with a friendly smile and instruction.

Pickleball combines elements of tennis, badminton and table tennis and can be played by two or four players using a paddle and hollow plastic ball.



Pickleball suits all ages and skill levels. -S

Merton cricketers beat Wangaratta on their home turf

MERTON cricketer's hosted the inform Wangaratta Magpies at the lush Merton Cricket Ground (MCG) last Saturday with the home side holding onto a memorable victory in the last few overs.

Merton won the toss and batted making 7/168 finishing the final overs strongly after a slow start due to some tight bowling. Some hard hitting in the latter overs from Mahoney, 34 Mackinnon 31 saw the runs flow with skipper Jai Lerch-Mckinnon 32 getting things moving in the middle order.

Luke Benton opening made a steady 33. Charles Seager 2/24 the dual wicket taker for the visitors. The Magpies' innings started strongly with opener Luke Simms smashing anything short while he raced to 55 off 34 balls. The combination off Henry Berriman 3/ 37 and Harry Craddocks eight overs for only 18 runs saw things swing into Merton's favour along with some good outfield catching saw the game go down to the last few overs with the Magpies unable to score at the required run rate going down by 12 runs in the final over.

Lerch-Mckinnon, Luke and James Benton, and Sutton the other wicket takers, two run outs helping the home side to victory in a super competitive match.

Merton travel to Greta next Saturday where another challenge awaits with the top six or seven sides looking to be very even at this early stage of the season.