

The Yea Chronicle

PO Box 5, Alexandra Vic. 3714

With which is incorporated The Yea Telegraph, The Yea Telephone and Upper Goulburn Advocate

Ph: (03) 5772 1002; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Your community newspaper since 1885 Wednesday, November 19, 2025 \$2.00 inc. GST

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murrindindibusiness.com.au

INSIDE THIS WEEK'S EDITION

Yea Show this Saturday



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Terip Terip new fire truck



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Buds and Blossoms 20 years



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Weekend sport



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Aquatic facilities still free, but contributions welcome

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

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

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

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

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

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

"An economic assessment undertaken following the opening of the Eildon Baanh ba Djila Splash Park also showed a significant boost in local spending of approximately \$700,000 compared to the previous year in Eildon, demonstrating that investment in recreation can deliver wider benefits for our local economy and tourism.

"Council is trialing a voluntary tap-and-go contribution system at its pools and exploring options at the splash park this season. This approach seeks to help offset operating costs without creating barriers to participation.

"When you visit, keep an eye out for our tap-and-go contribution points, a simple way to contribute at your discretion and help us keep these facilities accessible for everyone.

"Council carefully monitors the operating costs of all community facilities, including pools, which include staffing, maintenance, and compliance requirements. Fees and charges for all council services are reviewed annually to ensure they remain fair, transparent, and aligned with community expectations.

"Looking ahead, these are important budget considerations for council. We will need to work closely with the community to address challenges presented in the long-term financial plan. Whether council can continue to deliver aquatic services in their current form will be one of the areas discussed with the community as part of our upcoming facilities review and future budget discussions.

"The 2025-2026 swimming pool season will run from Saturday, November 15 to Monday, March 9, 2026, with free entry for all residents and visitors. Pools will open when the Bureau of Meteorology forecasts 23 degrees or above in Alexandra, Eildon or Yea, and 21 degrees or above in Marysville. Morning lap swimming and school or club bookings will operate regardless of the forecast.

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

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



The Yea Cenotaph on Remembrance Day. -S

Buds and Blossoms celebrates 20 years

A CELEBRATION was held last Saturday for 20 years of the Buds and Blossoms program at Rosebank Aged Care, with residents and community families that have been involved with the program gathering for food, ice cream and cake.

The Buds and Blossoms program has been running since 2005, with Thursdays during the school term at 10.55am allocated for storytelling, singing and playtime between the residents and families with young children up to five years old.

The program was forced to transition to Zoom during the pandemic, but has stayed strong, running consistently for the past 20 years.

Those who were heavily involved in the program, such as Michelle Mussett and Lorina Gray, gave speeches on the day, describing the history of Buds and Blossoms, and its success. There was also a whiteboard on display with *Yea Chronicle* articles from through the years relating to the program.

Michelle Musset, Joy Anderson, Kaye Baynes, Lorina Gray and Gaye Garlick all worked together to cut the celebratory cake.



The celebration highlighted the connection between the Rosebank part of Yea and District Memorial Hospital and the community. More images on page 9. -BD

Alexandra District Health

5772 0900

Yea & District Memorial Hospital

5736 0400

In an emergency dial 000

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

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ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS

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The Yea Chronicle

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Letters to the Editor

Hospital merger survey

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

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

The survey does not ask about community understanding of amalgamation, potential risks and benefits, or views on local leadership. Supporting the survey by completing it could be interpreted as a vote in favour of amalgamation, regardless of your actual opinion.

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

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

Amalgamation by Stealth

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

Eastern Health (EH).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Name and address supplied but withheld by request

Outside School Hours Care grants for Buxton and Yea

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Weekly Weather

November 19 - November 25, 2025

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

Yea

DAY LOW HIGH DAY LOW HIGH

Wednesday 9 21 Wednesday 8 21

Thursday 7 18 Thursday 7 18

Friday 4 22 Friday 5 21

Saturday 7 24 Saturday 6 24

Sunday 14 26 Sunday 14 27

Monday 15 28 Monday 15 28

Tuesday 15 26 Tuesday 15 27

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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

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

Like us on Facebook

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

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

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

The Yea Chronicle

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

Thumbs up/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

Metro predator stalks small rural hospital prey

by Alexandra and District Traders and Tourism Association

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

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

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

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

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

In proposing the amalgamation, Eastern Health is intimating Alexandra will receive a significant uplift in surgical and other health services. Advantages such as a major increase in patients, nursing staff and specialist medicos, most of whom will be sourced from Melbourne, are being spread like fairy dust. These benefits may be attractive but are vague and unsubstantiated.

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

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

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

Eastern and Alexandra health boards are treating community views with disdain. The proposal for amalgamation is accompanied by sketchy supporting material. A consultation program is limited to a 15 day period that started at a time when the community was unprepared to consider and respond to the

proposal. A flawed community survey process almost guarantees that anyone responding will be deemed in favour of amalgamation. Supporting material implies a formal proposal for amalgamation will be made to government in December regardless of community response.

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

This is yet another example of metro-centric rationalists believing they know what is best for their country cousins. Every time this happens

it is regional Victorians that feel the pain and pay the price.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Brain Hub

Yea
Tuesday, 2 December 2025

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

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

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

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

Supported by:



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

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

Cost: Free

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

Find out more

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

National Dementia Helpline **1800 100 500**

Find us online dementia.org.au



For language assistance call **131 450**



Brain Hub

Alpine Outreach Van:
Eildon & Kinglake - 4 Dec 25

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

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

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

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

Supported by:



When: Thursday 4 December 2025

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

Cost: Free

Additional information:
Locate us in the following area:

Eildon: In Central Eildon down the main street.

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

Find out more

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

National Dementia Helpline **1800 100 500**

Find us online dementia.org.au



For language assistance call **131 450**

Letter to the community from ADH board member Alan Studley

ALAN Studley has provided the following letter for publication.

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

of the story of this town and the people who built it.

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

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

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

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

A possible voluntary amalgamation means we'd come together by choice, as equals, to strengthen what we have. Alexandra District Health service would keep its name, its staff, its fundraising. Every dollar raised here would

stay here and be used to support local care. The health service would still be here for urgent care, acute patients and community health. What would change is our ability to do more. This could mean more visiting specialists, enhanced local services such as X-ray, ultrasound and infusion care, expanded hospital-based treatment, and greater career opportunities for staff. It could also support nurses and allied health professionals to broaden their skills and scope of practice to provide enhanced care.

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

Some in the community have said they value the partnerships we already have with other services and wonder if that could be enough without voluntary amalgamation. It's a fair question. The truth is, partnerships only get you so far. They rely on goodwill and short-term projects, not long-term certainty. A voluntary amalgamation could bring stronger accountability and clearer decision-making, one structure, one plan, and a shared commitment to our communities. It could let us move faster to expand local services like oncology and dialysis, grow our workforce,

and make sure we can keep delivering quality care close to home for years to come.

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

At the end of the day, our job as a board is to protect and enhance our community's health services. Protect the things that make Alexandra District Health special, our people, our culture, and our care. Enhance what we can offer through new services, new specialists and better, connected healthcare.

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

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

GMW seeking expressions of interest for commercial developments at Lake Eildon

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"We also acknowledge and respect the Taungurung Land and Waters Council as Traditional Owners of the Lake Eildon region and will ensure all developments align with cultural heritage and environmental values."

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

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

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

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

Total Fire Ban Day campfire fine

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

COMMUNITY DIARY

Yea District Hospital

5736 0400

Non-emergency police assistance

131 444

EMERGENCY 000

Local Radio Frequency

UGFM 88.9 Yea / Highlands

UGFM 98.9 Flowerdale/Hazeldene

UGFM 94.5 Kinglake Ranges

MONTHLY COMMUNITY GROUPS

1st Mon St Luke's Seniors, St Lukes Hall, Ph Jenny 0407 972 099

1st Thu Yea Hospital/Rosebank Aux 2pm. Ph 5797 3057

2nd Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.

4th Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.

Last Fri Yea-Kinglake RSL, 11.30am RSL Hall, Ph 5796 9353

ALEXANDRA

NEWSPAPERS

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

Church Services

ST PETER'S MEMORIAL

ANGLICAN CHURCH

Cnr Bald Spur/Whittlesea Kinglake Rds,

Sunday Services, 8.30am Communion.

Minister: Rev. Ruwan Palapathwala

0458 113 099

ST LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

OF YEA

Sunday Service time 11am

Prayerful Reflection - held each Tuesday,

10am to 11am - all welcome

Father Mario Hendricks

Ph: 0435 953 777

CATHOLIC PARISHES OF

ALEXANDRA AND YEA

Parish Priest, Father Jose Mathew

0459 402 547

St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 5pm

Immaculate Conception Parish

Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am

Sacred Heart Yea, Sunday 10.45am

CATHOLIC PARISH OF

KINGLAKE

Fr Martin Ashe, Parish Priest

Ph 9717 6482

St Mary's Kinglake: Sunday 8.30am

SCOTS PRESBYTERIAN

CHURCH, YEA

Station Street Yea

Sunday Service 10.30am

Colin Whiteway

Ph 0457 340 525

UNITING CHURCH

1st and 3rd Sundays 9am, 1050 Main Road,

Kinglake West. 9716 2330

108th Yea Show this Saturday

THE Yea Show this Saturday will focus on ‘Country Excellence’, whether it’s from the farm paddock or the farm homestead. Cattle, sheep, horses, poultry, working dogs, machinery, baking, preserving, gardening, crafts, photography as well as all the fun of the Fair. Yea CWA will once again be providing afternoon teas and lunches at the main pavilion.

The Yea Cattle Show, including the popular Heifer Challenge and Hoof and Hook Competition, has developed into the biggest showing of prime cattle outside the Royal Melbourne Show. Judges give excellent critiques on all winning beasts and the Yea Show is followed one week later by the Cattleman’s Dinner where prizes of the Commercial Cattle competition are announced and guest speakers talk on cattle health and pasture Improvement.

The Cattle Show begins on Friday evening with the prestigious Heifer Challenge. Cattle studs and school agricultural students from the New South Wales Riverina, South Australia and all over Victoria compete and the Junior Judges and Junior Handlers competitions are well contested.

The Yea Cup Final of the Victorian Yard and Utility Farm Dog Trials will be held at the Yea Show again this year with excellent prize money. Winners of trials from Seymour, Euroa, Alexandra and Yea Shows compete at the end of the day for the Yea Cup Final. The Dog High Jump on the main arena at 2pm is always one of the biggest attractions of the day.

The Six-Ring Horse Arena is always a popular attraction for both riders and spectators. Outback Western will also be in attendance to support our horse lovers. These beautifully groomed and trained horses and immaculately turned-out riders always present a great spectacle.

An event always popular among country people, especially one with the timber history of the Murrindindi Shire, is the Victorian Axeman’s Wood Chop Competition with top axemen from all over Victoria and Tasmania competing.

Sheep and wool are a feature this year. Around the Fleece Pavilion you will find shearing demonstrations with commentary, happening all day. A skilled shearer can shear 200 plus a day. It’s back-breaking work but shearers make it look so easy. A special attraction this year is demonstrations of old-fashioned blade shearing, the way sheep were shorn for hundreds of years before mechanical shearing machines were invented. A skilled blade shearer could out-gun a machine in the early days. There will also be historical shearing equipment on display.

A clydesdale team and wagon will give rides all day and these gentle giants love a pat and their photos taken. Kids will love to have a photo taken with Chase and Marshall from *Paw Patrol* will also be in attendance, and you can high-five with Iron Man. Have fun with giant bubbles and learn lots of tricks you can do with hula hoops in the Hula Hoop Playspace. An animal nursery will delight, and there will be rides and sample bags. Kids are encouraged to bring their ‘best friend’ along to the Children’s Pet Show held on the netball courts from 10am on show morning.

Check out the classic cars and vintage machinery displays, and a ‘Bucking Bull’ will provide some fun for young and old. The innovative and acclaimed Yea Hospital Outreach team will be in attendance and a celebrity dunking tank will provide lots of entertainment here. Yea Men’s Shed and Yea Yarn Spinners will have demonstrations in the main pavilion.

The main showgrounds pavilion will be overflowing with exquisite crafts and amazing photography. The Netball Rooms will entice you with the beautiful scents of the stunning floral arrangements and the Tennis Pavilion will have excellent displays and exhibitions of all things to do with cooking and preserves. The Yea Celebrity Men’s Challenge Bake-off will feature here as well as kids baking fun and lots of delicious cakes and preserves will be on sale.

A design competition is held each year for primary school children to design the front cover of the Show Schedule and the



Last year’s Grand Parade at the Yea Show. -S

advertising flyers for the Yea Show. It is highly contested and the Yea Show is proud of this special link with local Yea Primary School.

Admission to the Yea Show is adult \$17, seniors and concession \$12, secondary

students \$5, children under 12 free, family ticket (two adults, two children) \$35. Unless you spend money on food or rides, you can have a whole day’s entertainment for the price of the entry only.

Come along to the Yea Showgrounds in Snodgrass St. Yea to enjoy

COUNTRY EXCELLENCE

at the

108th Yea Show

Pavilions open at 9am
Art, Craft, Photography
Horticulture, Cookery
& School Displays

Shedding Demonstrations

Woodchop Championships from 10.30am

Yard Dog Trials Commencing at 7am

SATURDAY 22ND NOVEMBER 2025

with the Heifer Challenge on Friday 21st at 6.30pm

5 Rings of Horses with a Fancy Dress Parade

Colonial Clydesdales Wagon Rides

Roaming Comic Characters

Hoop Sparx Fun with Hoola Hoops

Showbags, Rides and a Variety of Stalls

Pet Show at 10am

Dog High Jump

Stud Cattle, Hoof & Hook

Mechanical Bull

Poultry with newly hatched chickens

Rookie Rollers Lawn Bowls for Children

Picture by Brooklyn Waghorn Yea Primary School

GRAND PARADE AT 2.00PM

Admission Prices

Adults \$17.00	Seniors & Concession \$12.00	Secondary Students \$5.00
Family Ticket (2 Adults & 2 Children) \$35.00		
Children Under 12 Free		
Admits to Friday Night Heifer Challenge & all day Saturday		

Full schedule available from shops in Yea or www.yeashow.org.au
Enquiries to 0477 972 545

Yea Show



You're Invited

Yea and District Memorial Hospital ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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

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

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

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



Monday, 1st December 2025 – 5:30pm
Country Club Hotel – 18 High St, Yea
Supper provided, Drinks at bar prices
RSVP by Friday 21st November : (03) 5736 0400
Sandra.Bray@ydmh.org.au



Department of Health



Board director opportunities at Yea & District Memorial Hospital

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by Yea & District **Community Bank®** Branch



YEA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Congratulations to our Values Award winners this week.

Fox, Sam, Maverick, Ethan and Sophia have all been showing RESILIENCE in the classroom, persevering when things get tricky.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by Kinglake branch



CFA reaches major milestone in lifesaving program

CFA is excited to achieve its target of 50 brigades to participate in a lifesaving program which responds to select medical Triple Zero (000) calls.

The program, which commenced operations in late 2024, currently has 33 CFA brigades responding to certain Ambulance Victoria calls in their local community, with the

remaining 17 brigades to finalise training and commence operations in stages over the next seven months.

The Fire Medical Response (FMR) program is a joint initiative of CFA and Ambulance Victoria which sees CFA brigades and Ambulance Victoria dispatched simultaneously to cardiac arrests.

The joint agency program was designed for 50 brigades to undertake FMR in their communities with Kilmore, Cobram, Broadford, Swan Hill and Castlemaine the most recent brigades to commence operations, having gone live on Wednesday, November 12. Alexandra is already on board.

All FMR brigades have been trained extensively by both Ambulance Victoria and CFA in preparation for the program, which will complement Ambulance Victoria's response in those local areas.

Deputy Chief Officer Garry Cook said the program was a natural fit for CFA because of the 52,000 volunteers they have across the state.

"CFA has more than 1200 volunteer stations. This puts CFA in a unique position to complement the Ambulance Victoria response in 50 locations across Victoria, and help deliver early intervention at cardiac arrests," Garry said.

"When a person suffers a cardiac arrest, their chance of survival reduces by 10 per cent every minute that CPR and defibrillation is delayed".

"Community members who call for an ambulance in the 50 communities with an FMR brigade may receive both a fire truck and an ambulance.

"There's no specific order in which the services arrive, the aim is to get to the patient

as quickly as possible to give them the best possible chance at surviving.

"The response from our brigades involved in the program has been really positive, with the rate of patient resuscitation higher than the Victorian state average. Brigades should all be very proud of their incredible service to the community."

Ambulance Victoria Acting Executive Director Regional Operations Michael Georgiou said Victoria has Australia's best cardiac survival rate and the third best anywhere in the world, thanks to high rates of early intervention.

"The Fire Medical Response program will improve survival rates for people in rural and regional Victoria," Michael said.

"Quick intervention with CPR and a defibrillator has the greatest impact on improving a patient's chances of surviving a cardiac arrest."

Fire restrictions start November 17

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"All burn offs are the responsibility of the landowner to ensure that they are out and can't flare up later."

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

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

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

Fire Danger Period information

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

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

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

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

Terip Terip CFA receives younger fire truck

TERIP Terip Fire Brigade recently took delivery of a younger tanker to act as their primary fire truck.

The 2003 3.4D replaces Terip's previous tanker, which was the same model but from 1991.

Terip CFA Captain Shannon Roach expressed her excitement about the upgrade and explained how it was an improvement.

"Our last truck was from 1991, this one is from 2003, so it's a lot younger. It is the same truck, it's a 3.4D tanker, and it's the same work capacity, which is really important for us. But it's a lot younger," Shannon said.

"It's better, it's more improved, everything is a little bit newer. We can start the pump from a different spot rather than having to reach over the back, and it's a lot safer. It's an improvement overall."



Terip Terip CFA Captain Shannon Roach with the younger tanker. -BD



The 2003 3.4D fire truck that is now Terip Terip CFA's primary firefighting vehicle. -BD



Metro Tunnel opens **early December**

With construction now complete, get ready to explore five new stations and enjoy direct train access for the first time to Melbourne's major hospitals, universities and St Kilda Road.

To celebrate, enjoy free public transport across Victoria every weekend in December and January.

With more services arriving in February, the new Metro Tunnel gives you more ways to move.

more ways to move

Find out more at bigbuild.vic.gov.au



ADH CEO: Survey now has more than 200 words available

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

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

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

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

“Although the engagement period is concentrated, there are multiple ways for community members to participate and provide feedback, including more than 20 hours of in-person Tea Talk / community engagement sessions, an online and hard copy survey and a dedicated feedback email address. These options ensure that the process is accessible and flexible, allowing people to have their say in a way that best suits them.

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

“To date community participation has been strong. The Chairs and CEOs of both health services have met with more than 100 stakeholders, including local Members of Parliament, council representatives,

neighbouring health services, community groups, donors, volunteers, and clients. Five Tea Talks held on November 10 and 12 in Marysville, Alexandra, Yea, Eildon and Yarck as well as a meeting with the Alexandra and District Traders and Tourism Association drew more than 130 attendees, with positive feedback about the openness of discussions and the accessibility of board members and CEOs.

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

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

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

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

Yea Probus shenanigans on Oaks Day

YEA Probus members celebrated Oaks Day in style as usual, with the ladies and some gentlemen dressing for the occasion and having fun cheering on their favourite horse in the Yea Probus Cup. Fascinators and hats were very ‘in vogue’ and most of the members excelled themselves in their beautiful outfits.

Probus member, Gary Tuck, race caller extraordinaire, filmed a horse race, set up a

‘Bookies Board’ with all the comical horses names who were running in the Yea Probus Cup and made sure all members had a horse to cheer on, which they did with gusto.

The Yea Probus Cup has been held on Oaks Day, the same day as the club’s November meeting, since 1918, with a bit of a break over COVID-19. The horses are all given ‘silly’ names, but as one person commented they are not much sillier than many of the names

given to the real deal horses competing in races all around Australia.

The Yea Probus Cup race was a photo finish between number 11 ‘Puffing Billy’ and number four ‘In The Pink’, with Puffing Billy declared the eventual winner. The owners of ‘Puffing Billy’, Joy Purcell, Libby Pink and Rosemary Simon were presented with their prize of One Million Dollars by past president Gary Tuck. All the winners will be ‘lying low’ for a while so the winnings do not affect their pension.

At the Oaks Day Probus meeting the club was fortunate to have local state Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish as the guest speaker. Cindy is currently holding the positions of Shadow Minister for Women since December 2022, Shadow Member for Prevention of Family Violence since 2022 and Shadow Minister for Environment since October 2025.

Cindy gave an insight into her very busy schedule as a Member of Parliament. She spoke about the difficulties of distance when attending events within one of the largest electorates in Victoria as opposed to those members within the city electorates. She is most passionate about the local events she represents and attends, and also related some of the sad and difficult situations she deals with in her portfolios.

Yea Probus members were very grateful to her for taking the time to speak to them during her very busy schedule.



Race caller Gary Tuck, Joy Purcell holding the Million Dollar prize money, and Libby Pink and Rosemary Simon with the Yea Cup and Perpetual Trophy. -S



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Development Opportunities - Commercial Land Leasing at Lake Eildon

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

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

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

Expression of Interest Process

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

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

How to Apply

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

Contact

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

ADH CEO: the proposed merger is ‘led locally’

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Buds and Blossoms celebrates 20 years



Some of the main organisers from Buds and Blossoms cutting the 20 year anniversary cake. Pictured are Michelle Musset, Joy Anderson, Kaye Baynes, Lorina Gray and Gaye Garlick. -BD



Ice cream was provided for all. -BD



The main room at Rosebank was decked out for celebration. -BD



There was party food and a 20 year celebration cake. -BD

WHAT KIND OF MAN DO YOU WANT TO BE?

We asked Victorian men about everything from fatherhood to relationships to online gaming to social media.

HEAR MEN'S STORIES



RESPECT VICTORIA





John Bednarik paying his respects. -S



Emcee David Anderson. -S



Yea Rotary Club President Darryl King. -S



Cr Sue Carpenter placing a wreath on behalf of Murrindindi Shire Council. -S



Remembrance Day in Yea

Yea High School students laying a wreath. -S



Ed Davies placing a wreath. -S



Students from Yea Primary School. -S



Steve Bennett from the Yea CFA. -S



A Yea Police member paying their respects. -S



Fran Phil with the Legacy wreath. -S



Students from Sacred Heart Primary School. -S



Nic Jacson reciting The Ode. -S

The Farmer's Ag News



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

CFA urges hay safety after thousands of bales lost

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Haystack fires are often caused by spontaneous combustion when hay is baled with excess moisture. High moisture levels, combined with the compact nature of hay

bales, can create internal heat, leading to ignition.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The science behind hay fires

by Andrea Henry, Dairy Industry Development Officer, Maffra

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

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

How do spontaneous combustions happen?

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

What are the risk factors?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

More tools to keep Victorian farmers safe

THE Victorian Government is ensuring Victorian farmers have the tools and tailored support they need to make farms safe places to live, work or visit.

Deputy Premier and Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC Ben Carroll last week announced a \$2.6 million funding agreement between WorkSafe and the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) to deliver the next phase of the Making Our Farms Safer project.

“An investment in farm safety is an investment in the people who keep Victoria running, and this project supports farmers to create safer work environments without the red tape. It’s practical, personalised and it’s been shown to work,” Mr Carroll said.

“We’ve been listening to farmers who’ve asked for more in-person, tailored support from industry peers who understand the realities of farm life, and we’re delivering.”

The funding will expand the project’s dedicated safety advisory service, which delivers on-farm, in-person support to identify and help manage key risks.

The project also supports farmers with a range of tools and resources that help them adopt better on-farm health and safety practices.

Agriculture employs about two per cent of the Victorian workforce but is one of the state’s high-risk industries, accounting for 33 work-related deaths since 2021. In that same period, WorkSafe accepted 2458 claims from Victorian workers seriously injured in the sector.

This next phase of the Making Our Farms Safer project will have a stronger focus on high-risk areas such as cattle handling and the use of machinery including tractors and attachments, quad bikes and side-by-sides, which together account for more than a quarter of all farm injuries.

As part of this funding boost, the VFF will visit hundreds of farms, organise more safety activations, presentations and events, and help provide farmers with more practical support from industry experts and peers who understand the unique realities of farm life.

VFF Chief Executive Officer Charlie Thomas said, “Farmers have relied on the VFF Making Our Farms Safer project since 2020, and the team will continue working hard to improve safety and reduce the tragic overrepresentation of agriculture in workplace incidents.

“Nothing beats in-person, tailored safety advice to your farm. The team will be busy conducting on-farm safety

visits and I encourage all farmers to take advantage of the free resources on offer.”

The partnership is part of WorkSafe’s broader strategy to build strong relationships with farmers and industry groups to help drive down injuries and fatalities in the agriculture industry.

This includes the successful *It’s never you until it is* campaign, which shares safety success stories from farmers, highlights the crucial role of safety conversations, and challenges common ideas which contribute to unsafe practices, such as that injuries and fatalities only happen to inexperienced farmers.

WorkSafe Chief Health and Safety Officer Sam Jenkin added, “Farmers are the backbone of Victoria, powering our economy, supporting regional communities and keeping our shelves stocked, and we must do everything we can to help farmers stay safe while doing some of the toughest work there is.

“It takes real conversations and real connections to create change and a culture of safety. This project will help ensure we are meaningfully engaging with farmers to understand where they’re at on their safety journey, what’s holding them back, and what we can work towards together.”

For more information visit worksafe.vic.gov.au/saferfarms or makingourfarmssafefarm.org.au

NFF statement on United States tariff removal

by NFF Interim Chief Executive Su McCluskey

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

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

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

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

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

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



Mayor Damien Gallagher, Jac, Cr Jodi Adams, Wayne and Chelsie.



The students all had a great time at the event. -AR

Local support and morale-building from Disaster Relief Australia

THE Kinglake Community Preparedness and Resilience Operation was a three day operation led by Disaster Relief Australia (DRA) and other community groups. It took place from November 11 to 13, focused on hazard reduction, community asset restoration and morale-building.

The activity locations included Kinglake, Kinglake West, Flowerdale and Castella.

On Thursday, November 13, the events included a community lunch with partners and students from Kinglake West Primary School, and an AFL-led clinic for 140 children.

Speaking at the Flowerdale work site, volunteer Soraya said, "I'm from NAB and our NAB Foundation has a fantastic

partnership with Disaster Relief Australia. We've been lucky enough to, for the last few years, be coming out on these volunteer days and helping communities recover from disasters. It's been a really fantastic experience because it's just something different. We get out from behind the desk. We get to actually get close to communities, reconnect in the communities that we live and we play and we work in, and try something different that makes a difference."

For these particular volunteers, this meant chopping up a large amount of firewood for local families.

Soraya said, "What's fantastic about DRA is it always partners with community groups

who know the area and who know what their different residents need."

Another volunteer, Clare, said, "I'm applying for the Australian Defence Force at the moment, and I wanted to know more about the ADF, and this works hand in hand with it, as it's a veteran-led organisation."

She previously worked at Triple Zero and was there call taking during the 2019 fires. "It was hard," she said. "It was 500 people waiting for phone calls and it was ridiculous. I heard about DRA already through that but I didn't have the capacity to go out there. But I still was supporting the community by taking the calls. But now that I have the luxury, I thought, well, let's get into it now."

In addition to helping with firewood, she also spent time at the community centre in Kinglake, helping to remove about 200 metres of an invasive shrub.

Wayne O'Brien, Director of Preparedness for Disaster Relief Australia, said, "This has been an amazing opportunity for us to step into the Kinglake community and support preparedness activities in front of the high risk weather season."

Other organisations which helped at the event included AFL, RAWs (Rotary), Landcare, Murrindindi Shire, Rescue Logs, Alabaster Church, Kinglake Heritage Society, Kinglake West Primary School, Kinglake Neighbourhood House and the local football and netball clubs.



Kevin Sheedy, in red, chatting with members of the local Kinglake football team. -AR



Volunteers hard at work cutting and carrying firewood. -AR



Students from Kinglake West on the oval. -AR



Children enjoying the football clinic. -AR

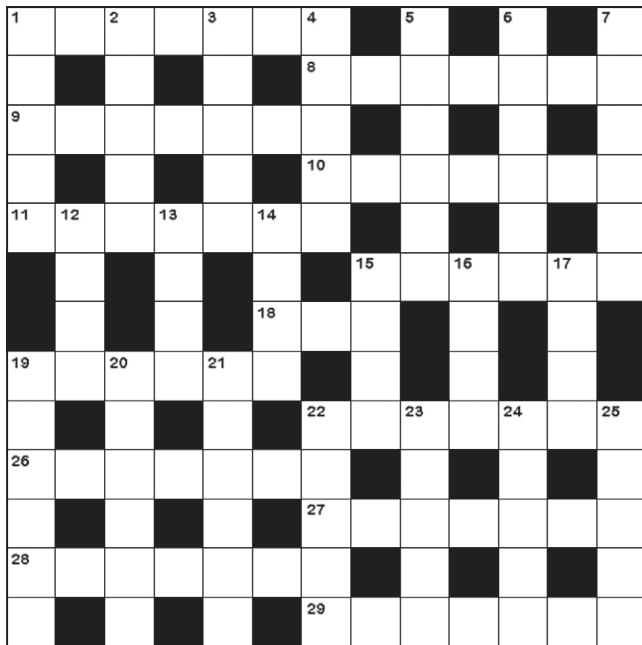
PUZZLES

SOLUTIONS
Page 15

Crossword

ACROSS

1. Kept in order with a law enforcement agency.
8. Possessing or exhibiting great wealth.
9. Secure it again to be sure it won't come loose.
10. Steal the limelight from someone else.
11. A light short-handled axe or tomahawk.
15. Puts things off until another time.
18. A resort area having mineral springs.
19. A partial refund of money paid.
22. Make peace with a person or situation.
26. Interrupt a calm or settled state.
27. Causing the least hardship or distress.
28. Inclined to be lenient or merciful.
29. Make neat, trim and spruce.



DOWN

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. A protective covering for an injured eye. | 12. A common skin problem of the adolescent. | 20. Became occupied with various activities. |
| 2. Not very heavy, quite easy to lift. | 13. State of deep prolonged unconsciousness. | 21. Pestered customers persistently. |
| 3. Come upon suddenly and unexpectedly. | 14. Freedom from difficulty or effort. | 22. Assists, usually in some wrongdoing. |
| 4. A small ring-shaped fried cake. | 15. Just a slight wetness. | 23. Shaped and dried dough, such as spaghetti. |
| 5. Follow with intent to overtake and capture. | 16. Something that will inevitably happen. | 24. Someone who is very highly skilled. |
| 6. Be on one's guard against trouble. | 17. Pieces of thick fabric used to cover floors. | 25. Was taken into the mouth for consumption. |

Word Search

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

Little things

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

Math Square

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

Fill in the missing numbers.

The missing values are the whole numbers between 1 and 9.

Each number is only used once.

Each row is a math equation.

Each column is a math equation.

Remember that multiplication and division are performed before addition and subtraction.

Cryptogram

Little things

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I

J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
		9			25			

S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
	7						

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

T
7 11 1 26 18 23, 15 1 18

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

Sudoku

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

Difficulty: Medium

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

KID'S PUZZLES

Colouring Page



Word Search

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

Words starting with “AG”

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

Math Square

5	+		+		14
-		-		-	
3	-		+		2
+		+		+	
	-		-		3
11		-4		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.

Jokes

Q: Why did the student eat his homework?

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

Q: Why don't elephants use computers?

A: Because they are scared of the mouse.

AI brings water challenges

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The ABC also said, "Greater Western Water was assessing 19 applications from data centres to use up to 20 gegalitres of water a year" and "Yarra Valley Water has received seven applications to draw water from the municipal supply to cool proposed data centres, according to Freedom of Information documents seen by the ABC."

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

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

A DEECA spokesperson responded, "As demand for digital services grows, so does the need for data centres. Our focus is on securing the state's water supply, while also supporting the tech and innovation industries to grow local jobs and our economy.

"In the process of reviewing applications for data centres, water corporations must be satisfied that water security and supply can be met, without negatively impacting communities and other users.

"All data centres have different water and energy needs and companies are getting smarter about how they can save water. Water corporations encourage all proponents to utilise recycled water and treated stormwater."

When urban water corporations review applications for large water users, they assess whether the broader water network has capacity to support the requests. If a request cannot be accommodated, the applicant is advised of the network upgrades they can fund to supply their requested demand.

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

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

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

Funding now available, further planning underway

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

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

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

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

The program will offer a mix of grants and capacity building activities, including leadership development, across the country. In total, there are three grant elements, each available to specific Local Government Areas (LGAs), as well as National Mentoring and additional capacity building activities.

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

Small Network Grants

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

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

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

Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) Social Outcome Grants

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

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

National Mentoring Initiative

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The applicants, representing many of the over 2000 small domestic and stock customers across the region, argue that they have been charged for services that do not exist. They rely on unregulated waterways, creeks and springs with no GMW operated dams or infrastructure, and yet saw their annual water fees almost double between 2015 and 2020. This has since been compounded by rises in licence renewal fees. These are set to rise from \$700 in 2023-24 to around \$1100 in 2027-28.

Cameron Reid, spokesperson for the group, said, "Year after year, our fees have increased far beyond inflation, for no service, no infrastructure, and no benefit. For most of us, water comes from small local creeks. We maintain our own pumps, pipes, and filtration. GMW provides no service beyond enforcing compliance fees, yet continues to charge as if it does."

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

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

"We are not asking for special treatment," Mr Reid said. "We are simply asking that the fees applied to

us relate to services we actually receive. This is about fairness, trust, and respect for small rural Victorians who have been left out of the system."

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

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

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

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

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

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Council secures AusNet grant to boost local energy resilience

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rubbish on the Melba Highway

THE pile of rubbish on the Melba Highway roadside, near the Kinglake turnoff has still not been removed. The Department of Transport were contacted to find out why not, given that they previously said it would be removed in "coming weeks" not months.

They were asked whether a date had been set for the removal of the rubbish.

They responded that inspections and tests to ensure the safety of crews while removing dumped rubbish are continuing along the Melba Highway.

They also said that to ensure the safety of crews while removing dumped rubbish, the site has been inspected to make sure these materials are disposed of safely and carefully. Rubbish removal will happen shortly after this.

PUZZLES SOLUTIONS

CRYPTOGRAM

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
10 15 20 17 13 4 18 11 1 12 14 9 16

N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
26 25 8 22 21 23 7 24 3 5 2 19 6

FROM LITTLE THINGS,
BIG THINGS GROW

CROSSWORD

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

MATH SQUARES

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

SUDOKU

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

KIDS - MATH SQUARES

5	+	1	+	8	14
-		-		-	
3	-	7	+	6	2
+		+		+	
9	-	2	-	4	3
11		-4		6	

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Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm
Ph 5772 1002

E: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

Deadline - Noon Monday

Proofs
Line ads proofs not supplied
Display will only be supplied if requested

Payment
Payment is required at the time of placing
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Death notices
Cannot be published without confirmation
from a direct family member or funeral
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Vehicles/Deals on Wheels
Registration number or VIN number must be
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will run for 8 weeks unless cancelled.

Bargains under \$100
Either one item to the value of \$100 or
several items not totalling more than \$100.

Animals
It is an offence to advertise the sale of a
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Source number and microchip identification
number of each animal generated by the
Pet Exchange Register is included in the
advertisement.

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Check your advertisement on its first
appearance. Although every care is taken
to ensure your advertisement is correct
errors can occur. Notify us immediately
if there are errors in your advertisement.
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TRADES ADVERTISING DEADLINE NOON THURSDAY

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

Print Post Approved - PP 100000292.

MEETINGS


Registration No: A0018756R

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

Business of the Meeting:
• to confirm the minutes of the previous annual
general meeting
• to receive and consider:
(a) the annual report of the Committee on the
activities of the Association during the
preceding financial year
(b) the financial statements of the
association for the preceding financial year
• to elect the members of the committee;
• Appointment of Auditor
Applications for a position on the Board
of Management are invited. Please contact
Darlingford on 5774 2711.
ALL WELCOME
Please RSVP by November 24, 2025.

PUBLIC NOTICES

DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

Jason Heffernan
Chief Officer

Chris Hardman
Chief Fire Officer



**FOREST FIRE
MANAGEMENT VICTORIA**

SITUATION VACANT



ALEXANDRA & DISTRICT KINDERGARTEN
Director (Part Time)

Seeking an experienced leader with a
passion for Early Childhood Education,
to oversee operations on behalf of our
Committee of Management.

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

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

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

Applications close Friday 28/11/2025.

PUBLIC NOTICES



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

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

Service Stream Ltd A.B.N. 46 072 369 870
Telstra Ltd A.C.N. 086 174 781
Amplitel Pty Ltd A.C.N: 648 133 073

SITUATION VACANT


Department of Health



Board Director opportunities at Alexandra District Health

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

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

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

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

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

Applications close at midnight Sunday, November 23, 2025.

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

IN MEMORIAM

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

MEETINGS

**ALEXANDRA AND
EILDON GEM AND
LAPIDARY CLUB.**
AGM on November 25, at
club rooms at 2pm.
All welcome.

DEATH NOTICES

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

**PETS &
LIVESTOCK**

ISA BROWN LAYERS
- POL, \$35 each. Ph 5798
1868. Pick-up in Alex-
andra or Yea. beckysfre-
erange@gmail.com

**FUNERAL
NOTICES**

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


McCormack
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INC. 1800 080 909
www.mccormackfunerals.com.au



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**ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS**



Strong showing from Team Yea at Murrindindi Masters

by Alan Pell
TEAM Yea delivered an outstanding performance at last Saturday's Murrindindi Masters event.

Leading the way was Jonathan Fisher, scoring 40 points to claim the Men's Mini Master title. Matching that score was Sam Gregory, whose 40 points earned him victory in C Grade, an incredible achievement in his first-ever tournament.

Among the ladies, Di Elliott posted 34 points to win Ladies B Grade, while Vicki Clements also recorded 34 points to finish runner-up in A Grade. Penny Britton added to the club's success with 32 points for runner-up in B Grade.

Additional highlights included Vicki Clements winning a nearest the pin, and Russell Wealands taking home the raffle prize.

Congratulations to all participants for representing Yea with pride and helping make the day a great success. Many thanks to FoodWorks for their sponsorship of the Masters and to Kathy (FoodWorks) for presenting vouchers.

Last Wednesday's golf for the men saw 25 players contest a stableford event with the Dunne family with Travis (33) and father Chris (7) finishing on top with 37 points apiece.

Third was the ever improving John Renehan (51) with 36 points from Luke Gregory (11) 36 and Martin Lowe (17) fifth with 35. Nearest the pin on the 11th was Tony Rule and the club award was won by Rob Gill.

Ladies Stableford Results
A field of 13 players competed in the Ladies Stableford competition last Wednesday.

Winner: Miranda Gill (19) with 39 points, an excellent round; runner-up was Khai Mohammed-Noor (36) with 38 points; third was Carolyn Webber (45) with 35 points, continuing her surge in form.

Well played to all 38 competitors on the course.



Vicki Clements was runner-up in A Grade. -S



Sam Gregory was the victor in C Grade. -S



Penny Britton took out runner-up in B Grade. -S



Jonathon Fisher claimed the Men's Mini Master title. -S



Di Elliott won ladies B Grade. -S

Classifieds

FOR HIRE

FITNESS EQUIPMENT

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

BUSINESS FOR SALE

Established Mowing business for sale.
Regular ongoing clientele base. Equipment included: trailer, ride on mower, push mower and whipper snipper. Hand over with introductions included for a smooth start.
Call Luke for a chat. 0418 522 842.

DEALS ON WHEELS

2022, EZYTRAIL Stirling GT MK3 forward fold camper trailer. As new, never used. Inclusions: Diesel heater, solar off-grid pack (Bluetooth), 96L fridge/freezer, hot water system, lots of storage. Lots more extras. Reg C28236 until 21/03/2026. \$22,000 price negotiable. Ph: 0407 513 501 or 0419 677 550.

SPORT

Strong start to season at Murrindindi Little Athletics

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

The first event on the track was the 1500-metre race walk, where the Hilder brothers put on an impressive battle to set the tone for the day. Senior athletes then moved through a busy program, taking on discus, triple jump, the 100 metres and the 400 metres. The sprint events were real highlights, with rising athlete Harish Balansag and local talent Levi Campbell both pushing their limits and achieving new personal bests.

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

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

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

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

Murrindindi Little Athletics wishes them the best of luck.



Sonny Crouch jumping to great heights. -S



Under six 70 metre sprint. -S



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



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



Zoe Collier completing her triple jump on Saturday. -S

Squash: Round six of term four pennant

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition

Camembert versus Feta

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

Kristelle (fill in) versus Jess: Three very close games until Kristelle used her

experience in the final game to run away with the game and match. 62 to 53.

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

Derrick versus Andrew: A match of two halves. Derrick conceded too many points in the first two games. Andrew held control in the first half before Derrick turned to take

the second half. Holding onto points, Andrew claimed a close victory. 57 to 51.

Gouda versus Mozzarella

Robbie (fill in) versus Eric: It was close throughout the match. Both players had good thoughtful placement of shots, but Robbie stayed ahead to win. 67 to 58.

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

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

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

Wednesday competition

Orcas versus Piranhas

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

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

Barracudas versus Hammerheads

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

Daniel K versus Michael H (fill in): Michael filled in as the latest guest in Daniel's house of horror and torment. The first two games ran like the script to a Saw movie as Daniel played a game with Michael, hitting any spot he wished leaving his opponent behind. Michael was on target in game three to make a comeback. However, he couldn't get past Daniel who put a stop to his hard work, to run away with the last game and the match. 76 to 36.



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



The Monday Triples winners, Barry Moore and Darren Sherman. Terry Muller was absent. -S

Good effort by Yea against top side

by Maurie Finn

AGAINST one of the top sides in the competition, Tatura Hilltop, Yea Bowls Club finished with two rinks up, one drawn, and one loss, to go down by just 12 shots overall.

Neil Riechieck, with Barry Moore, Kevin Smith and Judy Elenius, got off to a flyer, leading 10 to three after nine ends. However, Tatura got going, winning the next four ends to make the difference just three. In the second half, the scores ebbed and flowed with Yea holding on to win by three shots.

Wayne Martin, with Mick Barrott, Darren Sherman, and Terry Muller, were down by two after six ends, but then won the next five to go to a seven shot lead; they increased their lead to 10 after 16 ends and finally had a convincing eight shot victory, 22 to 14.

Terry McInnes, with Viv Cavanagh, Brett Reece and Doug Shirrefs, had a day they

would rather forget where nothing was going their way, down by 23 at the break. To their credit the second half was even to go down by 23 shots.

Maurie Finn, with Angela Finn, Maureen Marks and Rob Marks, were in real trouble not scoring until the ninth end and going into the break down by 16 shots, four to 18.

However, in a remarkable turnaround, helped by some outstanding lead bowling by Angela Finn they won seven of the last eight ends to draw the game at 19 all. Next week Pennant will be played at Yea against Shepparton Park.

Social Bowls

Progressive Physio Monday Triples had good numbers competing. Winners were Barry Moore, Terry Muller and Darren Sherman. Thursday socials bowl winners were Terry McInnes and newcomer Michael Sheather.

Merton cricketers beat Wangaratta on their home turf

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

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

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

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

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

Make a splash this aquatic season

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Chronicle Sport

Sports Editorial: sports@alexandranewspapers.com.au



Reddrops FoodWorks Yea Stakes Day at Yea Racing



Yea Racing held the Reddrops FoodWorks Yea Stakes Day last Saturday in warm conditions to much success. -Photos by BD



'Voriah' ridden by Shaun Cooper warming up before the race. -BD



The crowd had the fence packed whenever a race got underway. -BD



Some 10 horses and jockeys took part in the third race of the day. -BD



The races were well attended last Saturday in the warm 23C weather. -BD



Spectators watched 'Kahungunu' ridden by Caitlin King parade around the yard.



The trees around the Yea racetrack provide welcome relief from the crowd when the weather is warm. -BD



Some people prefer tables with umbrellas for their day at the races. -BD