

Standard

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

P.O Box 5, Alexandra, 3714. Ph: (03) 5772 1002; Fax: (03) 5772 1603; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Wednesday, May 6, 2026 \$2.50 inc. GST

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Pedestrian death at dangerous intersection

PEDESTRIAN Barb Doyle (65) from Alexandra, named with the permission of her family, died on Tuesday, April 28 at the intersection of Grant and Downey Streets in Alexandra after being struck by a vehicle.

Emergency services were called to reports of the collision at the intersection just before 12.30pm. Barb was treated by paramedics but sadly died at the scene.

The driver, a 77 year old Alexandra man, was not injured. He was interviewed and released pending further enquiries.

Major Collision Investigation Unit detectives are investigating the exact circumstances surrounding the collision.

Anyone who witnessed the collision, has CCTV or dashcam, or anyone with information is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or submit an online confidential report at crimestoppersvic.com.au

Ambulance Victoria spokesperson said, "Ambulance Victoria was called to an incident in Alexandra around 12.25pm on April 28. A specialist Air Ambulance Victoria helicopter crew, Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance (MICA) and Advanced Life Support (ALS)

paramedics, and an Ambulance Community Officer (ACO) attended the scene."

Our hearts go out to the woman's family and friends, the driver of the vehicle, and the emergency first responders who attended the incident.

The intersection is well known to locals as being very dangerous. Locals have spoken of petitions dating back 80 years, seeking action to improve safety at the location.

In February 2017, the *Alexandra Standard* contacted VicRoads (now the Department of Transport and Planning) about the issue. They advised that they had a record of only one incident at the intersection in the prior five years, being a cyclist losing traction. As a result, people were encouraged to report their collisions at the location, as many have been involved in 'fender benders' in the area.

In the following edition's *Letters to the Editor* section, a local resident wrote, "On reading the front page story, *Cross over the Intersection*, in last week's *Standard*, I, like probably many others was initially astounded on learning that VicRoads has only one 'incident' recorded at this intersection. Having personally

been involved in several near misses and witnessing numerous others I thought that couldn't possibly be right."

On January 24, 2018, the government informed Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish that VicRoads had undertaken consultation with Murrindindi Shire Council, Victoria Police and VicForests about potential fixes for the intersection. The Minister for Roads and Road Safety said a concept plan had been developed by VicRoads which included the removal of the turn lines from within the intersection and installing painted islands and linemarking to make it look more like a cross intersection. In addition, current Give Way signs are also proposed to be replaced with stop signs due to the limited sight distances within the intersection. An information session was held locally on March 21, 2018. The works were undertaken in May 2018.

In June 2018, it was noted that "The intersection of Grant and Downey Streets in Alexandra is continuing to cause concern, with many locals believing that the recent changes have done little to fix the problem."



Barb's niece Emily Layfield (right) being interviewed by Ruby Silverback from WIN News in Shepparton on Friday, May 1. -AR

Murrindindi Shire Council general manager Infrastructure and Development said at the time, "VicRoads has committed to continue monitoring, with council, how the new intersection layout and signage is working and, if necessary, will review the need for further measures."

In late September 2018, a 44 year old male riding a trail bike died at the intersection, with police believing that the incident was the result of rider error.

Minor changes to the intersection were undertaken in June 2019, "enhancing advance warning" at the location, as well as line-marking adjustments.

In an article on mobility challenges around Alexandra in March 2023, four people who use wheelchairs, mobility scooters or walking sticks were interviewed, along with their carers, about some of the challenges they face in the area.

Continued page 4



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May 30 and 31**

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Town

Phone.....

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ACCEPTED**

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INDEPENDENTS SECURE WIN FOR AGED CARE

After persistent advocacy from Independents in Parliament, the Government has scrapped aged care co-payments for essential daily care.

This is a win for older people across Indi and the nation - and for the families and carers who spoke up about what these changes mean for their daily lives.

Helen Haines MP

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



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 Yea & District Memorial Hospital
5736 0400
In an emergency dial
000

Standard The Yea Chronicle

CONTACT DETAILS

CLASSIFIEDS AND COMMERCIAL PRINTING
 reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

MANAGER AND ACCOUNTS Karen Morrison
 manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au
 accounts@alexandranewspapers.com.au

ADVERTISING
 1sales@alexandranewspapers.com.au

TRADES AND ONLINE DIRECTORY - Mary
 trades@alexandranewspapers.com.au

EDITOR Anne Richey
 editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au
 (Bailey) journalist@alexandranewspapers.com.au

SPORTS
 sports@alexandranewspapers.com.au

43 Grant Street - PO Box 5, Alexandra 3714
 Telephone: 5772 1002 Fax: 5772 1603
 Hours: 9am-5pm Monday-Friday



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COMMUNITY DIARY

Alexandra District Health
5772 0900
Non-emergency police assistance
131 444
EMERGENCY 000

Local Radio Frequency
 UGFM 106.9 Alexandra / Lake Eildon
 UGFM 98.5 Marysville / Lake Mountain

MONTHLY COMMUNITY GROUPS

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

MONTHLY
 1st Wed Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318
 1st Thur Murrindindi Men 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
 1st Sun Crop/Produce swap 10.30am-noon @ Embassy of Ideas
 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



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.

Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club report

by honorary secretary Mike Jennings

THE bridge players were in action on Wednesday and on Friday, the Alexandra and District Senior Citizens Club held the monthly business meeting. The treasurer advised that they have the funds available, so they are planning to go ahead with a trip to *Morning Melodies* at Healesville RSL on Wednesday, June 9 using the shire coach and president Yvonne at the wheel. If you want to come remember to put your name on the list on the front desk.

Some thank you mentions this week. John Rouget donated a new clock to the

tearoom after some of the card players lost track of the time. Brenda Bennett donated a microwave oven after the one in the kitchen failed its fitness test, and Jeanette made a birthday cake to celebrate the birthdays of Jack, Mary and Dominique. The process went down well after the game of 500 too.

This Friday is a social meeting commencing at 1pm. If you are a senior and you fancy a chat, a cuppa and a game of cards head along and join them in the Bayley Street clubroom. Meanwhile stay safe and keep smiling.



THUMBS UP: To the people of Alexandra for their effort in helping the RSL in raising a record amount over the Anzac period with the sale of badges. This money goes solely towards the welfare of Veterans and families. A huge thank you.

THUMBS UP: To the Department of Transport and Jacinta Allan for fixing the woobos on Gilmore's Bridge after two and a half years.

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

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

Pre-sentence hearing over Yarck death

SEYMOUR man, David Graham Berry (44) returned to County Court for a pre-sentence hearing last week before Judge Pardeep Tiwana.

Berry pleaded guilty to theft, culpable driving causing death and failing to stop after a motor vehicle accident, and unlicensed driving.

The court heard that on May 8, 2024, Berry found keys to a Ford Ranger inside a Euroa hotel and stole the vehicle. At the time, Berry only had a learner's permit and had never held a full licence.

Later that afternoon, a witness called the police regarding the vehicle travelling at excessive speeds, higher than 140km/h.

On the Maroondah Highway in Yarck at 4.16pm, Berry drove the ute on the wrong side of the road, into the path of

Letters to the Editor

Renewable energy

KEN Collier would be absolutely correct in his assessment of the renewable energy issue, if the *Spotlight* expose was correct. Unfortunately, *Spotlight* chose to omit certain facts and mislead their viewers. *Media Watch* (available on ABC iView) did an excellent article covering these omissions, untruths and misdirections and I encourage everyone to watch this before rushing to criticise renewable energy.

There is a serious and shameful war being waged against renewables by those with vested interests and deep pockets. Similar tactics to those used in the defence of tobacco are being deployed, with similar deleterious outcomes. Unfortunately, we can no longer rely on honest reporting by some sections of the media.

Andy Miller, Alexandra

oncoming motorcyclist from Alexandra. The motorcyclist died at the scene.

Berry exited the Ford Ranger when it came to a stop about half a kilometre away. He was found just before 7pm, 5km from the scene of the collision.

The court heard that Berry was under the effects of methamphetamine and alcohol, and that he was experiencing cognitive impairment and impaired decision-making. His blood alcohol levels were between 0.129 and 0.187. As a learner driver, he was meant to have a blood alcohol level of zero.

The court heard victim impact statements from his ex-wife and their two daughters. The judge said their statements spoke "eloquently of the loss the family endure."

Berry will be sentenced in mid-May, having already spent 720 days in custody.

RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT

STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	8.00AM Mon	1.85	steady	below flood level
Rubicon River at Rubicon	8.00AM Mon	0.60	steady	
Acheron River at Taggerty	8.00AM Mon	0.73	steady	below flood level
Home Creek at Yarck	7.32AM Mon	0.23	steady	
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	7.27AM Mon	0.52	steady	below flood level
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	8.00AM Mon	0.42	steady	
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	8.00AM Mon	0.40	steady	
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	8.00AM Mon	3.86	steady	
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	8.00AM Mon	0.45	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Trawool	8.00AM Mon	1.54	steady	below flood level
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	8.00AM Mon	0.29	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Seymour	8.30AM Mon	1.81	steady	below flood level
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	8.00AM Mon	0.79	steady	

*ISSUED AT 8:54 AM AEDT MONDAY 4 MAY 2026



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.



Weekly Weather

May 6 - May 12, 2026

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	4	15
Thursday	6	8
Friday	9	13
Saturday	9	15
Sunday	7	17
Monday	7	19
Tuesday	7	20

Yea

DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	5	16
Thursday	6	9
Friday	10	14
Saturday	9	16
Sunday	8	17
Monday	7	19
Tuesday	8	20

Standard The Yea Chronicle

DISTRICT RAINFALL

Alexandra.....	22mm
Buxton.....	43mm
Eildon (AWS).....	24mm
Flowerdale.....	22mm
Jamieson.....	37mm
Kinglake.....	26mm
Lake Eildon.....	30mm
Mansfield.....	12mm
Taggerty.....	25mm
Yarck.....	18mm
Yea.....	16mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

LAKE EILDON

Height above sea level this week.....	269.41m
Capacity as at 9am Monday.....	40.4%
Metres below full supply.....	19.49m
Daily inflow.....	2500ML
Release.....	4000ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change).....	63%



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

What's happening with the post-fire clean up?

MURRINDINDI and Strathbogie Shires have called on the Victorian Government to urgently extend council's free bushfire waste disposal program beyond its current end date of May 12.

The councils are calling for a further six months to be added to the program to ensure recovery continues to be properly supported for households impacted by the January bushfires.

In January, the Victorian Government provided two programs for bushfire impacted property owners to use following the January 2026 fires, free waste disposal at council-managed landfills and Resource and Recovery Centres available to all bushfire impacted property owners/tenants until May 12, and on-site clean-up for eligible property owners however it must be a primary place of residence, under-insured or uninsured. No deadline has been provided for the end of the latter program.

Over 275 Murrindindi property owners registered for the Victorian Government's on-site clean-up program, however only 27 have been accepted with just five seeing any activity at their property. Strathbogie has seen 131 property owners registered with 14 accepted and four seeing any activity at their property.

Some people have reportedly now given up waiting for the state government program and have withdrawn from the process while many others have been deemed ineligible.

Demand has been high for the council operated, fee-free waste disposal services, with a years' worth of waste being registered in the first four months of the year at the Alexandra landfill site.

The free bushfire waste disposal at council facilities is currently providing a critical safety net for those with no other viable recovery pathway. With a high number of people still waiting for their assessments, closing this option now would unfairly shift pressure onto those least able to absorb it.

Of the many municipalities affected by the 2026 fires, these two shires were the most impacted, yet the scale of state-funded recovery support has not yet matched the level of damage experienced locally.

Reports are still coming that many residents are only now beginning the difficult process of clearing fire-damaged properties as the need to secure temporary accommodation ahead of winter becomes

increasingly urgent. The delays to clean up have also had a compounding impact on mental health and wellbeing with residents continuing to confront the extent of damage to their properties.

Mayor of Murrindindi Shire Council, Cr Damien Gallagher, said the community was increasingly anxious about the looming end date.

"For many people in our shire, recovery hasn't even properly started yet. Some residents are only now gaining safe access to their properties, while others waited in good faith for state programs that are still moving slowly," said Cr Gallagher.

Mayor of Strathbogie Shire Council, Cr Scott Jeffery said "We have seen many people take advantage of the free waste disposal at council's sites over the past few months.

"Many residents in Strathbogie are not eligible for the on-site state-provided clean-

up program, so this service [free waste disposal] simply provides essential support for people least able to absorb further pressure. Without accessible and affordable disposal options, there is also a heightened risk of environmental harm and illegal dumping, which could further impact already vulnerable landscapes and waterways.

"We're seeing strong use of the service and many of these people are already carrying enormous financial and emotional strain. Without an extension, these residents will be left with no viable pathway to safely and affordably remove fire-damaged waste," Cr Jeffery said.

Both councils are urging the state government to act quickly to avoid compounding hardship for already vulnerable households.

"Behind every load of fire-damaged waste are families trying to put their life

back together, businesses trying to reopen, and communities doing their best to move forward," Cr Jeffery added.

"Support needs to keep pace with impact, especially for those who have the least capacity to carry more. Right now, it's not and that needs to change and quickly."

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Pedestrian death at dangerous intersection

Continued from Page 1

Jessica said, "I think the biggest issue right now is that there are no safe crossings. Bernadette can't cross the road [the Grant and Downey Street intersection] herself to get to the library and she has limited support funding. There might be a week where she can't access any part of that side of Alexandra." Bernadette added, "I can cross it, but I'm a bit scared to."

Jessica said that when she and Bernadette were on the phone to council they raised the topic, which is particularly important due to the number of people on frames and in wheelchairs. "There's nowhere that's safe to cross [the road]," Bernadette said.

Alison said she hasn't had particular issues with crossing the Grant and Downey Street intersection, although she agreed that a zebra crossing or similar would be helpful. "Cars generally are nice enough to stop though," she said. "Often they'll let me across the road, but not everyone."

Beke said she would love to see a zebra crossing on the corner of Grant and Downey Street to slow traffic down so people can get across the road more easily. "You don't realise the incline as well," she said.

Council recently received funding for improvements at the intersection of Grant and Nihil Streets.

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Australian Government



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Out & About



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

THURSDAY, MAY 7

Free heart health checks at Murrindindi Foodshare 9am-noon- access via Bayley Street carpark.

FRIDAY, MAY 8

Confetti and Chaos at Trawool Estate. This fabulous five star experience has fun and mayhem bursting from the seams of a wedding dress, with entirely original comedy that pulls out all the stops; including quick fire character changes and quick fire laughs. From arrival through to seating, eating, and dancing, audiences will become part of a classic wedding reception gone wildly wrong. The most hilarious wedding reception ever. A perfect gift for your mum for Mother's Day. Book now 5792 1444 or trawoolstate.com.au/whats-on/confettiandchaos

SATURDAY, MAY 9

Yea Garden Club announces it's inaugural Mother's Day bouquet sale outside Yenckens Yea from 9am until sold out.

SUNDAY, MAY 10

Enjoy Mother's Day in Wild Water restaurant at Trawool Estate. Dine from the usual all day menu, or enjoy the specials available just for this special day. Booking essential on 5792 1444 or trawoolstate.com.au/booktable

TUESDAY, MAY 12

Friends of the Library Alexandra AGM. 6pm at the Alexandra Library. New members welcome. Nomination forms available by emailing the secretary proctor@virtual.net.au

THURSDAY, MAY 21

Free heart health checks at Alexandra Pharmacy 10am-noon.

Cute Ute Crew makes welcome delivery to Captain's Rebuild Shed

ON Saturday, April 25, the Cute Ute Crew made a very welcome and generous delivery to the Captain's Rebuild Shed in Alexandra.

They delivered IBCs, wheelbarrows, fencing materials and tools, as well as hay and other items. These will be given free of charge to people impacted by the Longwood fire.

To find out more, visit facebook.com/captainsrebuildshed



Ian, Josh and Matt with Alex at the front, unloading the first items to be delivered. -AR



Members of the Cute Ute team at Captain's Rebuild Shed in Alexandra. -S

Department of Transport comments on intersection

THE Department of Transport was asked whether they will be taking any action to make the intersection of Grant and Downey Street in Alexandra safer following the tragic incident last week.

A Department of Transport and Planning spokesperson responded, "Any death or serious injury on our roads is a tragedy, and our thoughts are with

everyone impacted by the incident in Alexandra, which remains under police investigation."

They said that they will continue to work with Victoria Police and Murrindindi Shire Council to understand the circumstances and investigate opportunities to improve safety.

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

Council statement on pedestrian fatality

MURRINDINDI Shire Council provided the following statement on the death at the corner of Grant and Downey Street.

"Murrindindi Shire Council extends its heartfelt sympathies to the family, friends and loved ones of a long-standing Alexandra resident who tragically lost her life on Tuesday, April 28.

"This is a deeply felt loss for the Alexandra community, and our thoughts are with her family and with everyone who is grieving at this time.

"We recognise that this tragedy has caused significant shock, sadness and distress across the community.

"The intersection of Grant and Downey Streets is part of a state-controlled road network. Safety concerns at this location have been raised by both the community and council over a number of years, and council has consistently advocated to the state government for improvements.

"At this time, our focus is on supporting the community and allowing space for grief, while recognising the importance of continued action to improve safety.

"Council will continue to press for improvements at this intersection and across the Alexandra town centre more broadly. This includes advocating for measures to improve pedestrian safety and exploring opportunities to reduce traffic volumes and heavy vehicle movements through the centre of town.

"We ask that the community keeps the family at the centre of our thoughts and continues to treat one another with care and compassion in the days ahead."



The Cute Ute Crew on Grant Street on Saturday, April 25. -AR



Unpacking the load of IBCs. -S



Delivering wheelbarrows. -S



Fencing wire. -S

Community calls for urgent safety upgrades at intersection following tragic fatality

from the family and friends of Barb Doyle

FOLLOWING the recent fatal accident at the intersection of Grant Street and Downey Street, community members are calling for urgent and meaningful road safety improvements to prevent any further loss of life.

The tragic incident has heightened longstanding concerns regarding traffic speed, driver visibility, pedestrian safety, and confusion at the intersection. Residents believe immediate action is necessary to address the dangers posed by the current road layout.

The community is advocating for the following immediate measures: reduction of the speed limit to 40 km/h approaching and through the intersection; installation of permanent flashing warning lights to alert drivers and encourage lower speeds; construction of safe, clearly marked

pedestrian crossings; and installation of effective speed humps or traffic-calming devices that physically slow vehicles.

In addition, longer-term improvements are being strongly encouraged, including installation of traffic lights to provide clearer traffic direction and control, and consideration of a roundabout to improve traffic flow and reduce collision risk.

Local residents are urging authorities to act swiftly and prioritise this intersection before another tragedy occurs.

"The community deserves to know that every possible measure is being taken to improve safety at this location," the statement said. "No family should have to endure another preventable loss."

The Alexandra community is calling on relevant agencies and decision-makers to publicly outline the next steps and timeline for implementing these critical safety upgrades.

Murrindindi calls for reform after fire inquiry hearing

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has renewed its call for targeted structural reform to Victoria's disaster recovery system following its appearance before the Parliamentary Inquiry into the 2026 Summer Fires.

Council's submission, reinforced through council's testimony at a public hearing held in Alexandra on Friday, April 24, sets out 15 practical, evidence-based recommendations to strengthen preparedness, response and long-term recovery.

The evidence presented to the Inquiry points to a fundamental issue at the centre of recovery.

Murrindindi was the most heavily impacted municipality in Victoria during the January fires, with almost one third of the shire affected and nearly half of the state's structural losses occurring locally, including 216 homes, more than 520 outbuildings and widespread destruction of farming infrastructure and fencing.

Impact assessments compiled by Emergency Management Victoria show that Murrindindi experienced around 48 per cent of the state's losses.

Despite this, council received approximately eight per cent of recovery funding including the same \$750,000 Council Support Fund allocation as most of the other 18 impacted councils.

Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said this misalignment between impact and funding was central to council's evidence.

"Frontline in the disaster, back of the queue in recovery. That's the reality for Murrindindi," Cr Gallagher said.

"By any measure, Murrindindi sustained close to half of the state's impact, yet received a fraction of the recovery funding," Cr Gallagher said. "Equal funding did not result in equal outcomes for our communities."

Council's submission outlines how this one-size-fits-all approach has created visible gaps in recovery, particularly in rural municipalities managing large-scale damage across dispersed communities with limited workforce capacity.

"When funding does not reflect impact, it affects the pace of recovery, the visibility of services, and ultimately confidence in the system," Cr Gallagher said.

Chief Executive Officer Livia Bonazzi told the Inquiry that while recovery is underway, many parts of the shire remain in relief, with new requests for assistance continuing months after the fires.

"The defining issue before this Inquiry is not only the scale of the fire, but how recovery has unfolded," Ms Bonazzi said.

"Equal funding did not result in equal outcomes. The recovery system assumed impact was evenly distributed. The evidence shows it was not."

Ms Bonazzi said the consequences of this mismatch are now shaping recovery on the ground.

"Recovery is the point at which we either restore communities or quietly lose them," she said.

"Under-funded recovery does not just delay rebuilding, it compounds trauma."

Council's submission highlights broader systemic challenges exposed by the fires, including telecommunications and power failures that left communities isolated, the absence of fit-for-purpose local relief infrastructure, increasing pressure on volunteers and local government capacity, and gaps in coordination, data sharing and recovery delivery.

It also reinforces the cumulative impact of repeated disasters, with Murrindindi communities still recovering from floods, storms and drought prior to the 2026 fires.

"Recovery frameworks often assume events occur in isolation. Communities experience them as cumulative, layered and unfinished," Ms Bonazzi said.

A key focus of council's recommendations is the need to move from short-term recovery responses to proportionate, place-based funding models that reflect verified impact and support long-term recovery.

Ms Bonazzi said local government's role as the recovery coordinating authority must be properly resourced to remain effective and sustainable.

"Local government sits at the centre of recovery. We are the coordinating authority, the delivery layer, and the connection point to community," she said.

"But this is not a sustainable model if the funding that underpins it is not proportionate to the task."

"Resilience is not a funding model. Without structural reform, rural communities will continue to carry a disproportionate burden", Ms Bonazzi said.

Mayor Cr Gallagher said the Inquiry must now focus on ensuring its findings lead to real change.

"There is clear scope for this Inquiry to deliver meaningful recommendations for reform, particularly in addressing recovery funding inequity," Cr Gallagher said.

"What matters now is that those recommendations are adopted and implemented by government, not left sitting on a shelf."

Council representatives, including Chief Executive Officer Livia Bonazzi, Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher and Director of Community

and Development Andrew Paxton, appeared before the Inquiry at Alexandra Shire Hall to present evidence on behalf of the community.

While the public hearings have concluded, council is continuing to encourage community members to continue sharing their experiences to ensure the full impact of the fires is understood.

"The hearings may have concluded, but the story of recovery is still being written," Cr Gallagher said.

"We encourage our community to continue telling their story, because every voice contributes to the change needed to build a fairer, stronger recovery system."

To read council's full submission to the Inquiry, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Council/Advocacy-and-Partnerships/Parliamentary-Inquiry-into-the-2026-Summer-Fires-Across-Victoria



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Australian Government

May store sale at Yea Saleyards

THE May Combined Agents Store Sale took place last Friday at the Yea Saleyards, followed by the launching of Yea and District Memorial Hospital's Mouth Mapping program.

Some 1912 head of cattle were yarded, with an average price per head of \$1505 and an average weight of 315kg, equalling out to an average of 478c/kg for the day, a strong result.

The top price per head for steers was \$3060 with a top weight of 633.8kg, resulting in 483c/kg.

Heifers went for a top price per head of \$2520 and a top weight of 567.5kg, leading to 444c/kg.

There will be two more cattle sales held at the Yea Saleyards in May, with the Nutrien Yea Spring Drop Weaner Sale on May 22, and the Combined Agents Feeder and Weaner Sale on May 29.



There were the usual four vendors at the May Combined Store Sale, being Alex Scott and Staff, Elders, Nutrien Ag and Victorian Livestock and Property (VLP). -BD



Anne and Michael Green from Buxton. -BD



Cattle and crowd at the first of three May sales at the Yea Saleyards. -BD



Nutrien Ag auctioneers were wearing blue shirts instead of their usual green to promote the Dolly's Dream charity. -BD

YEA SALEYARDS		STOCK REPORT 1 MAY 2026		
Combined Agents Store Sale	Total Yarding	Steers	Heifers	Cows & Calves
Number of head	1,912			
Average \$ per head	\$1,505			
Average weight per head	315kg			
Top price per head		\$3,060	\$2,520	\$3,500
Top weight		633.8kg	567.5kg	
Turnover	\$2.83 million			

Opposition claims fire inquiry confirms the under-resourcing of the CFA

THE state Opposition said that the government's chronic underfunding of the Country Fire Authority (CFA) was laid bare at a Parliamentary Inquiry on Friday, May 1, with recent government funding announcements falling well short of reversing the damage.

CFA Chief Executive, Greg Leach, said the organisation was not meeting fleet renewal benchmarks, including the turning over of tankers at 20 years of age and pumpers at 15.

He said that a \$65 million per year investment would be needed just to maintain the current age of the CFA fleet, a far cry from Labor's recent \$10 million per year promise for the next ten years.

He also revealed there are 802 single-cab tankers in the CFA fleet. This contradicts earlier Department of Justice and Community Safety evidence that put the figure at 627 during Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearings six months ago.

CFA Chief Officer, Jason Heffernan, told the inquiry that CFA staff shortages led to "some deficiencies" in affected districts. He confirmed he had formally

raised concerns with the Emergency Management Commissioner ahead of the fire season, and issued a "qualified attestation" about the CFA's readiness ahead of summer due to the staff shortages. This attestation has not been made public.

He also said unfilled vacancies existed in District 22 at the time of the Longwood fire in January, but could not say how many.

Fire Services Implementation Monitor, Niall Blair, warned the inquiry the vacancies were "leaving vulnerabilities across the state."

Leader of The Nationals and Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Danny O'Brien, said Labor continued to under-resource the CFA and leave regional Victoria vulnerable.

"We knew the CFA was under-resourced going into the fire season and not getting enough support to upgrade fire trucks. Today's hearings confirmed this.

"The ageing firefighting fleet will only get older under this government, with volunteers forced to sit in the open air in single-cab trucks, exposed to the smoke, dust and heat, for another decade if Labor win again in November."

Big increases in drug use over the past year

REPORT 25 of the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program has recently been released, based on data collected from December 2024 to October 2025, covering 57 per cent of the population of Australia.

In the CEO report, it states, "Australia's major illicit drug markets continue to demonstrate sustained growth. In year nine of the program, consumption of methylamphetamine, cocaine, heroin and 3,4-methylenedioxymethylamphetamine (MDMA) continued to increase, with a record combined weight of 26.8 tonnes consumed nationally between August 2024 and August 2025. This amounts to a 21 per cent combined increase from the previous year, with the following increases individually methylamphetamine 23 per cent, cocaine 17 per cent, MDMA 20 per cent and heroin 23 per cent.

The estimated street value of these last four drugs in year nine was \$14.3 billion, up from \$11.5 billion in the previous year.

Australia has the second-highest rate of consumption of methylamphetamine out of the 34 SCORE countries (Sewage Core Group Europe), covering Europe, North and South America and Oceania.

The data is also broken down on a state-by-state basis, with the Victorian data below.

Since August 2022, the estimated alcohol consumption of regional people has fallen and is now only slightly above urban consumption rates.

It's a different story with cannabis however, with regional cannabis consumption at double the rate of people in urban areas.

It seems that people in urban areas prefer cocaine, with the rate being almost double that of people in regional areas.

The rate of fentanyl usage in regional area has fallen in the last year, and is now similar to urban usage.

Heroin usage is three times higher in urban areas.

Ketamine usage is also higher in urban areas, but not by much.

MDA usage in regional areas is double that of urban areas.

The rate of MDMA and methylamphetamine use is similar between urban and regional.

People in regional areas smoke more nicotine, with their rate being a third higher than in urban areas.

The oxycodone usage rate in regional areas is double that of urban areas.

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ALEXANDRA PRIMARY SCHOOL



ELSIE RAGG

Elsie consistently shows our school values of Respect, Care, and Integrity. She is a friendly student who is always smiling. Elsie is kind and cares about her teachers and her peers. She is always ready for feedback to help her achieve to become the best she can be. We are proud to have you in our learning community, Elsie. You are a star.

BUXTON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Alex, Dusty and Layla for being so caring of our school environment, plants and animals.

EILDON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Juniors-Daniel Joshy

For demonstrating the school value of Achievement by confidently recognising 14 out of 25 letter sounds. Keep up the fantastic work, Daniel.

Seniors: Charlotte Smith
For demonstrating the school value Resilience by writing so neatly in the cursive script style. Impressive, Charlotte.



ST MARYS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Delilah

This award recognises Delilah for her consistent focus and her strong desire to achieve her personal best in all that she does. She approaches each task with determination, care, and a positive attitude towards learning. Delilah is friendly, kind, and supportive of others, making her a valued and respected member of our class community. She should be very proud of her efforts and the example she sets for others.



Tahj Parker

Congratulations to Tahj; our year four talented swimming student on his outstanding achievement. Tahj represented St Mary's at State Swimming last week and came third in the 9/10-year-old boys 50m breaststroke.

Tahj is commended for his dedication, perseverance, and hard work in the pool. We are incredibly proud of what he has accomplished, a fantastic reflection of both his determination and positive attitude. We look forward to seeing his continued success in the future.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by Kinglake branch



Fencing along Seven Creeks to manage and protect waterways. -GBCMA

Financial support available to help protect and restore waterways after Longwood fire

LANDHOLDERS impacted by the January 2026 Longwood bushfire can now access targeted financial assistance to help protect and rehabilitate damaged waterways and wetlands.

Through the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority's (CMA) January 2026 Fire Recovery Program, eligible landholders can receive subsidies to repair or replace riparian (streamside) fencing and incentives to protect new riparian and wetland sites.

The Longwood Fire caused widespread damage to riparian corridors, leaving streambanks exposed, fencing destroyed and conditions ideal for weed invasion due to increased sunlight and bare ground.

Goulburn Broken CMA River Health Projects Manager Linc Wellington said early action is essential to support natural recovery.

"Riparian zones are some of the most vulnerable parts of the landscape after fire," Mr Wellington said.

"Without fencing, stock can easily access burnt streambanks, slowing regeneration and increasing erosion. At the same time, weeds such as blackberry and others can quickly establish if they're not managed early."

The program aims to protect fragile streambanks from overgrazing, support the regeneration of native vegetation, and reduce sediment and nutrient runoff into local waterways as the catchment recovers.

"These incentives help landholders take practical steps now that will deliver long-term benefits for waterways and the broader fire-affected landscape," Mr Wellington said.

Landholders within the Longwood Fire footprint are encouraged to contact the Goulburn Broken CMA on 5822 7700 to discuss eligibility, site priorities and available support.

The January 2026 Fire Recovery Program is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and Victorian governments through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

First ever stocking of critically endangered fish

ONE of Victoria's rarest native fish, the West Gippsland galaxias, has been released into the Tyers River in a world-first stocking of the critically endangered species.

Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) CEO Travis Dowling said hundreds of hatchery-bred West Gippsland galaxias have been released, marking a major milestone in efforts to recover the species in the wild.

Currently, the West Gippsland galaxias is found only in a small tributary of the La Trobe River, north of Traralgon. Its population suffered a 97 per cent decline between 2002 and 2012 due to sedimentation, bushfires, drought stress, and predation.

"For the first time, the species has been successfully bred at the VFA's Conservation Hatchery at Snobs Creek, giving scientists and fisheries managers a powerful new tool to support its recovery.

"A tributary of the Tyers River was carefully selected as a suitable release site by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), with high-quality habitat and conditions that maximise the chances of survival for the stocked fish," Mr Dowling said.

Representatives from Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation attended the stocking, which was coordinated by DEECA's Arthur Rylah Institute (ARI), recognising the importance of partnerships in protecting and restoring native species and waterways.

The stocking was made possible thanks to funding from the Federal Government's Saving Native Species Program.



West Gippsland galaxias. -S

The milestone coincides with the two-year anniversary of the VFA's Conservation Hatchery at Snobs Creek, and the broader 10inTen conservation program, which aims to restock and recover 10 of Victoria's most at-risk aquatic species by 2034.

In just two years, the VFA and ARI's 10inTen program has made significant progress, including world-first breakthroughs, breeding and safeguarding some of the state's most at-risk aquatic species such as the Glenelg freshwater mussel, Moroka and McDowall's galaxias, river blackfish, Macquarie perch and trout cod.

For information about the 10inTen plan, visit vfa.vic.gov.au/10inten

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or a little pain



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The Unbreakable Farmer

by Dianne Goschnick

The Unbreakable Farmer is an amazing man

He travels for miles across this wide land.

To share his story and support people living far and wide

The way he presents, you would think he takes it in his stride.

But it has not always been easy for this once farming man

Life was bloody tough as he farmed his land.

About to give up when he faced financial and emotional stress

He once felt his life and land was in such a mess.

Though he found a way to find purpose and rebuild his life

To be there for his family and his loving wife.

Nothing more important than good health and happiness

So when he reflects back, it was more his mind that was in a real mess.

The Unbreakable Farmer now so strong, he is there to support

So find the time to have a conversation with him, you really ought

He will help you find your way and hope it all makes sense

The least you should worry about is that damaged fence.

Some things can wait, but life is much more in the fore

And taking each day at a time, it will help for sure.

There's always tomorrow to tend to those many things

So please hold onto those that matter and the love and peace it brings.

Life on the land can be so mighty tough, there is no doubt

Especially with bushfires, floods, so often followed by drought.

With financial ruin and times of complete despair

You can often wonder "what's the use" or why are you here.

The Unbreakable Farmer's wise words can help guide you through

And will help you make sense with what you can do.

He stresses the importance to tell your story and be sure to be heard

Never a truer situation, please believe these words.

The Unbreakable Farmer is more like a long lost friend

I'm sure you will agree and with gratitude you will send.

To thank him for helping to ease the heartache and pain

And to help see the big picture and what you will gain.

There is hope for the future and a full life to live

Despite all the desperation you felt with so much more to give

Never give up, it is so important to be heard

As are the Unbreakable Farmer's wise and encouraging words.



Some of the committee members discussing the possible placement and fixture of the umbrella. -S



A view of the garden. -S

The wonderful sensory garden at Kellock

THE Friends of Kellock committee would like to sincerely thank everyone who came to the stall and bought delicious cakes and biscuits, or bought a barbecued sausage, with onions on the top, or bought raffle tickets for the trailer load of fire wood on Easter Saturday.

The next firewood raffle begins on June 18 and will be drawn on June 27.

The fundraising done by Friends of Kellock buys 'extras' for the residents of Kellock Lodge to enjoy, such as the magnificent sensory garden, seen in these photos. The planning took as many months as the physical

work. It was a very large endeavour, and the Kellock Lodge residents love it. To Friends of Kellock, that's all that matters.

They are currently fundraising to buy a very sturdy sun umbrella to complement the garden setting and provide shelter to residents enjoying the serenity and scents of the garden.

News Bargaining Incentive a win for regional communities

by Country Press Australia

REGIONAL news publishers have welcomed the release of draft News Bargaining Incentive legislation and urged all Members of Parliament, regardless of party, to support its passage.

Damian Morgan, President of Country Press Australia, which represents more than 240 regional and community news publications and their digital news services across the country, said the proposed legislation was an important step toward restoring fairness between Australian news publishers and major global digital platforms.

Country Press Australia recognised the work of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Minister for Communications Anika Wells and Assistant Treasurer Dr Daniel Mulino in progressing the draft legislation and acknowledged the constructive engagement that has occurred with the regional news sector through the policy development process.

"This is fundamentally about fairness, but it is also about truth, facts and the future of informed communities," Mr Morgan said.

"Professional journalism costs money to produce. Large digital platforms derive value from that journalism, but they do not employ the local reporters, editors and photographers who create it. The News Bargaining Incentive is designed to encourage fair commercial agreements so Australian journalism can remain sustainable."

In simple terms, the NBI would require large digital platforms, including Meta, TikTok and Google, to pay a charge unless they have reached commercial agreements that fairly compensate eligible Australian news organisations.

Country Press Australia said the proposed legislation builds on the News Media Bargaining Code introduced by the former Coalition Government, which established the important principle that powerful global technology platforms should contribute to the cost of the news content from which they benefit.

Australia has led the world in confronting this challenge. That leadership has been bipartisan, and Country Press Australia is calling for that same spirit of cross-party support to continue.

"Local news is not a Labor issue, a Liberal issue, a National Party issue or a Greens issue. It is an Australian issue," Mr Morgan said.

"Every community deserves access to reliable, professionally produced information. Every community deserves journalists who are prepared to ask questions, check facts, attend meetings, report decisions and give local people a voice."

Country Press Australia acknowledged the genuine contribution technology companies have made to modern life, including connectivity, commerce, search, social connection and access to information.

It also recognised that Google has continued to engage constructively with Australian news publishers and has shown that commercial agreements between global technology companies and Australian media businesses are possible.

"We acknowledge Google's constructive engagement with the news industry," Mr Morgan said.

"But the responsibility cannot fall on one company alone. All major digital platforms that derive value from Australian journalism must accept their responsibility. No company should be able to benefit from the credibility, relevance and public value of professional news while avoiding a fair contribution to the cost of producing it."

Country Press Australia said it was important the final legislation encourages genuine commercial deals and does not create an incentive for platforms to reduce, remove or downgrade access to Australian news.

"Reliable news must remain visible and accessible to Australians," Mr Morgan said.

"The answer cannot be for platforms to avoid responsibility by making trusted news harder to find. At a time of rising misinformation, Australians need more access to facts, not less."

Country Press Australia said the issue was especially important for regional, rural and local Australia, where local news media is often the only professional source of verified local information.

Together, Country Press Australia members form the largest regional digital news publishing network in the country. They reach millions of Australians across digital and print each day, and publish more than 1000 news stories online every day, produced by local journalists who live in, understand

and are accountable to the communities they serve.

Country Press Australia members cover councils, courts, emergency services, schools, sport, agriculture, local business, community groups and the decisions that affect people's everyday lives.

In many communities, if they are not there to record, question, explain and publish, often no-one else is.

"That matters deeply," Mr Morgan said.

"Without local news media, communities lose more than a publication or a website. They lose a trusted public record. They lose scrutiny of local decision making. They lose a place where facts are checked, rumours are challenged and local stories are told with care and accountability."

"At a time when misinformation can spread quickly and loudly, the work of professional local journalists has never been more important. Country Press Australia members do not deal in anonymous claims, conspiracy theories or algorithm driven outrage. They stand behind what they publish."

Country Press Australia said the consultation process must ensure regional and community publishers are properly recognised in any future commercial arrangements, not left behind while only the largest metropolitan media companies benefit.

"Regional Australians must not be treated as an afterthought," Mr Morgan said.

"Our members are often the only professional news media voice in their communities. They are the ones making sure regional people are seen, heard and understood.

"The choice is not simply between local news and no local news. It is between trusted journalism and an information vacuum. It is between facts and unchecked misinformation. It is between communities with a voice and communities left out of the national conversation."

Country Press Australia urged Parliament to pass legislation that delivers fair, practical and lasting outcomes for eligible Australian news publishers of all sizes.

"This reform is about keeping facts in front of Australians," Mr Morgan said.

"It is about protecting local journalism, strengthening democracy and ensuring regional communities continue to have a voice."



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Shane Lewis: challenges and decisions after difficult diagnosis

JUST over two years on from being diagnosed with motor neuron disease (MND), Eildon and Alexandra local Shane Lewis made the decision to undertake VAD, or voluntary assisted dying.

His daughter, Nicole Ainger, was keen to talk about the challenges faced by their family in dealing with the My Aged Care system, as well as Shane's decision.

Sourcing the help Shane needed was an ongoing struggle for the family, given that none of the local services have the training required to do his catheter and Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG) work. His wife, Marlene Answer-Lewis, was his primary carer while he was unwell.

Nicole explained, "It wasn't even anything to do with him not having funding. The funding was there and approved. There are no people to deliver the services.

"This wasn't the only reason he made the decision [VAD], but the reason we're trying to tell this story is because it shouldn't have been a part of his decision making at all.

"From all of what Mum and Shane have said, whenever they've had any carer support from Menzies, the people have been fantastic. We don't want to shoot them down at all. A couple of them even came to see Shane in the last few days after he made the decision, off their own back. They were amazing."

"But they didn't have enough people to deliver the services... I'll tell you the simplicity of doing the catheter and the PEG feed. So the catheter bag, there's a bag you empty. Wash the bag out, clip it back on. Shane had some problems with some blood clots. If you had blood clots and they wouldn't come through, it's a medical emergency. And you have to call an ambulance. It's either draining or it's not.

"The PEG feed's kind of similar in that, so he had to have these little high nutrition fluids, we call them milks... put down his tube. And then his medication was just crushed up tablets, which at the stage of the illness he was, were all about symptom management.

"They just got crushed up, shake them up with a bowl of water, and you literally just tip it down the tube. And it drains down the tube. If it doesn't go down the tube, to fix it, he has to go to hospital."

Shane came home from the hospital in the last few weeks with the resolution that he didn't want to go back to hospital if he had problems.

"He just wanted to be comfortable at home, spend time with Mum, you know. We would come visit when we could and go from there," Nicole said.

Marlene works two days a month in the Made in Mansfield store where she sells her socks, as part of the artists program. Outside of this, she works from home. Recently, she'd found that she needed carer support to look after Shane during those two days, rather than simply asking a friend to come and sit with him, due to his reliance on catheters and peg feeds.

"It's not difficult. I think there's probably just a line that you don't want to cross with your friends. So she tried to organised carers," Nicole said. "The district nursing was one of the options to come and do that, but there's no guarantee on all of the timing for them to get there. And then you're coordinating



Marlene and Shane. Shane had briefly taken the ventilator off for the photo. -S

two different services. You're trying to coordinate the district nurse, and you're trying to coordinate Menzies.

"And the reality was that those two days that Mum was trying to get recently, Menzies only had someone to cover one day, and then they couldn't do the PEG feed and medication either.

"It really was, Mum just went nope. I'll just cancel my days. And her colleagues at Made in Mansfield have been pretty incredible. It's not the first time she's had to cancel because of stuff like this. But it was this time that when she did it, Shane said, that's it, I want to use the VAD."

Nicole said, "He was at peace with the decision [to use VAD]. Once he did make the decision, he was pretty resolute. He made it. They asked him for his consent twice before they administered the medication. He did not hesitate in it at all. But in Shane fashion, he gave the doctor the thumbs up."

Shane was told when he was diagnosed that he probably only had six months to live because he had a fairly intense version of motor neuron disease called Bulbar. This version affects the diaphragm, so breathing and swallowing are impacted first. He has been nil by mouth for the last nine months.

Both he and his family knew that whatever services were delivered to him were not going to save his life, it was palliative care designed to give him the best quality of life possible. That's why they found it so frustrating that local medical professionals didn't have the training to be able to provide carer support.

"I think the bit that Mum's found frustrating is that people have known about the need for this service and by whatever miracle he lasted

a bit over two years from diagnosis, and there still wasn't a solution," Nicole said.

"I think this is a systematic issue. These skills are not complex. So why don't we just have people that are trained to do them? Why is it an extra training skill? I don't know that they need a full-time role. I think it's somewhere along the line they need to just get more carers skilled up with it.

"On top of that, when a service has got someone in their area that has the potential for needing this, that there's nothing sitting there. There's no one sitting there going, oh, we've got to make sure that this service, when they need to deliver this skill, can actually deliver it.

"I guess it comes down to, they don't have enough staffing to begin with. There wasn't an option for Mum to just show a carer how to do it."

On top of challenges around people with the skills to provide care for Shane, there was also the difficulties around My Aged Care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

He worked his whole life and never received any government benefits. He was 65 when he was diagnosed with MND, meaning that he was too old for NDIS but not old enough to receive an aged pension.

"They've changed the aged pension age, but they've not aligned everything else with it. But motor neuron disease and other complex neurological diseases like it have nothing to do with being aged," Nicole said.

"And then to get the right support in there a couple of years ago, we initially had to write to MPs to get stuff pushed through. He got told there was a 12 month wait to get

payments on disability pension escalated and it was done three days later.

"Mum got the answer of, they'll do back pay, but they only do back pay for three months. And at that point, Shane's diagnosis was six months. So we were looking at, this might be 12 months before it'll get approved. And that's not even regional specific, that's just the system."

Marlene and Shane didn't ask for ridiculous amounts of support, they struggled on in relative silence. When they asked for donations to help them refit their bathroom, the community rallied.

"We did the big fundraising thing to help them get their bathroom done because the My Aged Care wasn't going to cover enough of it and that's probably the only real time that we've asked for really direct support from anyone and we got it from the community in spades. It was amazing," Nicole said.

"Mum said to me recently that every time she goes to organise carers it just was so difficult. She was so tired and stressed about looking after Shane, but also upset that she was going to lose her husband. And she said, she just didn't think she had anything left in the tank to keep fighting."

The VAD process was another unnecessary challenge for the family. In order to qualify, you need a diagnosis from your GP, and then you've got to have another GP and other specialists to all sign off on it.

There's no access to any form of Telehealth with it, not even a digital script. The script has to be delivered in person. And the nearest specialists for Shane were located in Tatura, an hour and a half drive from Alexandra.

"I live on the Mornington Peninsula, and I'm not saying the system's perfect down here, but it's 1000 times easier for people," Nicole said.

"The problem is, I feel that we've got people making decisions for regional areas without understanding the complexity of a regional area. I don't think that regional Victoria gets a big enough voice.

"In Mum's case it's been lucky that we pushed her a long time ago to sell her car and buy an accessible van. If she hadn't done that, there's no accessible taxi in the Alexandra area. She would have had to be trying to organise patient transport.

"And as a side note, they actually have to pay for the VAD doctor to come out and it's not covered by Medicare. There's no Medicare offer. It was \$300 to get the doctor to attend when he made the call."

Nicole closed by speaking about their families' experience of the overall failure of the system, and their hopes for the future.

"I'm sure that for every person like Shane that has been happy for us to speak up for him, that there's probably another 10 people out there that say nothing. The fact is there's no one part of the system that has kind of failed Shane. It feels like it's multiple parts," Nicole said.

"I would love to see one day that the whole NDIS versus My Aged Care is gone, that there's just one system that says we will assess care needs based on your care needs. And I hope we see a cure for MND one day. I really hope we see a cure in my lifetime."

Alert about weed toxic for dogs at Eildon Pondage



Fleabane. -S

by Eildon Township Landcare Group

EILDON Township Landcare Group is alerting residents to the presence of a potentially toxic weed, identified as fleabane (likely flax-leaf), in areas around the Pondage, walking tracks, and access roads.

The alert follows a report from a Taggerty veterinarian linking the plant to dog health issues. Dog owners are urged to take care when walking in these areas.

Fleabane is a greyish, hairy plant, usually under one metre high, with multiple stems and small fluffy seed heads now turning brown.

Landcare volunteers are actively removing the weed. If found, residents are advised to wear gloves, pull the plant out by the roots, bag it, and dispose of it. Watering the soil first may help with removal in dry conditions. Further updates will be provided.



Eildon Township Landcare Group clearing the weed at the Pondage. -S

Council News



May 2026

Council lodges submission to 2026 Fires Inquiry

Council has lodged its submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the 2026 Summer Fires, ensuring the experiences of our community are formally represented.

With nearly half of all structures lost across Victoria occurring in Murrindindi, Council is advocating for a fairer, impact-based approach to recovery funding and stronger support for small rural councils.

Community members are encouraged to read the submission and stay informed as the Inquiry progresses.

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

AusNet Energy Resilience Projects Grants now open

Applications are now open for the final round of AusNet's Energy Resilience Grants. There are two categories: Energy Resilience Grants, and Energy Education and Literacy Grants.

These grants provide funding for projects that strengthen local energy resilience and help communities prepare for, respond to and recover from prolonged outages, emergencies and severe weather events.

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

2026 Murrindindi Children's Network Annual Conference

Join us on Thursday 7 May for a day of activities and discussions focusing on child safety.

Changes in early learning are currently a major topic of discussion, and keeping children safe remains a central focus of our work with children and families.

For details, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/childrensconference26

Murrindindi Business Month

Council is proud to announce Murrindindi Business Month, an initiative designed to support, strengthen and celebrate local business.

Throughout June, this coordinated program guides businesses through a journey of recovery, growth and future planning.

Businesses can register for free, attend multiple sessions and take part in the full program. Strong local businesses support a strong community.

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

Draft Annual Budget 2026/2027

Council is preparing a draft Annual Budget for the next financial year. The draft Budget is scheduled to be made available to the community for comment during May.

Notice of reinstatement of Road Management Plan

The Longwood Fire Event significantly impacted Murrindindi Shire and Council operations. In response, Council temporarily suspended the Road Management Plan at the end of January 2026 to prioritise fire response, community safety, and recovery efforts.

As of Tuesday 7 April, the Road Management Plan has been reinstated across all roads in the municipality, except those directly affected by the Longwood Fire.

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

Have Your Say on the LEAP Project

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

The survey is open from 1 May to 30 June 2026 and seeks feedback from Mansfield, Murrindindi and Strathbogie Shire communities that have already taken part in the Project.

Participate online at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/leapsurvey

Free firewood collection extended

Council is continuing its free firewood program for residents affected by the January 2026 bushfires, with more collection times now available.

Eligible residents can book a maximum of two collection times with a permit.

For details, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/freefirewood or call Council on 5772 0333 for assistance applying.

Events Forum 2026

The Strath Creek Progress Association, supported by Council, will host the Murrindindi Events Forum in Strath Creek on Wednesday 13 May, from 9.30 am to 1.30 pm. The Forum will bring the community together to build more sustainable events across the region.

This event is part of Council's Community Capacity Building Program, made possible with funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) Community Development Fund.

For details, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/eventsforum26

Get in touch

5772 0333

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

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Eildon Lions ran the sausage sizzle for the day. -BD

Snobs Creek Hatchery Open Day shows crowds around new Macquarie Perch Recovery Centre



UGFM broadcasting live from the Snobs Creek Hatchery Open Day. -BD

A DEGREE of wet weather didn't stop a crowd forming at the annual Snobs Creek Hatchery Open Day last Sunday, where the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) facility was on display to promote the important breeding and conservation work undertaken there.

Snobs Creek Hatchery produces everything from Murray cod to trout cod and Macquarie perch, brown and rainbow trout and Chinook salmon, and VFA staff were on hand to chat with attendees about the work they do.

A team from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA's) Arthur Rylah Institute were also in attendance to explain the work being carried out in Snobs Creek Hatchery's newest facility, the Macquarie Perch Recovery Centre, launched in February 2026.

On top of all this, there were a range of children's activities, casting clinics, an aquaculture hub, live music, a coffee van and sausage sizzle, making it a fun day out for all those who made the trip.



A Murray cod on display. -BD



Inside the Conservation Hatchery at the Snobs Creek Hatchery Open Day. -BD



The new Macquarie Perch Recovery Centre was on full display at the open day. -BD



Looking through the display tanks in the Macquarie Perch Recovery Centre. -BD



Attendees were taken on tours around the outside ponds. -BD



Exploring the Salmonid Hatchery at the open day. -BD



Dahlia and Kate Morley enjoying their day exploring the Snobs Creek Hatchery. -BD



Ashleigh Davon entertaining the crowd with live music. -BD

CFA conducts emergency stabilisation works

THE Country Fire Authority (CFA) is conducting its largest emergency stabilisation works in history following the devastating January 2026 bushfires.

These works are taking part across the southwest, west, northwest and northeast of the state and remain a key focus in CFA's post fire recovery for landholders.

CFA volunteers and staff, Forest Fire Management Vic (FFMVIC), Victorian State Emergency Service (SES), Coast Guard, Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) and contractors have been, and some continue to be, out on the ground in fire affected areas repairing and replacing private infrastructure that was impacted as a result of suppression activities during fire response, including fencing that was cut, gates that were damaged, and replacing water that was used.

The reinstatement of soil and stabilisation of control lines on private property remains a priority and involves extensive work using dozers and graders to push back soil and apply erosion control measures to protect the land and water quality.

CFA established a dedicated Incident Control Centre (ICC) at Seymour specifically for the emergency stabilisation works for the Longwood-Berrys Lane fire.

CFA's Vegetation Management Team Leader and Deputy Incident Controller/Stabilisation Manager for the Seymour ICC Daniel Idczak said the Longwood-Berrys Lane fire is the largest fire CFA lead this season, impacting more than 1800 properties predominantly on private land.

"The perimeter of the fire is 540km and we have mapped around 889km of control lines so it was a very large fire," Daniel said.

"We've assessed all that area aerially and crews are working on all sectors of the fire footprint with around 60 per cent of the control line now stabilised.

"We have a number of CFA volunteers and staff in teams out there, working alongside partner agencies to make this happen. It's sector-wide and it's a big job, so we need all the resources we can get."

CFA is working through properties on a request basis. Daniel says some landowners may not want parts of their property repaired.

"People often ask us to leave the control line in place as they want to maintain it as a permanent asset going forward," Daniel said.

"We've received really positive feedback from residents as a result of these stabilisation works, some have made permanent changes to their properties to allow easier access for emergency services in the future if required.

"We're moving as quick as we feasibly can to get to properties. There's a lot happening out there and a lot of people have been impacted but we're doing our best to get there as quickly as we can.

"We're working closely with those impacted and traumatised community members so there's many challenging conversations taking place."

CFA is also working with the community to repair a football oval used for staging areas, cleaning the halls that were used for community hubs and replacing the water used for aviation purposes.

The emergency stabilisation works have largely been completed for the fire impacted areas of Natimuk, Streatham and Larralea, while works for the Mount Mercer fire is scheduled to be completed by the end of April and in the next couple of months for Harcourt and Longwood.

Landholders who have been impacted by fire can submit a form to request repairs at their property that were a direct result of fire suppression activities from emergency services. All fencing and water replacement work is reactive to requests from landholders.



Mansfield Football Netball Club president, Bo Christopher (centre, left) with BlazeAid Alexandra camp coordinator Cheryle Foster (centre, right) with the \$6000 cheque before football and netball players at training last week. -S

Eagles help out with fire relief and BlazeAid

by Pam Zierk-Mahoney

INSPIRED by an ABC Landline program focusing on the effects the 2026 bushfires had on sports persons in local football and netball games and other sports, Mansfield Football Netball Club has chipped in with funding support.

The program also focused on the BlazeAid volunteer organisation that helps rebuild affected farms.

MFNC president Bo Christopher said, "As a club we wanted to do something to help not only the farmers but those who help with the recovery. Many sports participants could not take part in their local matches due to commitments either with firefighting or farm recoveries, so we decided to do some fund raising to help out. The best way we could help was to raise some money and donate to BlazeAid

who are helping our local farmers and who came in straight after the fires to help replace fencing. What a great community group this is.

"We reached out to our Melbourne network for mainly three major items which we could auction off," Christopher said.

The Victorian Racing Club, Carlton United Breweries and the AFL Victoria all came up trumps and donated items to the value of around \$5000.

"At an auction in the clubrooms following the Easter Saturday games those items were auctioned and raised \$6000.

"Auctioneer was Tom Davies from Nutrien Mansfield, and they were very appreciative of his assistance."

A cheque presentation was held last Thursday to BlazeAid camp coordinator for the Longwood/Alexandra region's Cheryle

Foster in front of MFNC footballers and netballers while at training.

Ms Foster said the money was very much appreciated and the donation from the football netball club will go a long way to supporting BlazeAid in the Longwood fire recovery efforts.

She said a total of 1500kms of fencing is the task before BlazeAid in this area alone which covers, Merton, Alexandra, Ruffy, Highlands, Gobur and all the way down to Eildon.

"This will be a long-term recovery effort for BlazeAid which will be here to help out for as long as it takes," she said.

Ms Foster also said BlazeAid was looking for more volunteers for this recovery project and anyone willing to take up a challenge can contact her at the Alexandra BlazeAid camp.

Government announces additional family violence supports

THE Victorian Government is boosting support to help victim-survivors of family violence to stay safe and rebuild their lives, with the *Victorian Budget 2026/27* investing \$3.5 million to expand the Personal Safety Initiative.

The Personal Safety Initiative allows victim survivors to access important, but often costly, practical security upgrades. This includes stronger doors and locks, alarms, lighting and security cameras. It means more women will be able to access this program and feel safe in their own home.

Women and children from diverse backgrounds experiencing family violence often face unique barriers, risks and gaps in accessing support, so the government is investing \$6.4 million from the *Strengthening Women's Safety Package* to expand access to specialist family violence support for multicultural and multifaith women, women on temporary visas, children and young people, older women, women leaving prison, women with disability, and gender diverse Victorians.

Bushfire safety information to be released

THE state Opposition is accusing the government of deliberately hiding bushfire risk management reports, leaving regional communities to face Victoria's fire seasons without knowing the real risk around them.

The reports provide localised bushfire risk and fuel hazard levels, information farmers, families and communities need to prepare for a bushfire season and stay safe.

Shadow Minister for Public Land Management Melina Bath said, "It's appalling Labor knowingly withheld critical bushfire safety information, meaning regional Victorians went into fire seasons not knowing their bushfire risk was extreme.

"Recent fire seasons have seen the tragic loss of human life, homes lost, and livestock lost. For a government to have not released the reports that may have lessened this devastation, is beyond comprehension."

Ms Bath said the reports were kept hidden as they would have exposed the government's bushfire unpreparedness.

"This is a government more interested in self-protection than public safety. And it just demonstrates the little regard this city-focussed government has for regional Victoria."

She said that the cover-up occurred while hundreds of frontline firefighting vehicles were taken out of service, including faulty Unimogs and G-Wagons, stripping firefighters of critical capability when fuel hazards were at their worst.

A recent motion, successfully passed through the Legislative Council by the Opposition, will see the bushfire risk documents finally released.

"Victorians deserve the truth, not a government that hides fuel hazard warnings and leaves communities to face bushfires without knowing the risks around them," Ms Bath said.

AusNet Energy Resilience Community Fund final round opens

COMMUNITIES across AusNet's electricity distribution network are invited to apply for the final round of grants from AusNet's \$12 million Energy Resilience Community Fund (ERCF), which is now open.

Established in response to the major storms of February 2024, the fund is helping communities better prepare for prolonged power outages and emergencies.

Since launching the fund, AusNet has provided grants to almost 100 energy resilience and education projects including the creation of more than 60 community energy resilience hubs providing power, connection, critical services and community support during severe weather and other emergencies.

AusNet Energy Resilience Community Fund Manager Kim Sullivan said the grants are helping strengthen local resilience and keep communities safe and connected when it matters most.

"Reliable energy is critical to how our communities function, particularly during extreme weather and prolonged outages," Ms Sullivan said.

"Through this fund, AusNet is supporting practical, on-the-ground solutions, from back-up power and solar and storage, to community facilities that will help people access vital services and stay connected during emergencies."

The ERCF is open to community and not-for-profit organisations, local councils and essential small businesses across AusNet's electricity distribution network area.

In this final round, AusNet is offering Energy Resilience Grants of \$5000 to \$50,000 for projects such as generators, solar and battery storage, back-up power for critical businesses, electrical infrastructure upgrades, and generator-powered mobile facilities including cool rooms, kitchens and showers. There are also Energy Education and Literacy Grants of \$5000 to \$25,000 for initiatives that improve energy knowledge and capability through learning resources, multimedia tools and community education campaigns.

Ms Sullivan said all Energy Resilience Grant projects must be capable of operating during outages.

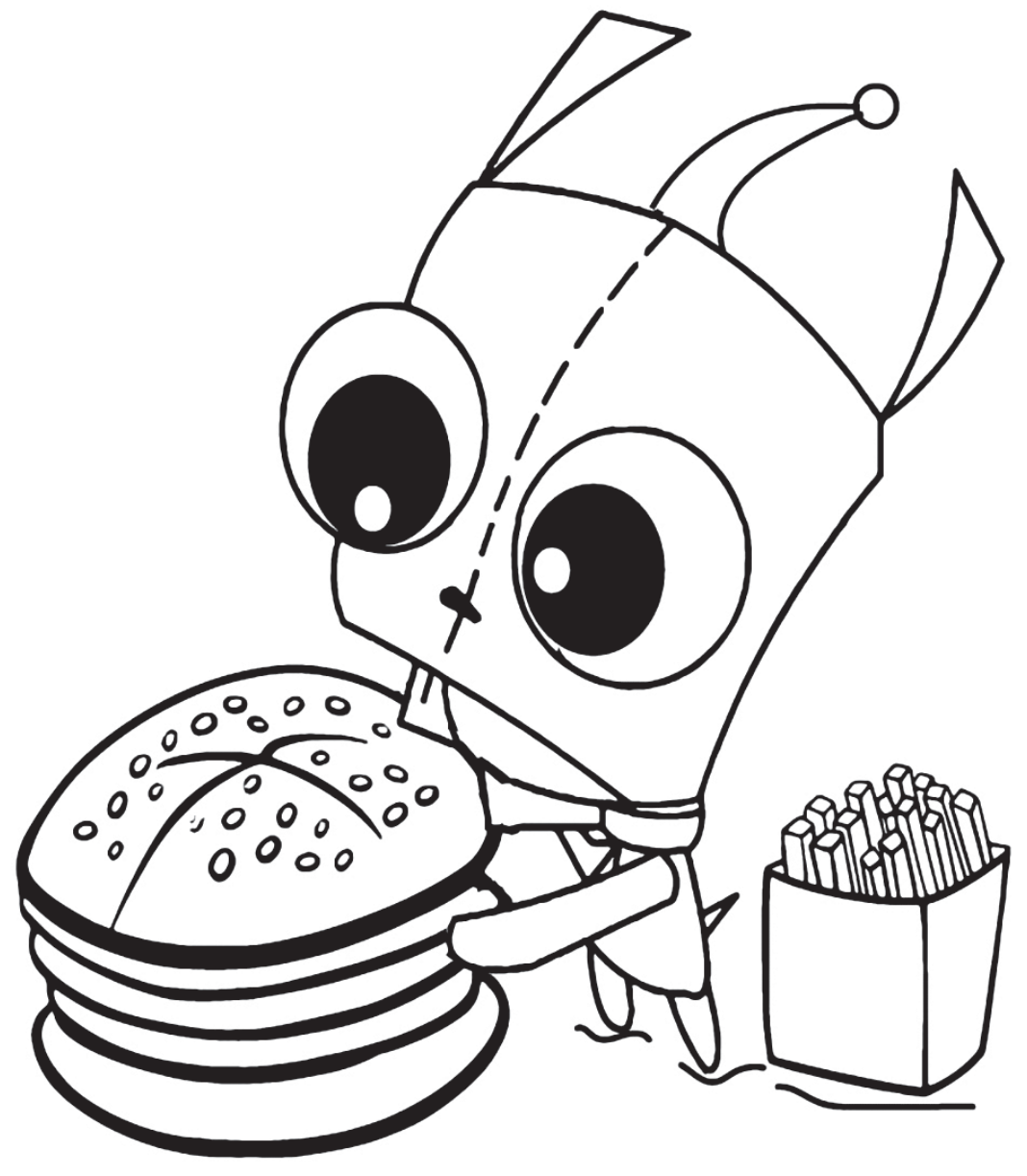
"These projects must be 'islandable', meaning they can deliver power when the broader network is unavailable."

Applications close at 5pm on Friday, June 12. More information and application details are available at ausnetservices.com.au/ercf

KID'S PUZZLES PUZZLES

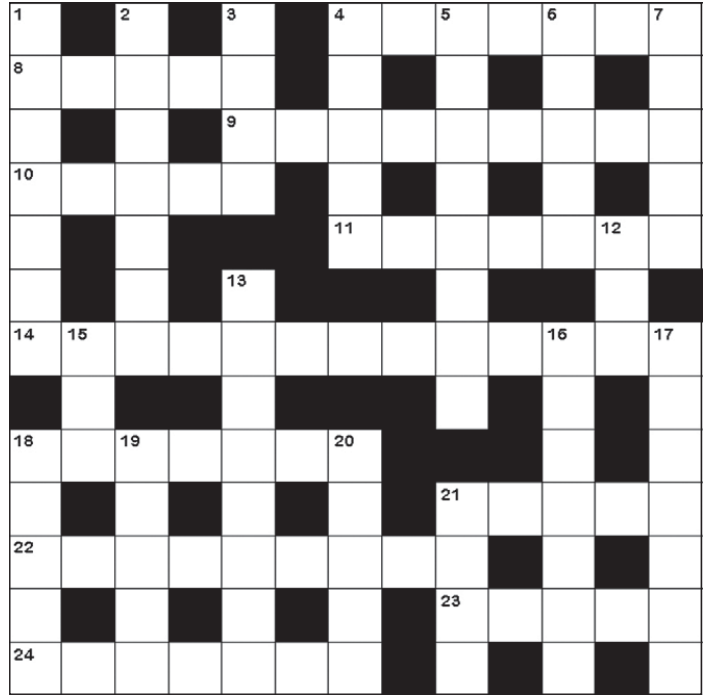
SOLUTIONS
Page 18

Colouring Page



Crossword

- ACROSS**
- Layers of pasta with sauce, cheese and meat.
 - Large black-and-white bear from China.
 - Smooth-skinned variety of the peach.
 - The popular taste at a given time.
 - Hung down loosely and swayed to and fro.
 - Inclined to judge other people too severely.
 - A long-handled pan used for frying foods.
 - Timeworn and banal from constant repetition.
 - A gradual beginning and becoming visible.
 - Show a response to someone or something.
 - A point that sticks out and attracts attention.



- DOWN**
- Words written in memory of one who has died.
 - Wrap around or enclose completely.
 - A group of musicians playing popular music.
 - Capable of thinking with a clear mind.
 - Become stale or foul from lack of movement.

- A cooking surface of parallel metal bars.
- Much further advanced than the others.
- A major division of geological time.
- An introduction to a play or a novel.
- Large long-haired wild ox of Tibet.
- Something funny that evokes laughter.
- A complete outfit for a new baby.
- Cooks slowly and for a long time in liquid.
- Completely or highly satisfactory.
- Doctrine accepted to be true without proof.
- A limited period of time.

Word Search - Words starting with "N"

NACHOS	P	Y	T	N	D	F	W	N	W	F	H	J	Y	Q	A
NAME	E	K	J	O	S	R	E	B	M	U	N	Y	T	M	S
NATURE	G	R	U	T	I	X	N	D	S	O	Y	E	H	Y	Q
NAUGHTY	X	C	U	E	T	Z	O	Y	O	N	M	O	G	W	W
NEARLY	N	Z	U	T	J	Y	O	T	S	A	Z	N	U	J	E
NEVER	W	I	Q	J	A	E	D	D	N	I	A	E	A	D	M
NEXT	S	V	G	S	A	N	L	E	G	C	C	S	N	B	E
NICE	L	U	A	H	Y	D	E	Q	H	I	L	I	B	U	N
NIGHT	B	S	W	W	T	I	S	O	N	N	H	W	Q	K	I
NINE	Y	Y	E	Z	X	Q	S	A	R	E	V	E	N	K	N
NOODLES	Y	L	C	U	L	G	K	P	M	R	H	Q	V	G	D
NOTE	I	E	R	A	E	I	A	K	J	R	G	S	L	L	B
NOUN	Y	P	O	A	Y	H	N	O	U	N	F	K	O	B	Y
NOUN	B	H	K	Z	E	C	M	A	K	E	M	P	K	A	U
NUMBERS	D	T	P	G	Q	N	Q	U	Q	G	A	O	K	I	Q

Word Search

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

Sudoku

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

- Winter**
- | | |
|--------------|----------|
| COATS | OPENFIRE |
| FROST | RAIN |
| GLOVES | SCARF |
| GUMBOOTS | SKIING |
| HOTCHOCOLATE | SNOW |
| JUMPER | WIND |

Difficulty: Easy

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.

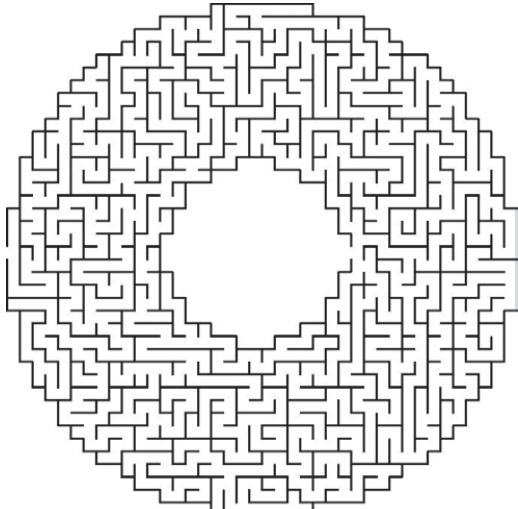
Math Square

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.

	+		-		10
-		-		+	
	+		-	4	4
-		+		-	
	-		+	7	3
-3		10		-2	

Maze



Math Square

	+		-		5
+		-		-	
	-		+		4
-		-		+	
8	÷		÷	2	1
4		-3		6	

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.

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Claire Palmer. -S

Claire Palmer commences as Interim CEO of Alexandra District Health

ALEXANDRA District Health (ADH) has welcomed Claire Palmer as Interim Chief Executive Officer, commencing Monday, April 20.

Claire brings more than 25 years of nursing and health service experience to the role, including almost two decades with ADH. Since joining the organisation in 2007, she has held several senior leadership positions, including Nurse Unit Manager Acute and Urgent Care, Deputy Director of Nursing/Quality Manager, Director of Quality and Risk, Director Clinical Services/Nursing, and Acting CEO.

A local at heart, Claire grew up in Violet Town and now lives in Yea with her husband and two sons on their Angus cattle farm.

Claire said she is proud to step into the role and lead ADH during an important time for the service and community.

"I care deeply about our staff, our patients and our community. My focus is on supporting our team to continue delivering safe, high-quality care for the people who rely on us every day," Claire said.

"ADH is a unique place. We have a strong culture, a supportive team and highly skilled staff who are committed to achieving the best health outcomes for our patients. We provide care across every stage of life, from young children in urgent care through to end-of-life care, and we do it in a very personal way.

"I'm excited about what's ahead, including expanding our oncology infusion clinic to two days per week in partnership with Eastern Health, and introducing a post-discharge cardiology clinic from May so patients can access follow-up care closer to home."

ADH Board Chair Kim Flanagan said Claire's strong connection to the organisation and community positions her well to lead the health service.

"Claire knows ADH inside and out. She is a highly respected leader with a deep commitment to quality care and to supporting our staff," Mr Flanagan said.

"We are confident Claire will continue to build on the strengths of our service and ensure we deliver the high-quality care our community expects."

The Boards of Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health have formally recommended a voluntary amalgamation to strengthen access to care closer to home for the Alexandra and district community.

The proposal is with the Minister for Health for consideration and approval under the *Health Services Act 1988*. No changes will occur unless Ministerial approval is granted.

ADH continues to focus on strengthening local healthcare access, including initiatives that reduce the need for patients to travel, while maintaining high-quality, community-based care.

PUZZLES SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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MATH SQUARE

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MAZE

KIDS - MATH SQUARE

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The many medical faces behind the Mouth Mapping Screening Program, from Yea and District Memorial Hospital, University of Melbourne and La Trobe University. -BD

World-first Mouth Mapping program launched by YDMH at Yea Saleyards

YEA and District Memorial Hospital's (YDMH's) new Mouth Mapping Screening Program was launched last Friday at the Yea Saleyards, following the conclusion of the cattle sales. A partnership between YDMH, the University of Melbourne and Yea Rotary brought the project to fruition.

Ian Marshman, Board Chair at YDMH, officially launched the program, and attendees heard from speakers such as YDMH CEO Elizabeth Sinclair, Tony Jacobs from Yea Rotary, the Rural Health Academic Network Co-ordinator at YDMH Dr Jennifer Keast, and Associate Professor in Oral Medicine and Oral Pathology at University of Melbourne Tami Yap.

The Mouth Mapping Screening Program, or MouthMap, is a world-first oral cancer screening program being undertaken at the Yea Saleyards by YDMH and Melbourne University. It uses high-quality medical photography to take detailed images of a person's mouth, which are then sent away to be reviewed by specialist doctors. This save locals from long journeys to Melbourne.

MouthMap will be delivered as part of the YDMH Saleyards Program of free health clinics held alongside monthly cattle sales at the Yea Saleyards. The initiative was funded by Rotary Club of Yea.



The forces behind the new Mouth Mapping initiative. Pictured are YDMH Board Chair Ian Marshman, YDMH CEO Elizabeth Sinclair, Associate Professor Tami Yap from Melbourne University, Dr Jennifer Keast, Dr Virginia Dickson-Swift from La Trobe University, and Yea Rotary's Tony Jacobs. -BD



The assembled crowd listening to the various speakers talk about the new initiative. -BD

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The Alexandra Standard and The Yea Chronicle are printed by North East Media, Wangaratta.

Print Post Approved - PP 10000292.

DEATH NOTICES

BARBARA Doyle.

Lovely lady, beautiful smile. Condolences to the Scorch and Doyle families. Love Aileen Tossol.

DOYLE, Alison Barbara

14/02/1961-28/04/2026 Loving wife to Leo (dec.). Loving daughter to Colin (dec.) and Elizabeth (dec.). Loving sister to Janet, Roger and Katie. Loving sister in law to Ian and Leanne. Friend and companion to Jim. Loving aunty and stepmum. Rest in Peace.

MCCOLM, Jillian Mary

14/03/1939-25/04/2026 Loved wife of Ken (dec). Loved mum of Paul, Catherine and Alexandra. Loved Nan of Sarah and Jamie. Much loved friend and companion of David. Rest in Peace.

MEETINGS



ACHERON FIRE BRIGADE

General and Biannual meeting will be held on Sunday, May 17 at 10.30am at Acheron Hall. All welcome.

PETS & LIVESTOCK

ISA BROWN LAYERS

- POL, \$35 each. Phone 5798 1868. Pick-up in Alexandra or Yea. beckysfreerange@gmail.com

FUNERAL NOTICES

DOYLE, Alison Barbara

The funeral service to celebrate the life of Alison Barbara Doyle will be held at The Alexandra Shire Hall on Wednesday, May 13, 2026 commencing at 1pm. A private cremation will follow the service.



MCCOLM, Jillian Mary

The funeral service to celebrate the life of Jillian McCollm will be held at The Murrindindi Chapel, Alexandra on Monday, May 11, 2026 commencing at 1pm.



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FITNESS EQUIPMENT

Rental and Sales Alexandra Treadmills, X-trainers, exercise bikes, rowers and more. PH:0407 231 377

MEETINGS

Notice of Rescheduled Annual General Meeting



Friends of the Library Alexandra & District Inc.

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of FOL Alexandra & District Inc., originally scheduled for April 7, 2026, has been postponed due to lack of quorum.

New date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at 6pm Alexandra Library, Grant Street, Alexandra New members welcome Nomination forms for committee positions available from the secretary: proctor@virtual.net.au



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need invitations?



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Alexandra Golf Club pays tribute to Barb Doyle

by Dave Silverman, on behalf of the committee and members

THERE was some golf played last week at Alexandra Golf Club, but it doesn't feel right to make much of it, having just been reminded so starkly about what is really important.

Last Tuesday, a much loved and universally respected member of the Alexandra Golf Club community lost her life as the result of a tragic accident. Barb Doyle was quite simply, a force of nature, with an ever-present smile and a bubbly demeanour, and the room always seemed just a little bit brighter when she was in it.

A long term member of the Alexandra club, Barb was a keen competitor, as the many photos of her accepting trophies prove, but never took the game, or herself, too seriously.

As a club, we are grieving, and trying to come to terms with the fact that we will never see Barb out on the course again, but at the same time, we also wish to convey our heartfelt sympathy to all of her other friends and her family.

I'm sure that all our lives are that much richer for having known Barb, and that much poorer for having lost her so soon. Vale, Barb.

Graeme Smedley Memorial at Eildon Golf Club

by Puttamic

LAST Saturday Eildon golfers paid tribute to one of Eildon Golf Club's lifetime members and past captain of the club in the Graeme Smedley Memorial. Only a small field of 11 players contested a four ball best ball competition in Graeme's honour.

Winners for the day with 43 points were the pairing of Michael and Sandi McLear followed up by Colin Long and Leigh Munro on 41. The ball rundown went to 40 points and earned Kerry Power and Grant Walters a prize.

Phil Dally was nearest the pin on the par four third (second shot), Ken Coller the 12th and Kerry Power on the 14th. The fifth and 11th went begging as did the 15th on the birdie hole. Kerry Power was successful with birdie on the par four eighth finding the green with his tee shot but unfortunately missing the eagle opportunity.

The entry draw was shared between Phil Dally and Ian Lakeland and Kerry Power was the fortunate swindle recipient. Congratulations to all winners.

Next week's competition will be a stroke round. Hope to see a few more familiar faces. Until then, take care and happy hitting.

Serious matches underway for Euroa and District winter tennis

by Deb Mims

HAVING had the Round Robin the previous week to blow out the cobwebs for some of the players at the Euroa and District Ladies' Winter Tennis Association, the 'Weather Gods' produced another glorious day for the ladies to take to the courts for the now serious, social stuff.

Moglonemby versus Mansfield 3-3, 35-39

The Mansfield team consisting of Karyn Fraser, Carolyn Muymray and Loretta Armitage ably supported by Michelle Pigdon and Belinda Cipa, were up against reigning premiers, Moglonemby, over in Euroa.

Sue Vaughan, Marlene Hanrahan, Lyn Johnson, and Lisa Krepp fought hard against Mansfield, with two tie breakers going Moggy's way. Some seesawing matches saw the end result going Mansfield's way, kicking off the season with the major points.

Creightons Creek versus Terip Terip 4-2, 43-37

Playing at the same courts, Creightons Creek took on Terip Terip who were runners up in last year's comp. Marja Wonderjem, Lyndal Bigland, Ros Doxey, and Kerry Hewlett flying the flag for Creightons Creek showed they were a force to be reckoned with.

Up against Cindy Hayes. Frances Lawrence, Phoebe McDermid, and Jenny Martin, Creightons Creek took the win. Once again two tie breakers were played going to Creightons Creek, which made the difference in the number of sets apiece and the final score.

Wappan versus Euroa 2-4, 29-42

The third match was a home game for Mansfield's Wappan, Jenny Bell, Rhonda Carpenter, Carol Watts and



The Euroa team of Faye Mollison, Mary Dewis, Debbie Seach and Triona King. -S

Kimberley Marsden up against Euroa's Faye Mollison, Deb Seach, Triona King and Mary Dewis. Euroa was too strong for Wappan winning four of the six sets. Once again a tie breaker was played showing just how close the matches can be.

As always to end off the day a lot of chatter and a late lunch early afternoon tea was enjoyed. Benalla had the bye.

This week sees Mansfield hosting Creightons Creek, Euroa a home game against Moglonemby and Terip Terip hosting Benalla. Wappan has the bye.

Hectic week for Marysville Golf Club

by Lesley Rundle

Marysville Golf Report

THE Dalhousie Pennant season is well under way with the men's finals played last Sunday at Lancefield. In the Division Two Handicap final Marysville Golf Club played Alexandra but unfortunately due to heavy rain the match was abandoned after four holes. The decision regarding the outcome of the match is pending and will be explained in next week's report.

Last Monday, April 27 in the third round of the ladies' section Marysville played Woodend at Seymour and lost 3/2. Both Michele Mansfield and Margaret Blair's matches were drawn after the 18th and a 19th hole had to be played. Despite their great efforts both the ladies lost on the 19th hole. Last Monday Marysville played Romsey/Macedon at Lancefield and results will be given next week.

Last Thursday three ladies travelled to Lancefield to play in the ladies' tournament. Most players found the fast pace of the greens tricky but a good day was had by all 46 ladies who attended. This week's Dalhousie event is closer to home at Yea and five ladies will compete in the annual bowl.

Last Saturday a mixed stroke round was played for the May monthly medal and the ladies round

included the third round of the Barton Shield. The ladies' medal winner was Heather Jenkins (19) with nett 76 and the runner up was Sabrina Stow (23) with nett 78 on a countback from Beverley Bellman. The Round Three qualifiers for the Barton Shield were Beverley Bellman and Fiona Wright. Round Four will be on June 13.

The daily winner was David Douthwaite (24) with nett 71 followed by Steve Coker (18) with nett 72. At the presentation former member and men's Captain Justin Ruddick and his son Hayden were welcomed to the club and Hayden won three of the four nearest the pins.

Brian Worcester won on the 11th hole and also won the Golden Shot. Richy Clark won the putting with 23. At presentation members helped Heather Jenkins celebrate her birthday and all enjoyed the chocolate cake expertly made by Helen Howard. Next Saturday all golfers will play Par.

It was with great shock and sadness that members learnt of the tragic death of Barb Doyle. She was a long-time respected member of the Murrindindi and Dalhousie golfing community, was a skilful golfer and a pleasure to play with. Member's thoughts are with her family, friends and all the Alexandra Golf Club members. Barb's smile and calm demeanour will be greatly missed.

Alexandra Squash Club: Round Two of Term Two pennant

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition Funnel Webs versus Redbacks

Randy versus Sally: Sally took an early lead in an attempt to overwhelm Randy. Digging in for a strong finish, Randy overcame Sally and claimed the victory. 69 to 61.

Sam versus Mick: Great rallies throughout. Sam lead from the front to build a substantial lead. Mick won the last game but it was too late to change the result. Sam won the match. 68 to 54.

Ben F (fill in) versus Jim: Incredible squash. Well run points and dedication, it was impressive to witness. Ben dug in to win the crux points. Jim had trouble with his placement, furthering Ben's opportunities and helping Ben in his win. 55 to 48.

Orb Weavers versus White Tails

Eric versus Matthew (fill in): Great game to watch. There were some great rallies, but Matthew was on fire and proved too strong for his opponent. 81 to 35.

Jessica versus Liane: A see-sawing match. Jessica took a commanding lead in the second game but Liane got revved up and fought back in the second half to overcome the deficit, taking the lead to win the match. 59 to 52.

Chris versus Sam (fill in): A high energy game of squash, lots of long rallies and lots of running around the court. Sam took the lead in game two but had some push back by Chris who persisted to claim the victory. 67 to 59.

Michael H versus Daniel W (fill in): Daniel's power and court speed makes him a difficult opponent, but Michael has many tricks and used conventional shots to stay in the game. Eventually

the timer rang and the point were level when the match ended. 60 to 60.

Wednesday competition Bees versus Mosquitos

Marty versus Jordan: The youngest player in the pennant had a tough assignment against Jordan who has developed a fair arsenal of shots. Marty played some good strokes, but Jordan won without needing to engage top gear. 71 to 58.

Lucan versus Mick: The score was tight it the midway point with only a two-point difference. Lucas kept the pressure on Mick to pull ahead in games three and four to finish on top. 57 to 48.

Justin versus Daniel W (fill in): Extreme intensity and vigour in this match. Neither opponent wanted to give more than they had two and both fiercely wanted to win. Daniel managed to hoard some extra points early on which he held onto and greatly helped him in his victory. 63 to 60.

Hornets versus Wasps

Nicole versus Beth: These opponents were quite evenly matched which made for a great game. Beth started strong, but Nicole got a read on the play and came back to win by one-point. 53 to 52.

Kristelle versus Daniel L: A sibling match. Both players were a bit too relaxed and ambled around the court. Kristelle needs to watch her serve from the left box, as there were a lot of high serves. Daniel did well in the last minute of each game to run away with the match. 69 to 55.

Ben F versus Michael M: The first game was an absolute slaughter with Ben taking a 17-point lead. Michael took control for the next two games to make up some ground, but Ben wouldn't concede, finding his footing to claim the win. 54 to 43.

Athletics Day at Alexandra Secondary College



Throwing the shotput. -AR



The long jump. -AR



Students ready to take part in the running events. -AR



Students received a present when they put on sunscreen. -AR



Snacks were available for the students. -AR



One of the running events. -AR



The students had a day of fun and sports. -AR



Many students dressed up for the Athletics Day. -AR



Fun in the sun. -AR

SPORT

Rebels big winners at the Junction

BOTH the rebels Seniors and Reserves teams recorded resounding wins over bottom of the ladder Yarra Junction at Yarra Junction.

Reserves

Alexandra 14.18-102 defeated Yarra Junction 3.1-19

The Reserves took to the field, despite several key players unavailable yet continued to play impressive team football with their attack on the ball a feature.

The team's on field domination was offset by their conversion recording 18 behinds impacting the 83-point victory.

Better players where Ben Jack in the midfield was prominent throughout the four quarters. With the full back and center half back unavailable the ever reliable Lachlan Collard was the general in defence, Luke James in the ruck continues to impress topped off with three goals combining well with Connor Heaslip. Justin Coventry with four goals (five last week) and Luke Frith took advantage of the constant delivery from upfield.

Goal kickers: Coventry four, James three, Frith three, Jack, Steiner, Heaslip, Humphries one.

Awards: Shannon Group Award, Ben Jack; Future Fit Finance, Lachlan Collard; RUOAK Hotel, Luke Frith; Buxton Hotel Award, Luke James.

Seniors

Alexandra 31.25-211 defeated Yarra Junction 4.3-27

The Rebels Senior team continued its brilliant form with 89 and 99-point wins against Emerald and Yea with a massive 184-point win over Yarra Junction.

Prime mover Mitch Parker the reigning 2025 Best and Fairest winner continues his outstanding form.

Kicking 31 goals the Rebels potent forward line didn't disappoint with William Stewart kicking eight goals, Sam Critchley kicking seven, Josh Edward's kicking six and Edward Watkin kicking five all taking advantage of the Rebels' midfield dominance.

Young local Rebels Ryan Lucas and Peter Cairns also put in impressive games.

Awards: Kervale Award, Mitch Parker; O'Briens Real Estate, Sam Critchley; RUOAK Hotel Award, Ryan Lucas; Buxton Hotel Award, Peter Cairns.

After a well-earned rest with next weekend's bye Alexandra then go into games against four of the top teams in the following five weeks.

Under 18s

Alexandra 5.3-33 defeated by Warburton / Milgrove 6.12-48

Bowens Award, Shannon Galloway; Kia Chadstone, Matt Wal; ANFC Club Voucher, Hunter Vine; Coaches award, Logan Conway.

Netball results

A Grade, Yarra Junction 59 defeated Alexandra 25. Awards: Incentive, Ellie Hedger; Corner Hotel Award, Belle Spargo.

B Grade, Yarra Junction 53 defeated Alexandra 35. Awards: Incentive, Cassie Kidd; Corner Hotel Award, Regan O'Toole.

C Grade, Alexandra 21 defeated Yarra Junction 18. Awards: RUOAK Hotel, Lizzie Butcher; Corner Hotel Award, Brodie Wheelhouse.

Under 17s, Alexandra 45 defeated Yarra Junction 5. Awards: RUOAK Hotel, Eva Twitchett; Corner Hotel Award, Taya Barkley.



Under 18's player Shannon Galloway. -S



Reserves player Lachlan Collard. -S



Seniors player Brad Johnson. -S



Reserves player Ben Jack. -S



Seniors player Mitch Parker. -S



Under 17 netballer Marli Collier. -S



Alexandra's Under 11 netballers moving the ball. -S



Under 10 footballer Noah Knight. -S



Under 9 footballers Kayson Halliday and Ned Hedger. -S



Under 14 player Mitch Kidd in the ruck. -S



Under 14 player Harish Balansag. -S

Alexandra junior football and netball report

Football

Under 16

Echuca 156 defeated Alexandra 8

Awards: Reddrops FoodWorks, Aiden Campbell; Essence Coffee Lounge Award, Jordan Carr; Kazza's Diner, Brock Hogan; Gilligan Plumbing, Chase Hilder; Coaches award, Izham Edmund.

Under 14

Alexandra 103 defeated Mooropna 13

Awards: Reddrops FoodWorks, Cooper Rennie; Essence Coffee Lounge, Charlie Broadway; Kazza's Diner, Jett Danieli; Coaches award, Will Simpson.

Under 12

Alexandra 33 defeated St Marys 12

Awards: Reddrops FoodWorks, Zach Stephens; Essence Coffee Lounge, Lincon Dehn; Kazza's Diner, Baxter Lamaro; Coaches award, Bodhi McKenzie.

Under Nines

Awards: Essence Coffee Lounge, Eden Kelly; Sherrin Bounce Footy, Riley Wings; Footy cards, Ned Hedger and James Munro.

The Under 10s didn't take the field last week, with St Mary's unfortunately unable to field a side due to low numbers.

Netball

11 and Under Red

Alexandra 2 defeated by Yea 3

Awards: Reddrops Award, Izzy Benson; Kazza's Diner, Annabell Hill.

11 and Under Black

Alexandra 6 defeated by St Marys

Awards: Reddrops Award, Matilda Blakeney; Kazza's Diner, Oakley Bishop.

13 and Under Red

Alexandra 7 defeated by St Marys 38

Awards: Reddrops FoodWorks, Gemma Cole; Kazza's Dinner, Charli Stephens.

13 and Under Black

Alexandra 7 defeated by Broadford 54

Awards: Reddrops FoodWorks, Summer Edwards; Kazza's Diner, Ruby Bermingham.

15 and Under Red

Alexandra 19 defeated by Yea 50

Awards: Reddrops FoodWorks Award, Eadie Gibson; Kazza's Diner, Holly Williams.

15 and Under Black

Alexandra 12 defeated Broadford 8

Awards: Asher Mullins and Zelda van Lierop.



Under 10 footballer Leo Jager. -S



Tough competition in the Under Nine football. -S



Under 12s celebrate after a goal. -S



Alexandra Under 11 netballer taking on the competition. -S



Under 12 footballer Vander Kaiser. -S

THE ALEXANDRA · EILDON · MARYSVILLE

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The Thornton-Eildon team in a huddle. -S

Thornton-Eildon celebrate growth and women's sport in away clash

by Sophia Weaver

THE scoreboard may have favored the hosts, but for the Thornton-Eildon Football Netball Club (TEDFNC), Round Four represented a significant milestone in their inaugural season. Despite a 45 to 0 loss to Gembrook-Cockatoo, the 'Roos' walked off the ground celebrating their most competitive performance to date, recording their smallest losing margin of the year.

The match at Gembrook Recreation Reserve was more than just a contest, it was a celebration of the expanding landscape

of women's sport in Victoria, marking the first women's AFL side fielded by Gembrook-Cockatoo and their first win.

A wall of defense

After the early morning trip 'over the hill', the Roos arrived ready to dismantle the opposition's offensive plans. Every point registered by Gembrook-Cockatoo was hard-earned, as the Thornton side utilized clean tackling, well timed smothers, and a series of impressive mark intercepts to interrupt the play.

While the hosts eventually secured their first-ever win as a team, the Roos' technical improvement was the talk of the

sidelines. The skills and courage of the brand-new squad suggests that their first points on the ladder are not a matter of 'if', but 'when'.

While Gembrook-Cockatoo walked away with the win, the energy in the visitor's rooms told the story of a different kind of victory. Coach Tash Hay noted that the bond within the team has solidified faster than anyone could have anticipated.

"One of the proudest moments came after the game," Tash shared.

"Walking into the change rooms, the music was pumping, the girls were singing at the top of their lungs, and the whole room was vibing. That energy says everything. This brand new team has connected, bonded, and grown into something special already."

Community recognition

The club also took time to recognize individual excellence and the vital role of its support staff. Jimmy Fulton was named Volunteer of the Week, cited for his relentless energy and encouragement as the team's runner, a role crucial to the Roos' developing on-field structure.

The Roos now look forward to returning to their home ground next week, where they aim to turn this defensive momentum into offensive results.

Gameday awards

Bechet Cousens: \$45 Voucher (Valley Aged and Disability Home Care Support Services); Jevitha Kumar: \$25 Club Voucher; Amber Saric-Skewes: \$20 Dindi Kids Cash Gift.

Next Saturday is a home game against Officer at Thornton Recreation Reserve, 1.30pm. Head down to Thornton next Saturday to support the team, grab a drink, and enjoy the footy.



Game day award winners Bechet, Jay and Amber. -S



Volunteer of the Week, Jimmy, the team's runner. -S