

THE ALEXANDRA · EILDON · MARYSVILLE

Standard

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

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murrindindibusiness.com.au

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Vehicle crash in Molesworth



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Yea Community Bank 15th birthday



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RAR Indi regional forum takes place



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Weekend sport



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Ken, Neil and Peter selling flowers in Eildon on Daffodil Day, raising funds for cancer research. -S



Are dog parks on the horizon for the shire?

CONFINING your dog to just the backyard isn't good for their physical and mental health. Having an extra place for them to explore and make friends and socialise is not only beneficial for the dog but also the owner.

Having a communal area for dogs to be contained is also beneficial for the wider community who may be unsure of dogs and their behaviour.

Earlier in the month Alexandra Newspapers asked the Murrindindi Shire Council how the feasibility work relating to off-leash and on-leash areas for dogs from the 2021 – 2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) was tracking.

A response was provided on August 22 with the following information.

"In Murrindindi Shire all parks are off-leash unless otherwise signed. Establishing dedicated, fenced dog parks requires significant budget allocation, and council has been engaging with community representatives about a possible site in Alexandra. We are also pursuing external funding opportunities to help make this a reality.

"The broader review of off-leash, on-leash and fenced dog areas will be included in the development of council's next Domestic Animal Management Plan (2026–2029). To inform this work, we recently sought community views on designated off-leash areas, including preferred locations, facilities and features. A summary of this feedback will be published on council's website next week and has also been shared directly with the 77 people who made submissions.

"Council is now assessing the sites identified through this consultation and gathering internal advice on their suitability. Once potential sites are confirmed, draft designated areas and the required legal instruments will be prepared for further community consultation.

"The new DAMP, including proposed off-leash and on-leash areas, is expected to be presented to council for endorsement by December 2025."

The DAMP Community Feedback Summary Report is based on consultation that took place over a 25 day public feedback period during July 3 to August 3.

There were 77 survey submissions through the consultation period and 27 different suggestions for potential off-leash areas in the Murrindindi Shire.

To have off-leash parks in the shire, 75 per cent of respondents said they would regularly use a designated space and more than 60 per cent expressed a strong preference for fully fenced areas. These parks are seen as beneficial for dog socialisation, owner connection and community engagement.

The top five suggested off-leash parks in the survey included Leckie Park in Alexandra being number one, followed by Eildon Oval, Yea Railway Reserve, the old tennis courts in Alexandra, and Kinglake West Reserve. Other suggested areas are also mentioned in the summary report on council's website.

The participants of the summary report showed most were aged 40 and 79 years old and identified as female, and 73 per cent of respondents currently own a

pet and 96 per cent have owned a pet at some point.

The survey also showed the lifestyle benefits of having a pet, emotional connection ranks the highest as over 80 per cent see their pets as integral to wellbeing. Social and physical benefits were also widely reported as 50 to 60 per cent say their pets help them exercise more and build relationships.

All the feedback will be considered to help draft and deliver the Domestic Animal Management Plan for 2026-2029. Community consultation on the draft will commence in October 2025.



Will there be a place soon our much loved dogs can run around and have some fun? -S

Year 2000 to 2025 time capsule opening soon

In 1975, Alexandra Rotary laid their first capsule, when about 150 people wrote letters for a time capsule to be opened in the year 2000. That 1975 capsule was opened in March 2000, followed by a special event organised at the Timber Tramway Museum in September 2000, where the letters were displayed and the eager crowd received their letters.

A new time capsule was soon under way, covering the next 25 years. It was buried in Rotary Park in September 2000 and will soon be dug up.

There was a wonderful response from nearly 300 families who put an envelope into that capsule. Both local or ex-local families, adults and children from across Victoria, have left messages for their families or relatives to be read in 2025.

On Sunday, October 5, which is an Alexandra Market Day at Rotary Park, Rotary will display the messages from the time capsule near the stage behind the Alexandra Information Centre, the envelopes ready for collection.

It will be exciting to receive an envelope addressed to them and to find what has been included. Did their children record what their lives would be like in 2025? What messages have they left for their future families? The possibilities are endless.

Look for a full page in the September 17 edition of the *Alexandra Standard* containing a list of names of those to receive family messages.

A new time capsule is to be buried in November this year, to be opened in 2050.

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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with any other media outlet in the Murrindindi Shire.

McCormack Funerals welcomes Jane Bigham

by McCormack Funerals

MCCORMACK Funerals would like to thank Brooke Carter who has been part of their team for just short of a decade. Brooke's care and compassion to families within the community has been deeply appreciated by all. She will be profoundly missed, and McCormack Funerals extend their best wishes for the next chapter of her life.

They would like to introduce Jane Bigham who has joined McCormack Funerals based in Alexandra Murrindindi Chapel at 21 Johnston Street, who will be supporting Andrew Howie with all funeral services in the Murrindindi and surrounding areas.

Jane grew up in Alexandra and is actively involved in the community. She is currently a member of CFA and also studying a diploma in community services and a Cert IV in leadership and management.

Please feel free to call the office on 1800 080 909 or drop in for a cuppa and a chat if you would like to discuss their services.

Andrew Howie and Jane Bigham. -S

Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club report

by honorary secretary Mike Jennings

WITH the inclement weather on Friday numbers were a little down but the members quickly got through the social meeting agenda and retired to the tearoom for refreshments and a chat before the customary games of UNO and 500.

The Wednesday bridge session saw two tables as members welcomed Murray and Jill back from their travels.

This Friday, there will be a business meeting and the agenda will include plans for further excursions and hopefully good reports from the *Morning Melodies* trip to Lilydale.

The club welcomes new members, so if you fancy some company for a chat, a cuppa and a game of cards please drop into the Bayley Street club room on a Friday afternoon. Meanwhile stay safe and keep smiling.

COMMUNITY DIARY

Alexandra District Health
5772 0900

Non-emergency police assistance
131 444

EMERGENCY 000

Local Radio Frequency

UGFM 106.9 Alexandra / Lake Eildon

UGFM 98.5 Marysville / Lake Mountain

MONTHLY COMMUNITY GROUPS

WEEKLY

Tue Women's Walk @ 7am @Embassy of Ideas

Sun Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training. Ph 0456 583 611

Fri Man Walk @ 7am meet at RSL Hall

Fri Communita 10am-12pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801

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

2nd Tue Alexandra District Garden Society Meeting Ph 5772 2285

2nd Wed 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.

RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT					
STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS	
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	12.00pm Mon	1.17	steady	Below Flood Level	
Rubicon River at Rubicon	12.00pm Mon	0.71	steady		
Acheron River at Taggerty	12.00pm Mon	0.92	steady	Below Flood Level	
Home Creek at Yarek	12.50pm Mon	0.38	steady		
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	4.33am Mon	0.62	steady	Below Flood Level	
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	10.00am Mon	0.40	steady		
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	12.00pm Mon	1.34	steady		
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	1.00pm Mon	3.73	steady		
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	12.00pm Mon	0.65	steady	Below Flood Level	
Goulburn River at Trawool	12.00pm Mon	1.52	steady	Below Flood Level	
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	12.00pm Mon	0.43	steady	Below Flood Level	
Goulburn River at Seymour	12.00pm Mon	1.91	steady	Below Flood Level	
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	12.00pm Mon	1.46	steady		

*ISSUED AT 01:09 PM AEST MONDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2025

ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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

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

Like us on
Facebook

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

Weekly Weather

September 3 - September 9, 2025

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

Yea

DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	6	14	Wednesday	6	15
Thursday	3	13	Thursday	3	14
Friday	2	15	Friday	2	15
Saturday	9	17	Saturday	10	18
Sunday	11	18	Sunday	11	19
Monday	8	17	Monday	8	18
Tuesday	6	14	Tuesday	6	15

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

DISTRICT RAINFALL

Alexandra	43mm
Buxton	106mm
Eildon (AWS)	42mm
Flowerdale	63mm
Jamieson	102mm
Kinglake	48mm
Lake Eildon	59mm
Mansfield	27mm
Taggerty	77mm
Yarek	55mm
Yea	54mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

LAKE EILDON

Height above sea level this week	276.17m
Capacity as at 9am Monday	57%
Metres below full supply	12.73m
Daily inflow	11500ML
Release	1000ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change)	40%

THE ALEXANDRA EILDON MARYSVILLE

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BICORPORATING THE ALEXANDRA TIMES - THE YAREK, GOBUR, TAGGERTY, THORNTON, AND ACHERON EXPRESS

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

Single vehicle crash

A MOTOR vehicle accident occurred at Molesworth early on Sunday morning, August 24.

An Ambulance Victoria crew enroute to Alexandra came across the vehicle that had crashed into the wire rope barrier near Killingworth Road on the Goulburn Valley Highway at 2am on Sunday morning.

The Ambulance Victoria crew checked the single occupant and called for assistance from SES from Alexandra for lighting, and CFA from Molesworth, who attended until a tow truck cleared the highway.

There were no police available in the area to attend the scene to breathalise the driver as a number of police were involved with a search in Yea at the time, which included the police helicopter.

Emergency services at the site of the collision. -S



Tree down at Cathkin

ON Thursday, August 28, a tree fell on Goulburn Valley Highway in Cathkin.

Alexandra SES crews were called out at 4am where a large gum tree had fallen in windy wet conditions blocking one lane.

It's a gentle reminder to be aware of road conditions when driving especially at night, where wet conditions combined with strong winds can bring down trees and branches across roads making driving conditions extremely hazardous, apart from having to avoid the many potholes in our roads.

The highway was cleared of the tree at 5.30am. Well done to all involved.

Alexandra SES clearing the fallen tree in Cathkin. -S



Help shape Murrindindi with the draft Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

MURRINDINDI Shire Council is inviting community feedback on the draft *Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029*, which is open for comment until Sunday, September 14.

The draft plan outlines how the shire compares with the state average across a range of health indicators, highlighting key areas where Murrindindi residents experience poorer health outcomes. While prepared by council, the plan sets priorities for the whole community and calls for coordinated actions from all agencies.

Council's role in supporting health and wellbeing across the shire includes advocating, planning, funding and partnering with service providers, agencies and community groups. The plan also emphasises the importance of addressing inequities and supporting priority population groups.

The draft was informed by community feedback, health data, a review of the current 2021-2025 plan and collaboration with key health partners. It sets out a shared vision between council and partners for supporting physical, mental, and social wellbeing.

The plan identifies children, young people and older residents as priority cohorts, recognising that different community members experience health

and wellbeing in different ways. Council's initiatives will focus on reducing barriers to equity and ensuring local voices guide this work.

Community members are encouraged to review the draft and provide feedback to help shape the final plan before it is presented to council for consideration in October 2025.

For more information and to share your feedback, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/hwp or contact council on 5772 0333.

Community Wellbeing Portfolio Councillor Jodi Adams said, "This plan is about working alongside our community to improve health and wellbeing for everyone in Murrindindi Shire. By focusing on mental, physical and social wellbeing, and addressing the specific challenges faced by children, young people and older residents, we can build a healthier, more connected community."

"We know that health and wellbeing are experienced differently across the community. That's why your feedback is so important: this is your chance to ensure the plan reflects what matters most before it goes to council later this year."

"Council also thanks everyone who contributed feedback to the council plan, which helped shape the direction of this draft."

Firewood collection times now open

FROM this week until November 30 the spring season firewood collection is open. Firewood cannot be collected outside of these times. You can only collect firewood from designated collection areas in state forests during the specified times.

Firewood collection from roadsides is generally prohibited but may be allowed with a permit on select local government roads, Parks Victoria does not allow firewood collection in the protected areas they manage, including national, state, regional and metropolitan parks. It is always illegal to cut down standing trees without express permission.

You can collect two cubic metres of firewood per person per day. The limit for each household is 16 cubic metres per financial year. A single cubic metre of split firewood will fit into a standard trailer of about 1.8 metres by 1.2 metres if it's neatly stacked to a height of 50 centimetres.

Some households in regional areas rely on firewood for winter energy. Financial assistance is available for people on low incomes who need to buy firewood.

When collecting, you can use small equipment such as a chainsaw, axe, or handsaw. You can't use heavy machinery, including a bulldozer, crane, excavator, forwarder, hydraulic log splitter, saw bench, skidder, skid steer loader, or a tractor.

To protect yourself and the environment never use a chainsaw during a declared Total Fire Ban, make sure your chainsaw is fitted with a proper exhaust and spark arrester, only refill chainsaw oil or fuel on a hard surface where liquid can't leach into the forest soil.

To ensure your safety always use necessary safety equipment such as chaps, gloves, boots, eye and ear protection.

Authorised Officers regularly patrol state forests targeting illegal firewood theft and run dedicated enforcement operations with other public land authorities. Authorised Officers can issue on-the-spot fines or pursue court proceedings so stick to the areas that are designated for firewood collection.

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5772 2649
54A Downey St, Alexandra



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

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.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

Free health checks for the farming community – mental health support and healthy eating. Yea Saleyards.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

Darren Gilbert open studio Saturday and Sunday from 10am-4pm. 5 Giffard Street, Yea or other times by appointment 0421 378 451.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

Alexandra Opportunity Shop AGM will be held on Monday, September 8, at 10am in the RSL Hall.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

Alexandra and District Traders and Tourism Association will hold their AGM at 6pm All businesses are invited to attend. For more details visit alexandratourism.com/agm

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

Maindample online clearing sale commencing noon September 11, concluding noon, September 15. Inspection day 101m-4pm, September 11. Pick up day September 17. New tools, chainsaws, old mowers, farm sundries and much more. Visit emblingrural.com.au for full list and details or phone Embling rural; Andrew 0418 266 038 or Ayden 0427 924 944.

Goulburn Fishing Festival 2025 is a free event at Eildon. 9am-2pm. Vic Fish Kids clinics at the pondage, Snobs Creek Hatchery guided tours, live music, market stalls and much more. Fireworks at 7pm. vfa.vic.gov.au/goulburnfishfest

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

There will be a public meeting taking place at the Molesworth Public Hall on September 10, starting at 7.30pm. The purpose of the meeting is to nominate new committee members for the Committee of Management for the Molesworth Public Hall Reserve.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Alexandra Race Club AGM will be held at noon followed by a light lunch. Presentation of annual reports and election of office bearers. All welcome. Enquiries to secretary 0467 413 767.

Murrindindi Shire Council's August meeting

CR McAulay was an apology for the Murrindindi Shire Council August meeting, and Cr Adams requested planned leave from September 19 to October 10, which was approved.

Cr Carpenter noted her interest in item 4.1, a Quick Response Grant for the Yea Rotary Club, but stated there was no conflict because council is not being asked to make a decision on the matter. Cr Gallagher noted his interest in item 4.1 also, stating that he is a member of Thornton Eildon Football Club, but that there is no conflict because councillors are merely being asked to note a decision.

Open forum

Linda Davis spoke in public participation about the removal of the planter boxes in Grant Street, detailing the events that occurred, and asked to know what compensation will be given to those affected by their removal and subsequent damage.

Cr Gallagher responded that “the provision for these planter boxes, they are basically street furniture on the roadside and that simply the trader would require a permit to home one of these planter boxes.” He also said that council will be conducting a review of Grant Street in terms of streetscape later this year.

Manwele Ghirxi from Alexandra Woodies also spoke about the issue of the planter boxes in Grant Street, saying that they plan to refurbish them and put them back in the main street of Alexandra.

Community recognition

Council recognised the incredible achievements of Flowerdale local Tayla Street in representing Australia at the FIM Women’s Speedway Gold Trophy in Croatia. They presented her with a small gift as well.

Grants and sponsorships quarterly allocations

The applications for grants received between May and July 2025, along with the assessment panel’s recommendations, were presented to council for consideration.

Quick Response Grants made under delegation: Alexandra and District Kindergarten, \$2400 for environmental and cultural education for kindergarten aged children in a natural bushland setting; Thornton Eildon Football Netball Club, \$1500 for improvement of club facilities; Rotary Club of Yea, \$2500 for the Yea Garden Expo 2025; Highlands Community Hall committee, \$1247 for the purchase of a Hisense Laser Projector; Yea and District Riding Club Inc, \$2500 for an arena upgrade with sand top-dressing; Rotary Club of Kinglake Ranges, \$400 for a defibrillator project in Toolangi; and Strath Creek Progress Association Inc, \$1200 for Christmas in July.

Council were then asked to endorse sponsorship and local event grants recommended by the Grants and Sponsorship Assessment Panel. These included: Daniel Kriss, \$500 for the Victorian Squash Championship; Triangle Arts Group Inc, \$5000 for Music in the Park Marysville; The Lake Eildon Rowing Club, \$1500 for the Grand Ponderosa Cup Rowing Regatta on Eildon Pondage; Marysville Community Golf and Bowls Club, \$1000 for the annual anniversary fundraiser event; and Melbourne University Car Club, \$2500 for the 2025 Akademies Car Rally.

Project and major event grants for endorsement by council included: Strath Creek Progress Association Inc, \$5000 for restoring Strath Creek’s iconic and historic water wheel; and Joyride Mountain Bike Rookie Cup 2025, round three at Eildon, \$10,000.

Council noted and endorsed all the grants presented to them.

Councillor Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy review

The Councillor Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy is required by the Local Government Act 2020 and is designed to ensure transparency and integrity in decision-making arising from the receipt of gifts, benefits and hospitality. Murrindindi Shire Council’s policy was due for review, and a revised policy with a focus on improving readability, was presented to council for approval.

Council adopted the revised policy.

Contract 25/1 Slashing Services Panel

A report detailing the procurement and evaluation process undertaken to appoint suitable contractors for council’s slashing work for an initial term of three years commencing October 2025, with the option for a two-year extension, was presented to council for consideration. The total contract amount over the five-year contract period totals \$2,400,000. The contract was awarded to multiple contractors, including: E-S Hadfield Contracting; Kupper Group Pty Ltd; Mt Beenak Earth Pty Ltd; C.G.M Pty Ltd; Glen McMaster Contractor; Fern Mowing and Maintenance Pty Ltd; Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd.

Council approved the report and its recommendations.

Contract 24/11 Dry Hire Plant Panel

A similar report was presented to council for awarding a contract for plant maintenance machinery hire, to last three years, beginning September 15, 2025, with the option of a two-year extension. The total contract amount over the five-year contract period is \$1,500,000. The contract was awarded to multiple contractors, including: Rollers Australia Pty Ltd; Coates Hire Operations Pty Ltd; Porter Excavations Pty Ltd; Brooks Hire Service Pty Ltd; The Trustee for the Boda Family, ConX.

Council approved the report and its recommendations.

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Missing
Croydon man

SADLY, the ground search for missing Croydon Mark, Mark, was called off on Wednesday, August 27.

He was last seen on Sunday, August 17 at a campsite on Big River Road, and his bag was found in the days following on Frenchmans Spur Track.

While the on-ground search has ceased, police will continue undertaking an intelligence-based investigation.

If you see Mark, please contact the police urgently.



Ken and Peter doing a great job of collecting daffodil's for Eildon's Daffodil Day. -S

Food insecurity in our own backyard

WITH the increasing cost of living, grocery prices are getting higher, and many people are wondering where their next meal will come from. The Foodbank Hunger Report 2024 released in October last year shows how Australia is grappling with a growing food insecurity crisis.

The report indicates that nearly two million Australian households have experienced food insecurity in the past 12 months.

Worry about food affordability remains a constant among severely food-insecure households, with 97 per cent concerned about running out of food before having enough money to buy more, and 93 per cent unable to afford balanced meals. These households also face challenges such as running out of food (79 per cent), skipping meals or cutting meal sizes (97 per cent), and adults not eating for a whole day due to affordability (50 per cent). There are groups that are

at greater risk of food insecurity than the general population, in particular, low-income households (below \$30,000), those in regional areas and single parent households (69 per cent experiencing food insecurity, 41 per cent severe).

A positive outcome seen in 2024 is the increase in awareness of food relief services, with 47 per cent of Australians knowing where to get support if they couldn't afford enough food, this is compared to 34 per cent in 2023.

In the Murrindindi Shire food relief services have been ever growing in recent years in line with the food insecurity crisis many Australians are facing.

There are neighbourhood houses, community hubs, faith cupboards and local churches, and food pantries in schools and breakfast clubs in government schools.

One of the many services in the shire, Murrindindi Community Food Share has been operating since May 2024, and it's been a steady climb in breaking barriers for community members to seek help when its needed.

In their first year of operating, 9100 kg of food was distributed in 12 months, and 1635 kilograms of fresh produce was distributed. Nine hundred and fifty-eight people were supported in the first 12 months, and not only people, a total of 518 pets including dogs and cats were supported in the effort.

Even though the statistics are out on the countries levels of food insecurity, this reality for millions includes the local community. The combined effort of different services in the shire all has a shared vision and that is no one goes hungry. The services are available to anyone who needs it and there is no shame asking for a helping hand.



If Meta was a miner we'd shut them down

Country Press Association president Damian Morgan

I'M often asked why Meta (owners of Facebook) should be forced to pay compensation to news publishers. It's a fair question. On the surface, Facebook can be seen as a media disruptor, like Uber upending the taxi industry, or cars replacing horse and cart.

It's easy to think social media is just the "new and improved" media. But Facebook isn't a modern version of traditional media at all, it's an entirely different thing. The core business of traditional media is producing content, primarily news and entertainment. We are a product business. Facebook doesn't produce any content. Zero. Its business model is to 'share' other people's content, without paying for it. This has never been done at scale before.

In the early days, many of us curated our Facebook feeds to include trusted news sources. That made the platform more important to us, more credible, and far more valuable. Credible journalism gave Facebook enormous legitimacy. It made the feed worth coming back to and helped Facebook build its empire.

Credit where due, Facebook was a brilliant pioneer of the internet, effectively inventing social media and colonising the World Wide Web. It offered everything for free, until we relied on it. Then they cashed in, creating one of the most powerful and profitable corporations in history.

But like all new boom industries, social media's race to dominate the internet has left regulation in the starter's blocks. There were no guardrails to protect people and

organisations from the consequences of its domination. No recourse for scams or misinformation. No regard for the mental health of teenagers. No thought for the destruction of regional news services.

The benefits of social media are clear. But the full extent of the harms caused by Facebook, and the copycat platforms that followed, are still not fully understood, let alone addressed.

Facebook's real 'product' is you. Your attention is what they sell. And they'll serve up almost anything to keep it, along with your personal data, to advertisers, based on what you read, watch, click, and where you go online. Now, with Meta glasses, they're even tracking what you see and say every day. The potential for harm is staggering.

While Facebook deserves credit for innovation, its refusal to engage with regulation is contemptible. Google has behaved differently. Its core product, search, is also vastly more valuable when it includes journalism from credible sources. For example, when you search for updates on a local bushfire or the war in Ukraine, those results are far more valuable when they include stories from trained journalists at credible news organisations.

Without trusted journalism in the mix, Google's search results would be less relevant, less useful, and far less valuable. That's why Google agreed to pay Australian news publishers after the introduction of the world-first News Media Bargaining Code in 2021.

Facebook initially complied. Then they walked away. They are now openly defying the Australian government and refusing to pay for

the journalism that helped build their empire and continues to drive their profits.

The Australian Government is responding with the News Bargaining Incentive to force them to the table. So far, Facebook has responded with silence and contempt.

Let's put this into perspective as the government stands up to the bullying tactics of Meta. Imagine for a moment that Meta was a mining company. It's not a perfect analogy, but it's a useful one. Mining companies don't own the resources they extract, so they pay royalties because those resources belong to the people. Facebook doesn't own the internet or the content it extracts, yet it refuses to pay anyone, anything.

Mining companies impact the environment, so they pay taxes, levies, and offsets. Facebook has damaged the information environment massively, spreading scams, misinformation, and harmful content, yet takes no responsibility.

Mining is dangerous, so companies are required to invest in safety, education, and emergency services. Facebook profits from dangerous content that fuels our mental health crisis, yet contributes nothing to public well-being.

Mining companies affect the communities where mines are located, so they invest in those communities as part of their social licence to operate. Facebook has pillaged and damaged local news in regional Australia. Now it refuses to pay for the journalism it profits from.

If Facebook were a mining company, we wouldn't let them get away with it. We'd shut them down.

Separating fact from fiction on accessing your super early

THE Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is warning against the risks of accessing superannuation (super) early to pay for non-critical medical procedures or lifestyle expenses.

ATO Deputy Commissioner Emma Rosenzweig cautions those who are considering accessing their super to carefully consider their circumstances and the impacts it can have both short and long term.

"Superannuation is saving for your retirement. Your employer pays 12 per cent super on top of your salary or wages as a long-term investment which grows over time and generally cannot be accessed until you reach preservation age or retire.

"Access to super on compassionate grounds is available in very limited circumstances for critical medical procedures and should only be considered as a last resort where all other options of paying for the eligible expenses have been exhausted.

"We have seen an increase in dodgy advice and misconceptions around when individuals can access their super early, and we want to make it clear that Australians should not be considering early access unless they are eligible and it is absolutely necessary for their circumstances," said Ms Rosenzweig.

Ausnet inspections underway

AUSNET has been undertaking aerial inspections in the area. They commenced on Monday, September 1 and are expected to continue until Thursday, September 4.

The areas to be inspected include Alexandra, Acheron, Taggerty, Maintongoon and Thornton.

Helicopters give AusNet a bird's-eye view, so they can more easily identify and repair any wear and tear on powerlines and poles.

Each year they inspect around 40,000 poles. This work is undertaken throughout the year in an effort to keep the AusNet distribution network safe and reliable.

These routine aerial inspections help support a reliable and safe electricity supply for Victorian communities.

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Student of the Week

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Local guitarists in rehearsal, getting ready for the concert. -S



Connecting guitarists through High Voltage

GUITARISTS across Murrindindi Shire and surrounds gathered over several workshops from Friday, August 22 to Sunday, August 24 in Yea and Alexandra to kick off rehearsals for the High Voltage concert.

Local producer, Cynthia Lim said, "There were 19 attendees for the first weekend of workshops and more guitarists will be joining in for the following weekend including students from local high schools. We're thrilled to have attendees ranging in ages from 14 to 80 years old."

Further workshops will be held on August 30 and 31 and September 4 and 5 to get all the guitarists ready to perform for the final show. Anyone considering taking part is welcome to register and get involved.

"It is not too late to learn the show stopper songs and I'm happy to discuss the process with anyone interested," Ms Lim said. "The skills of the guitarists that attended the first weekend ranged from those who play actively in bands, those who pick up a guitar every now and then to those who haven't played anything for decades. All are invited to participate."

Internationally acclaimed artist and musician, Joseph O'Farrell (JOF) and guitar educator Chris Green spent the weekend in the region helping the guitarists shape their musical skills. Joining the performance will be students from Dindi Dance and other local performers will also be involved. The event is all ages and all skill levels.

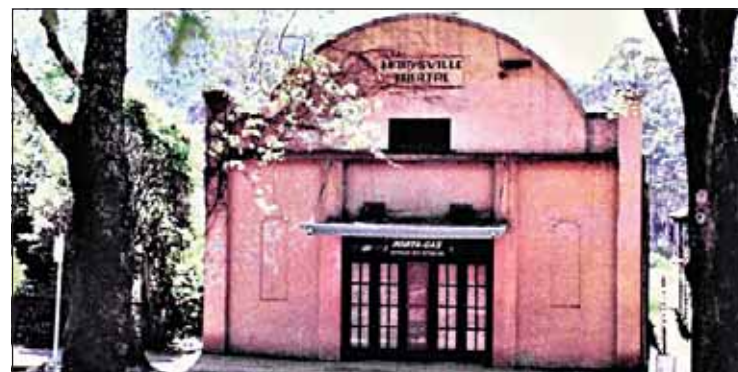
The big concert takes place on Sunday, September 7 at 4pm at the

Yea Shire Hall. Entry to the event is free and everyone across the region is invited to enjoy the final performance and support the rock stars. No tickets are required. Make it a Fathers' Day activity.

Guitarist registrations are welcome. Complete the form which is available via the Yea Arts Inc website, yeaartsinc.org/high-voltage

High Voltage project is led by Yea Arts Inc and proudly supported by Murrindindi Shire Council to make it a shire-wide celebration, bringing local talent together for one High Voltage concert to remember.

For further details contact the Local Producer Cynthia Lim at eventsyeaarts@gmail.com or call 0403 831 520.



The Marysville Theatre. -S

Marysville Theatre remembered

THE Marysville Theatre has been added to the Cinema Treasures website by cinema historian Greg Lynch.

It states, "Jim Wallace who was born in Dumfries, Scotland emigrated to Australia with his family when he was aged six.

"He arrived and settled in Marysville in 1922 and ended up working for the Barton Brothers looking after their touring cars and their garage. He met Marj in 1928 and they married in 1930.

"Jim and another well known local Clarrie Smith had spoken many times about showing the new fangled 'talkies' in the local hall and then in 1932 had local builder, Harold Cuzens, build the Marysville Theatre, located on Murchison Street.

"The theatre was constructed of solid concrete and was used successfully as a cinema and meeting place from its opening in 1932. In 1947, Mr J Wallace of Marysville approached the council requiring prevention of

smoking in the picture theatre. The Marysville Theatre was closed in 1970 when it was purchased by the Darmody family, where for two years it was used as an Arts and Crafts Centre. The building was then purchased by Norman and Rosemary Fiske in 1977 and converted into a popular restaurant named The Pumpnickel.

"The Wallaces, now in their senior years, departed Marysville in 1980 for a new life in Ringwood, Victoria."

It states of the post-Black Saturday town, "The town has a close-knit community, with fourth-generation residents and a strong sense of local identity. There is a fierce determination to rebuild Marysville and return it to a place where guesthouses and homes with beautiful gardens, reminiscent of a quaint English village can flourish once more in the Australian bush, and perhaps in time, a new cinema will be built to carry on the legacy of the Wallace family."

RAR Indi regional forum takes place

ALEXANDRA Rural Australians for Refugees (RAR) members and Mayor Damien Gallagher attended the recent Rural Australians for Refugees Regional Forum on Saturday, August 16.

A panel of people with lived experience sharing their stories was among the features of the Indi forum in Wangaratta.

Mayor Damien Gallagher commented, "The RAR conference was a powerful opportunity to learn from the very personal perspectives of those who've lived the challenges of seeking refuge and transitioning to a very different life here in Australia. The message is that despite some global turmoil, the most effective response is locally led, practical and pragmatic protection of those in need."

"Thank you, Rural Australians for Refugees for bringing people across Indi together to hear from important thoughtful leaders."

Held in Rowan Street's Uniting Church Hall on Saturday, August 16, the forum attracted more than 60 people, drawn from Wangaratta, Myrtleford, Corowa, Wodonga, Shepparton, Mansfield, Alexandra and as far as Marysville.

Highlights of the day included presentations by former Human Rights Commissioner and patron of RAR Australia Gillian Triggs AC, and by local Independent Federal Member for Indi Dr Helen Haines, as well as the panel of four people with lived experience of being or working with refugees.

Ms Triggs said that in her broad experience, rural communities were the first to welcome and care for vulnerable and traumatised refugees.

She said that following World War Two, about two million people were displaced and sought refuge. In 2025, an estimated 122.6 million people have been forcibly displaced, and 4.3 million are refugees, of whom 40 per cent (and rising) are children.

She said less than one per cent of the two million refugees identified by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees had been resettled in the USA, Canada, Australia and European states.

Ms Triggs said it was important to understand and respond to root causes of forced displacement, find local solutions to stabilise populations in their own or safe neighbouring countries, and to include refugees and asylum seekers in national social safety systems, access to work, school, freedom of movement, and building self-sufficiency.

She said the responsibility for refugees should be equitably shared, not only by governments but local communities, faith groups, refugee-led organisations, sports groups, schools and universities, parliamentarians, the private commercial sector, and international financial institutions.

Having the political, legal and moral responsibility to welcome and speedily process asylum seekers, and to address root causes and provide humanitarian and compassionate support, was also vital, according to Ms Triggs.

Dr Haines spoke about the deep commitment expressed to her by Indi constituents through letters and personal representations, and of the advocacy she provides for refugees through her interaction with the government. She encouraged those attending the forum to write to her about their issues of concern, so that she could gain a true perspective of local attitudes.

The four-member panel of people with lived experience then outlined more of the reality of the refugee and migrant experience.

Hamida Samar, who worked in various local jobs after arriving in Mansfield from Afghanistan, described the barriers experienced by many refugees when seeking employment, including discrimination, and lack of information and follow-up from government-funded agencies.

A member of Mansfield RAR, and a strong advocate for women's rights and safety, Hamida is developing accessible information to assist newly-arrived people to apply for work and understand their work rights.

The attendees at the forum. -S



Rabya Jamshaid and her family arrived in Shepparton, and following her university postgraduate studies, she works as a professional migration agent with people and communities in the Goulburn Valley, specialising in refugee visas and family reunion.

She has worked with RAR Indi to develop the innovative regional sponsorship proposal, which has been supported by seven regional councils, and continues to advocate for women and children in Afghanistan.

Rabya said learning to speak English was the main barrier and challenge for women seeking information about services, employment to develop independence, and socialising.

She stressed the importance of overcoming this language barrier, and of the valuable support people can provide to refugees to locate essential and interpreting services, assist with school and TAFE, enrolments, open a bank account, and to share and connect with local community members.

Zahra Khademi arrived in Australia in 2001 with three young children, and lives with her family in Shepparton.

She has worked with the Victorian Education Department in educational support and as a family liaison officer for 15 years, and is a founding member of the Goulburn Valley Afghan Women's Association Shepparton, helping to engage women in the local community.

Zahra also mentioned the language barrier, and spoke about how trauma and mental health issues could isolate newly-arrived people, especially women experiencing domestic and family violence, and the importance of welcoming and supportive services for language, safe housing and health care.

Sam Atukorala, who arrived in Australia as a student and now lives in Shepparton with his family, is the chief executive officer of the Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District, and works with regional communities, organisations and groups to help to break down barriers and provide greater opportunities for new arrivals to connect with and contribute to the community.

Sam said he initially had little understanding of the challenges faced by refugees before coming to Shepparton.

Being actively involved with diverse local communities, through sport, as a volunteer and professionally, has helped him to develop understanding, connections and networks.

He emphasised the importance and value of working with and learning from people with lived experience to identify priorities for local communities and determine how best to address them.

Following a lunch break at the forum, attendees divided into groups to identify and recommend actions for the future.

On the local front, Alexandra RAR continues to raise funds to assist just one family seeking safe haven from the Taliban in Afghanistan. Finding an employer is the biggest immediate hurdle, with visa entry to Australia also incredibly difficult to attain.

RAR Alexandra has 50 locals on its books including members from Marysville, Buxton, Yea, Flowerdale, and Highlands.

Anyone seeking more information about RAR is encouraged to contact convenor for RAR Alexandra, Reverend Doctor D Paul Dalzell dalzuboy@gmail.com or Bev Dick at raralexandra3714@gmail.com



Human rights lawyer and president of the Australian Human Rights Commission from 2012 to 2017, Gillian Triggs AC. -S



Member for Indi, Helen Haines. -S



A discussion at the forum. -S

2025 GOULBURN FISHING FESTIVAL

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Do you have a bushfire plan ready?

AHEAD of the looming fire season, a recent CFA survey revealed that 40 per cent of Victorians living in bushfire-prone areas do not have a bushfire plan in place to save their family.

One in five people in these areas do not believe "leaving early" in a fire emergency is the best way to safeguard their loved ones, and 16 per cent would stay to protect their property.

CFA's annual post-season bushfire community survey has been conducted every year since 2009 to understand the attitudes, behaviours and preparedness of householders living in bushfire risk locations in Victoria.

Despite the recent AFAC Spring Seasonal Bushfire Outlook indicating increased fire risk across several drought-affected parts of the state, the survey found that out of the 611 people interviewed, 24 per cent did not feel adequately prepared around their home.

Over the last two years, the survey shows the perception of a bushfire being a threat to Victorians and their property has declined from very large to small, with 50 per cent of people not showing concern and nearly 40

per cent are not alarmed enough to warrant direct interaction with CFA.

Worryingly, those least concerned, and less likely to be prepared were located just 500 metres to one kilometre from bushland.

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan expressed his concerns about the distressing statistics, warning Victorians that now is not the time to be complacent with an earlier and more active fire season predicted.

"It is never too early to prepare. Don't gamble with your safety this season. Residents living in high fire-risk areas must take their preparation more seriously," Jason said.

"Take a moment to sit down with your household and make a plan so everyone knows what they need to do and where they need to go if a fire threatens your local area.

"It's easy to panic and make poor decisions if you're not prepared, and the last thing you want in an emergency is to become trapped. Leaving early is your greatest form of protection."

A further 31 per cent of respondents would delay leaving until threatened by a bushfire,

waiting for the danger to increase or for instructions from emergency services.

"It is vital you understand the risks of your residential area and where you are travelling this summer. The best way to do this is to download the VicEmergency App and set your watch zones to your locations so you are alerted to warnings wherever you are," Jason said.

"Don't wait for an official warning before you take action to protect your family.

"We have a number of resources available on our website to actively help you prepare before it is too late, and our volunteers are always happy to help you with any questions you may have."

CFA will be running a Get Fire Ready weekend on Saturday, October 4 and Sunday, October 5, where many brigades will open their doors to connect with local community members, hoping to build public awareness and preparedness across Victoria.

"We're seeing a concerning decline in property preparedness around Victorian households, so we're really encouraging you

to tidy up around your homes over coming weeks," Jason said.

"Before the warmer weather arrives, ensure you move your winter piles away from your houses and sheds, give your trees a prune, clear your gutters and maintain the length of your grass.

"Get your emergency kit packed and ready to go, fill it with clothes, medications, toiletries, chargers and blankets and take it with you when you head to shelter.

"As we witnessed throughout the fires in the Grampians last season, the mountain of work done in the lead up to summer can make all the difference in lessening devastation on communities.

"We want to be really clear this summer. Our members will always be prepared and on hand to assist you, but fire safety is a shared responsibility, and everyone has a role to play.

"We cannot have a fire truck at every property during a major bushfire. We need you to do your bit too and take small steps to be more fire safe this year."



Let's eat, it's our treat

Let's Eat August winner

THE winner of our August Let's Eat \$50 voucher was Bruce Marshall from Highlands. Bruce will be having a \$50 feed on us at Kinglake Pub. Be sure to get your entry form from this edition for your chance to win a \$50 meal at the venue advertised in this edition of Let's Eat; It's our treat.

Time to prepare for Father's Day: Perhaps a nice meal?

SEPTEMBER 7 is Father's Day, the specific day set aside for celebrating fathers and the happiness and support they bring to our lives is fast approaching, which means it is time to consider how you can make your dad's day special.


Perhaps you could make your dad a handmade card, with some special theme or wording that symbolises your bond. Poetry can be a thoughtful gesture, or a picture of a moment shared. Framed photographs of you and dad together, or group pictures of the family, can be a nice gift to adorn his desk or bedside table or the living room wall.

There are so many gifts to choose from that it can be difficult to decide, but particular thought should be given to what interests your dad. You could spring for something family-focussed like a board game or trivia cards that he can play, or go for a practical gift like a new gadget or tool. If you're older, a nice bottle of wine or whisky could be a good choice.

Another choice is to make Father's Day an experience, perhaps by taking your dad out for lunch or dinner. There are a number of excellent places to eat in Murrindindi Shire, including but not limited to Philip Lobley Wines and the Kinglake Pub.

A seared steak or a traditional parma with a couple of drinks and good company could easily make September 7 a day for dad to remember. Throw in some dessert like a piece of cheesecake or pudding, and you've made it extra memorable. Would he prefer a charcuterie board paired with various tastings of wine? The choice is up to you.

Or maybe dad would like a day out on Lake Eildon fishing, or to go on a walk? A day skiing up at Mt Buller? To go see some live music? There are plenty of options to make Father's Day special, that cover a range of budgets and timeframes, it's just a matter of picking something your dad will enjoy.



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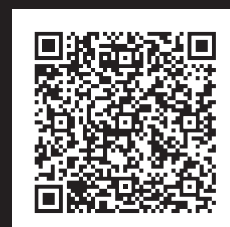
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The Farmer's Ag News

NFF underwhelmed by intergovernmental biosecurity review

THE National Farmers' Federation (NFF) is disappointed in the recent release of the 2024 Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB) Review Report and the accompanying joint government response, describing the outcome as underwhelming and a missed opportunity to secure Australia's biosecurity future.

The IGAB defines the roles and responsibilities of governments and sets priority areas for collaboration to minimise the impact of pests and diseases on Australia's economy, environment and communities.

It remains a vital framework for ensuring cooperative effort across jurisdictions to protect our national biosecurity system.

NFF President David Jochinke said the report and response had fallen short of expectations.

"The scope of this review was substantially narrower than previous IGAB reviews, and that's reflected in the recommendations. At a time when biosecurity risks are increasing, farmers were looking for ambitious reform and certainty, instead, we've been left with a missed opportunity," Mr Jochinke said.

The review found serious challenges in Australia's biosecurity arrangements,

including: A lack of transparency and public reporting from the National Biosecurity Committee; unlike the Commonwealth, no state or territory jurisdiction has long-term, predictable funding for all biosecurity functions; an acknowledgement that the IGAB cannot be effective without consistent implementation across governments.

"While we note governments' agreement to the majority of recommendations, there is already a mounting pile of biosecurity reviews and reports gathering dust from past IGAB reviews to findings of the Inspector-General of Biosecurity," Mr Jochinke said.

"What farmers need now is for governments and industry to work together and get on with the job, starting with urgent action to address outstanding biosecurity review recommendations, and expedited implementation of the National Biosecurity Strategy.

"The cost of failure to safeguard our biosecurity system is simply too high."

The NFF and its members remain ready to work with the Commonwealth, states and territories to ensure Australia's biosecurity system is transparent, sustainably funded, and implemented consistently across jurisdictions.

Farmers show frustration in farmer survey

MORE than 700 Victorian farmers have had their say in the first *State of the State: Victorian Farmer Priorities Survey*. Nine in ten farmers don't believe the Victorian Government understands local issues or has a positive plan to grow the industry. Farmers have outlined increases to the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund, the state of regional roads, maintaining our biosecurity safety net and steamrolling of renewable energy infrastructure developments as the top issues across the state.

Huge increases to the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund, crumbling regional roads, maintaining our biosecurity and forcing renewable energy infrastructure developments on communities topping the list of concerns in the Victorian Farmers Federation's (VFF) inaugural *State of the State: Victorian Farmer Priorities Survey*.

More than 700 Victorian farmers also outlined their lack of trust in the Victorian Government, with nine in 10 saying they don't believe the state government understands their issues or has a positive plan to grow the \$20 billion dollar industry.

VFF President Brett Hosking said the frank results should ring alarm bells for the Victorian Government and be a 'wake up' call for genuine engagement and discussion with farmers and rural communities.

"Farmers and our regional communities have sent a blunt message that they aren't being listened to and have lost faith that our Victorian Government has their back.

"From massive increases to the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund, roads literally falling apart and communities being steamrolled in the face of renewable energy infrastructure, farmers have a lot to worry about.

"More than 92 per cent of farmers don't believe the Victorian Government understands or is even listening to the concerns of farming communities. That's a massive indictment and it must change, because they've lost the trust of these farming communities," Mr Hosking said.

Despite the blunt results of the survey, Mr Hosking said there remains considerable opportunity and a bright outlook for Victorian agriculture.

"Victorian farmers are the best in the nation at what they do. We produce 25 per cent of Australia's food and fibre value using just three per cent of Australia's farmland. We employ more than 150,000 and contribute more than \$20 billion to Victoria's and Australia's economy.

"When we have the nation's best farmers working on the nation's best farmland, imagine what we could achieve if our Victorian and Australian governments supported our farmers to achieve even more.

"We're just over 12 months from the next state election. We want to support all sides of politics to get solutions to these issues and grow Victoria's farming future," Mr Hosking said.

The Trap

By Jed Dunstan



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Long-range forecast for spring

THE Bureau of Meteorology has issued the long-range forecast for the 2025 spring season. The long-range forecast is updated weekly for the upcoming three months.

For the September to November period, rainfall is likely to be above average for most of the eastern half of Australia.

There is an increased chance of unusually high rainfall across much of eastern and central parts of Australia.

Spring can also be the start of severe weather season and a peak time for severe thunderstorms along

Australia's east coast. Coastal lows can also bring storms in early spring, increasing the risk of damaging winds, heavy rainfall and flash flooding.

Spring rainfall may provide relief to large parts of Victoria, South Australia and western Tasmania experiencing prolonged dry conditions. However, sustained rainfall is needed to replenish soil moisture and water storages.

Australia's fire agencies advise there is an increased risk of fire this spring across parts of Western Australia, Victoria and South Australia.

Victoria

Above average rainfall is likely for most of Victoria, apart from some eastern parts of the state.

Average spring rainfall in recent decades has been between 100 and 300 mm for most of the state, increasing to 400 mm over the Great Dividing Range, while the north-west corner has 50 to 100 mm.

Daytime temperatures are very likely to be higher than usual throughout much of Victoria.

Warmer than usual nights are very likely throughout Victoria.

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T&Cs: Professional photographers are ineligible to enter. **One photo per entry.** Photo must be taken in the Murrindindid shire and are not to be digitally altered or enhanced.
Staff or associated family members of Alexandra Newspapers are ineligible to enter.

The Farmer's Ag News

The deer issue is getting worse and something needs to be done

Sam Hicks – Murrindindi Food and Wine

MURRINDINDI Food and Wine Inc secretary, Sam Hicks explained that she contacted a large number of businesses across the shire to find out their challenges in time for the recent visit by the Small Business Commissioner. "One of the common themes was deer," she said, with vignerons saying that deer ate their crop, and farmers needing to pay to repair or install new fences.

Many beef farmers across the north east of Victoria are finding that there are more deer and kangaroos in their paddock than cattle. They're coming in looking for feed due to the drought.

"They're all complaining about it and saying that we should stop having them protected but have them as a pest species," Sam said.

In every other Australian state, deer are classified as pest species and some funds are available to deal with the deer as pests, but not in Victoria. On the flipside, if deer are classified as a pest species, then the 'cowboys' may come in keen to shoot on people's properties. People currently harvesting deer for human consumption need to go through an 12 month training program via DEECA, and there is a significant outlay involved, in the range of \$50,000 to \$60,000. Venison can sell for \$40 to \$200 per kilogram.

Sam also expressed concern about the reduction in abattoirs, and the distances people have to travel to get their meat, including cattle, processed. The larger abattoirs may also decide not to process less than a truckload, and a three month wait may be involved due to the destocking. Farmers have gone from paying \$60 per bale to \$330 per bale.

Sam said of the deer problem, "There needs to be some consistency Australia wide."

Having a local, legal abattoir, or even a qualified butcher in a mobile boning room, would be a great encouragement to hunters and "It would be an industry that the Forestry Transition program could get behind," Sam said. One of the challenges in this may be the Meat Safe regulations.

Cindy McLeish MP

MEMBER for Eildon Cindy McLeish said, "The deer numbers have absolutely exploded, and the government has been poor at managing this growth."

She said, "The destruction's one thing, and people have known about the destruction, but now more and more people are seeing and having collisions with deer, and there's more and more dead deer on the side of the

road... The government has been really slack in dealing with this. It's been an enormous problem for too long."

She noted that when people kill a deer and leave the carcass, it's a meal for the foxes and their numbers explode. She is also concerned that dead animals on the side of the road are not being cleaned up.

Since July 31, she has had a Questions on Notice pending with the Minister for Environment. It states, "The Victorian Deer Control Strategy has been in place since 2021, yet deer populations continue to grow across many regions. What funding, by year, for the past five financial years, including the 2025–26 year, has been allocated to the Murrindindi Shire Council for deer control activities." The same was also asked about the Yarra Ranges, Mansfield and Nillumbik Shires.

Karine Haslam - Eildon

KARINE Haslam from Eildon Events said, "This is ridiculous with the deer. They really are out of control and there is not a night that goes by without somebody hitting one on the Eildon Back Road and the Front Road, even in town it is incredible. Front yards, in the heart of town and the deer are in there."

"I've been away for nearly two months, my husband's been home, but when I got back and I saw the devastation, it broke my heart and he said, but there's nothing I can do. I've already put wire around some of the trees."

One of the pine trees in the garden was up to almost 10 foot, but has been stripped bare. They have also destroyed citrus trees, roses, hydrangeas, camellias, and pushed the fences in. "We're not alone," Karine said. "Everyone is saying the same thing, but it's more the risk to life because of the number of accidents."

There has been discussion around starting a petition to push the state government to do something about it, specifically asking that deer be classified as a pest species. As game they're protected.

She added, "You see a little Bambi around and you think, oh aren't they cute. Yes. Until they grow up."

Even in the Eildon township, they're in huge numbers.

Wendy Dare - Eildon

Wendy Dare from Eildon provided the following statement, "When the agapanthus are not just eaten, but chewed down into the root, when plants in your garden are chewed and broken, when your pot plants are dragged around and the contents chewed, only one suspect here, the deer."

"When you walk or drive around, regardless of time of day, what do you see, the deer. Now in paddocks you can see the deer, looking back at you, we live here too."

"We are in a plague, not just a glut. Once they were choosey, but now there are too many and they are big and hungry, this winter is cold, they too need more food."

"Will they move back into the bush when the cold weather is over? All guesswork. Only time will tell."

"And what of our native animals also looking for food and competing with a bigger, more powerful, and abundant opposition."

"Think of the farmer with cattle and sheep to feed. Their animals must also compete with the deer. The farmers are trying to grow our food."

"Damage to properties, farms, the bush, gardens and cars, they are indiscriminate and relentless. Help, but where? Who? What? Are we too late? Is this now the new normal with the numbers increasing? Eildon township is legally impossible for legal firearms for deer eradication."

"And so you could fence off or electric fence your property, and at what cost, and it does not solve the problem."

"When night driving, deer are a huge risk and it is very worrying, they can cause a lot of damage to cars and with complete write offs of vehicles happening."

"We came for a tree change, did not sign up for a deer change."

Sonja Herges – Murrindindi locale

Sonja Herges from Sedona Estate said of the deer issues, "We've been impacted now for a number of years. It became a prominent problem for us around 2018 or 2019. 2019 was the first time that we actually had deer in our Merlot vineyards during the day, eating leaves. It is the vineyard that is closest to the cellar door and the parking area, so very concerning that animals, that shyness that we are often thinking of when we're talking deer, it most certainly wasn't there. The animal was just grazing happily on the vineyard during daylight, with cars and activity around."

She added, "The issue has grown since then... I can't tell you the exact cost, but it is huge. So what we did as a self-help, at obviously our own cost, we erected two metre high fence above from the vineyard line which helps to a degree, but of course they have other ways of getting in because they are grazing and wandering along Shannons Road, so they're using the front entrance to get in our property, so while we have created some protection from the top, it mitigates it a

little bit, but the problem has obviously grown and they come from Shannons Road."

They are now investigating mobile electric fencing to protect their most precious vineyards at the appropriate time. The cost of installing electric fencing around the whole property would too high.

She said, "But the problem is, why do we have to do this and why do we have to do this at our own cost?"

They also engage a hunter with the appropriate permits, and notify neighbours of potential shooting nearby, "But the problem is beyond that," she said.

"Why do we have to keep these animals out? The issue is really that these animals should be declared pest animals and they should be treated accordingly at state level. It's a government problem. It is just out of control... They are non-native. They are causing a lot of grief, and also accidents which are unnecessary. It is well overdue the deer need to be declared as pest and then appropriate measure has have to be put in place to eradicate them."

"The cost for us is huge. They don't just eat the vineyard leaves. They also come in and eat a few tonne of Sangiovese and Karman fruit. But mind you, there were also some Kangaroos in the mix."

Peter Ingham – Murrindindi locale

Peter Ingham has a combination of hill country and river flats, with the hill; country bordering onto the state forest. He said, "What we've noticed for the first time in the last year or so is that there are a lot of deer coming down from the hills onto the country that they wouldn't normally visit... They're coming down because they've got no feed in the bushland. Even the blackberries have been dying up there, so you know there's nothing for them to eat so they come down."

He expressed concern about the deer hooves eroding the banks of the river. He has also had to buy more hay than may otherwise be required due to the deer eating the pastures, and noted the expense of repairing damage to fences caused by deer. He said that the cost has been huge this year, noting that kangaroos are also causing significant losses.

He believes that a controlled culling program needs to be put in place for both deer and kangaroos. He also questioned whether deer should be classified as a pest species, instead of game, but didn't want uncontrolled shooter causing challenges.

He said of the deer issue, "It's obviously an environmental problem, even in the bush, and a traffic hazard as well."

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FRIDAY 5 SEPTEMBER



Further thoughts on the urban-rural divide

IN democracies around the world, a political phenomenon appears to be increasing, but is it the fault of voters or politicians?

The urban-rural political divide has been observed in countries including (but not confined to) Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Thailand, Turkey, the USA, the United Kingdom and Australia, as well as on a state level, including Victoria.

We asked current and former politicians for their thoughts on the subject. While the Premier Jacinta Allan did not respond directly, we have included her speech from the Bush Summit.

Premier Jacinta Allan

SPEAKING at the Bush Summit in Ballarat on Friday, August 29, Premier Jacinta Allan talked about the tragedy in Porepunkah and said, “Many of us here today share one thing in common. We love the bush. We love it enough to live in it, to raise our families in it, to work in it, to build our lives around it. We love it enough to share its burdens together. And too, to fight for its future together.

“I say this very clearly, if you live in the bush you know this one truth, that it can be both beautiful but it can be brutal. It gives us space, it gives us community, it gives us a way of life that you won’t find anywhere else. But I do acknowledge that it can be hard, and I know a lot of Victorians are feeling that. Families, farmers, small business owners too, many are doing it tough. Some of it is because of nature.”

In the recording, a member of the audience can be heard responding, “It’s because of your government.” Such heckling continued through much of the speech.

The premier continued, “Some because of markets, the economy, or the wider state of the world. But I think it’s important too to show the world that the other side of the coin is also true. The bush gives you something you simply can’t find anywhere else. The fresh air, the quiet, the space, and the sense of community and connectedness.”

She spoke about living and raising her children in regional Victoria, and said, “I’m so proud of the work my government is doing in regional Victoria, because we know how much it matters. Because living in regional Victoria, I know the challenges that regional families feel are not abstract, they’re real.”

She spoke about accommodation challenges, opportunities for tradespeople, educational opportunities, and said that this is why they’re supporting the Regional Workers Accommodation Fund. “So towns can house the people who keep them going.”

She also noted the government investments in regional hospitals, such as Maryborough and Ballarat, regional school funding, upgrading train lines, providing more train services and cutting regional fares.

“We know too that there is always more to be done in supporting regional communities. That for too long, you’ve been told that living in the bush comes with trade-offs. You can have the space, the freedom, the community, but not the same services of the opportunities as the city, and I don’t accept that, and I don’t think anyone in our state should. Because country people deserve the care, the services and the opportunities as anyone in Melbourne. And that’s my ambition for regional Victoria. A place where your postcode never limits your future. Where young people don’t have to go away too far. Where families can stay and thrive in the pace they love, knowing they’re not missing out.”

She continued, “And also too, more than that, a state that doesn’t just protect our way of life in the bush, but builds on it and creates new industries, where we build new opportunities and deliver new jobs. And that’s where I wanted to reflect on where we can make the most of our natural resources and the advantages we have. We’re seeing it in farming communities. We’re seeing it in mining also.

“When people think of mining in Australia, they often picture the Pilbara or the Hunter, but when it comes to critical minerals,

Victoria is where it’s at,” she said, drawing loud boos from the audience.

“In the north east of Victoria alone, there are \$200 billion worth of critical minerals, and these contain projects than can support thousands of jobs and inject billions into our regional economies.

“And that’s why also, we’re supporting renewable energy projects that are driving investment. And then finally too, supporting the gas projects that will also drive our state’s future, that is also supporting jobs, investments and opportunities in rural and regional Victoria.

“The work we’re doing in regional Victoria is more than just about today. It is about tomorrow. It’s about making sure we have the secure energy service, the secure infrastructure asset, that our growing regional communities need.

“It’s about making sure every country kid has the same chances as a kid anywhere else. Those country kids who want to make sure their voice is heard, that they have the opportunities my kids have today, and can see their grandkids have in the future.

“We should be proud to live in country Victoria, because it is the best pace to live... Regional Victoria has the opportunity to show the rest of the country what a strong, united place we are. A place where we have great schools, great hospitals, great services, but most importantly too, a future that is built by regional Victorians for regional Victorians, supporting the industries of the future because regional Victoria is the heart of our state. It’s our strength... I’ll continue to work very hard to make the future of regional Victoria even stronger for the future.”

Treasurer Jaclyn Symes

WHEN asked about the urban-regional divide, Jaclyn Symes, Minister for Regional Development said, “The Labor Party was founded in regional Australia and will always be a party that represents the country. We have a record number of regional Victorians in our Labor team, who are on the ground listening to their communities each and every day, proudly representing the regional Victorians who they serve.

“We have invested more than \$47 billion in rural and regional Victoria by working with local communities, councils, industries and businesses, creating more jobs, housing and investment opportunities across a range of regional industries.

“We are continuing to invest in regional Victoria, this includes the \$100 power saving bonus, investing in regional hospitals and schools and capping and locking fuel price rises with our Fair Fuel Plan.

“When I became Treasurer, the Victorian Liberals said Victoria was being ‘run by out of towners’. I’m proud to be a regional Treasurer and Jacinta Allan is proud to be a regional Premier.

“The Liberals and Nationals always fail regional Victoria, they closed country rail lines, regional hospitals and countless schools. Only Labor can be trusted to invest in the services regional Victorians rely on.”

The following background was also provided. “We reject the premise of the question, with a record number of regional members in the Victorian Labor caucus and stronger results in many parts of regional Australia for the Albanese Labor Government in the last election, Labor clearly has broad support across many regional cities and electorates. We do not accept that international trends of political polarisation between urban and regional communities can be reasonably applied to Australia.

“We’re supporting more than 40 projects through the Regional Worker Accommodation Fund across two rounds, unlocking almost \$370 million in new housing investment for thousands of regional workers and their families.

“Victoria’s regional economy has increased by 26.4 per cent over the past decade, along with regional employment which has grown by 14.6 per cent. The unemployment rate in

regional Victoria remains historically low at 3.7 per cent (June 2025), the equal third lowest among the states equivalent with New South Wales.

“Rural and regional Victoria is now home to one in four Victorians, accounts for 781,500 jobs and almost a quarter of the state’s small businesses. The Regional Development portfolio is currently delivering more than 600 projects with a total value of around \$2 billion dollars.”

Dennis Napthine

FORMER Liberal Premier, Dennis Napthine was interviewed to find out his thoughts on the cause of the rural urban political division. He said, “I think there’s an increasing frustration and even anger in regional rural areas, and I think at the core of it is that regional rural people, and particularly farming people, feel that they supply Australia, the cities, with high quality food that’s produced very efficiently, they’re very productive, and indeed, our farmers are at the forefront of increasing productivity. But they feel that while they’re doing all right, they’re being ignored and taken for granted.

“There’s a genuine lack of understanding, awareness, support, or even care about regional rural issues, regional rural people, farming communities in the major cities, in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra.”

He said that countering this is very difficult “Because those cities are often very self-focused and they’re worried about their commute to work or whether their coffee is hot enough or those sort of things... I’ve just been overseas and Australians take for granted that we have the best quality, the widest range of healthy food produced at very, very reasonable prices. The very basics of life are taken for granted, and yet our farmers are working long hours, really hard under difficult conditions, whether it be droughts or bush fire threats or all those sorts of things, or commodity prices and squeezes in that respect, and the city people keep complaining about the cost of living, well Australia is one of the lowest cost quality food suppliers anywhere in the world.

“I think the only way to change that is for our farming communities to fundamentally go on a big campaign to alert, hopefully supported by the supermarkets and some of the big food suppliers, to fundamentally say thank you to our farmers and support our farmers.”

He also noted that people in rural communities suffer from poorer health outcomes, a poorer range of services, poorer educational outcomes, poorer public transport and fewer opportunities.

“We really we need to rethink, as Australia and in Victoria, about how we look after our regional and rural communities,” Dr Napthine said.

He said that the division of wealth and infrastructure are areas of concern for people in regional areas. He said, “Regional rural people aren’t looking for a handout. They don’t want people to feel sorry for them. They just want a fair go. They just want to be recognised for what they’re doing and the classic example in Victoria is, and let me be political here because I come from a political background, we’ve got the city-centric Labor government spending billions upon billions on Big Builds and particularly the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL), which has no business case, billions of dollars, and they can’t spend a few dollars fixing potholes on unsafe, dangerous country roads. People in regional and rural Victoria have got every reason to be absolutely irate about that imbalance. The billions being spent in metropolitan areas and nothing being spent to fix what are really serious, dangerous road conditions in country Victoria.”

Asked where the right is going wrong in terms of gaining votes in urban areas, Dr Napthine said, “If we knew the answer to that question. Two things I think. One is creating an awareness in the city about the need to get a balanced approach to give a better outcome for everybody. We need the rural areas, they need the city, and a more balanced approach

is a better way to go. And I think that’s really, really important. And I think we need some visionary policies on that. I think we need to bring back a strong decentralisation policy.

“I really think that sort of visionary sort of policy saying, over the next decade, we should have a decade of decentralisation and that’s a win-win as far as I’m concerned. Instead of developing some of the sprawling outer suburbs of Melbourne, which need massive infrastructure and have very high-cost housing. If we can create job opportunities and re-house people in regional and rural areas, where many of those communities have got opportunities for more affordable housing, they’ve got better lifestyle, better quality of opportunities for young people, instead of being in those outer suburbs of Melbourne where there are real problems with youth gangs, with crime, with people having mental health issues, whereas growing up in the country, yes, we need to invest in more in health services and education, but there are great opportunities there. I think having a decade of decentralisation would be a visionary approach, that the conservative side of politics should take. This has win wins for everybody.

Asked about the infrastructure cost under such an arrangement, given that regional infrastructure would likely be more expensive, Dr Napthine responded, “In a lot of our regional centres there is capacity in infrastructure, whereas you build new suburbs in Melbourne, you’ve got to build train lines, you’ve got to build all the things that go with it, and a lot of that infrastructure is already in regional centres. I think that there is certainly that capacity to increase Warrnambool, Echuca, Bendigo, Ballarat, Traralgon, by about 10 or 15 per cent without adding any cost to the infrastructure.

But what about areas like Murrindindi Shire where there are no major centres? He responded, “Then there’s the flow on effect to the communities like Alexandra because if there’s more people in Seymour, Kilmore, and up the Hume Highway then people choose to go to Alexandra and Yea because they want that more township village lifestyle, so you have a win-win there.”

He also commented that “Melbourne is killing itself in terms of congestion and overcrowding. One of the problems is people don’t want to live in that crowded environment, don’t want to have to travel two hours to work each day. This is one of the big arguments why more people want to work from home. It’s because of the cost and time taken in travel. Whereas in in, if you live in Alexandra or Yea, whether you live work locally or whether you travel to the newest regional centre, it’s a breeze.”

He added that with the partial work from home, Alexandra and Yea become very attractive.

Dr Napthine also commented on the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF). “I’ve just got my rates notice and my eyes popped out of my head with emergency services levy, and the real issue here is it is just a tax, and you know it’s just a tax. But it is the unfair discrimination, discriminatory nature of the tax that hits farmers and rural disproportionately compared to their city cousins, because the money all goes into consolidated revenue, the money doesn’t go to the local CFA, most of it goes to emergency services in Melbourne, not in the bush... That’s just wrong.”

He said of the philosophical differences between the city and country, “If you’re in a country area and you want something done, the first question, you have a meeting and people say, I can do this, I can do that. This is how we can fix it. In Melbourne, they have a community consultation process where the first question asked is, what’s the government going to give it? It’s not, what can we do ourselves? It’s not, how can we fix the problem? It’s how will the government fix it for us?”

Dr Napthine also spoke with concern about the move to solar and wind power, particularly the locations, in rural and regional areas on farmland.

PUZZLES

SOLUTIONS
Page 15

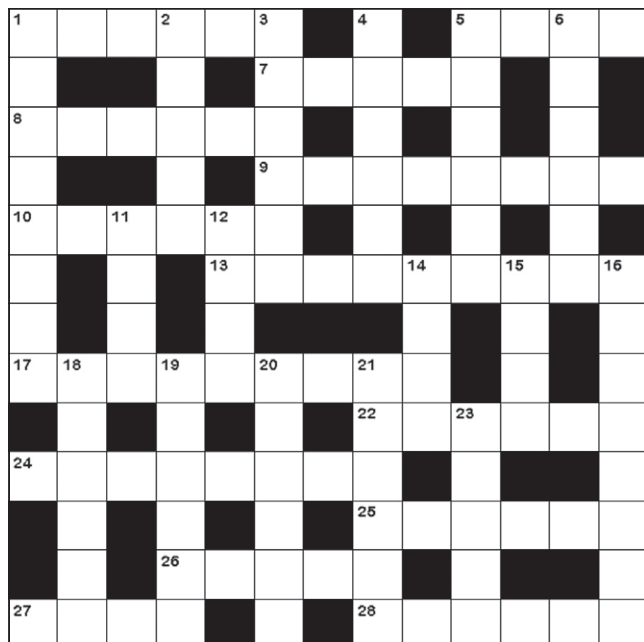
Crossword

ACROSS

1. Raised from a lower to a higher position.
5. Impossible to doubt or dispute.
7. Live without happiness in a bad situation.
8. Sometime earlier than the time in question.
9. Thought about at length and in depth.
10. Small or less than average size.
13. Wholly absorbed in a task.
17. Pass information on using arms or flags.
22. Moving toward a position ahead.
24. Events that differ from the expected values.
25. Fall suddenly and sharply.
26. Official permission to be absent from work.
27. Animal hunted or caught for food.
28. Money paid for the return of a prisoner.

DOWN

1. A type of statement that is slanderous.
2. A fish resembling a small trout.
3. Make stronger and more intense.
4. The one who comes first in the race.
5. Press home a point.
6. Fail to fulfill a promise or commitment.
11. Cut down to the desired size or shape.
12. A sudden and decisive increase.
14. A foreboding sign of things to come.
15. Series of books on the history of a family.
16. A pleasant wish that is unlikely to be fulfilled.
18. Used to remove pencil and ink marks.
19. With extreme enthusiasm.
20. A place where aircraft can be stored.
21. A list of names for individual turns.
23. An adult female human being.



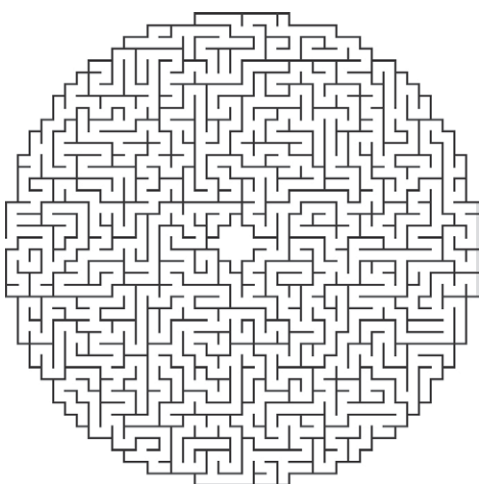
Word Search

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

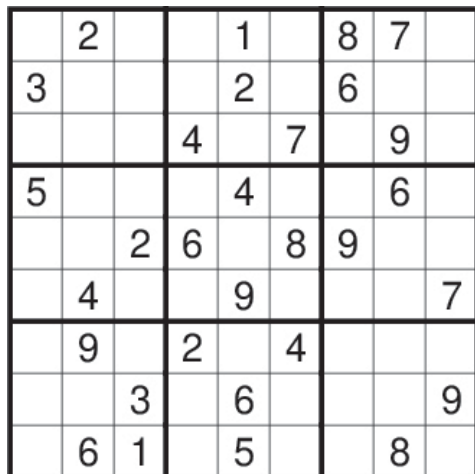
Mountains of the World

CAMEROON KAZBEK
ELGON KILIMANJARO
EVEREST PINATUBO
FUJI SINAI
GIANTSCASTLE TAMBORA
KARISIMBI VICTORYPEAK

Maze



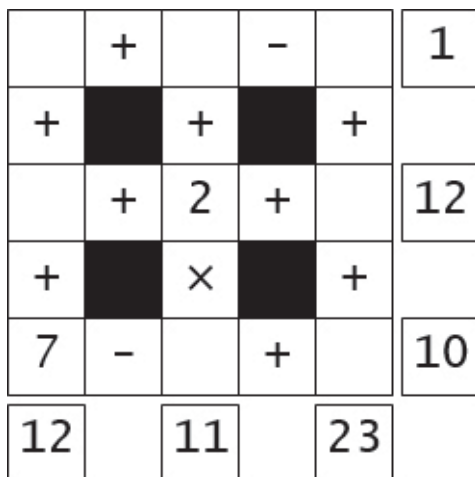
Sudoku



Difficulty: Very Hard

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

Math Square



Fill in the missing numbers.

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

KID'S PUZZLES

Colouring Page



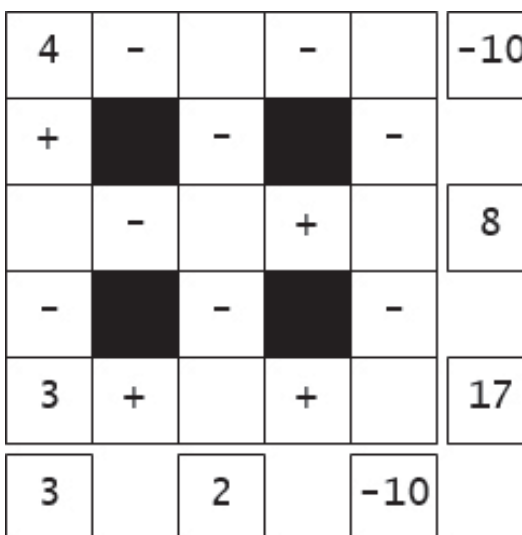
Word Search

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

Words starting with "T"

TALENTED THUNDER
TANIA TIGER
TANK TODAY
TEMPERATURE TOMATOES
TERRIFIC TORTOISE
THOMAS TRUSTING
THOUGHTFUL TWISTED

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.

Jokes

Q: Why didn't the teddy bear eat dessert?
A: Because he was stuffed.

Q: What kind of room doesn't have windows or a door?
A: A mushroom

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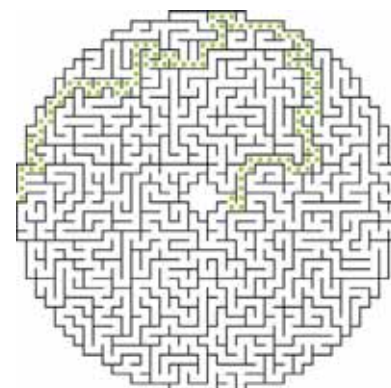
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MATH SQUARE

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+		+		+	
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MAZE



KIDS MATH SQUARES

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2	-	1	+	7	8
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MEETINGS



Alexandra Race Club AGM will be held on Sunday, September 21 at noon followed by a light lunch.

Presentation of annual reports and election of office bearers.

All welcome.
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0467 413 767.

THE ALEXANDRA OPPORTUNITY SHOP INC.

Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday, September 8, at 10am in the RSL Hall.
All welcome.

PUBLIC NOTICES

OPTUS

PROPOSAL TO UPGRADE AN EXISTING MOBILE PHONE BASE STATION AT ALEXANDRA AND MARYSVILLE

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 - a monopole at 1071 Lake Mountain Road Marysville VIC 3779 (M7860 Lake Mountain)
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 - M7860 Lake Mountain: Removal of three (3) existing panel antennas, installation of four (4) new antennas, installation of one (1) temporary antenna to be used during construction, and installation and relocation of ancillary equipment.
- We invite you to provide your feedback or request further information by contacting us at: at Wannan Bao, Indara, 02 9495 9000, community@indara.com or Level 1, 110 Pacific Highway, St Leonards NSW 2065. We will accept submissions until **5pm on Monday 22 September 2025**.
- For more information, please visit
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FUNERAL NOTICES

ARMSTRONG,
Gilbert Andrew

The funeral service to celebrate the life of Gilbert Andrew Armstong will be held at the Alexandra Shire Hall, 55 Grant Street, Alexandra on Friday, September 5 2025 commencing at 11.30am. Following the service the funeral cortege will proceed to the Alexandra Lawn Cemetery.



N.F.D.A 1800 080 909
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DEATH NOTICES

ARMSTRONG,
Gilbert Andrew

03/06/1945-
30/08/2025

Passed away peacefully at the Alexandra Hospital.

Loved husband of Valerie. Loving father to Jodie and Andrew. Father in law to Ian and Karen. His loving grandchildren Sophie, Anthony, Hannah and Lachlan along with their partners, Jessie, Breanna, Mitchel and loving great grandchildren, Harry, Jack and Zoe.

Gilbert lived for his family and farming.

ARMSTRONG,
Gilbert Andrew.

In loving memory of Gilbert Armstrong

A dearly loved husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Grandad will be fondly remembered for his unwavering love for his family. His presence brought warmth to every room, and his legacy will live on in our hearts.

He was deeply cherished and will forever be remembered by his family and friends for his kindness, his laughter, and the many treasured memories he leaves behind.

We love you, grandad, and will miss you more than words can ever express.

With all our love, Sophie, Jesse, and Zoe Rabjones

DEATH NOTICES

ARMSTRONG,
Gilbert Andrew

Dad, we are never ready to say goodbye forever. Even though we know it's part of life. This day our hearts are heavy for losing someone so special, but as we mourn your death, we're also celebrating your life.

Rest in peace dad.
From Jodie, Ian, Sophie, Jessie, Zoe, Anthony, Beanna, Harry and Jack.

ARMSTRONG,
Gilbert Andrew

In loving memory of my wonderful husband. Of all the special gifts in life, however great or small to have you as my husband. It was the greatest gift of all.

May the winds of love blow softly and "whisper in your ear". I love, I miss you and I wish that you were here. I will miss you, Gilbert. Love Val.

ARMSTRONG,
Gilbert Andrew

You never failed to do your best, your heart was true and tender, you simply lived for those you loved and those you loved remember. One of nature's true gentleman. Forever in our hearts.

Andrew, Karen, Hannah, Lachlan and Mitchel.

ARMSTRONG, Gilbert Andrew. 03/06/1945 - 30/08/2025. Much loved brother in law to Sydney and Dorothy. Treasured uncle to Kylie, Stacey and Tara. Close to our hearts you will stay. Remembered always xx

ARMSTRONG, Gilbert. 30/08/2025. Loved brother in law of Brian (dec) and Adell, Lorraine and Aley (both dec), Judith, Jeffrey and Isobel, David, Dorothy and Syd and families. Those who touch our lives, stay in our hearts forever.

ARMSTRONG Gilbert Andrew. Fond memories of the good times, and your coffee making, a true gentleman, now at rest. Trish, Andrew Embling and families.

ATKINS, Joyce. Aged 94. In loving memory. Mum passed away peacefully at Alexandra Hospital on 27/08/2025. She requested no service be held. Thanks to all who gave their friendship and support over many years.

DEATH NOTICES

ARMSTRONG, Gilbert Andrew. Uncle Gilbert, you were a gentle, kind and sweet man. You leave me with many cherished memories of summer holidays down on the farm. You are much loved and will be missed always. Your niece, Kylie xx

DEATH NOTICES

REDDROP,
Jack Norman.

30/12/2002 -
11/08/2025

Died suddenly and unexpectedly surrounded by his friends.

Loving and very much adored son of Tina and Michael. Cherished brother of Ruby. Beloved grandson of Laura and Jack Dreyfus and Margot (dec) and Norman Reddrop. Nephew and cousin of the Kim, Klages and Gray families.

Former resident of Trinity College and graduate of the University of Melbourne and Scotch College.

You died way too soon, but we were blessed to have you with us for a rich and full 22 years.

(Please see later newspapers for details of the Celebration of Jack's Life to be held on September 15.)

WATTS, Peter.

15/04/1946 –
26/08/2025

Passed away peacefully at Kellock Lodge, Alexandra.

Beloved husband of Sue (dec). Loving father of Liz, Ange, Kylie, Peter and Daniel. Proud and loving grandfather to Hannah, Tom, Nick, and Sam, Tadhg and Zac, Charlie, Regan, Jasper and Ollie, Jed, Aliyah and Layla, and great grandfather to Lachlan and Charlotte.

Dearly loved and now peacefully resting with mum.

Always in our hearts.

Private cremation and service



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BEREAVEMENT THANKS

ARMSTRONG,
Gilbert Andrew.

Alexandra Hospital, thank you. On behalf of Val, Jodie, Ian and family.

We would love to say a special thank you from the bottom of our hearts. To say from all of us that the care factor was premium at such a time of great need.

We can't thank the staff enough for the care they gave to Gilbert.

ARMSTRONG,
Gilbert Andrew.

Kellock Lodge. Thank you. On behalf of Val, Jodie, Ian and Family

A special thanks to the Kellock Lodge staff, for the special care and attention that was required during Gilbert's stay. Gilbert had a very special person in Kellock, his granddaughter, Hannah.

She made him feel proud and safe. He loved her kisses and cuddles. A big thank you to Ellie. Also big thank you to Dawn, Brooke, Tonia and Kate.

Thank you to the food staff. Thank you to the care team for Gilbert.

ARMSTRONG, Gilbert. The family of Gilbert Armstrong would like to sincerely thank all the beautiful carers at Kellock lodge and the staff at Alexandra District Health, for all their kindness, care and support during Gilbert's stay. Andrew, Karen, Hannah, Lachlan and Mitchel.

WATTS, Peter.

On behalf of Peter's family, we would like to thank Brooke, Cass and Stine and the beautiful, amazing team at Kellock Lodge for all of their kind and caring support of dad. And a personal thank you from Liz, to Noelene and Viv for your kindness and support.

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

CANN, Peter.
07/09/1968.

Gone are the days we used to share, but the ache in our hearts is always there. Loved always, mum, dad and family.

No competition at Alexandra Golf Club

by Dave Silverman

SAD to report that once again, last week’s golf at Alexandra Golf Club was kicked into touch by the weather.

There has been no competition at all at Alexandra, and in fact, as I write these words, our course is closed due to the amount of water on it.

Only on Wednesday did five ladies brave the conditions and go out to play a non-competitive nine holes, and the photo of the wattle tree adjacent the seventh tee, and oh, with Sandy Wettenhall in the foreground, is courtesy of Sandra Morris.



Sandy Wettenhall on seven. -S

Cool conditions for Eildon Golf Club

by Puttomatic

WITH cool conditions and a wetter than usual course 14 players competed in the Eildon Golf Club August monthly medal. The course defiantly produced a difficult day at the office.

Wayne Kupke dealt with the conditions the best on the day and finished with a nett 74 to win the monthly medal. Coming in second and keeping it in the family was Adam Kupke with a nett 76, the ball run winners for last week were Kerry Power nett 76, Rod Taylor nett 79, Jared Slone nett 80 and Peter McNair also nett 80.

Nearest the pins for the week, Jared Slone was the best with his second shot on the par four third, Grant Walters hit a great shot on the fifth and Rod Taylor was the closest on the 14th. No winners for last week on the fifth or 14th also no birdies on the birdie holes eighth and 15th.

The newly introduced super six competition is proving to be popular and last week’s winner was President John Beale. Other winners, Dennis Seamer had a win with the swindle and Kerry Power took out the entry draw.

A huge thank you to Kaz for providing sandwiches for after the game, including the very popular curry egg sandwiches.

No more sunnier climes at Marysville Golf Club

by Lesley Rundle

WHEN last week ‘sunnier climes’ were mentioned in the Marysville Golf Club report it was wishful thinking that they would last forever. Sadly, they didn’t and the golfers recently had to deal with icy temperatures, damaging winds, ‘snow on higher ground’ and some wet patches on the fairways.

A few intrepid golfers were prepared to tolerate these conditions and both the Thursday and Saturday competitions were held as usual.

The Thursday nine holers played stableford on the back nine holes. Richy Clark (7) was the winner with 20 points followed by Gail Leigh (6) with 19 points.

The nearest the pins were won by Gail on the 11th and Mark Alexander on the 18th.

Conditions last Saturday were variable with some moments of sunshine and rain but plenty of wind. The golfers played stableford for the Neil Murphy Trophy which is a mixed event. The trophy winner was Ming Kuan (19) with an excellent 39 points followed by Paul Martin (28) with 34 points.

The nearest the pins were won by Keith Atwell on the 18th and Paul Martin on the 11th and ninth and Paul’s day became even better when he won the Golden Shot.

Next Saturday after the AGM a stroke round for the September monthly medal will be played. All members are encouraged to attend the AGM in the clubhouse at 8.45am.



Colin, Lizzy and Heather completed 18 holes. -S



Steve, Paul and Michele after their game. -S

SPORT

Season concludes for Under 17 netballers

Netball
Alexandra 6 defeated by
Warburton / Milgrove 28

THE under 17 netballers had an early start on Sunday morning, taking on Warburton/Millgrove at 9am in the Semi Final. The girls put in a strong and determined effort, but Warby proved too strong on the day.

Congratulations to coach Sarah Skehan and the entire team on a fantastic season, your hard work and dedication have made us all proud.
A big thank you to all our supporters who travelled to both finals over the weekend, and to our generous sponsors, the Alexandra Hotel and Buxton Hotel, for hosting the club on both Saturday and Sunday evening.



Abby Milijovic sending the ball on its way. -S



Ashlyn Newman running interference. -S

Competitive matches for recent squash round

by Kristelle Leary

Monday Competition
Australorps versus Silkies
JORDAN versus Lochlan: A fabulous see-sawing match. It was close, but Jordan nabbed some extra points with his impressive serves. 73 to 62.

Laura versus Liane: Two likable level-headed ladies lined up to take their shot at victory. Both opponents were well matched, and neither was backing down from the challenge. Liane was waning going into the final game, but perked up, rallying for a came back that she never quite reached. Laura was victorious. 56 to 53.

Chris versus Justin: Fuelled and ferocious Justin kept the ball speeding around the court. Chris started to get Justin's measure in the second half, but Justin was too far ahead. 72 to 56.

John versus Michael H: As one rises to the top, the other must fall. Michal opened with a decent game which John was using as a warmup. John got serious an improves with each game to claim the match with ease. 73 to 44.

Leghorns versus Isa Browns
ERIC D versus Tyler: In the beginning there was only a two-point difference. Tyler pulled away to claim the victory with his solid serves. 82 to 53.

Sally versus Jess (fill in): It was a close match all the way. Both players played some lovely shots

and with a few extra well placed shots Sally slunk ahead to win. 60 to 56.

Ben versus Michael M (fill in): If we discount game three, Ben would have been in with a chance. Unfortunately, Ben lost all knowledge of how to put ball-to-racquet in game three and watched Michael rack up points, crushing any hopes Ben had of winning. 70 to 44.

Derrick versus Andrew: It was a tight game but there was room for only one champion on the court Andrew claimed the first half with a twelve-point lead. Scraping back some points John claimed the third. Reinforcing his lead, Andrew won the final game and the match. 63 to 50.

Thursday Competition
Golden Retrievers
versus Labradors

MATTHEW versus Eric F: Matthew is continuing to improve, and Eric seems to have his eye in now. With a slightly stronger can and a serious height advantage, Eric triumphed. 64 to 47.

Kristelle versus Jess: Kristelle dominated from the start and didn't let up. Jess struggled greatly with her serves and to top it off Kristelle added in some nonchalant killer return. Kristelle was victorious. 74 to 48

Mick versus Sam: After a hotly contested opening gambit, Sam got on a roll with a streak of good serves that had Mick rushing. Mick returned to contention with



Beth prepares to strike back against Blake. -S

a serving streak of his own. Mick continued to have moments and stay competitive but Sam's ability to find the back corners and side walls kept him ahead in each game and win, 65 to 47.

Daniel versus Michael M: Daniel took the time out from his busy schedule to show us all how it was done sending Michael careening around the court with force. With ease, Daniel kept his status as champ. 62 to 34.

Whippets versus Dachshunds
BEN H versus Randy: Mercilessly Randy commanded the court. It was a very one-sided match resulting in Randy coming out on top. 83 to 44.

Beth versus Blake: Beth had hope when she won the first game. Changing the script, Blake upped his efforts to increase his point collection, winning three games and the match. 66 to 49.

Travis versus Lucas: A nice close first game but Travis took the lead. In the second Lucas came out very

strongly, begin ahead by seven at one point, but Travis slowly came back to win by one. Game three was filled with rallies, great shots and more attempts at taking the overall lead from Lucas. It was too late, Travis was the winner. 57 to 52
Ben F (fill in) versus Daniel W: Ben put in the hard yards and kept it interesting, but he had a nasty habit of hitting it back to Daniel. Daniel slapped the ball all around the court, keeping the ball away from Ben and making him run. Daniel claimed the title. 75 to 50.

Rebels reserves grand final bound

by Wayne Miller

Reserves **Alexandra 10.13-73 defeated** **Pakenham 6.7-43**

THE Rebels extended their undefeated run to eight with a 30-point win over Pakenham in the second semi-final at Yarra Glen to go straight through to the Grand Final.

After finishing third at the end of the home and away, in the two finals to date the Rebels have defeated the side that finished second by 24 points and the team that finished first by 30 points out scoring their opponents in the eight quarters played.

Their recent DNA of fierce tackling hard running and creative team ball use was again evident from the first bounce in a four-quarter performance with all players committed to an impressive win.

The Rebels line up for the game was: Goonan, Musgrove, Saggin, Collard, Heverin, Dundas, Correa, Halligan, Ward, Roper, Hill, Coombs, Andrews, Keath, Wallace, Steyger, Kapakoulakis, Heslip, Kidd, McDonald, Phillips, and McKinley.

It is a little unfair to mention better players however it would also be unfair not to mention Brandon Kapakoulakis, Harry Correa, Conor Heaslip, Tom Halligan, Nathan Dundas and Jake Keath (three goals).

The boys must now await the winner of the Preliminary Final between Pakenham and Seville to know their Grand Final opponent which will be held at Yarra Glen on Saturday, September 13.

Seniors **Pakenham 15.9-99 defeated** **Alexandra 12.8-80**

THE seniors travelled to Woori Yallock on Sunday to do battle with Pakenham in the First Semi Final with the winner to play against Warburton in the Preliminary Final.

Bobby Massey and Kellan Percy were welcome additions to the line up however this was offset by the big loss of Tom Boots with a knee injury.

In a close hard fought game Pakenham who had maintained a narrow lead throughout the game held on for a 19-point win.

The Rebels trailed by eight points at quarter time after goals to Stewart (two) Watkins and Aujard.

The second quarter was an even battle, the Rebels hit the front after goals to Stewart (two) and Grimwade, however, not to be

denied Pakenham scored two late goals to maintain an eight point lead at half time.

The Rebels came out full of running and were getting on top of the opposition however failed to convert shots for goal scoring 3.5 to Pakenham 5.0.

Full forward Wil Stewart was giving the Pakenham defence major problems kicking two goals for the quarter with one goal to Watkins. Alexandra 10.8 to Pakenham 13.5.

The Rebels were asked for one final effort producing goals to Edwards and Stewart however Pakenham were equal to the task scoring two goals.

Full forward Stewart who won the league goal kicking put in a masterful display kicking seven goals.

Mitch Parker in the centre continued his excellent form all season with another great game.

Sam and Charlie Boots, Jonathon Grimwade, Harry Prendergast and Ed Aujard also deserve a mention in an even team.

A special thank you to coach Nick Wal and all the players who have given their supporters a lot of joy this season.



Sam Boots lining up his shot. -S



Tom Halligan and Brent McDonald apply pressure. -S



Seniors player Ryan Lucas lining up to kick the ball. -S



Reserves player Bart Wallace moving the ball with determination. -S



Harry Correa from the Alexandra reserves doing levitation magic. -S

Team photo of the Alexandra under 14 football team. -S



Alexandra under 14 footballers and under 13 netballers through to the grand final

LAST Sunday the Alexandra Football Netball Club under 14s and under 13s Alexandra Black teams headed to Nagambie to take on the Shepparton Swans and Broadford in their respective matches. Both teams successfully brought home the wins to earn their spot in the grand final.

Under 14 football preliminary final
Alexandra 9.14-68 defeated
Shepparton Swans 3.0-18

Best Players: Mitchell Kidd, Jaidyn Dimech, Eli Van Lierop, Joshua Northmore, Max Kaiser, Izham Edmund.
Congratulations to the under 14s who will now take on Seymour in the grand

final on Sunday, September 7 at Kings Park, Seymour at 2.15pm.

Under 13 Alexandra Black netball

The under 13 team, Alexandra Black, secured a strong win over Broadford by 11 goals. They will now advance to the next stage and play against St Marys in the grand final.

The Alexandra under 10 team will also be in action, competing in the Lightning Premiership this coming Sunday, with their first game kicking off at 9am at Kings Park.

Alexandra Football Netball Club wish all their teams the very best in the finals this Sunday and encourage all supporters to head along and cheer them on.



Team photo of the Alexandra Black under 13 netball team. -S