

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, May 28, 2025 \$2.00 inc. GST

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Fight over unfair tax taken to Spring Street

COUNTRY Fire Authority (CFA) brigades from Murrindindi Shire joined other brigades in Wallan last Tuesday to drive in a convoy down to the protest against the Emergency Services Volunteer Fund (ESVF) at Parliament in Melbourne.

Brigades from across northern Victoria, including Echuca, Rutherglen, Benalla and Wangaratta, met with Murrindindi brigades in Wallan and left for Melbourne in a convoy at 7.45am on Tuesday, May 20.

The Murrindindi Shire brigades that attended the protest were Acheron, Yarck,

Taggerty, Molesworth, Glenburn and Terip Terip. They were supported by other locals who made the trip down to Parliament personally, rather than with their CFA brigade.

Jonathan Tofts, first lieutenant at the Terip Terip CFA and organiser of the northern brigades for the protest, spoke about the successful day.

"It went all successfully. We left Wallan about 7.45am with brigades from right across northern Victoria. We made our way down Flemington Road into Melbourne and caused havoc," Jonathan said.

Some Melbourne people were caught unawares by the procession of CFA trucks heading into the city, with no clue what was happening.

"We did have one person ask 'what's happened, what's going on, why are you doing it?' and we pretty much continued driving. Melbourne people had no idea what was happening," Jonathan said.

"And that actually even happened at Parliament, this elderly person said 'what's happening, what's the matter?'. They've got no idea what's happening down in Melbourne."

The northern brigades met up with another convoy of CFA trucks on the way into Melbourne, around Essendon Airport, where they merged together.

"When we were going up Flemington Road we all went through, everything went smoothly and we got all the vehicles up on Spring Street, in the manner of time. I had about 45 vehicles in our convoy from Wallan, and then we met with another cluster as well," Jonathan said.

"We almost all merged on around Essendon Airport there. We were pretty much coming up and over the bridge as they were coming under their section, and we all merged together, just at the right time. It was quite good. Four lanes of the highway were blockaded by us, and we were moving nice and steady."

Upon arriving at Parliament, the brigades formed a crowd, listening to guest speakers and protesting for around an hour and a half, before heading home.

"We listened to all the guest speakers, and all the opposition team. Cindy McLeish, Annabelle Cleeland, Danny O'Brien and all that. They came out and said some words. Everyone was on the steps," Jonathan said.

"It would have been about an hour, an hour and a half. We left around 12pm."

Jonathan reported that the state government refused to meet with the protestors.

"They were hiding behind their big doors," he said.

"Hopefully we don't have to pay it. It will affect a lot of local businesses and local farmers. It's going to affect everyone. All the prices are going to have to go up to absorb the price of the city-centric tax that the government is putting on," Jonathan concluded, sharing his final thoughts on the issue.



Many of the people who were involved in the creation of the Yea Wetlands Discover Experience. More on page 6. -BD

★ OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, JUNE 9 ★

EARLY DEADLINES APPLY FOR JUNE 11 EDITION

CLASSIFIEDS INC DEATH AND FUNERAL NOTICES - 2PM FRIDAY, JUNE 6 ★
reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au

★ EDITORIAL, SPORTS, THUMBS UP/DOWN AND
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR - 10AM MONDAY, JUNE 9 ★
editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au AND sports@alexandranewspapers.com.au

EGN and TRADES advertising deadlines remain unchanged.



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The Tea Chronicle

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ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS


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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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

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

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Standard

The Age Chronicle

****ISSUED AT 10.15AM ON MONDAY, 26 MAY 2025**

Height above sea level this week.....	276.9m
Capacity as at 9am Monday.....	69.1%
Metres below full supply.....	12m
Daily inflow	300ML
Release.....	2000ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change).....	50%

We thank you for your continued support

Foundation Murrindindi announces Volunteer Grant Recipients

FOUNDATION Murrindindi proudly announced the successful recipients of its 2025 Volunteer Grant Program, at an event in Yea during National Volunteer Week.

"It's a real privilege to celebrate and congratulate the successful recipients of Foundation Murrindindi's Volunteer Grant Program," Executive Officer Robyn Hill said at the recent announcement. "This moment is about recognising the tireless efforts, selfless giving, and powerful impact made by volunteers throughout Murrindindi Shire."

Foundation Murrindindi's Volunteer Grants are designed to empower community organisations by supporting the people who give their time, energy, and heart to help others. Whether used for first aid training, the purchase of essential

equipment, or subscriptions that enhance operational capacity, these grants represent a meaningful investment in building strong community networks.

"This grant program is also about ensuring sustainability. It's about saying to our volunteers 'You matter. Your development, wellbeing, and capacity to keep going matters.' When we invest in our volunteers, we're not just ticking boxes. We're building the future of community-led resilience in Murrindindi."

Foundation Murrindindi is pleased to announce the following 2025 Volunteer Grant recipients:

Marysville Triangle Community Mens Shed's ShedTech Project: Building Community Together, Tri Gym for First Aid,

CPR and Defibrillator, Eildon Events for MOVES: Moving Our Volunteers Equipment Safely, Yea CFA for Join Yea CFA Help Protect Your Community, Glenburn Hall and Progress Association's Glenburn Kitchen Upgrade, Murrindindi Ranges Wildlife Centre's Flush for Wildlife, Yea Community House's Upskill Our Volunteers, Fawcett Hall's Modern Tools for a Historical Hall: Powering our Volunteers to Better Serve the Community, Marysville CFA's Stay Safe, Murrindindi Little Athletics Centre's Empowering Volunteers Through Technology: Laptop Upgrade for Murrindindi Little Athletics, Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House's Digital Champions: Empowering Volunteers for the Future, and Alexandra Community Hub's 'Give Back, Feel Forward': Market

to Inspire More to Volunteer and Help Our Community Thrive.

"To the successful grantees, may this support energise your projects, expand your impact, and inspire others to join in the rewarding act of volunteering. We are proud of your achievements, and we are grateful for your contribution," Robyn said.

Foundation Murrindindi thanks all volunteers for their continued service and encourages everyone to consider the powerful impact of getting involved.

"Let's continue to lift each other up, lend a hand, and celebrate the incredible power of community" Robyn added.

For more information about Foundation Murrindindi, visit foundationmurrindindi.org.au



Foundation Murrindindi and the Volunteer Grant recipients. -S

Rural Councils Victoria concerns over new budget

Rural Councils Victoria had a lot to say about the newly announced Victorian budget, including how the budget is propped up by hundreds of millions of dollars that will be ripped from the state's rural communities through the unfair Emergency Services Volunteers Fund levy.

"Despite using rural communities to prop up the state's finances, this budget fails to deliver for rural communities," RCV Chair Rob Amos said.

"Most of the spending is pre-announced or business as usual, with very few new initiatives for rural voters."

"Investing in new schools and roads upgrades is the bare minimum we expect from government," Mr Amos said.

"Rural Victoria is bearing the brunt of tax increases with very little to show for it."

The budget appears not to contain any new measures to support rural councils to manage the delivery essential programs and basic infrastructure with limited revenue.

Mr Amos said there were some positive elements in the budget, these included: a third of the government's new \$150 million Victorian Investment Fund has been earmarked for regional Victoria, to promote economic growth and new jobs; the government has also fully funded its previously announced Economic Growth Statement (\$74.1 million). Under this package, \$10 million will be spent on critical basic infrastructure needed to support new homes, such as sewerage and water connections, \$3.5 million will be used for cutting red tape across regional areas, including digitising regional council systems, and \$400,000 has been set-aside for the creation of Regional Launching Pads' to help stimulate regional businesses; there is also \$88 million for regional housing, as part of the Commonwealth Government's Housing Support Program.

Cr Amos said Rural Councils Victoria looks forward to working with the Victorian Government to identify further opportunities to reduce the tax burden and deliver better outcomes for rural communities.

State budget contains few goodies for Murrindindi

THE Victorian Budget was delivered by Treasurer and Member for Northern Victoria, Jaclyn Symes, on Tuesday, May 20. Shortly afterwards, a press release was received from government, stating that, "The Allan Labor Government is focused on what matters most to families in Northern Victoria, delivering real help with the cost of living and more investment in frontline services."

The press release spoke about upgrades to Broadford Primary School and Wangaratta High School, St Georges Primary School in Shepparton, Tallangatta Secondary College, Lancaster Primary School, Yarrawonga College and Broadford Secondary College.

There is also \$729,000 to keep running Yarrawonga Flexiride, an on-demand bus services booked through the app. Seymour train line will also receive an additional morning and afternoon service.

As well documented, public transport will be free for Victorians under 18 from 2026, and free for Victorians aged 60 and over on weekends.

There will be an upgrade to Country Fire Authority satellite station at Leitchville. There is also an additional \$2 billion investment in Free Kinder. The Rural Women's Leadership and Mentoring Program will be continued, along with the Fox Bounty, and some additional funds into pest animal management.

Sports infrastructure in the budget includes Mount Beauty United Cricket Club, Benalla Saints Football Netball Club, and a new Pump Track for Yackandandah.

\$6 million is going towards food shares in Albury-Wodonga, Geelong, Bendigo, Shepparton, Mildura and Warrnambool. \$3 million is also going into Foodbank's GROW program.

The budget also provides rebates for energy efficient heat pumps and solar hot water systems, and a \$100 Power Saving Bonus to eligible Victorian households with a concession card.

\$18 million will enable pharmacists to treat even more Victorians with even more conditions, including allergies, nausea, high blood pressure and minor wound care for free.

But what about Murrindindi?

The treasurer's media representative was asked, has Murrindindi Shire been completely forgotten in this budget? Murrindindi has no schools funding listed. Murrindindi has next to no public transport and therefore the free public transport makes no difference here at all. Murrindindi has no Flexiride service. Murrindindi has no train line. None of the CFA station funding appears to be in Murrindindi. No sport infrastructure upgrades are listed for Murrindindi. Murrindindi's Foodshares do not appear to be receiving any support. Only the statewide changes seem to apply.

They advised in response: Rubicon Outdoor School received \$449,000 for capital works at their Thornton Campus. Current schools that have been recently funded for upgrades in the Murrindindi region include: Eildon Primary School received over \$4 million for upgrades and modernisation, this is about to go to tender with design and planning works complete. Middle Kinglake Primary School have received over \$181,000 for maintenance upgrades. Marysville Primary School have received just over \$516,000 for maintenance upgrades. Alexandra Primary and Secondary Schools also received maintenance funding.

They also said that Kinglake West CFA has been funded in this year's budget for upgrades to the station, noting that this is also almost at construction stage, and said that Murrindindi CFA received a new ultra-light tanker as part of the last round of VESEP grants announced late last year.

They further pointed out that while the extra funding for Foodshare organisations are just the ones listed, ther FoodShare's will be eligible to apply for funding through the Community Food Relief Program, which is opening again soon.

Just hang on one minute

Our newspaper explored the projects listed. All but one of the schools projects had been announced earlier in 2025, with one announced in 2024. It was also noted that the Kinglake West CFA station upgrade was announced in December 2023 and appeared in the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee 2023-24. Murrindindi-Woodburn CFA was announced in the VESEP grants in the 2023/24 round.

Clarification

When contacted about the discrepancy, the media representative advised that some of the above projects were included to say that there has been investment in local schools and infrastructure in Murrindindi recently.

Although announced previously, there were two Murrindindi items which were funded in the budget this year, being Rubicon Outdoor School (\$449,028) and the Kinglake West CFA station. The Kinglake West CFA station upgrade was an election commitment from back in 2022. They have now received their construction funding in this year's budget.

They said it is not uncommon for election commitments to be funded in the later years of the term.



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The photography had many different subject matters. -MP



There were some beautiful floral arrangements on display. -MP

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

1 st Mon	St Luke's Seniors, St Lukes Hall, Ph Jenny 0407 972 099
1 st Thu	Yea Hospital/Rosebank Aux 2pm. Ph 5797 3057
2 nd Wed	Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
4 th Wed	Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
Last Fri	Yea-Kinglake RSL, 11.30am RSL Hall, Ph 5796 9353

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.

Talent galore at CWA Group arts and craft exhibition

YARCK hall was home to the CWA Group Arts and Crafts Exhibition last weekend.

The winners for this exhibition were: Winning Branch Entry Mansfield; Most Points for Home Industries Yarck; Most Points for Blooms Redgate Alexandra; Branch Gaining Most Points overall: first Mansfield, second Yarck, third Yea; Most Points Handcrafts Helen Fitzgerald; Most Points Cookery Margo Galloway; Most Points Junior under 12 Teah Brophy; Most Points Junior 12 to 18yrs Leila Robinson; Most Points Preserves Fiona Greenway; Most Points Floral and Produce Gail Brandsen; Most Points Photography Fiona Greenway; Best Bloom in Exhibition Cynthia Williams; Best Piece Needlework in Exhibition Rita Tomic, and One Woman's Work Margo Galloway.



Sustainable art was a very popular category. This basket was made out of toilet paper rolls. -MP



Some pretty little desserts looked too good to eat. -MP

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



This beautiful creature was made out of many gumboots by Ruth Rowlands. -MP



The quilt displays were brilliant. -MP

Out&About

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

TUESDAY, JUNE 3

Yea & District Memorial Hospital 2025 Scholarship Program applications open now.

Details and application form can be found at yeahospital.org.au, or contact Jacky Baynes on 5736 0412. Applications close June 15.

Library. Nomination forms for committee positions are available from the library or from the secretary proctor@virtual.net.au. For more information contact 0423 043 564.

Local driving instructor comments on proposed P plate age change

ADAM Neeves, the owner-operator of Drivetrain Education, teaches driving in the Murrindindi Shire. He was keen to comment on the proposal to lower the driving age to 17.

He said, "It has always been my experience that when I teach people a little older than usual, sometimes I get people come to me that are 19, 20 or 21, they have a cautious attitude and they almost inevitably do better

when they're older in terms of safety. I think there is a valid argument to keep the age at 18, but I also see arguments for lowering it when it comes to things like apprenticeships and stuff like that.

"I think that if there was a discussion of reducing the age to 17, for example, that it could be made conditional on things like being enrolled in a trade or being apprentice

or something like that. You could make it linked to employment."

He commented on an article he read on cognitive development. Having wisdom teeth come through at around age 20 or 21 is one of the last vestiges of the physical aspects of puberty. There are also cognitive development things that go along with that, and risk assessment is one of those late developing skills. That seems to be exacerbated in boys as well.

"I think that there's a prevailing attitude among some teachers where they want to use negative reinforcement, like scaring young people with the threat of violence and stuff, if you don't drive properly you're going to die and all that kind of thing. It just falls on deaf ears because they're not actually able to perceive danger at that age.

"That's one of things we're up against. It's not a lack of will to understand, it's a lack of a capability of understanding in a lot of cases," he said.

In terms of the gender divide, Adam said, "Certainly you see a little bit more risky behaviour in boys, but it's certainly not exclusive. I've seen plenty of girls do dumb things as well."

He added, "Anybody will tell you there's some kids that are 16 and level-headed that could probably cope with handling a car on their own. And there are other people that are 25, still haven't got it together enough that they can be trusted with the car. It really is an individual thing. However, the law is not really able to make that distinction in a way that makes sense. It's hard to quantify maturity. So there has to be some arbitrary cut-off date. The middle ground is 18, which is what Victoria's got.

In many cases, young drivers are taught by one parent, and the child is absorbing 100 per cent of that person's strengths and weaknesses in their driving.

He also commented that driver training is very under-regulated, so no one really polices what they say or do in a lesson, so driver trainers could give bad information or

incorrect information, or really just do nothing at all, which is a very common complaint

Adam said, "I think that with a bit of regulated and structured learning, absolutely it would be possible to lower the age, but to lower it without those safety checks in place would be I think, would be irresponsible."

Asked what advice he would give to parents when their children are learning to drive, Adam said, "I try to impress upon all parents to never hurry your child to make a decision... Safe driving isn't necessarily about eliminating error, because that's really impossible, and it's a bit of a fool's errand, we cannot fully eliminate error from the way we operate. It is important to get into the habit of making errors that don't matter. An error that doesn't matter is sitting at an intersection for a little bit too long and not going when you probably could have, whereas an error that is very important is going in front of somebody and getting T-boned. Parents should always be encouraging their kids to take their time and decision making, even when that means taking a little too long to make the decision. It is very, very easy to teach through the lens of your own experience and say, well, I would have gone then, so you should have gone then, which is an unfair thing to do to a person who's maybe in their first 10 hours of driving."

He said that the physical aspect of driving just comes with practice, but always tries to impress on people, 'If in doubt, don't pull out'.

"That would be probably the one biggest piece of advice I would give to parents is never hurry your child," Adam said. "You also have to defend them sometimes, from somebody else, somebody behind the hurrying them, somebody beeping and yelling and carrying on. You have to be able to stand up for your kid and say no, don't listen to that person. You go when you're ready."



Adam Neeves. -S



DRAFT YEA TOWNSHIP STRUCTURE PLAN



The draft Yea Structure Plan is now available for community review and feedback. Help shape the future of Yea by sharing your thoughts.

This marks the next step in shaping a long-term vision for Yea's growth, following successful community engagement events in March and April. If you missed the community events, you can now have your say online.

Visit theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/draftYSP or give us a call on 5772 0333 to get involved and share your feedback.

Feedback closes Wednesday 18 June.

This project is supported by funding and project management from the State Government through the Department of Transport and Planning's Regional Partnerships Program, which assists flood-affected councils.



**Yea & District
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL**

2025 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



Yea & District Memorial Hospital is committed to supporting local residents and current staff members in pursuing careers in health-related fields.

- Are you currently employed at Yea & District Memorial Hospital or live in the Murrindindi shire?
- Are you currently studying or enrolled to study a tertiary course within Australia in 2025?
- Do you require financial assistance?

APPLICATIONS OPEN

Our scholarship program is here to assist you to complete your studies. Yea & District Memorial Hospital is offering \$5,000 to the successful applicant.

Applications close 15th of June 2025

Further details and application form at www.yeahospital.org.au

Contact: Jacky Baynes on (03) 5736 0412

Student of the Week

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



SACRED HEART SCHOOL

Hayley, Josh, Milly, Ted, Olivia and Avarah were recognised for their commitment for outstanding actions that align with our school values of Respect, Resilience and Safety.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by
Kinglake branch



Aunt Angela guiding attendees through the smoking ceremony. -BD



Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Damien Gallagher officially opened the Yea Wetlands Discover Experience. -BD



Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre chairman Don Knight spoke to those in attendance. -BD



A number of people attended, including volunteers, council staff, and members of the public. -BD



The Orbweavers performing for the gathered crowd. -BD



David Anderson emceed the event. -BD



Aunt Angela Ten Buuren performing the Welcome to Country. -BD

Yea Wetlands Discover Experience officially opened

THE Yea Wetlands Discover Experience Project was officially opened last Friday after over three years of work from the team at the Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre.

The experience includes a new walking trail, the Kayigai Trail, boardwalks and viewing platforms in the wetlands, an Indigenous sculpture trail, and four new displays in the Interpretive Wing of the centre.

The project received funding from the Victorian Government in 2022, and the rest of the budget (around 25 per cent) was comprised of donations from the Yea and district community.

Aunt Angela Ten Buuren of the Taungurung people conducted a smoking

ceremony to cleanse those present, and a Welcome to Country. She acknowledged all of the hard work to bring the project to fruition.

David Anderson emceed the event, listing the apologies of those who could not attend, including Steve Dimopoulos, Minister for Environment.

Chairman of the Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre, Don Knight, spoke about the people involved and the enormous amount of effort that went into creating the project over three years.

"Significant efforts by several association members, led by Frank during the Christmas break of 2021/22, resulted in an application to the Victorian Government's *Regional*

Tourism Investment Fund grant program for a grant of \$350,000," Don said.

"The grant required the association to raise an additional \$125,000, making it a total of \$500,000. Ian Marshman led a small team to approach the local community for support and the response astounded us.

"On behalf of the association, I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the project, and particularly the outstanding support of a number of Yea community members, some of whom are with us today, who contributed more than \$130,000 towards the \$500,000 project."

Volunteers met monthly around 29 times over the project duration, and the flooding

in Yea led to the project being extended. It was a happy celebration to see it completed.

Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Damien Gallagher officially opened the Yea Wetlands Discover Experience Project.

Marita Dyson and Stuart Flanagan from *The Orbweavers* provided live music, playing several examples of their songs that are included in the immersive part of the Interpretive Wing. An afternoon tea was had, and attendees went for a guided walk around the new wetlands trail.

David Webb Ware comments on ESVF and the drought

WHEN asked his thoughts on the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF), farmer, first lieutenant at Glenburn CFA and deputy group officer of the Yea Group, David Webb Ware said, "It's an utter disgrace. What it does, it just shows the utter contempt this government has for regional Victoria."

He said, "Probably the one question that needs to be asked which nobody has answered is why have farmers been hit with the highest percentage increase? I know the answer. It's because farmers tend not to vote for Labor."

He explained that residential rates have gone from 8.7 cents per \$1000 capital improved value to 17.3 cents. Farmers have gone from 28.7 cents per \$1000 to 71.8.

"Why should farmers be paying that much higher percentage increase?" David said.

David also provided the following figures. In the last rate notice, if you had a \$750,000 house, you would have been charged \$65 under the new residential rates. You'll now be charged \$130.

If you have a residential house valued at \$1.5 million dollars, it's gone from \$130 to \$260.

Farms, including hobby farms, anybody on the rural one or rural two rate, a \$1.5 million hobby farm, for instance, went from \$430 to \$1077.

A \$3 million hobby farm or farm went from \$860 to \$2154.

A \$5 million farm, getting towards a viable farm size, from \$1435 to \$3590.

"Tell me why a farm should be paying \$3590 and a residential paying \$260. The fact that a lot of the farmers are CFA members, it is such a kick in the guts. We go and do the work, and passionately do the work, to protect the community from fire and that sort of stuff. And then we get slugged with this massive great tax," he said.

"Under the old fire service levy, all the money was put into consolidated revenue and then it was distributed to CFA, Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV), etcetera. CFA had a budget of \$330 million, FRV had a budget of \$1.70 billion. That's a much smaller organisation but it gets a much, much higher budget. Now, this levy (ESVF) covers CFA, FRV, SES, Forest Fire Management, Emergency Management Victoria, Emergency Recovery Victoria and Tripe Zero. I've seen various figures as to how much money this is going to raise.

"If you look at the CFA budget and the FRV budget, there's not much left for all those other organisations, and yet they've got to be covered. So that clearly means that there will be some money cuts from these organisations. The figures don't add up.

"As for the so-called exemption that volunteers get, that's a sham too. The Treasurer, Jaclyn Symes, said on ABC radio on Friday that volunteers would be exempt and people covered under the drought assistance package would get a discount on their ESVF. To come out and just say volunteers will be exempt is an absolute lot of nonsense because it's actually calculated

based on your house and the immediate title it's on, not the rest of the farm. It's highly deceptive as to how this thing is going to be recovered. The other thing is people have got to pay the ESVF and then claim the exemption back.

It's understood that at the rally at Parliament House on Tuesday, May 20, around 600 brigades were offline, around half of the brigades in the state. David said that the event was very well-attended and people were very passionate about getting rid of the levy.

He said that in the western district, people are walking away from the CFA because of it, in significant numbers. "I think it's a tragedy," he said. He doubts that it will happen to the same degree in our area, "But people are sick to death of being treated like cash cows, and treated with the utter disrespect that this government has shown us." He said that some of the brigades abandoned their trucks at the rally because they're now out of the CFA. "Both communities will still be served by the former CFA on private units," David added.

"This is a land tax. The money that's raised from this new land tax helps to make their budget look better. The only reason they were able to call a surplus was because of this new tax. Everybody's calling that a sham too.

David also commented on the drought, and on Murrindindi missing out on the drought supports. "It is outrageous what has happened, particularly with this fire service levy. Some of the bigger farmers are going

to be paying in excess of \$20,000, some of them in excess of \$40,000. It's insane and it doesn't take into account the fact that some of these big farms might only have 50 per cent equity, so they actually own half of it. The bank, the other half, and yet you've got to pay the full amount. It is going to affect everyone in the shire, because if the farmers have got to spend this money on the levy, yeah, they won't have that money to spend back into the community."

They're also unable to raise the prices, as the prices are set by the buyers. The only way that the prices will rise is if there is demand on a limited amount of stock, but again this is up to the buyers.

As a farmer, David is trying to keep hold of his stock in the hope that the drought will soon break and he can capitalise on it, but it's costing him a lot to do so. He bought some hay two or three weeks ago for \$340 per tonne. The same hay would be worth between \$500 and \$600 per tonne now. He said that if we don't get some rain soon, "It will be a catastrophe."

David added, "I detest what is happening and the only way we're going to change this and get some respect into regional Victoria is a change of government... The fight's certainly not over yet. It's very important to know that the CFA members in this area will be still looking after the community. If there's a house fire, we will be turning out. We will be looking after the community."



Protesters outside Parliament House. -S



CFA vehicles lined up along Bourke Street on Tuesday, May 20. -S



Ray Goss from Taggerty CFA was happy to share his thoughts at the protest. -S



CFA members from Ruffy. -S



Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish, Mayor Damien Gallagher and Warren Davies, the Unbreakable Farmer. -S

Opposition declares intention to scrap ESVF

THE Liberals and Nationals have announced that they will scrap the Emergency Services Property Levy (ESVF), saying that it's "a tax that rips \$765 million a year from Victorian families, farmers and small businesses under the guise of supporting emergency services."

Primary producers are hit the hardest under the new tax, facing rate hikes of up to 150 per cent. There is also no guarantee that the money will go towards frontline services.

Leader of the Opposition, Brad Battin, said, "Only Labor could try and spin a massive land tax as support for volunteers. This is not about emergency services. It's about squeezing more cash from Victorians to pay for Labor's budget blowouts."

The Opposition, if elected, plan to return to the "simpler, fairer Fire Services Property Levy, a model that funds fire

services transparently, without punishing homeowners, renters and farmers." They also said that SES funding would be secured transparently through the state budget, not hidden inside property rates.

He added, "Labor has failed to respect our CFA and SES volunteers. Their funding model is based on deception, and we will scrap it."

Leader of The Nationals and Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Danny O'Brien, said regional Victorians had been hit hardest by Labor's new tax. "This cruel tax deserves to be consigned to history. The Liberals and Nationals will make sure it is," he said. "It is a tax that hits regional Victorians particularly hard. Slugging farmers with a 150 per cent increase to what they previously paid is nothing short of callous amid a drought and a cost-of-living crisis."

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PUZZLES

SOLUTIONS
Page 11

KID'S PUZZLES

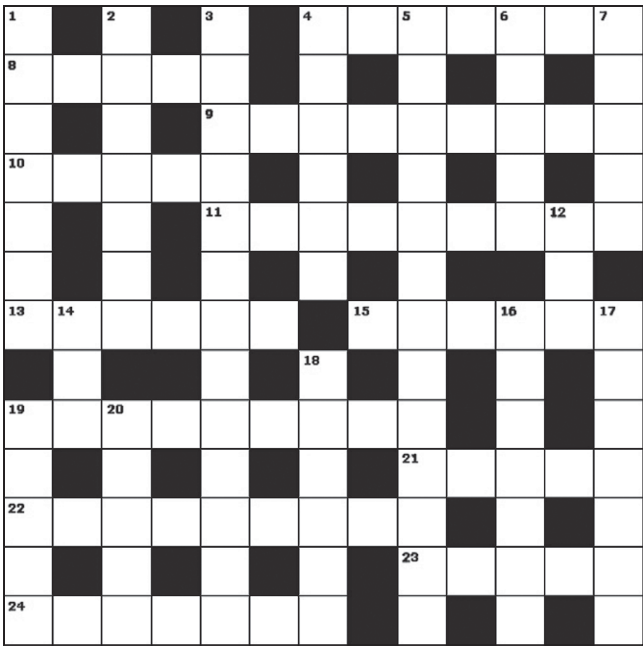
Crossword

ACROSS

- 4. Sweet mixture poured over desserts.
- 8. Doglike African mammal.
- 9. Creating clothes from cloth.
- 10. Farm consisting of a large tract of land.
- 11. A means to an end.
- 13. A fine cord used in sewing.
- 15. Small cold-water silvery fish.
- 19. Strict accuracy.
- 21. Travels by ship.
- 22. The male head of a family.
- 23. Religious paintings in oil on a small wooden panels.
- 24. A person who is being taught a skill.

DOWN

- 1. A horse-drawn battle vehicle.
- 2. A curve in a stream.
- 3. Person skilled in the science of numbers.
- 4. Curls tightly.
- 5. Skill in fencing.
- 6. Moving quickly and lightly.
- 7. A finger or toe.
- 12. A hard-shelled seed.
- 14. Of a female.
- 16. Reference book containing an alphabetical list of words.
- 17. Support oneself.
- 18. Ruthless in competition.
- 19. Small songbird.
- 20. Something additional.



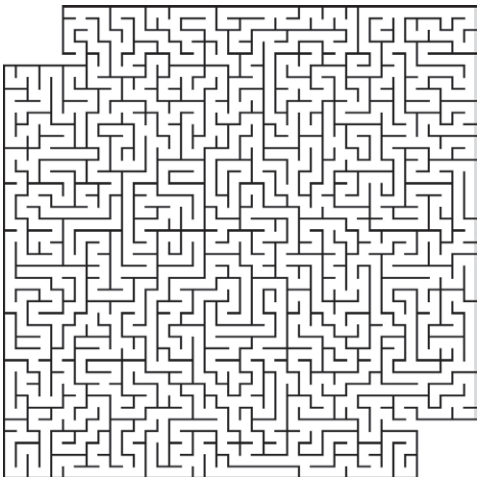
Word Search

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

Winter

- COATS
- OPENFIRE
- COLD
- RAIN
- GLOVES
- SKIING
- GUMBOOTS
- SLEDDING
- HOTCHOCOLATE
- SNOW
- JUMPERS
- WIND

Maze



Sudoku

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

Difficulty: Easy

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

Math Square

	+		÷	2	11
÷		-		×	
	-	5	-		-2
-		×		+	
	÷		-		-4
-7		-9		9	

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.

Colouring Page



Word Search

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

Words starting with "F"

- FABULOUS
- FINISH
- FAMILY
- FLYING
- FATHER
- FRANK
- FAVORITE
- FRECKLE
- FEATHER
- FRIENDS
- FEELING
- FROSTY
- FELICITY
- FUN

Math Square

5	+		×		13
-		+		-	
	+		+		18
+		+		×	
7	+		÷		9
9		11		-10	

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: What kind of chocolate do you find in airports?

A: Plain

Q: Why do bees have sticky hair?

A: Because they use a honeycomb.

The Farmer's Ag News

Cattle and lamb turn off surges as seasonal conditions bite

AUSTRALIA'S red meat sector has recorded a significant lift in cattle and lamb slaughter volumes in the first quarter of 2025, with producers responding to varied seasonal conditions across the country, according to Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA).

Cattle

Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has revealed that cattle slaughter reached 2.2 million head for the quarter, up 2 per cent from quarter four 2024 and 20 per cent higher year-on-year.

This marks the largest quarterly cattle slaughter in Victoria since 1979, and in New South Wales since 2015, with volumes lifting five per cent and seven per cent respectively. South Australia also recorded its highest quarterly cattle slaughter since 2017, up 16 per cent, driven by tough seasonal conditions prompting early turnoff.

Despite recent flooding and cyclones, Queensland's cattle slaughter rate eased by two per cent, reflecting improved seasonal conditions that allowed producers to retain stock longer. Western Australia saw a four per cent decline, while Tasmania lifted four per cent.

The female slaughter rate (FSR) rose to 52.7 per cent, indicating elevated female turnoff, particularly in South Australia and Victoria. However, according to MLA's Market Information Manager, Stephen Bignell, this is not indicative of widespread herd liquidation across the country.

"The elevated female slaughter rate reflects regional responses to seasonal pressures, particularly in the south where a prolonged and expanding drought is impacting numbers," Mr Bignell said.

"While some areas are destocking, others are benefiting from improved conditions and holding onto stock.

"This is most evident in Queensland where generally good conditions are resulting in stock retention and even herd growth."

Beef production rose three per cent to 679,000 tonnes, with South Australia recording the largest lift at 16 per cent. National average carcase weights increased by 1.5kg to 313kg, supported by growth in lot feeding and earlier turnoff of heifers.

The value of cattle production hit \$4.41 billion for the quarter, with the average value per head rising three per cent to \$2029.

National average price per tonne was \$6.49, with South Australia leading at \$6.98/tonne.

Lamb

Lamb slaughter surged to 6.86 million head, the second-highest quarterly figure on record, up 12 per cent from the previous quarter and slightly above year-ago levels.

Victoria led the charge, processing a record 3.83 million head, while New South Wales lifted 27 per cent to 1.48 million head. Only Western Australia saw a decline, down six per cent, though volumes remained above the five-year average.

Lamb production reached 166,800 tonnes, up 18 per cent from quarter four 2024, with Victoria producing a record 91,600 tonnes. National average lamb carcase weights rose to 24.3kg, with South Australia leading at 26.1kg.

Sheep

Sheep slaughter totalled three million head, a 14 per cent decline on the previous quarter though remained seven per cent above year-ago levels.

While Victoria saw a year-on-year decline, most state turnoff lifted above year ago levels staying high following record turnoff in late 2024. Mutton production reached 74,700 tonnes, which was the third-highest quarterly volume in a decade.

The gross value of sheep and lamb slaughtered in Australia lifted once again across all states to an impressive \$1.58 billion. This is likely due to an increase in throughput and production, however markets remained relatively strong in the first quarter despite the elevated supply.

Virtual fencing regulations inching closer for farmers

VICTORIAN cattle farmers will soon be able to harness the benefits of virtual fencing and herding technology, with the Victorian Government taking the next step to allow this new technology.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence last week announced that new regulations will be prepared for the use of virtual fencing and herding technology for cattle in Victoria. The announcement follows engagement with industry, manufacturers, and researchers on virtual fencing to understand the animal welfare impacts of the technology that will create better and more efficient farms.

"We know that Victorian farmers are looking to use virtual fencing and herding technology to improve productivity and farmer safety, which is why we're making decisions to ensure farmers have the best technology up to date," Ms Spence said.

"It is critical that we have appropriate safeguards in place to protect animal welfare, while enabling innovation on farms and these new regulations will provide a framework to achieve this."

Further engagement will occur with relevant stakeholders, including animal welfare groups with the regulations to be finalised by the end of the year.

A trial of Halter virtual fencing technology at Agriculture Victoria's Ellinbank SmartFarm in Gippsland will continue conducting research until June 30, giving Victorian farmers the chance to experience first-hand this new technology close to home.

Since July 2024, dairy cattle at the SmartFarm have been fitted with solar powered smart collars that use electronic cues to contain animals within a virtual fence and guide them to areas of the farm via a mobile phone app. It also allows farmers to monitor their cows' location, health and reproductive status.

Virtual fencing uses collars with GPS and wireless technology to control livestock without physical fences. If the animal leaves a designated area, the collars send out three warning noise and vibration cues and additional stimulus to encourage the animal to return to the area.

The new regulations will make sure the roll out of virtual fencing across the state will improve animal welfare outcomes, farm safety, productivity and staff wellbeing. Agriculture Victoria is also actively contributing to the development of the Australian Animal Welfare Guide for Virtual Fencing, a project led by the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

This guide aims to support a consistent regulatory approach across states and territories, while ensuring optimal animal welfare outcomes where virtual fencing is used.



Around 100 people attended the 'Farming in Unpredictable Conditions' presentation at the Molesworth Hall last Friday. -AR



Andrew Embling and Mayor Damien Gallagher. -AR



David Webb Ware. -AR



Kerri Goschnick from Agriculture Victoria speaking on maintaining your farms water supply. -AR



Rural outreach worker Ivan Lister, who provides mental health support for farmers. He is in the Nagambie area every Wednesday and always happy to have a chat. He can be contacted on 0474 501 406. -AR

Drought presentation fills the Molesworth Hall

THE Molesworth Hall was filled to the brim with locals and farmers for the *Farming in Unpredictable Conditions* presentation and barbecue last Friday.

Around 100 people attended the event, organised by Alexandra Events and Murrindindi Shire Council.

Andrew Embling from Alexandra Events emceed, and guest speakers included Rob

Inglis from Elders, Kerri Goschnick from Agriculture Victoria, local farmer David Webb Ware, rural outreach worker Ivan Lister, and Murrindindi Shire Council Mayor Damien Gallagher.

Topics discussed included feeding stock, in particular how to make sure livestock get enough energy, what to do in transitioning stock from containment to grazing, how to cultivate quick feed, etcetera.

Damien Gallagher spoke about how council is lobbying the state government for drought relief in our area, with a co-signed letter from the Hume local government area requesting drought support.

Warwick Long from the ABC broadcast the *Victorian Country Hour* program live from the Molesworth Hall after the conclusion of the presentations, while attendees were enjoying a free barbecue.

How can you help someone with hoarding challenges?

HOARDING is an issue for many in our community. Australia Psychology Association CEO Sara Quinn kindly provided more information about the phenomenon and the psychology behind it.

She said that hoarding “can occur when individuals in the community go through any traumatic experience [such as Black Saturday] or if there’s a sense of emotional deprivation through someone’s upbringing, that can increase the likelihood of developing a disorder such as hoarding.

“We know that when attachment bonds, a child’s attachment to their adult figures in their lives, are disrupted, people tend to refocus on material possessions as an emotional containment mechanism because that invokes these feelings of control, and identity and safety and security. And we would see the same sort of responses occur through a traumatic experience.”

She said that hoarding disorders, “is an ongoing difficulty letting go of possessions, and what we know is when people have difficulty letting go, that can lead to cluttered spaces, and then a disrupted daily life. It’s often driven by that strong emotional attachment to their material possessions, real difficulties with decision-making and some unhelpful beliefs about items and, and in general avoidance of distress. So hoarding disorder is actually defined as a difficulty getting rid of material possessions, and that’s partnered with accumulation of possessions and cluttered spaces.”

She added that all humans experience some attachment to their possessions. “That attachment, when that impairs the person’s ability to engage in their normal quality of life, it becomes problematic,” she said.

People collect things, and that’s normal. When this impacts on a person’s quality of life, that it becomes problematic, and this may lead to a hoarding disorder.

Dr Quin explained, “Unhelpful beliefs are quite quintessential for hoarding... We know that in particular, some of our clients might hold rigid or unhelpful thoughts around some of the items that you and I might naturally want to throw in the rubbish or donate to others. Some of these beliefs can be ‘I might need this one day’ or ‘discarding of this type of article might be irresponsible’ or ‘this item is unique and it’s irreplaceable’. These beliefs can reinforce a person’s need to retain those items, and that’s irrespective of whether or not they’ve got actual utility or value. “

“What we see as someone unable to clean up what we might determine as mess is actually being reinforced by those unhelpful beliefs... It can undermine a person’s ability to live their day-to-day life. And that’s before we even start talking about behavioural avoidance.”

She explained that when people have these unhelpful beliefs, “there’s a lot of emotional discomfort and a lot of what we would call cognitive load, so there’s a lot of stress and pressure associated with sorting and discarding, which can often lead to people avoiding those very behaviours that others do quite naturally. Avoidance means that they don’t have to go through the pressure of having to sort things out and get rid of them, but what it does do over time, is perpetuates that cycle of hoarding and that contributes to that clutter and that mess and then and then this overall sense that people are actually not getting rid of what we would perceive as rubbish. Because the problem is too big at that point.”

We know that individuals with hoarding disorder can often form intense, not only emotional connections to their possessions, but the intensity of even the thought of having to engage in any sort of sorting or making decisions around whether or not we keep throw away an item, that in itself can be incredibly overwhelming, and we actually know that there are some deficits in some individuals who develop hoarding disorder around information processing, so they can have difficulties with attention, they might not see what it is that we see, they have difficulties organising their spaces, categorising them, and decision making, which is key. Those sorts of changes can make the actual process of sorting through anything completely overwhelming.

How do you help people who engage in

hoarding start to resolve the situation?

Dr Quin responded, “It’s a significant act when we think about all the challenges associated with it, and I think that the impact of this and why people start to resolve it is because it has an impact not just on the individual, but also on family members and if they have pets, and the community. Often if someone is living in the community and you can see some of that behaviour extending out onto the gardens, etcetera. It’s also important to note that some people experiencing hoarding don’t actually consider that their behaviour is a problem. Additionally, there could be quite an acute sense of shame associated with inviting people into their homes, and that might mean that they’re more likely to be isolated in the first place, which can then lead to the problem being exacerbated.

“In particular, when we speak to some of those individuals who do provide support to those with hoarding disorder is that there’s a lot of hazards usually that occur in the home for them.” These might include trip hazards or an increased risk of fire, and the problem may not be known until people become unwell or repairs are needed to the home. The problem is unlikely to be found until someone alerts that for the person.

In the psychological world, they have found that cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is usually the most effective evidence-based treatment, however bringing people to realise that they need to seek and take on board that support is one of the biggest challenges. CBT would involve teaching people how to make decisions on a small scale so that they can then expand out through explorations of beliefs and exposure techniques. This might include clinicians going into the home with the person and starting to get them used to experiencing that distress and those emotional challenges.

She added, “It’s a long process and quite overwhelming for an individual unless they’ve got good support.

Would it be wise to have someone come in and do some sorting, get rid of the bulk of stuff and then allowing the person to start again? Or do you feel that it’s important for the psychological recovery for the person to be doing it themselves with potential support.

Dr Quin responded, “I think it actually depends on the individual. I think that a lot of individuals will not feel able to be safe to be able to engage in that sort of behaviour without an expert by their side, because I think that even though somebody might have the best of intentions to help... Without familiarity around what the disorder is and some of those unhelpful beliefs in some of the intense emotional experience of the individual, we might see it as, they just don’t want to throw stuff out and they just need some help. What we’re not seeing is actually the significant challenges associated with that... “

“I would say that it’s really important for those individuals to understand the experience of the person that they’re trying to assist, because their refusal to engage in that help is not necessarily because they don’t think they need it. It’s often they don’t realise that it’s such a problem for them or it might be such a source of embarrassment and shame that they don’t want to even go close to accepting some help. The judgement free support that a psychologist has and that knowledge of how it is that we start to untangle some of those really complex beliefs can be quite crucial, not just for the individual, but for people offering support as well.”

Should a person seeking to help receive some psychological advice before undertaking that activity?

“Yes. I think when people feel safe enough to speak with their family and their friends about what is going on for them without judgement, then they’ll feel more likely to accept that help. When their families and those friends are educated on what hoarding disorder actually is, to provide that appropriate support, that means the support they offer is really helpful.

“Social workers and professional organisers who are experienced working with people with hoarding disorder, they can then work alongside treatment for the individuals. Effectively, it could be a really nice team



Dr Sara Quinn. -S

support as long as everyone is educated in what it actually is, and the person feels ready and able to accept that support,” Dr Quinn said.

I imagine that there would need to be a lot of tolerance and not showing external displays of judgement

“Yes definitely. I think there can often be an ambivalence for individuals who are experiencing hoarding and I think if you’re able to actually sit with them in their ambivalence and understand how it is that that occurred for them without judging their experience without you thinking that you can clean them up, which can be very, very distressing for, in particular, a family member or someone who really cares for that individual to want to get this done really quickly, sitting in some of this discomfort can be one of the most difficult yet important strategies to being able to help somebody in the long term,” Dr Quin said.

What other supports are potentially available?

“There are psychologists who are experts in human behaviour, but family members and community members can also be very well placed, especially if they approach it without judgement. Create a solid support system for an individual, especially if there are risk issues attached. If a person is more likely to become sick, sometimes their GP might be able to identify this first, people in the community when they see some of the hoarding extent onto their verge might notice that as well. There are also really well placed social workers and professional organisers who are able to, and very well experienced, working alongside that beneficial treatment as well,” Dr Quinn said.

What about industrial cleaners?

“It depends on the individual. Sometimes worst case scenario is we see individuals have been holding for a very, very long time we see the risk of fire, the risk of the associated financial burden, needing to repair a home

that might be in disrepair because of hoarding, there are so many risks that occur for an individual living in that sort of environment and the desire to want to clear it out really quickly can be really strong. If that person is in a position to be able to facilitate that, that is best case scenario for an individual,” Dr Quin said.

“However, if the problem is too overwhelming and/or the person is unable to assist with that, there can be a place for someone coming in and actually cleaning it up, but where possible I think involving the individual is going to give them the best sense of agency. Also when, we think of long-term gain, if they’re able to be part of that process, then they’re more able to start to develop more helpful ways of connecting and attaching themselves to their material position.”

Is there anything else that you would like to add on the topic that you think it’s important that the community knows about?

Dr Quin said, “I think the most important part of all of this is that hoarding disorder is a disorder, and it’s characterised by a persistent emotional attachment to possessions. We know that that’s often linked to past traumas or deprivation, and that in turn interferes with daily life. I think the psychologists are very well equipped to provide that evidence-based support. What I do want to normalise that it’s actually a really normal human experience to be attached to our material possessions. So just because someone is a collector of items doesn’t necessarily mean that they have a disorder. It is when it starts to impact their ability to function in daily life that we then think, how is it that we could help this individual? Look out for your neighbours, friends and family is probably the most important message.”

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One year milestone for digital driver licences

MORE than 1.8 million Victorians have downloaded their digital driver licence since it was launched by the Victorian Government one year ago.

Since the launch, 1.5 million full licence holders and 323,000 learner and probationary licence holders have downloaded the technology.

More than one third of eligible licence holders have accessed their driver, motorcycle, and heavy vehicle licences safely and securely via the myVicRoads and Service Victoria apps.

An average of almost 35,000 digital driver licences per week have been activated by Victorians since they were introduced one year ago.

Feedback from Victorians has been overwhelmingly positive, with ease of use and convenience being the most common reasons for people embracing the technology.

Physical licences are still being issued for all Victorian drivers and can continue to be used for identification purposes, with the digital driver licence being optional.

Drivers can add their digital licence to the Service Victoria app or myVicRoads app on their smartphone.

The digital driver licence has a highly secure, timed QR code that can be scanned by businesses and other authorities to verify authenticity and prevent fraudulent use. Digital licences also detail when a licence has been cancelled or suspended.

The licences can also be updated in real-time if there are changes to licence conditions or personal information like home addresses.

Visit the VicRoads or Service Victoria websites to find out more about the digital driver licence.

Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne praised the program.

“We are thrilled that more than 1.8 million Victorians have downloaded the digital driver licence in its first year, an average of almost 35,000 people each week,” Ms Horne said.

“Whether it’s collecting a parcel, going to a gig or driving a vehicle, the digital driver licence provides Victorians with a convenient alternative to the physical card.”

Minister for Government Services Natalie Hutchins added that there are a range of digital services available.

“We want to ensure Victorians can safely transition into the digital age, with more than 130 government services already available on the Service Victoria app and website,” Ms Hutchins said.

“Along with the new Parent’s Portal, Cost of Living relief and vehicle rego, Digital Driver licenses just make sense and ensure Victorians can quickly access the services they need, when they need them.”

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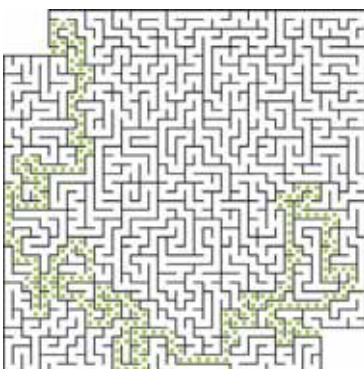
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TRADES ADVERTISING DEADLINE NOON THURSDAY

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

Print Post Approved - PP 100000292.

DEATH NOTICES

MCLEOD, June. Nan, you were an amazing, strong and inspiring woman. Thank you for being a generous, loving and caring nan. You will be so sadly missed. Rest peacefully Nan. Bec and Ryder.



DEATH NOTICES

MCLEOD, June. Much loved second mum to Julie, adored nan and great nan to Rebecca and Ryder, Allan, Vince and families. Friend to Kevin. Heartfelt thanks for all your love, support and cherished memories over the last 40 plus years will be sadly missed. A life lived to the full. Rest peacefully June. Reunited with Ken.

MEETINGS



Friends of the Library Alexandra & District Inc.

Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, June 3, 2025 at 6pm at
Alexandra Library, Grant Street, Alexandra.
New members welcome. Nomination forms for committee positions available from the library or from the secretary: proctor@virtual.net.au.
For more information please phone 0423 043 564.

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.
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DEATH NOTICES



STEWART, Stanley Fletcher

02/06/1926 –
20/05/2025

157007
Air Force, WW2.
The President,
Committee and
Members of
Yea - Kinglake RSL
regret the passing
of our respected
member, and a
past President,
Stan. Condolences
to the family.

Lest We Forget.

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FUNERAL NOTICES

McLEOD,
Dorothy June
11/06/1929 -
18/05/2025

Passed away
peacefully at
Kellock Lodge.
Loved wife of
Lawrence (dec).
Cherished mother
of John, Diane,
and Ken (dec).

Adored
grandmother to
Lara, Brooke,
Simon, Kaia,
Rebecca and
great grandmother
of 11 grandchildren

Now at peace
in the arms of
loved ones.

McLEOD,
Dorothy June

A funeral service
celebrating the life
of June will be held
on Wednesday,
May 28, 2025
at St Johns
Anglican Church,
Downey Street,
Alexandra
commencing at
11am.



PUBLIC NOTICES

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SALE

L2P reaches a million hours

THE Victorian Government is getting young learner drivers, who don't have had access to a car or supervisor behind the wheel, as the L2P program reaches one million hours.

Coinciding with National Volunteer Week, this program wouldn't be possible without the 7500 volunteers at the heart of the program.

Since 2009, the L2P Program has given more than 23,000 young drivers across the state the vital skills needed to drive confidently on our roads.

The program matches learner drivers aged 16 to 21 years old who don't have access to a car or a supervising driver with a fully licenced volunteer mentor and car to help them get the driving experience needed to gain a probationary licence.

The program not only benefits learner drivers but also gives volunteer mentors an opportunity to connect with their community.

Volunteer mentors are provided with comprehensive training and access to a L2P Program car.

The TAC funded L2P Program supports the Government's Graduated Licencing System (GLS) which makes it compulsory for learner drivers aged under 21 to obtain a minimum 120 hours of supervised driving practice.

For more information visit the transport.vic.gov.au

Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne said, "The TAC L2P Program plays a vital role in empowering and enhancing a young person's confidence by teaching them to drive safely and reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities among young drivers.

"Gaining a licence also enhances a young person's confidence and social independence allowing them to engage with their friends and community, helping them access employment opportunities and education."

TAC CEO Tracey Slatter added, "The more experience learner drivers can gain, the better equipped they will be to become safer solo drivers.

"The TAC L2P Program provides learner drivers with equal access to driving experience and an opportunity to develop the skills and behaviors necessary for a culture of road safety in Victoria."

The L2P program is available at the Alexandra Community Hub, phone 5772 1238.

New road safety cameras switched on

THE last of 35 new road safety cameras has been switched on, helping reduce road trauma and catching more dodgy drivers.

Speed contributes to approximately one third of all road trauma in Victoria, or around 100 deaths and 2000 serious injuries every year. Even small increases in vehicle speed can significantly raise the risk of a driver having a crash.

Exceeding the speed limit by just three km/h increases your risk of being involved in a crash by 25 per cent, and drivers travelling at 65km/h in a 60km/h zone double their risk.

Every dollar received from road safety camera enforcement goes to the Better Roads Victoria Trust, where it is spent on road restoration, surface replacement, bridge strengthening and other improvements.

The government's second Road Safety Action Plan will invest more than \$1.1 billion over the next four years to deliver life-saving road safety infrastructure and strengthen enforcement efforts to reduce road trauma.

The plan includes \$350 million of funding for new initiatives to reduce risky and unsafe behaviours, including the extension of the Distracted Driving and Seatbelt Camera Program in some of the highest risk areas on our roads.

Minister for Police Anthony Carabines said, "Road safety cameras have proven to be one of the most effective ways to get motorists to slow down and ultimately reduce serious injuries and save lives.

"It only takes one moment of distraction to turn into tragedy. We need people to heed the advice or they'll risk their life."

A successful Murrindindi Beanie and Fibre Festival



Beanies galore. -MP



St Mary's Primary School's fibre art display. -MP



Marysville Girl Guides' fibre art display. -MP



The hall was buzzing over the weekend. -MP



Some of the Beanie Festival committee. Pam, Carolyn, and Sue. -MP



The circus theme was in full force. -MP



Some great colours in this beanie. -MP



A winning hat by Donna Merrilees. -MP



Some beautiful chooks to purchase at the Beanie Festival. -MP



Spinning and yarning happening throughout the weekend. -MP



Elephant beanie created by Sue Wynn. -MP

Water restrictions for Euroa and Violet Town

IN response to unseasonal prolonged dry conditions, stage two water restrictions will be introduced in nearby Euroa and Violet Town from Wednesday, May 28. Goulburn Valley Water has determined the measure is needed to safeguard supplies and ensure the system has sufficient water until storages recover.

The key changes under stage two water restrictions are: Residential and commercial lawns cannot be watered at any time; gardens can be watered using a hand-held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle, bucket or watering can at any time, on any day; use of watering systems is only permitted between 6am and 8am and 6pm and 8pm on alternate days, ie. even and no numbered properties may water on even dates, odd-numbered properties may water on odd dates; all properties may water on the 31st of the month; councils and schools can water sports grounds and gardens in accordance with the prescribed times; cleaning windows, hosing down hard surfaces and washing vehicles is restricted.

The restrictions do not apply to recycled water or tank water. Water storages in these systems are at record low levels, about 60 percentage points lower than at the same time last year.

For more information visit gvwater.vic.gov.au/restrictions or call 5832 4800.

Set your focus on nature shots

ENTRIES for photographs for the 2026 Goulburn Broken Catchment calendar are now open.

The popular calendar is known for its stunning collection of local images taken by community members.

Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority CEO Carl Walters said the calendar photo competition was a great way for local people to showcase their photographic skills of plants, animals and the environment.

“Eighteen members of the public had their photos selected for this year’s calendar and of those, six were first time contributors,” Mr Walters said.

“The calendar photo competition continues to attract new interest from people who are out and about in nature with their camera, right across the catchment.

“Drone photography is proving popular in the entries and there was a great aerial shot of the Mid-Goulburn River selected this year.”

Email your images of birds, animals, plants, insects and natural places in the Goulburn Broken catchment to Janice Mentiplay-Smith at janicem@gbcma.vic.gov.au

To be eligible, photos must be between two and 10MB in landscape orientation (not portrait) and submitted as a JPEG file attachment, not as a picture inserted into the text of the email. Include a description of the image in the email subject line (ie. ‘Australian Boobook’). No USBs.

The Broken Boosey Conservation Management Network Advisory Group assists with selecting the best photos for inclusion in the calendar. This project is coordinated by the Goulburn Broken CMA, with support from Moira Shire Council and Greater Shepparton City Council. Entries close on August 13.



An Australian boobook. -Richard Gregson



Spraying the greater glider nests. -S

Concern over greater gliders

ON the evening of Monday, May 19 members of Kinglake Friends of the Forest were in Toolangi State Forest with a 1000 litre water tank, wetting down a greater glider nest tree “within a forest scheduled for imminent burning.”

Kinglake Friends of the Forest said they “have reported the presence and location of threatened species that live within this planned burn area to Forest Fire Management Victoria, but they are still determined to burn.”

They said, “We reported two Greater Glider den trees. They’re only 20 metres from the road but they haven’t even marked or raked around them for protection from the fire.

“Planned burn HR-MUR-TLG-0011, Glenburn - Eagles Nest Road is scheduled to be conducted any time in the next fortnight.

“Government and community survey records show this area is a refuge for seven threatened species. These include southern greater gliders, sooty owls, powerful owls, yellow bellied gliders, platypus, barred galaxias (fish), and goodia pubescens (plant).

When contacted about the issue, Forest Fire Management Victoria spokesperson said, “The Glenburn-Eagles Nest planned burn is part of Forest Fire Management Victoria’s three year Joint Fuel Management Program.

“The 634 hectare fuel reduction burn aims to reduce the impact of future bushfires on the Glenburn community. The planned burn is not currently scheduled for ignition.

“So far this year, FFMVic has completed 19 planned burns across 8500 hectares, reducing the threat of bushfires across the Murrindindi District. Every burn we complete now helps keep communities safer next summer.”



The top-selling trailer came in at \$710. -MP

Stellar wood auction for the community

THE annual Community Wood Raffle was held on Saturday, May 24. There was an outstanding turnout, with plenty to bid for. There were 36 trailers on offer from local community groups.

The event raised \$12,040, with the top trailer selling for \$710.

Over 14 community groups benefited from the wood auction. Alexandra Events main fundraising goal for their trailer load of wood is to go towards a doctors/mental health mobile clinic that will benefit many in the community.



Andrew Embling ran a great auction. -MP



Many people were interested in the bidding process. -MP

Round four of term two for Alexandra Squash Club

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition Eagles versus Kestrels

LOCHLAN versus Jordan: It was two games each with see-sawing

games. Jordan claimed a good win in game three to increase his margin and win the match. 69 to 64.
Michael M versus Oli: Oli jumped out of the blocks taking the first game before Michael warmed up and took control. There was lots of

running for both players. Michael held onto his control until the end of the match, claiming the win. 70 to 41.
Michael H (fill in) versus Jim: Michael took the game to Jim with his long reach and merciless

punishment of anything loose. The last half of the match was an arm-wrestle between Michael's smart shots and Jim's command of the walls and corners. A streak of perfect serves in game three kept Jim ahead for a comfortable win. 61 to 47.

Hawks versus Owls

ERIC versus Tyler: A great and reasonably even match. Tyler kept control of the game and stayed ahead throughout, winning with a solid lead. 76 to 46.

Chris T versus Mick: An entertaining match with some great rallies. Chris read the play to better position himself and control the ball. He had a lot of success with his short game and went home with the victory. 77 to 41.

Jared versus Matt L: It was a tight first game ending in a draw. Jared lifted his placement in the second game forcing Matt to rush his shots and miss hit the ball. Jared continued his dominance for a convincing victory. 74 to 56.

Andrew versus John: John was just a class above. Andrew would have done better if he hadn't have kept hitting it to John. John claimed a solid win. 63 to 45.

Thursday competition Blue tongues versus Geckos

BETH versus James (fill in): It was a competitive game when the points get going. James had a dominant

serve and brilliant returns that put him ahead for the win. 73 to 50.

Sam versus Jodie: A close match. Sam had the measure of Jodie's serves, quashing her usual strength. Jodie worked hard to keep in the contest, but Sam kept upping his game to claim his victory. 62 to 53.

Daniel W versus Phil: The match opened with a tied game. Daniel lost his cool in the second game, making some unforced errors. He pulled it together to take the third game, only to lose it in the final game. Phil went home with a decent win. 62 to 47.

Frill necks versus Skinks

BLAKE versus Matthew J: Blakes brief time in the level above has really improved his game. Matthew is always improving however Blake was just too strong and took home a commanding victory. 78 to 37.

Kristelle versus Lucas: It was anyone's match with see-sawing games and the lead changing hands every few points. Both players had a consistent mix of shots and were reading the play with deft accuracy. Kristelle clinched the victory, taking home the victory by one measly point. 58 to 57.

Stuart versus Justin: A see-sawing affair with the games swinging both ways. Justin has gone up a level and doing it admirably. Stuart snuck home with the final point in a big game to take home the win by a single point. 62 to 61.



Matthew jumps to return Blake's serve on the full. -S

Round four of winter tennis

by Rhonda Carpenter and Deb Mims

YET another glorious day dawned for winter tennis with blue sky backdrops for the matches in Euroa, Terip and Mansfield.

Euroa met Moglonemby and Seven Creeks welcomed Wappan on Euroa's lawn in pristine conditions. Both matches were lengthy hotly contested affairs.

Euroa's Lyndall Bigland, Faye Mollison, Julie Harrington, Mary Dewis and Ruth Nolan were made to work hard against Moglonemby playing two tiebreakers.

Moglonemby's Judy Sands and Sue Vaughan welcomed newcomers Kylie Ross and Ronnie Doxey into their team and together they combined strongly to take both breakers.

The sets were split three all but Euroa edged out their opponent by merely four games. Euroa won 3/41 to 3/37. On the adjacent courts Seven Creeks and Wappan played out an even longer contest.

Seven Creeks' Rowena Ellis and Nicola Enright won their opener eight to five while Wappan's Rhonda Carpenter and Carol Watts eventually took their marathon set in a tiebreak against Gayle Furphy and Mary Kelly.

Wappan found their feet on the lawn and closed out the remaining sets to win 5/45 to 1/29.

Terip had the longest day against Creighton's Creek playing three tiebreakers. Marja Wondergem, Chris

Ellis, Julie Brooks and Lyn Johnson pushed hard all day. Cindy Hayes, Frances Lawrence, Phoebe Macdermid and Jenny Martin played the key points better and won 5/47 to 1/32.

The very chilly start to round three of the winter tennis competition was deceiving as the sun thawed everyone out, and those wearing warmer tennis gear wished they hadn't.

Team Delatite's Carolyn Murray, Jo O'Brien, Deb Mims, Loretta Armitage and Deb McCormack were the home team and took to the court against Benalla players, Kate Campbell, Maureen Jewell, Deb Siggers, who utilised Mansfield player Kassy Thomas.

Deb Mims was nervous in her first three set match since gradually returning from injury. While Jo and Loretta, against Maureen and Deb, were the only Mansfield combination to win a set, Carolyn and Deb managed one game in their set against Kate and Kassy due to Kate, never normally serving a double fault, served four in a row.

Much laughter was heard, during the dance of frustration, before Kate regained her composure and with partner Kassy took out the set eight to one. As usual the day was completed with a delicious afternoon tea and lots of chatter. Benalla got the choccies 5/46 to 1/23.

Ladder round four: Euroa 33, Wappan 28, Terip 26, Moglonemby 19, Creighton's Creek 19, Seven Creeks 12, Benalla 11, Mansfield seven, Delatite five.

Outer East Football and Netball League Ladders

Football – Reserves

	Percentage	Wins
Pakenham	859.21	6
Seville	639.71	7
Belgrave	246.79	4
Warburton Millgrove	134.83	4
Alexandra	98.85	3
Yea	71.25	2
Powelltown	24.31	1
Yarra Glen	19.15	0
Yarra Junction	16.46	1

Netball – A Grade

	Percentage	Wins
Pakenham Lions	361.68	5
Warburton Millgrove	250.32	5
Seville	224.21	6
Yarra Glen	132.60	4
Yarra Junction	86.48	3
Belgrave	60.42	2
Alexandra	56.47	1
Yea	48.91	0
Powelltown	25.53	0

Football – Seniors

	Percentage	Wins
Pakenham	351.20	6
Seville	234.67	7
Warburton Millgrove	296.48	5
Yarra Glen	108.13	4
Alexandra	90.49	2
Belgrave	77.68	2
Yea	82.64	1
Powelltown	41.27	1
Yarra Junction	25.02	0

Netball – B Grade

	Percentage	Wins
Pakenham Lions	333.06	6
Seville	401.89	6
Warburton Millgrove	173.22	5
Yarra Glen	109.92	4
Belgrave	76.22	2
Yarra Junction	59.77	3
Alexandra	42.90	1
Powelltown	48.81	0
Yea	42.54	0

Football – Senior Women

	Percentage	Wins
Warburton-Wesburn	100.00	6
Wandin	83.33	5
Emerald	83.33	5
Thornton Eildon	60.00	3
Seville	16.66	1
Yea	16.66	1
Officer	0	0

Netball – C Grade

	Percentage	Wins
Pakenham Lions	247.73	6
Seville	317.35	6
Warburton Millgrove	217.32	5
Yarra Glen	96.62	4
Belgrave	62.70	2
Yarra Junction	70.51	2
Alexandra	66.80	1
Powelltown	42.34	0
Yea	34.34	0

Netball – 17 and under

	Percentage	Wins
Seville	443.86	5
Pakenham Lions Gold	243.75	5
Warburton Millgrove	82.58	2
Pakenham Lions Maroon	49.65	1
Alexandra	42.13	1
Powelltown	35.44	1

Netball – D Grade

	Percentage	Wins
Pakenham Lions	426.98	6
Seville	385.51	6
Warburton Millgrove	212.50	5
Yarra Glen	74.86	3
Alexandra	65.87	3
Belgrave	57.43	2
Yea	41.08	1
Yarra Junction	51.54	1
Powelltown	20.00	0

Football – Under 18

	Percentage	Wins
Pakenham	2283.33	6
Seville	285.21	5
Yarra Glen	87.61	3
Warburton Millgrove	35.99	2
Yea	31.16	1
Alexandra	13.77	0



Jeff Swain, Yea-Kinglake RSL Secretary receiving donation from Maurie Finn, Yea Bowls Club President. -S

Yea Bowls Club donates to RSL

by Viv Cavanagh

ON Monday, April 28, Jeff Swain, Secretary of the Yea-Kinglake RSL, was presented with the green fees and prize money from the day's Triple Bowls game.

Each year the Yea Bowls Club support the RSL by making a donation to the welfare of the RSL. The RSL appreciate donations and help from community groups to continue functioning, as their members are aging, but their services are still required.

Once again, on Monday, May 12, the green fees and prize money from the day's Triple Bowls game was donated to the Yea Memorial District Hospital for the Mother's Day Classic which raises money for research for breast and ovarian cancer.

Members of the bowls club were more than happy to donate to a cause that affects so many in the community.

ADNA winter netball is back

YOUTH winter netball kicked off for Alexandra District Netball Association (ADNA) with two excellent games.

Youth competition is a mixed competition involving players from years seven to 10 years of age. This year four teams will play in a 10round competition, then have finals.

Thank you to Lisa Wallace and Eliza Gesler for umpiring both games.

Game one Pep Hoornweg's Bandits versus Stu Collier's Astro's. First quarter was goal for goal with Holly G and Bella T shooting accurately for the Astro's with Samantha and Ivy also shooting well. By half time Team Collier (Marli, Zoe and coach Stu) took the lead 12 to nine. Both teams gelled well, being their first games together, excellent passing and teamwork through the centre with intercepts taken for both sides saw a hard-fought tussle going into the long break.

After half time both teams changed their attack and defence which switched players to positions they were a little unfamiliar in. The Bandits came back hard to be within one point of the lead, Marli and Tehya V shooting for the Astro's and Charli (fill in) and Tilly firing well for the Bandits.

A point the difference going into the final quarter, Holly G back into shooting with Tehya saw the Astro's win by three points.

Astro's best: Matthew, Marli, Bella, and Holly G. Best for Bandits: Chloe, Samantha, Tilly, and Indi.

Game two was fast and hard. Comets were strong in defence against diamonds through Megan and Ruby F in the first half and produced some good shooting from Charli (playing her second game for the night) and Brianna. Ball gets through the centre were tough, with a body-on-body battle happening

between Samantha and Harley, both playing well and taking intercepts from the other. Maddy and Koa also fought hard through the centre of the court. Holly W dominated play throughout the first half all over the court. Shooters Asher and Taya were accurate with some great long shots from Taya; Zelda was also strong in attack.

Comets had a few fill ins for the night, Coach Kat was away with Renee and Heidi stepping in, Zoe and Samantha playing a second game to fill in for missing players.

The second half saw some position changes with Megan and Koa going into shooting positions and Ruby B into the centre. Samantha and Holly shifted from defence into attack for the second half.

The Comets dominated the third quarter, Holly and Samantha unstoppable in the goal third, working like a well-oiled machine together, rarely missing a shot at goal. Koa and Megan in goals at the opposing end shooting well, but had a tough fight against Taya, Maddy, and Asher to keep the ball at the rebounds.

The final quarter was an even affair with both ends shooting accurately, Comets were unable to peg back the Diamonds lead.

Comets best: Harley, Megan, Koa. Diamonds best: Holly W, Samantha, Maddy, Taya.

Thanks to those parents who helped set up and pack up and put their hand up for scoring. New players to the competition will be accepted up to game three if anyone is interested in joining.

Contact Cassandra Fraser, Youth Competition Coordinator via junior.netball@gmail.com

Yea golfers find form after holidays

by Phil Armstrong

DESPITE scattered showers last Friday and cool windy conditions on offer, 30 avid golfers fronted up to compete in the Stableford events at Royal Yea Golf Club on Saturday.

The men competed in the first of two rounds in the Prideaux Cup. Fresh from his recent refresh in Fiji, Martin Lowe (19) was a run away winner in the mens' event with 41 points. Bill Dredge (25) backed up his recent run of great form to record 38 points and claim second place. Zach Pell (18) made the most of his early start to

record 36 points, which was just enough to claim third place on countback from Michael Spagnolo (7) who also scored 36 points.

Carolyn Webber (45) first up after her Broome/Kimberley's holiday, showed great form to post 36 points in the ladies' event. Ever consistent Cindy Armstrong (25) with 31 points claimed second place.

On Wednesday the men contested a Four Stick Stableford event. Rob O'Halloran (20) displayed all his versatility to score 37 points and claim victory. Phil Armstrong (19) had to settle with second on

countback after posting the same score. Rob Gill (30) and Mick Sheather (22) had solid rounds of 36 points.

The ladies' competed for the coveted Margret Samblee Brooch and Christine Simmons (24) was a comfortable winner with 39 points. Di Holdsworth (28) next best with 35 and Sharon Grogan (24) finished third with 34 points.

Knockout winners for the week: P Armstrong d S Wright; J Aurisch d B Priestly; J Phillips d T Connell; M Lowe d A Bohn; B Chenhall d W Rowe; J Moss d G Walsh.

ADNA winter netball ladder

	For	Against	%
Diamonds	38	22	172
Astros	17	14	121
Bandits	14	17	82
Comets	22	38	58