

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, October 15, 2025 \$2.00 inc. GST

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INSIDE THIS WEEK'S EDITION

Birds in the Backyard count



Page 3

Black Saturday revisited



Page 6

Yea Cruise night



Page 14

Weekend sport



Pages 15-16



Yea and District Memorial Hospital (YDMH) alongside Yea Rotary provided a barbecue sausage sizzle last Friday to promote looking after your mental health. -BD

Help support Yea Community House's campaign

THE Yea Community House are asking people to fill out postcards of support over the next few weeks to then send them in bulk to Local MP Cindy McLeish to pass on to the Ministers to show just how many people, directly and indirectly, benefit from the existence of Neighbourhood Houses.

Natalie and Carlie from Yea Community House explained that the issue that neighbourhood houses are currently facing is in the 2026 Election Budget Campaign the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP) rate is 20 per cent lower than a decade ago, and open hours have dropped to their lowest level in 10 years.

"The NHCP provides funding to around 400 neighbourhood houses and neighbourhood house networks across Victoria. It's simple: without sustainable funding, our doors will close. With fair funding, we will continue to

be the safe, welcoming places every Victorian community needs," Natalie and Carlie said.

Yea Community House are campaigning for an increase in funding for Neighbourhood Houses by 25 per cent, as well as support for 25 Neighbourhood Houses which do not currently receive any ongoing funding, and develop a fund for the establishment of five additional Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria's growth areas annually.

Natalie and Carlie said, "Years of underfunding mean too many houses are operating with limited staff and stretched resources, despite growing demand and a rise in complex safety issues, including mental health crises and instances of violence. Houses are being forced to cut open hours, reduce programs, or fundraise just to turn on the lights. Unless government acts, more doors will close, and communities will lose

trusted, safe and inclusive spaces they rely on every day."

Right now, Neighbourhood Houses are at breaking point. Nearly half of all Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria have recorded a loss for two years running. The Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP) no longer covers the true cost of employing a manager for the funded hours, and inadequate funding has become the number one wellbeing issue identified by managers across the state.

The Yea Community House serves as a community hub that provides social, educational, and recreational activities for the Yea district in a welcoming and supportive environment. It offers a range of services from emergency relief to educational workshops and manages the Pioneer Reserve for use by our groups and community groups.

The Community House is a central meeting place that helps build connections and reduce social isolation.

In addition to social events, the Community House provides critical support services to the region including: Emergency relief, food programs, financial support, including help with applications for programs like the Power Saving Bonus for concession card holders and the Salvocare PAL card system. The house offers a variety of educational opportunities to the community including various workshops and skill sharing.

To show your support visit Yea Community House and sign a postcard, and tell your local MP why you love Yea Community House, write a letter or email to your local MP and ask them to take action. Spread the word and join the cause.

Alexandra District Health
5772 0900

Yea & District Memorial Hospital
5736 0400

In an emergency dial
000

Standard

The Yea Chronicle

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Hours: 9am-5pm Monday-Friday

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NEWSPAPERS

PUBLISHERS

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Approved - PP 100000292

Independently owned and operated with no association
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The Yea Chronicle

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Letters to the Editor

Transmission plan

AS you may be aware, VicGrid has released the draft 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan, and the Strathbogie Ranges, Yea and districts are not included in the draft Renewable Energy Zones.

While this does not prevent a developer from making a proposal in this area, it does add conditions that make it much harder to proceed. Developers wishing to develop renewable energy projects outside a REZ must apply to VicGrid for access to connect to the transmission infrastructure (the grid).

Conditions for granting grid access include demonstrating that the project will not curtail

current or future projects within REZs accessing transmission infrastructure and that the developer meets government expectations including community and Traditional Owners engagement and provides meaningful social value and economic benefits.

VicGrid is currently calling for submissions, closing date November 5, to provide feedback on its *Draft Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects*. This is part of a broader consultation process for community and industry into VicGrid's Victorian Access Regime.

We encourage as many people as possible to make a submission. SRRCG is currently preparing a submission to VicGrid and an

important piece of evidence we wish to include is data on the impacted community's perceptions of FERA's community engagement to date.

To this end, we would be grateful if you could complete the survey found at survey.monkey.com/r/CommunityEngagementFERA

Closing date for this survey is Friday, October 24. The survey will only take about four minutes of your time and can be done on any device. The short timeline is necessary to ensure that we can use the data from this survey for our submission to VicGrid.

Darryl Otzen, secretary,
Strathbogie Responsible Renewables
Community Group

New round of Landcare grants

LAST week the Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos announced the 2025 Victorian Landcare Grant recipients, with each funded project making a difference to enhance and protect Victoria's great outdoors.

This year \$3.6 million in grants will support 509 Landcare and environmental volunteer groups across the state, helping fund on-ground works, community education and engagement activities, group development, and small grants supporting administrative functions, including insurance, incorporation and operational costs.

Locally, Landcare grants recipients included Upper Goulburn Landcare Network, who received \$15,598 to go towards environmental education for schools and community, in particular their popular kids teaching kids program, as well as their work with the schools and scouts of Murrindindi Shire.

Upper Goulburn Landcare Network also received \$12,100 for controlling pests, plants and animals in the Upper Goulburn, including workshops, running a chemical users course that qualifies land owners for using chemicals and bait, and a rebate on people buying chemicals for combating blackberries.

Upper Goulburn Landcare Network also had a \$20,000 extension to their funding for koala conservation, giving them more scope to expand outwards from their current work in the Yarck and Merton area to potentially the Goulburn River and Cathedral Ranges area.

Support grants of \$500 included Kinglake Landcare Group, Upper Goulburn Intrepid Landcare, Flowerdale Landcare Inc, and Strath Creek Landcare Group.

Landcare grants deliver lasting benefits to the environment, the funding will help Landcare groups restore and protect vital habitats and waterways, and grow strong, connected communities that will continue to care for the land for generations to come.

Grants were available to all Victorian Landcare and environmental volunteer groups, including Landcare and Friends groups, Conservation Management Networks, Committees of Management, Coastcare groups and Traditional Owner or Aboriginal groups and organisations working on Country.

The grants will be delivered in partnership with Melbourne Water and nine Catchment Management Authorities across Victoria.

For more information, visit environment.vic.gov.au/grants/victorian-landcare-grants

Weekly Weather

October 15 - October 21, 2025

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

Yea

DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	8	24	Wednesday	8	25
Thursday	12	27	Thursday	12	28
Friday	5	18	Friday	6	19
Saturday	10	20	Saturday	10	21
Sunday	16	24	Sunday	15	25
Monday	9	20	Monday	9	21
Tuesday	8	18	Tuesday	8	18

Standard

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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.

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The Yea Chronicle

RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT				
STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	10.00AM Mon	0.70	steady	Below Flood Level
Rubicon River at Rubicon	10.00AM Mon	0.60	steady	
Acheron River at Taggerty	10.00AM Mon	0.64	steady	Below Flood Level
Home Creek at Yarck	10.48AM Mon	0.18	steady	
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	10.55AM Mon	0.47	steady	Below Flood Level
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	10.00AM Mon	0.30	steady	
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	10.00AM Mon	0.54	steady	
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	10.00AM Mon	3.77	steady	
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	10.00AM Mon	0.43	steady	Below Flood Level
Goulburn River at Trawool	10.00AM Mon	1.46	steady	Below Flood Level
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	10.00AM Mon	0.29	steady	Below Flood Level
Goulburn River at Seymour	10.00AM Mon	1.74	steady	Below Flood Level
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	10.00AM Mon	1.14	steady	

*ISSUED AT 11:10 AM AEDT MONDAY 13 OCTOBER 2025

DISTRICT RAINFALL	
Alexandra	3mm
Buxton.....	12mm
Eildon (AWS).....	3mm
Flowerdale.....	4mm
Jamieson.....	6mm
Kinglake.....	6mm
Lake Eildon.....	0.4mm
Mansfield.....	N/Amm
Taggerty	6mm
Yarck	5mm
Yea.....	2mm
Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday	
LAKE EILDON	
Height above sea level this week.....	275.83m
Capacity as at 9am Monday.....	66.1%
Metres below full supply.....	13.07m
Daily inflow	2500ML
Release.....	3100ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change).....	70%

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



Attendees at the Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre event. -S

Murrindindi community invited to count the birds in our backyard

MURRINDINDI Shire Council hosted a Birds in the Backyard webinar with shared viewing events in Alexandra, Kinglake and Yea on Tuesday, October 7.

Presented by wildlife expert Dr Gráinne Cleary, the webinar, *What Are Birds Telling Us?*, explored how bird behaviour reflects the health of our environment, and what their songs, movements and silences can tell us about changes in local ecosystems.

Almost 30 participants joined the live broadcast online or gathered at council's viewing venues at the Alexandra Council Chambers, Kinglake Library and Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre, to take part in the interactive presentation and

Q&A session followed with a light supper enjoyed by those who attended in person.

Council is also supporting the annual Aussie Bird Count, a national citizen science project running from October 20 to 26, which encourages people to observe and record the birds in their local area.

There will be local events happening across the shire where you can get involved. The information collected helps BirdLife Australia better understand how bird populations are tracking across the country. To find out more or to register, visit aussiebirdcount.org.au

Murrindindi Shire Council Sustainability and Assets portfolio

councillor Sue Carpenter said the webinar was a great way to inspire people to connect with nature and take practical steps to support local wildlife.

"Birds are vital messengers of environmental change, and events like this help us understand and protect the ecosystems we share. I encourage everyone to take part in the Aussie Bird Count, it's a simple, fun way to contribute to conservation science right from your backyard," she said.

For more information about upcoming events including the Aussie Bird Count in October, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/events

Yea Hospital Mouth Mapping program gains funding

THE Australian Government is investing nearly \$4 million to drive groundbreaking oral health research that will benefit all Australians.

Administered through the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) *Targeted Call for Research: Oral Health Care in Australia 2024*, the funding will support five research projects focused on critical oral health issues.

Federal Minister for Health, The Hon Mark Butler, MP, said, "These important research projects could reduce the incidence, prevalence and effects of oral health issues and reduce inequalities in oral health status across the Australian population."

These projects aim to identify and address the gaps in how effective oral health interventions are developed and applied at a population level, including within health services. Based on the findings, the research could help ease pressure on the health system and lower costs over time.

Dr Tami Yap from the University of Melbourne will lead one of the funded initiatives, aimed at improving access to specialist oral cancer screening for rural Australian communities. The project will utilise digital tools to upskill rural health teams, removing geographical barriers to mouth cancer screening. It will bridge the city-country divide by allowing specialists to make diagnostic triage assessments remotely using digital health services.

As part of the rollout, the Yea Hospital Saleyards Farmer Health Program will be one of the key sites where Dr Yap's program is delivered.

As reported in the *Yea Chronicle* recently, Mouth Mapping photography training has already been undertaken by Yea and District Memorial Hospital staff with plans to commence program delivery at the saleyards early next year. In partnership with the Rotary Club of Yea, this will bring vital oral cancer screening services directly to local farming communities, supporting early detection and improved health outcomes in rural Victoria.

Forest Fire Management vehicles taken offline

FOREST Fire Management is facing some significant challenges in the lead-up to the fire season, with 290 G-Wagons (the entire G-Wagon fleet) and 59 Unimogs taken offline to correct an issue with their chassis and subframe faults.

The Herald Sun reported that the authorities have been working to put back-up plans in place. The contingency fleet includes Landcruisers, fire tankers and bulldozers. It's understood that the CFA and SES have also provided vehicles.

The vehicles were rolled out from 2017 and it's understood that the issue was identified on Friday, October 3.

The Victorian Opposition expressed concerns about safety, given that the state is just weeks from the start of fire season.

Leader of The Nationals and Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Danny O'Brien, said it was extraordinary that the same government which boasted about the vehicles' cutting-edge design has now sidelined the entire fleet.

"Labor promised Victorians a state-of-the-art firefighting fleet. Eight years later, Labor has delivered a world-class failure," Mr O'Brien said.

"When the Premier warns of a dangerous fire season, Victorians deserve answers on how this failure was allowed to happen and what steps will be taken to ensure community safety.

"Victorians are paying an additional \$3 billion through Labor's new emergency services tax, yet the CFA is relying on ageing vehicles and is now being asked to cover for FFMV, an organisation now being funded by these additional taxes," he said.

Shadow Minister for Public Land Management, Melina Bath, said that the Victorian Government is leaving regional Victoria dangerously exposed ahead of a high-risk fire season.

"Grounding Victoria's frontline fleet weeks before fire season is an unacceptable failure, given nearly 40 per cent of the state is public land.

"Labor's flawed bushfire policy 'Safer Together' has delivered just 1.6 per cent of land treated for fuel reduction annually since 2015 and the government routinely fails to meet its own fuel-driven risk targets.

"Victorians are paying more but getting less protection. Labor's failure to manage bushfire preparedness is putting lives at risk," Ms Bath said.

"At a time when we need every piece of equipment and personnel working to reduce risk, it is our CFA volunteers who are asked to carry the load with ageing equipment and limited resources."

A Victorian Government spokesperson said, "The safety of our firefighters is paramount, that's why regular safety inspections of vehicles and equipment are so important.

"FFMVic has brought online additional vehicles to continue undertaking critical bushfire season preparations and respond to bushfire emergencies.

"These repairs are being fast tracked over the next two months and FFMVic is working on agreements to secure additional emergency response vehicles from other states if required."

Continued Page 8

WATER WEEK

20-26 OCTOBER 2025

Join us in celebrating, exploring and learning about all things water this National Water Week.

Discover what's on and how to get involved:



Let's Grow: Waterwise Gardens

Wednesday 22 October

7pm - 9pm | Eastbank Shepparton



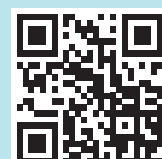
Discover how to design gardens that thrive in the Goulburn Valley with gardening experts.

FREE EVENT | BOOKINGS REQUIRED

Join the WATER NIGHT challenge!

Can you go 5 hours without taps, showers, or running water? Join thousands of Aussies switching off the taps and tuning in to how we really use water.

National and regional prizes on offer.



Sign up to take on the challenge on 23 October, 2025.



Can you spot a spotted tree frog?

CRITICALLY endangered species the spotted tree frog (*Litoria spenceri*) is a rare sight to see but can be found in the Murrindindi Shire, especially around Lake Eildon National Park and in other river systems in the region, including the Yea River.

They are also found in areas such as the Central Highlands, Mt Kosciuszko, the Alpine National Park, the Eildon National Park, and Buffalo National Park in Victoria, and the Snowy Mountains in New South Wales.

The small, camouflaged frog is experiencing a steady population decline due to threats including predation by non-native trout, amphibian chytrid fungus, and destruction of their natural habitat.

Locally, at Lake Eildon National Park closures have been put in place from Gap Track between Pinnacle Track and O’Toole Creek. The Parks Victoria website says, “There is no vehicle access to Gap Track directly from Eildon Jaimeson Road. By vehicle, Gap Track must be accessed from Pinnacle Track (when seasonally open), Jerusalem Creek Track, and Simms Track only.

“By vehicle, the shortest way back to the bitumen from this location is via the Simms Track connector to Eildon-Jamieson Road.”

The reason for this closure is to protect O’Toole Creek from damage by vehicles fording the creek, as the bridge over O’Toole Creek has failed. O’Toole Creek flows directly into White Creek which is home to the critically endangered spotted tree frog. Spotted tree frogs are threatened by loss of vegetation on creek banks, and by sediment in waterways.

The habitat restoration for the critically endangered spotted tree frog is just another way to protect the species now where numbers are declining.

Parks Victoria Ranger Team Leader Jane Lloyd said, “Spotted tree frogs are critically endangered in Victoria and work to protect the Lake Eildon National Park population has been going on for several years, as part of a multi-agency effort.

“Work has included habitat protection, by reducing sediment getting into the streams where the frogs live, removing non-native fish that prey on tadpoles and young frogs, and building a fish barrier that stops non-native fish getting into the frog habitat.

“Over the last three years we’ve seen more young spotted tree frogs surviving in the National Park thanks to these efforts.”

Captive breeding is another way the species survival is getting another chance. Zoos Victoria Healesville Sanctuary and the Amphibian Bushfire Recovery Centre at Melbourne Zoo are breeding this species and coming up with habitat restoration programs since their habitats were destroyed significantly as a result of the Black Summer Bushfires in 2019/20.

Climate related emergencies such as flash flooding can also compound the threat and further impact populations.

The species can live up to 10 years which is a good lifespan for a frog, with a combined effort of removing nonnative trout, destruction of natural habitat, and captive breeding programs this frog’s survival has a better chance.



The spotted tree frog (*Litoria spenceri*) is at high risk of extinction in the wild. -Jean-Marc Hero



The team from the Arthur Rylah Institute electrofishing to catch predatory fish in the Spotted Tree Frog habitat in Lake Eildon National Park. -S

Big open gardens weekend for Fawcett Hall

FAWCETT Hall will once again open its gates for the much-loved open gardens weekend on Saturday, October 25 and Sunday, October 26, from 9am to 4pm each day.

Visitors are invited to drop in between garden visits and enjoy a warm country welcome at the hall. The weekend will feature a car boot sale, plants for sale, trash and treasure, and plenty of home-baked treats, including that famous Marg’s sponge, along with Jan’s jams and sauces.

The Perry team will be on the barbecue, serving alongside locally roasted coffee brewed via ‘Pearl’ and hearty jacket potatoes prepared by the Stoney Creek girls. Children will love the Koriella CFA demonstrations and hoses from 10am on Saturday.

It’s a great opportunity to pick up something unique, meet the locals, and support Fawcett Hall.

Located at Fawcett Hall, 655 Spring Creek Road, Fawcett, entry is through a gold coin donation. For stall bookings, visit issimomarkets.com/bookings/113866

For more information visit fawcethall.org.au or follow Fawcett Hall on Facebook.

Out&About



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

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17

The Trawool Estate would like you to join them under the stars for an outdoor orchestral candlelight concert 7.30-9.30pm \$150pp. For bookings phone 5792 1444 or scan the QR code in this week’s edition.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18

Yarck Market is on again from 9am. Plants, soap, preserves and more.

Embassy of Ideas is hosting a whole town garage sale.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

Clearing sale, Station Street, Alexandra from 10am. Farm machinery, farm sundries, Conner Shae parts, general tools and hardware and

more. Approximately 500 lots. For more details phone Embling Rural 5772 3110 or visit emblingrural.com.au

Alexandra RSL general meeting will be held at noon, followed by a light lunch.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22

The Dame Pattie Menzies Centre Inc AGM will be held at 5.30pm at The Mount, 2456 Goulburn Valley Highway, Alexandra.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23

Redgate Alexandra CWA AGM will be held at 10am at the club rooms, Perkin Street, Alexandra. More information 0412 435 946.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25

Fawcett Hall Open garden weekend. Saturday and Sunday. Plants, bargains, food and coffee. Trash ‘n Treasure, raffles and more.

Alexandra Race Club Cox Plate Day. Music, food, racing, big screen and more. Bookings country.racing.com/Alexandra

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26

TEDFNC AGM will be held at 11am at the Thornton Sports Club. Everyone welcome. Nominations will be called from the floor; all positions will be filled. For enquiries phone 0422 787 132.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28

Free business networking brunch in Yea. Join local businesses and entrepreneurs from around the shire from 10.30am-12.30pm at Country Club Yea. murrindindi.vic.gov.au/businessnetworking

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10

Yea Football Netball Club AGM will be held from 6pm in the main clubrooms, Yea Recreation Reserve.

Tragic end for cows in truck rollover

ON Tuesday, October 7 Melba Highway was closed in both directions between Yea and Castella due to a cattle truck rollover.

It’s understood that there were around 102 cattle on board. The driver was able to safely extricate themselves from the truck.

Agriculture Victoria were in attendance, along with numerous police units. Victoria Police was the agency in charge at the scene and is responsible for investigating the cause of the accident and if any subsequent charges under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

Also in attendance were CFA, the local vet, and a local person with an excavator, all of who assisted with the recovery effort.

During the closure motorists were advised to use the Maroondah Highway through Molesworth, Alexandra, Taggerty, Buxton and Narbethong, as this detour was also suitable for heavy vehicles.

Another alternative advised was the Whittlesea-Yea Road through Flowerdale to Kinglake West. Then, Whittlesea-Kinglake Road and Healesville-Kinglake Road will lead drivers back to the Melba Highway, however this route wasn’t suitable for heavy vehicles.

Sadly, at end of operations on Tuesday evening, 30 cattle died or were euthanised by Agriculture Victoria officers and local vets.

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

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



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.



Some anxiety is normal during exams but don’t let yourself get overwhelmed. Putting self care practices in place to look after yourself through the exam period will help you in the long run. -S

Looking after yourself through the exam period

OCTOBER is the start of the most stressful period for year 12 students completing their Victorian Curriculum Certificate (VCE).

Physical and mental wellbeing need to be at the forefront of every student’s day as they navigate one of the most challenging periods of their life.

During the lead up to the exams, revision is something you need to stay on top of, so you don’t fall behind and avoid last minute cramming.

Creating a study schedule to help you feel a sense of control and gives you plenty of time to revise and practice exams. Make it realistic though, don’t set yourself up to fail by making unrealistic goals. Taking regular breaks during these times will make your head feel clear and focused when you return to study. This can involve going for a walk, watching a movie or listening to music.

Eating a balanced diet and getting enough sleep will optimise your results. It might be tempting to reach for the sugary snacks that you keep you wired but the sugar crash afterwards doesn’t help your focus later. Foods to improve your focus includes wholegrains, fatty fish, berries, coffee, nuts, eggs, leafy greens, and even a piece of dark chocolate here and there.

Relaxation techniques should be practiced during periods of stress; this

will help you build resilience to face the challenges ahead of you. Practices such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, meditation and visualisation is a great way to calm your mind.

Finding a balance and creating positive interactions within your day through connecting with friends and family, or your study group can be a great way to stay positive and help you feel supported. Try to avoid people who create stress for you, or online platforms that don’t put you in good mental health headspace.

Leading up the day of the exam ensure you’re organised the night before, so stress isn’t increased in the morning, have a good start to the day with a fuelling breakfast and allow plenty of time to get to the exam venue.

After the exam it’s time to reward yourself and have a bit of time to recharge and relax. Try not to reflect too much on the exam you’ve just taken, this will only create second guessing yourself and increase the stress levels, the key is to walk out of there and move on and focus on the next step ahead of you.

If you find yourself overwhelmed with exam stress speak to a trusted friend or family member or a health professional. You can also get online support through headspace.org.au/services/work-and-study-support/

Combating illegal shooters

THERE appears to have been an increase in illegal shooting activity on private properties in Murrindindi Shire, and police are calling on locals to report shooting incidents as soon as they become aware of them. There is little that can be done when they hear about incident days, weeks or even months later.

Call Triple Zero to make the report, or contact your local police station. If the station is unattended, police may be out on the road already. People may be put through to Benalla Police Station in their absence. Don’t hang up. Make a report to them, and the information will be relayed to the police in the local area.

If there have been a lot of incidents in a particular area, then police will be able to focus their attention on the locale, however reports are needed to ensure that police are patrolling the area.

Reporting these incidents also give police the power to get involved with other agencies, including the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) and the Gama Management Authority (GMA).

Police gaining evidence is vital. It helps if people have video cameras on their property,

however this can be a challenging and potentially expensive proposition for people.

The police also warned that people should not approach the illegal shooters, due to the risk to personal safety.

At times, the illegal shooters may believe that they are in a legal shooting area but they are in fact on private property. They may also not be aware of the legal shooting areas. Placing signs such as ‘No Trespassing’ or ‘Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted’ may help, as then there is no argument. It can also help to have a clear boundary line.

All are reminded that it is illegal to shoot native animals without an ‘Authority to Control Wildlife’.

Zac Powell, Director of Compliance and Intelligence at GMA said, “The GMA and Victoria police conduct joint patrols across Victoria. This partnership allows officers to share intelligence and target areas where illegal firearm use is most likely to cause risks to public safety.

“All allegations of persons illegally discharging a firearm on or across private property should be reported to Victoria Police on 131 444 or 000 in case of emergency.

A new era for Stonelea

THE reinstatement of the iconic Stonelea Estate is officially underway, marking the return of one of Victoria’s most beloved destinations.

Once known as a popular wedding and events venue, the estate is now reimagined as a premium accommodation, events and dining experience that will bring renewed energy and economic impact to the region.

Construction works have commenced, with local commercial builder Hedger Constructions appointed to complete the renovation and fit-out of the hotel and bungalow guest rooms.

Works on the main building will begin shortly, including the restoration of the restaurant and bar, hotel reception and lobby, the events and weddings centre, ceremonial hall and outdoor landscaping.

The new vision for Stonelea Estate is designed to deliver sought-after five star accommodation at a boutique hotel destination just two hours from Melbourne. With a strong design-led focus, the estate will feature a modern accommodation offering, premium food and wine experiences, and striking event spaces set within the natural beauty of Murrindindi.

The redevelopment is being led by Bennett Williams, with investment from the Victorian Government’s Regional Tourism Investment Fund.

The project is supported by Murrindindi Shire Council, Tourism North East, Alexandra Traders and Tourism Association and Murrindindi Food and Wine Inc. Each recognises the significant opportunity that Stonelea represents for attracting more visitors to the region, increasing overnight stays, and supporting the local economy.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos said the redevelopment of the historic Stonelea Estate will provide a major boost to the local economy by drawing more visitors to the region.

“The redevelopment of this property into a premium accommodation destination will give visitors even more reason to stay longer, supporting local businesses and experiencing all that our famous High Country has to offer.”

Stonelea Estate has appointed national hotel management group 1834 Hotels to oversee hotel operations.

Scott Armstrong, Director of Development at 1834 Hotels, said the project represented a major milestone for regional tourism and a strong investment in local infrastructure. “We’re thrilled to be involved with the Stonelea Estate project. It’s a truly exciting redevelopment that will reinvigorate regional tourism, and we look forward to supporting its successful opening and ongoing operation,” he said.

Owner and developer Andrew Purdie said the team was passionate about preserving the legacy of the site while creating a refined new experience for future guests.

“It’s an honour to bring Stonelea back to life. This is more than a renovation, it’s a new chapter for a place that has meant so much to so many. We can’t wait to welcome guests back and showcase what we’ve created,” Andrew said.

The project will generate local jobs, engage regional trades and suppliers, and establish a major new visitor destination at the gateway to Victoria’s high country.

It is expected that Stonelea will be open and operating by mid-2026.

“To report illegal hunting to the GMA visit gma.vic.gov.au or call 136 186.”

It is illegal to discharge a firearm on or across private property without the permission of the landowner or manager.

People caught illegally using a firearm may face significant fines, have their equipment seized, including firearms, spotlights and vehicles, and firearm licences cancelled.

GMA will continue to take compliance actions against those caught illegally hunting and support Victoria Police in regulating illegal firearm use.

Bushfire Risk Management Program underway across Victoria

by Chief Fire Officer, Forest Fire Management Victoria, Chris Hardman

BUSHFIRES are a natural part of the Victorian landscape, but with the right planning and action, we can reduce their impact on communities, the environment and critical infrastructure.

Right across the state, Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) crews are working hard to reduce the risk and impact of bushfires through a combination of planned burning, non-burn bushfire risk management and strategic preparation.

Leaves, small branches, long grass and undergrowth can fuel bushfires making them faster, more intense and harder to control. Bushfire risk management helps reduce this danger by removing excess vegetation (or fuel), protecting communities, the environment and critical infrastructure.

Less fuel means it's harder for a fire to start and spread, and easier for our crews to contain. That's why last season we delivered bushfire risk management works across more than 109,000 hectares of public land.

The seasonal bushfire outlook for spring asks Victorians to prepare for an increased risk, particularly in the state's west, but also the southern coast and areas around Melbourne. With low rainfall over the past 18 months, the outlook shows areas at increased risk stretching from the South Australian border across to Bendigo, the Otways, Melbourne including the Dandenongs and Yarra Valley and parts of south Gippsland.

As soon as favourable weather and forest conditions arrive, we'll make sure all available resources are delivering planned burning and non-burn bushfire risk management works.

Our bushfire risk management program is underpinned by a significant body of scientific evidence, built over more than 35 years. We acknowledge bushfire science is continually evolving, and we continue to invest in research and the best available science to inform our bushfire risk management program.

We use science and modelling tools to choose the right time and approach for delivery of our bushfire risk management program in each location or landscape, combined with our understanding of the ecological needs of our forests and the plants and animals that depend on them.

Planned burning plays a key role in our work in reducing bushfire risk. It involves the careful use of low-intensity fire to reduce dry vegetation like leaves and small branches that build up over time and make forests more flammable.

Our crews look for opportunities to carry out planned burning throughout the year, and with drier conditions in parts of the state, we've already been able to deliver planned burns over winter, including at Anglesea Heath in the Great Otway National Park, Boggy Creek Nature Conservation Reserve, Gellibrand Bushland Reserve, Wilson Promontory and at Mountain Creek Education Area in Shelley.

In areas where planned burning isn't suitable, such as near homes, on steep slopes or close to roads and towns, FFMVic uses non-burn bushfire management techniques. These include mowing and slashing long grass, mulching dense vegetation, targeted spraying of invasive weeds and maintaining public road networks in forests and reserves. Each method plays a vital role in reducing fuel loads and improving access for emergency services.

Over the coming weeks, you can expect to see our crews and contractors ramping up the mowing and slashing program. The timing of these works is important; if grass is slashed too early, before it has cured, it will only encourage regrowth.

Our top priority is to protect life, property and the environment from the risk of bushfires. While Victoria will always have bushfires, we want you to know that when fires happen, we are ready to respond. We have more than 1800 personnel on the frontline, including firefighters, fire lookout observers and fire support officers; firefighting equipment, including more than 500 ultralight tankers and close to 100 heavy tankers, and more than 50 aircraft contracted for the season ahead.

But being prepared for the bushfire season is a shared responsibility. While FFMVic crews are working hard on public land, all Victorians are encouraged to start cleaning up around their properties to help reduce bushfire risk in their own communities.

Visit our website to learn more about how FFMVic manages bushfire risk.

And to keep up to date on planned burns near you, sign up to receive notifications at Planned Burns Victoria or download the VicEmergency app.



Jason Lynn. -S

Black Saturday revisited

ON Tuesday, October 7, the ABC series premiered season two of *I Was Actually There*, with the first episode focused on the experience of Black Saturday.

The interview subjects were: Glen Fiske, Captain of the Marysville CFA who lost his wife and son during the fires, Kinglake CFA firefighter Karen Barrow, Kinglake West residents Jason Lynn and Juliet Moore, Maryville B&B owner Sharen

Donovan, Kinglake restaurateur Isabella Laudisio, Police officer Cameron Caine, Victorian Police Helicopter rescuer David Key, and Nine Network news reporter Tom Steinfort.

I Was Actually There collected their personal stories, sharing the terror and heartbreak of that day, as well as the extraordinary resilience and luck required to make it through.

Unexpected stories also emerged. While evacuating citizens from above, police helicopter rescuer David Key was surprised to find animals tagging along. He said, "There were deer, a koala ... They probably sixth-sensed that, yes, they're heading into safety. We'll follow them."

The episode is available to watch on ABC iView.

Pilots reminded to stay clear of bushfires

WITH summer almost upon us, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) is reminding all general aviation pilots and drone operators to plan ahead and stay well clear of bushfires.

Any crewed aircraft not involved in aerial firefighting should remain at least five nautical miles (9.26 kilometres) from fire boundaries, but ideally much further.

Drones must never be flown near bushfires under any circumstances.

Pip Spence, CASA CEO and Director of Aviation Safety, says that by following the rules, pilots and drone operators can contribute to safer outcomes for all.

"If you're in the air, firefighting aircraft can't do their job. By steering clear of bushfires, we can let aerial firefighters get on with the job of containing the fire and keeping communities safe," Ms Spence says.

"For drone operators, this includes keeping your drone on the ground. Drones are small and hard to see and pose a risk to aircraft and helicopters.

"Always remember to check the rules before you fly, and tune into your local fire authority for the latest updates on active bushfires in your area."

In recent months, prolonged wet weather across Australia has fuelled rapid vegetation growth, creating ideal conditions for bushfires. When fires ignite, they can spread quickly and disrupt flight paths that pilots would normally use.

Aerial firefighting operations rely on this airspace. These aircraft often fly at low altitudes and may change direction suddenly, posing risks to other airspace users nearby.

Pilots must heed the warnings of local fire and police authorities about any active bushfires along their intended flight path. Pilots are reminded to always consult NOTAMs before embarking on a flight.

CASA has a comprehensive set of safety regulations that govern aerial firefighting operations.

These include specific pilot training and experience requirements, approvals for air operators to spot fires and drop water or retardant and the creation of temporary danger or restricted areas around fires.

Hundreds of aircraft are approved to be used in aerial firefighting with, on average, a total of 30,000 hours flown each year in firefighting operations across Australia.

CASA requires air operators approved to control firefighting aircraft to identify and manage safety risks such as pilot fatigue. Safety checks and audits of these operators are carried out by CASA.

During the fire season CASA is ready to respond quickly to requests for new or changed operational approvals. CASA also has processes to allow foreign pilots to be used in Australian firefighting operations.

Protecting the mental health of workers in Victoria

THE Victorian Government is strengthening workplace safety with new protections to support workers' rights to a mentally safe and healthy workplace.

Deputy Premier and Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC Ben Carroll recently announced the new *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (Psychological Health)* 2025 have been made and will commence on December 1.

The new regulations recognise that psychosocial hazards are just as important as physical hazards, creating new obligations for Victorian employers to identify and manage risks associated with psychosocial hazards in their workplaces.

Psychosocial hazards such as bullying, sexual harassment, aggression or violence, and exposure to traumatic events or content continue to cause significant harm in Victorian workplaces.

Claims for work-related mental injuries in Victoria remain high, as community awareness grows and workers are encouraged to report injuries early ensuring they can receive immediate treatment and return to work faster. In 2024-25, 17 per cent of workplace injury claims to WorkSafe were reported as mental injuries.

The new regulations respond to recommendations made by the Boland Review, the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System and

the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health.

The changes align with regulations introduced in other Australian states and territories and reinforce the existing duty of employers to provide a working environment that is safe and free from risks to health, including psychological health.

A Compliance Code and supporting resources are available to help employers understand how to meet their duties to control psychosocial hazards. This includes prevention plan templates for employers to use to help identify actions they'll take to manage these risks.

For more information about psychological health and the new regulations, visit worksafe.vic.gov.au



Some of the participants on Daniher's Drive in Marysville. -AR



People having fun on the journey. -S



The participants enjoying lunch at Flowerdale Estate. -S



Neale's brothers, Chris, Anthony and Terry with Neale's daughter Bec. -AR



Neil Daniher's daughter Bec speaking to the audience at Peppers in Marysville. -AR

THE important annual event, Daniher's Drive, rolled through Murrindindi Shire on Thursday, October 9, stopping at Flowerdale Estate and Peppers in Marysville.

Matt Tilley, CEO of FightMND, described the start of Daniher's Drive as being "like the first day of school camp."

He explained that in addition to the drive being a lot of fun, it's also a meaningful time of the year for the people to reconnect with everyone from the MND community. Most people taking part have either lost someone or are living with someone going through it.

This year, they have 11 new teams taking part, in addition to returning teams. The event makes people feel less alone on their journey, as other people know what they're going through.

Founder and MND sufferer, Neale Daniher, was the winner of the Australian of the Year award this year, and Matt said that it's made a big difference to Daniher's Drive. "Spots filled up pretty quickly," he said.

On the first day of the drive, before visiting Flowerdale Estate and then Marysville in the evening, they visited Assumption College, Neale's old school, where they honoured him by naming a building after him. Neale recorded a speech for the occasion, and attended in person.

Teams taking part in the drive all raise or donate \$5000 for the cause, with sponsorship opportunities available. Donations are also welcome at fightmnd.org.au

Matt explained that the progress towards finding a cure for the disease is slow. "Science takes a long time," he said. "But we're trying to hurry everyone up. Just a month ago we flew in some of the best and the brightest from around the world, from universities like Oxford and King's College and Johns Hopkins, and we have a little think tank and we push them along and go, you can't just hide there in your laboratories, are you all talking to each other?"

He noted that Victoria has become "a bit of an epicentre for MND research."

Asked whether AI is making a difference in medical research, Matt said, "Interestingly enough one of the things we've funded this year is called the Longitude Prize. It's quite a significant amount of money and [FightMND] and a number of other organisations involved in MND research have contributed to it. It's effectively a prize to the research laboratory that can come up with the best AI approach to tackling the cure. We're definitely leaning into it."

He noted that medical professionals have long been using AI, before it became well known to the general public.

He added, "MND is not a city disease. It doesn't discriminate. One of the most powerful things we can do here is connect with people in these communities. People come from far and wide to join this drive... The hope we want to give people is that they're heard, no matter where they live, even though a lot of the resources and the medical treatment centres are in the capital cities. We know the people are everywhere and the tyranny of distance when someone has a disease that sees them physically deteriorating. It takes hours to prepare cylinders for a car ride and then to trek into the city and stuff. And exhausting for the carers and the families as well."

There's no test for MND, so it can take a long time to be diagnosed, and there's no cure although some trials may extend life by a couple of months. Genetics appear to be a factor in three to eight per cent of cases, but for the remainder, the cause is unknown.

This year marks the ninth time that Daniher's Drive has been run. Neale's daughter Bec said, "It's just been incredible. The Daniher Drive is about bringing together a community and for us we've had nine years where we've got to meet so many beautiful people. They've either been directly impacted by MND or they've been inspired to try and help make a difference. There is just no better group than these Daniher Drive people, and then the fact that we get to go out into

regional communities and I just think the spirit of regional communities continues to amaze us. The town stops, everyone comes out and wants to support it, and so often we see people living with MND as we go along and we know how important it is to see a town rallying behind someone in need. We see that time and time again."

She also commented on how proud she is of her father being named Australian of the Year. "It was such a kind of quite a surreal moment to hear his name being read out. He really does accept that on behalf of everyone who has been a part of the fight, who is in their own fight or in memory of those that have lost their fight. This has always been beyond just one person. This is about the power of a community when they can rally behind a cause. And whenever I see the Daniher's Drive community come together, it just reminds me how strong we are when we come together as a collective," she said.

She also spoke of the vital contribution that FightMND has made towards medical research. "We've been able to invest over \$117 million into vital MND research and critical care as well for those living with MND. We've got some grant announcements coming up at the end of October, a really significant boost to the fight against MND. We want to make sure that the funds that are raised are moved as quickly as possible because the people that are going to find the answer, they're the ones in the clinics and the labs around Australia and the world. We want to make sure that they're able to work as hard as possible. I just think every time I hear about an advancement being made, it's just a little more glimmer of hope. And I know we'll find a Eureka moment one day and we'll pop a bottle of champagne and fight MND will be no more because we're not needed."



The Flowerdale Estate event. -S

Student of the Week

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



SACRED HEART SCHOOL

Isla and Kaden were recognised for their commitment to outstanding actions that align with our school values of Respect, Resilience and Safety.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by
Kinglake branch



Forest Fire Management vehicles taken offline

Continued from Page 3

Ross Kenna, president of the AWU Victoria Branch said, "The Australian Workers Union covers all the field stuff for the guys who actually go into the field to do the prep work and fight fires as they come through, so I see our members who spend the majority of the time in the Unimog and in the G-Wagon fleet.

"Without going right back through history, when the government first purchased the G-Wagon fleet, the AWU formally wrote to the department suggesting that they weren't fit for purpose and we had some concerns about safety. The department did allay those concerns... but since then the G-Wagon has been a problem for our members. We've had lots of reliability issues across the service of the vehicle, and it's led now to a critical situation where we've got a bunch of cracks in the chassis of the fleet.

He was keen to make it clear that the workforce is willing and able, and that they're make do. They'll work in whatever vehicles they're provided to make sure Victoria's safe.

He added, "I think it's been a bit of a misnomer in the media coverage since it went live, that some of our CFA volunteers would be asked to do work that our members do. That's incorrect."

He said that the work of FFM is "really, really highly skilled and really demanding and our workforce will continue to complete the job. They're focused on making sure every Victorian property and every Victorian is safe from the effect of fire. They don't get paid enough money, they do it because they love the job, so they will continue to do that and if there is a vehicle bought in from interstate or from the CFA, we welcome that to make sure we can get them to the front. But our members will continue doing the work. So as long as the vehicles they're getting us are safe, we'll be happy for our workforce to continue to protect Victoria."

He added, "Our main concern will be making sure that our members are safe and that Victoria is safe... Some of the senior decision-makers within the department probably need to have a look in the mirror.

He said, "AWU is very proud of the membership and our health and safety representatives who brought this situation to the fore. They're the ones who really pushed on this and did the work necessary to make sure it became an issue. I know it's really inconvenient timing. It's terrible timing with the season about to be upon us, but the health and safety of every worker is their primary concern and they've done a great job in making sure that our workforce doesn't go in vehicles that could break down and could have catastrophic failure on a fire front."

Results are in: working from home works

ACCORDING to a survey undertaken by the Victorian Government, results show Victorians want and need their right to work from home protected.

Premier Jacinta Allan and Acting Minister for Industrial Relations Harriet Shing announced that 36,770 responses were received during statewide consultation on the Government's plan to legislate the right to work from home two days a week.

An initial snapshot of the data released makes it clear that Victorians want work from home protected.

The results showed that more than 74 per cent of employees surveyed (25,724) said the right to work from home was "extremely" important to them. More than 3200 didn't feel they could ask their current employer to work from home. Of those who could work from home but currently don't, most had requested it, and most were refused. Almost all those who were refused felt this was unreasonable, and the majority said it led to further challenges for them in the workplace.

Most employees surveyed said the ability to work from home would make them more likely to choose one job over another, and make them stay in their current job longer.

Survey respondents were asked to rank the benefits of working from home.

Saving time came out as the leader, with more than 13,300 respondents saying their

one-way trip to their workplace takes over an hour.

The second most popular benefit was saving money. More than 9200 said commuting to their workplace costs between \$25 to \$49 a week.

The third-highest benefit of working from home was being able to focus without distractions.

Additionally, more than 28,700 participants told us they were more productive when working from home, in terms of both hours worked and milestones achieved.

The survey also found that two days a week is the most common work from home arrangement (10,207 respondents), showing the policy gets the balance right.

The nearly seven week consultation attracted more than 700 in-language responses and 295 formal submissions.

More than 1000 responses were received in the first two hours of the survey opening, with 5000 responses received by the end of the first day.

Employers who participated in the survey mostly had fewer than 20 employees.

Employers ranked "employee satisfaction" as the most important benefit of having a work from home policy, followed by having a bigger talent pool for hiring and higher productivity.

Further consultation with businesses and industry groups is happening now, with 122 registrations for the online industry forums.

Of the 34,705 employees who participated in the survey the following results included: 19,774 (57 per cent) participants were female, 13,864 (40 per cent) were male 18,237 (53 per cent) were parents or carers 28,601 (82 per cent) people said they currently have the option of working from home and 10,207 (36 per cent) of those, said they currently work from home two days a week.

Of the 4346 participants who do not work from home, but said it was possible to do their job from home, 2469 (57 per cent) said they had already asked to work from home and, of those, 2049 (83 per cent) had been refused. Of those who'd had their request refused, 1988 (97 per cent) believed their workplace's response was unreasonable and 1549 (76 per cent) said it had led to further challenges for them. 15,260 (44 per cent) participants said that someone else in their household works from home and, of those, 12,705 (83 per cent) said this had made a positive difference to their household. 25,724 (74%) participants said working from home was 'extremely important' to them and 4449 (13 per cent) said it was 'very important.' 30,591 (88 per cent) people told us the ability to work from home would make them more likely to choose one job over another. 30,466 (88 per cent) participants said that having the ability to work from home would make them stay in a job longer. 24,787 (71 per cent) said their ability to work from home would impact their decisions on where to live. 28,778 (83 per cent) participants said they were more productive working from home, in terms of both hours worked and milestones achieved. 13,324 (39 per cent) participants said their one-way trip to work takes more than an hour and 9238 (27 per cent) participants said it costs them between \$25-\$49 per week to travel to and from work. The industries most represented were 'professional, scientific and technical services' at 5284 (16 per cent) and 'financial and insurance services' at 3955 (12 per cent). The number one age bracket for participants was 35 to 44 years old.

This is an initial snapshot of data from the survey's multiple-choice answers. A full report with further data will be released when the many 'free text' answers have been analysed.

The overwhelming response to this survey will now be used to make sure the new laws reflect what's fair, practical and already working for Victorians.

Under the Government's proposed laws, if you can reasonably do your job from home, your ability to do so two days a week will be protected, whether you work in the public or private sector.

Council adopts annual financial and performance statements at special meeting

A SPECIAL meeting of Murrindindi Shire Council took place last Wednesday, October 8, to adopt the Financial and Performance Statement for 2024-25.

Cr Adams and Cr McAulay were both apologies for the meeting.

Council's draft annual Financial and Performance Statement for 2024-25 was brought before council, after being reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee in September.

The statement reported that council recorded an \$8 million operating surplus, some \$5.7 million more than the original adopted budget. This was due to unforeseen revenue, notably a \$3.3 million grant from the Federal Government for the 2025-26 Financial Assistance Grants; \$2.5 million in flood recovery funding, and an accounting adjustment of \$1.9 million for reduced future landfill rehabilitation costs.

By removing capital income, the underlying picture shows that this is a \$1.8 million improvement compared to budget, but it still reflects a deficit of \$1.5 million. However, when the two one-off revenue items are removed, the grants, the adjusted underlying result is a deficit of \$6.6 million.

This shows that council's current working capital remains strong, but continuing annual underlying deficits are reducing council's financial position and sustainability over the medium term.

The resolutions that were brought before council at this special meeting included: that council approve, in principle, the Financial Statements for the year ended June 30, 2025, and the Performance Statement 2024-25; authorise the principal accounting officer to make minor amendments required to the Financial Statements and Performance Statement for the year ended June 30, 2025, to meet the requirements of the Victorian Auditor General's Office; and authorise Cr Gallagher, Cr Hildebrand and council's CEO, Livia Bonazzi, to certify the final versions of the 2024-25 Financial and Performance Statements, following any changes recommended or agreed to, by the Auditor General in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Council voted to adopt the Financial and Performance Statements for 2024-25, along with the resolutions brought before them at the special meeting.

POLICE REPORT

A MINI motorbike was located in Flowerdale on August 29 and handed into police at Yea.

If it belongs to you, please contact the station. You will be required to describe it.

The Farmer's Ag News

Growing the state's wine sector

THE Victorian Government is shaping the future of Victoria's wine industry, creating more regional jobs and helping grow the state's \$9.5 billion wine sector.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence recently unveiled a five-year strategy to grow agriculture, boost innovation, and create jobs that strengthen regional economies.

The strategy was developed in partnership with industry through a steering committee,

which included Wine Victoria CEO Stephanie Duboudin and Chair Dan Sims, following extensive consultation.

Reflecting the voices of growers, winemakers, regional associations, and government, the strategy focuses on four pillars, including workforce development, improving the visitor experience, innovation and sustainability of the industry, and expanding domestic and international trade.

Victoria is home to Australia's most diverse wine industry, with 21 unique wine regions and over 400 cellar doors, more than any other state, drawing visitors from across the country and the world. Together, the industry powers more than 23,000 jobs across grape growing, winemaking, logistics, exports, hospitality and retail.

Over the last two financial years, the government in partnership with Wine Victoria, has backed more than 170 wineries through programs that open doors to global trade and new opportunities.

Wine Victoria has appointed Hayley Purbrick, a fifth-generation family member at Tahbilk Winery near Nagambie, as Sustainability and Innovation lead to oversee the strategy's actualisation. Her position is jointly funded by the government and Wine Australia.

This ensures that benefits of the industry are felt across the supply chain, from growers

and producers to retailers, restaurants and regional communities.

The Labor Government's *Economic Growth Statement* identifies trade as a crucial driver for boosting Victoria's economic growth and the new \$10 million *Boosting Victorian Exports Package* will help more businesses take their home-grown products to global markets.

Victoria's primary producers and food manufacturers have delivered another year of record-breaking exports, leading the nation and hitting the state's \$20 billion target six years ahead of schedule. Victoria was one of only two states to record growth in food and fibre export value in 2023-24.

To explore the new Victorian Wine Strategy in more detail, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/crops-and-horticulture/wine-and-grapes/wine-strategy



The new five-year wine strategy aims to grow agriculture, boost innovation, and create jobs that strengthen regional economies. -S

Keeping soil in place when your paddocks are bare

by Kerri Goschnick, Land Management Extension Officer

MAINTENANCE is the key to reducing soil and sediment movement in paddocks. While spring rain is valuable for pastures and replenishing farm dams, run off may also carry sediment into livestock dams, particularly where there is exposed soil in heavily grazed paddocks.

Hay bales or netting held together with steel posts or stakes to control sediment flow into dams can be a good starting point. Although the cost of hay and the hazard of steel posts should be considered. Coir logs are a potential alternative to hay bales.

Fibreglass posts and construction site hazard fencing (barrier mesh) are another, often safer option. Using 20 metres of barrier mesh and four fibreglass posts upstream of a dam is both highly visible and relatively low cost, at around \$85 per site.

Aim for mesh openings that are no smaller than 100 mm square. Smaller openings will block up with debris too quickly and the fence will fail. It is also important to remove stakes or mesh once the risk of sedimentation has reduced to avoid debris build up.

Building earthen banks to protect areas from sedimentation usually requires survey design, knowledge of soil type and risks, suitable equipment and expertise to successfully construct.

A good understanding of catchment size and potential water volumes is necessary to avoid failure.

Road and track maintenance is also important. Annual maintenance with a slight camber in the road surface to shed water to the side with the shortest distance possible will help to prevent wheel tracks from developing into drains and washing out the track surface.

Culverts and side drains should also be cleaned annually to prevent blockages and water from being redirected to less suitable discharge areas.

Visit the Agriculture Victoria website for articles on soil retention and sediment movement on agricultural land following drought, fire, strong winds and rainfall events.

Grants of up to \$5000 are available for farmers to support investment in on-farm drought management activities and be better prepared for future droughts.

Eligible activities include water infrastructure upgrades such as pipes, tanks, troughs and dams, stock containment areas, grain and fodder storage, water carting and pasture re-establishment.

Visit ruralfinance.com.au/grants/ to apply.

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

Star gazing disease in livestock

Dr Jeff Cave, Senior Veterinary Officer, Northern Region

FOLLOWING the seasonal conditions we have experienced this year, there is very little standing roughage in most paddocks. This has set the scene for cases of 'star gazing disease' also known as *polio encephalomalacia*.

Polio encephalomalacia occurs when an animal lacks enough thiamine (Vitamin B1), an essential nutrient for normal body metabolism. In healthy ruminants such as cattle, sheep, and goats, thiamine is produced naturally in the rumen, the first stomach, where microbes aid in breaking down food.

However, if this microbial community is disturbed, thiamine levels can become dangerously low.

Any condition that disrupts the balance of rumen microbes can lead to thiamine deficiency. This includes grain poisoning, low-fibre diets, or an excess of sulphur in feed.

The disease most commonly affects well-grown calves or lambs aged between six and 12 months old, but it can affect animals of any age or sex.

When it comes to things to look out for the earliest signs can be subtle: animals may seem lethargic, lose their appetite,

or wander away from the herd. They may bump into objects, appear blind, or stand motionless, sometimes with their heads drooped, at other times gazing fixedly at the sky.

As the condition worsens, affected animals may experience convulsions, collapse with their head arched backward, and ultimately slip into a coma. Without treatment, death often occurs within two to three days.

But not every case is the same. Some animals are found dead without warning, while others show only mild symptoms and recover on their own.

If caught early, the condition may potentially be reversed with an injection of thiamine, which is available without a prescription from veterinarians. Farmers are also advised to support the rest of the herd by offering high-fibre feed, which promotes a healthy rumen environment and consistent thiamine production.

Unfortunately, once blindness or paralysis occurs, the brain damage is often irreversible. In such cases, humane euthanasia is usually the only option.

Farmers are encouraged to seek advice from their local veterinarian. In Victoria, advice is also available from Agriculture Victoria Veterinary or Animal Health Officers.

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PUZZLES

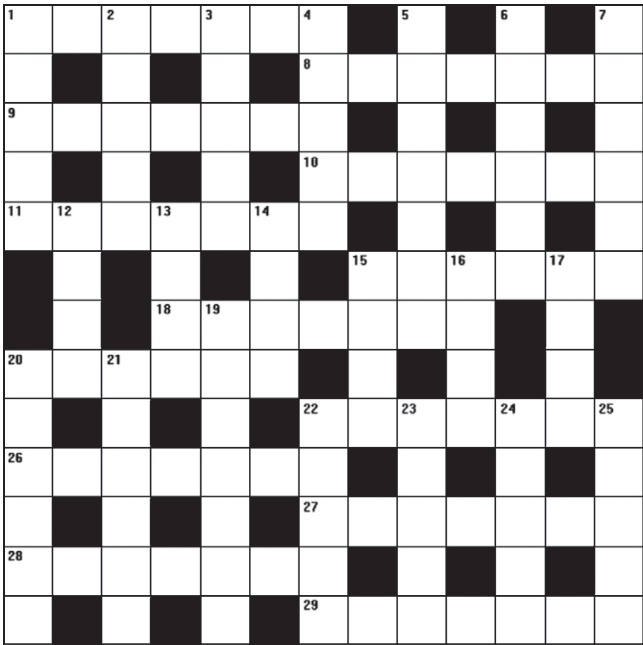
SOLUTIONS
Page 11

KID'S PUZZLES

Crossword

ACROSS

- 1. Gradually narrowed toward a point.
- 8. Raise from a lower to a higher position.
- 9. Fixes things that are broken.
- 10. Small oval citrus fruit with very acid pulp.
- 11. Leaves in a difficult or helpless position.
- 15. A devastating type of bomb.
- 18. Men who are expert boat rowers.
- 20. A drug or medicine that cures a disease.
- 22. Exhaled spasmodically through the nose.
- 26. Disparage or destroy one's good name.
- 27. Gnawing animals with large incisor teeth.
- 28. The green leaves of a plant.
- 29. Each wage earning day of the week.



DOWN

- 1. Small slender gulls with a forked tail.
- 2. The medium used for writing a letter.
- 3. The period during which a sovereign rules.
- 4. Pieces of furniture with a writing surface.
- 5. An antlike insect that feeds on wood.
- 6. An home appliance that cleans by suction.
- 7. Relating to or characteristic of the Celts.
- 12. A very large and scholarly book.
- 13. Plant with large red or yellow tubular flowers.
- 14. A flat-bottomed fishing boat with high sides.
- 15. A term used at the conclusion of a prayer.
- 16. On one occasion or for one time only.
- 17. Not in use or operation.
- 19. The supreme commander of a fleet.
- 20. Approve and express formal consent.
- 21. Small glass ball used in children's games.
- 22. Small mouse-like long-snouted mammal.
- 23. A person who is older than you are.
- 24. Sectioned for use for a particular purpose.
- 25. Lighted as if by twilight.

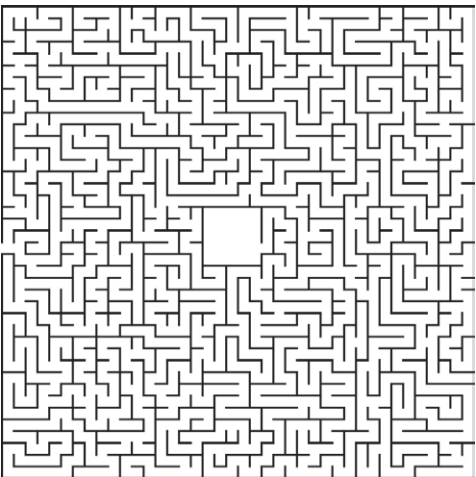
Shapes

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

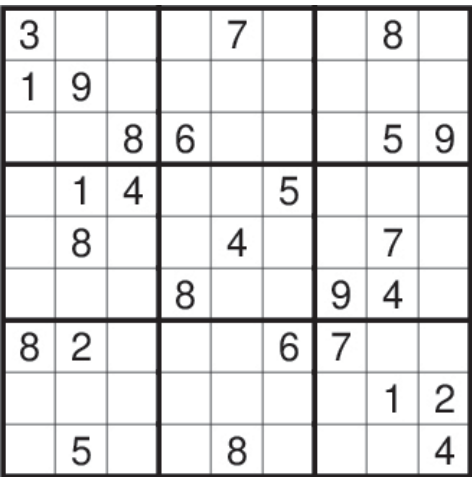
Fruit & Veggies

- CIRCLE
- PENTAGON
- HEART
- RECTANGLE
- HEXAGON
- RHOMBUS
- OCTAGON
- SQUARE
- OVAL
- STAR
- PARALLELOGRAM
- TRIANGLE

Maze



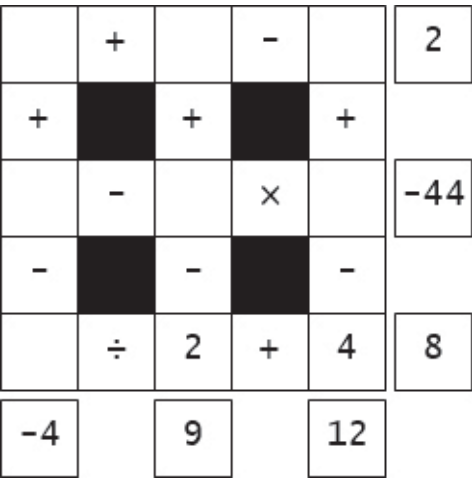
Sudoku



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.

Math Square



Fill in the missing numbers.

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

Colouring Page



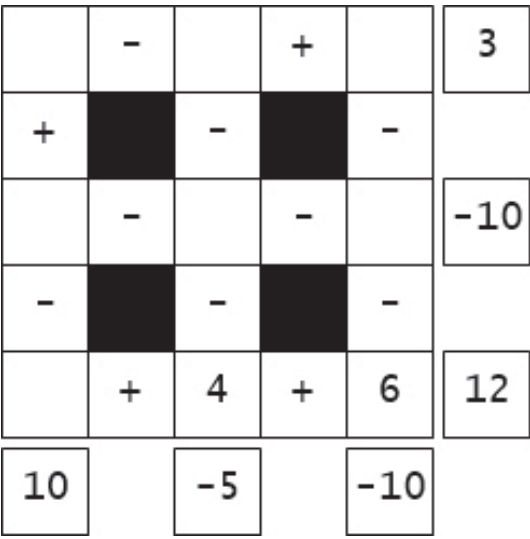
Word Search

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

Words starting with "Z"

- ZANY
- ZILCH
- ZEBRA
- ZIPPER
- ZEPHYR
- ZODIAC
- ZEPELIN
- ZOMBIE
- ZERO
- ZOOLOGY
- ZESTY
- ZOOM
- ZIGZAG
- ZUCCHINI

Math Square



Fill in the missing numbers.

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

Jokes

Q: What musical instrument would you find in a bathroom?
A: A tuba toothpaste.

Q: What goes up when the rain comes down?
A: An umbrella

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Free RSV immunisation for babies next year

THE Victorian Government will continue protecting Victorian newborns and infants from Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) next winter, following a successful program this year that reduced the rate of RSV cases.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today announced \$8 million to provide thousands of doses of the long-acting monoclonal antibody, nirsevimab, to protect newborns and eligible infants throughout the RSV season.

The state based program complements the Commonwealth maternal vaccine, Abrysvo, which was introduced in February as part of the coordinated national effort to build early immunity and protect as many babies as possible.

During the 2025 RSV season, more than 30,000 doses of nirsevimab were distributed to GPs, local councils and hospitals across Victoria, with the joint maternal and infant programs helping to significantly reduce cases among Victorian children and ease pressure on hospitals, falling from 4731 cases in 2024 to 3770 in 2025.

The Victorian infant program will again run from April to September 2026, offering free RSV protection for newborns whose mothers did not receive the maternal vaccine dose at least two weeks before giving birth, or those who have additional risk factors for severe RSV disease.

A dedicated catch-up program will also again be available for eligible Victorian infants aged up to two years who remain vulnerable to severe RSV illness.

While RSV is not a new virus, it is highly contagious, with most children contracting the virus by the age of two. It is the leading cause of infant hospitalisation in Australia and can progress to serious illnesses such as pneumonia or bronchiolitis in very young children.

In July the Allan Labor Government also announced an Australian-first program, which will see the Arexvy® RSV vaccine delivered to residents aged 60 and over in public and Aboriginal community-controlled aged care services.

PUZZLES SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

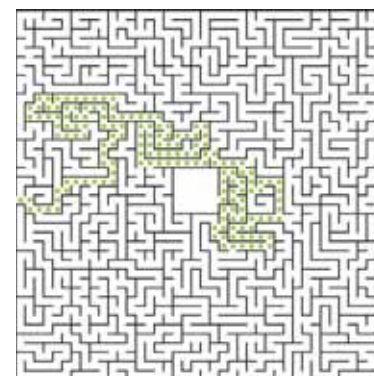
SUDOKU

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

MATH SQUARE

3	+	6	-	7	2
+		+		+	
1	-	5	x	9	-44
-		-		-	
8	÷	2	+	4	8
-4		9		12	

MAZE



KIDS MATH SQUARES

9	-	7	+	1	3
+		-		-	
3	-	8	-	5	-10
-		-		-	
2	+	4	+	6	12
10		-5		-10	

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It is an offence to advertise the sale of a dog or cat or to give away free unless the 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. Refunds or credits will not be issued if your advertisement has appeared more than once and you have not notified us. Credits or refunds will not be given if advertisements appear out of order.

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MEETINGS



The Alexandra Football / Netball Club (AFNC) invites all members and community supporters to attend the Annual General Meeting.

Date: Tuesday, October, 21
Time: 6pm
Location: AFNC Clubrooms

All members, players, supporters, and community members are warmly encouraged to attend. Enquiries president Kylie Cairns – 0409 932 761

Everyone welcome.

YEA FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB

Annual General Meeting

10 | NOV | 2025

6pm onwards, in the main clubrooms

Yea Recreation Reserve



The Dame Pattie Menzies Centre Inc., trading as Menzies Support Services, has been providing services to our community for over 40 years. We are a Not for Profit Charitable organisation, community owned, with a volunteer Committee of Management.

Notice of Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, October 22, 2025,
5.30pm at "The Mount",
Dame Pattie Menzies Centre, 2456
Goulburn Valley Highway, Alexandra

Any new business or applications for membership for consideration need to be forwarded to the Secretary, seven business days prior to AGM. **Please RSVP via the contact details below.** You will be provided with the agenda, Annual Report and other important documents prior to the AGM. **Members of the community are encouraged to attend the AGM.**

Please RSVP to Dame Pattie Menzies Centre Inc. Dave Beattie, President on 0448 009 200. Email the DPMC secretary, DPMC@menziessupport.org.au or Menzies Support Services 5772 1888.

All committee positions are open for nomination. For more information or to nominate for a committee position, please contact Dave Beattie, President on 0448 009 200. **We invite new members to the association.** Membership renewals and application forms can be obtained from Menzies Support Services at 49 Nihil Street, requested by email or post, or submitted online at menziessupport.org.au/dpmc

DEATH NOTICES

CANN, James Mervyn.
12/04/1934 - 28/09/2025.
(91 years). Loved and loving husband of Dawne (65 years). Much loved father and father in law of Rohan, Christine and Peter (dec), John (dec), Leonia and Natasha. Loved Pa of Beau, Renee, David, Laura, Esther, Aaron, Will, Darcy, Harry and Lucy. Great pa of Jordie, Olivia and Lenny. Caring and respected by Dean, Tarrelle, Lolah, Ciara and Sophie, Marni, Dean, Lexi and Oliver. Forever remembered. Never forgotten.

DICKER, Alan C 'Abdul'

27/05/1956 -
03/10/2025

Loving father to James and Thomas. Father in law to Alison and Kira. Pa to four beautiful grandchildren. Partner to Sabina. Forever in our hearts.

Keep on truckin' XXXX

Privately Cremated

A celebration of life for Alan will be held on Saturday, October 18, 2025 at the Grand Central Hotel Yea commencing at 12pm.



HALLIGAN, Lola Grace.
Most dearly loved mum, nan and great nan. There are no goodbyes for us, wherever you are you will always be in our hearts. Tim and Anja. Rach, Daniel and Jackson. Ash, Dylan and Maeve. Anna, Holly, Luke and Bradley.



DEATH NOTICES

HALLIGAN, Lola Grace.
Our memories of you will always be rich. You'll be forever loved, forever missed. Always in our hearts our beautiful nan and great nan. Ashleigh, Dylan and Maeve Lola.

NICHOLLS, Wendy.
September 26, 2025.
A true friend is never truly gone. Their spirit lives on in the memories of those who loved them. Sleep peacefully my dear friend. Judy.



RIDD, Les.

Our sincere condolences to Marg, Darren, Matt and Katherine and families on the recent passing of Les. He was a kind and thoughtful man who made a significant contribution to our community, Whanregarwen Fire Brigade

STEWART, Richard

27/02/1934 -
07/10/2025

Loving husband to Gillian.

Loving father to Kathy, Scott and James, and father in law to Martin, Kerrie and Vickie.

Loving grandfather to Geoff, Michael, Jenny, Sefton and Blake, and granddaughters in law Sharyn and Laura.

Loving great grandfather to Ethan, Liliana, Isaac, Zara, Lucy, Hannah, Caleb and Noah

Always in our hearts.

IN MEMORIAM

HYATT, Barbara Louise
(nee Picone). In loving memory of Barbara, 1950-2000. Very sadly missed by her loving family.

FUNERAL NOTICES

JAMES, Brian William.

A funeral service for Brian will be held at Bailey's Memorial Chapel, 82 Anzac Avenue, Seymour on Saturday, October 18, 2025 commencing at 12pm, midday followed by a private cremation.

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NICHOLLS.

The funeral service to celebrate the life of Wendy Marie Nicholls will be held at the Murrindindi Chapel, 21 Johnston Street, Alexandra on Friday, October 24, 2025 commencing at 1pm. Private cremation. An invitation is extended to family and friends to the Yack Hall for refreshments following the service.

FUNERAL NOTICES

STEWART, Richard

The funeral service to celebrate the wonderful life of Richard Stewart will be held at the Murrindindi Chapel on Tuesday, October 21, 2025 commencing at 1pm.



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MEETINGS



General meeting for the Alexandra RSL will be held on Sunday, October 19, at noon, followed by a light luncheon.

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SITUATION VACANT



Expression of Interest – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Dame Pattie Menzies Centre Inc., trading as Menzies Support Services, is an established not-for-profit organisation based in Alexandra, dedicated to delivering high-quality supports. An outstanding opportunity exists for an accomplished and values-driven executive to lead Menzies Support Services.

We are seeking expressions of interest from experienced leaders with a strong commitment to social impact, strategic growth, and operational excellence. The CEO will be responsible for ensuring the delivery of inclusive, person-centred care aligned with our mission and values and strategic direction.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide visionary leadership and strategic direction in collaboration with the Committee of Management.
- Oversee the effective delivery of disability and aged care services, ensuring compliance with NDIS and aged care standards.
- Drive innovation, sustainability, and continuous improvement across all areas of the organisation.
- Strengthen stakeholder relationships and community engagement.
- Lead a high-performing team with a focus on culture, accountability, and service excellence.

To express your interest or gain further information please contact David Beattie, President on 0448 009 200

A wonderful donation to food share program

ROS Bowd from Alexandra Motorcycles was the proud winner of a shopping spree at Alexandra FoodWorks, but instead of making the most of it herself, she decided to

donate the trolley of goods to the community.

Robyn Hill, CEO of Foundation Murrindindi which runs the Food Share program said, "We're absolutely

thrilled with the generosity of community member Ros Bowd to offer this whole trolley dash to Foundation Murrindindi's program, Murrindindi Community

Food Share. It means it will go straight to the people who need it most and we really applaud Ros's generosity in donating all of these beautiful products to us."

Foundation Murrindindi were also able to provide input to Ros about what was needed.

Robyn added, "Huge kudos to Ros for doing the research, coming down in her runners,

running around with the trolley, filling it up and making an incredible donation that will really make a big difference."

Ros explained that she saw the competition advertised and thought it would be a wonderful way to give back to the Food Bank. "I'm pretty lucky," she said. "Sometimes I win things. That was the only reason I entered. I couldn't believe it. It was just meant to be."

She said that Foundation Murrindindi staff members coming along to help made it even more special.

Michael Clark, sales representative for Unilever also helped out with the trolley run, tapping away on his calculator to make the whole experience easier.

He said, "I'm just happy that it's going to a good place."

He also donated an additional box of food on behalf of FoodWorks towards the cause after the trolley had been filled.

Ros's donation will make a huge difference to so many people. She thanked Unilever and FoodWorks who have always been so good to the community.



Robyn Hill from Foundation Murrindindi, Michael Clark from Unilever and Ros Bowd from Alexandra Motorcycles. -AR

More police in the community

TENS of thousands of police hours will be diverted to the frontline each year under a comprehensive package of reforms unveiled by Chief Commissioner Mike Bush.

A proposed restructure of the organisation is at the core of the plans that will free up police from administrative burden and give them more time on the streets where they can stop offending before it happens.

The proposals represent the most significant structural changes in years and lay the foundations for a transformation in how Victoria Police operates, with a total focus on reducing crime and improving the safety of all Victorians.

At the heart of the proposed new structure is a slimmed-down executive team, the backline of Victoria Police, that will enable a reinvestment in the frontline.

There is a reduction in the number of centralised Commands and Departments and an elevated focus on crime prevention and partnerships.

These proposed changes are a first step only. A second phase of the review will commence early next year, and will propose further, deep and tangible changes to the ways in which Victoria Police operates.

The restructure of Victoria Police is a centrepiece in a broader program of works unveiled by Chief Commissioner Bush. The Victoria Police Uplift Program will drive changes to how Victoria Police operates. It will focus on five critical themes: Leadership, Bureaucracy, Technology, Organisational Design, and Recruitment, Retention and Return.

Led by some of Victoria Police's most experienced senior officers, each of these programs will deliver critical reforms that will 'build the backroom', unshackling members from administrative burden and giving them the support they need.

Among the many initiatives they will be working on are:

A new State Crime Coordination Centre. Within the first half of next year this will

be launched. It will be a high-tech hub, that will bring together information, intelligence, and operational capability under one roof. Using advanced data and technology, the centre will identify links between crimes, uncover patterns, and provide real time insights to frontline police. From the centre, resources will be deployed in real time, 24/7, to respond to incidents, disrupt criminal networks and prevent crime before it occurs. A trial that will release sworn officers from police station reception counter duties and see them replaced by alternate staff. This will launch in the next three to six months and if the trial is a success, they will waste no time in implementing the initiative statewide. A new initiative which will see dedicated teams of admin staff, including former police officers, established within police stations to free members up from their paperwork after making an arrest. Currently police are spending too much time in the office tied up in paperwork when they should be back on the streets. Again, if these Investigation Support Units are a success, then they will roll them out across the state as quickly as possible.

Chief Commissioner Mike Bush said, "We have a crime problem here in Victoria. There is no escaping this fact. The levels of offending we are seeing in our community are entirely unacceptable.

"Good people, innocent people going about their everyday lives, are being victimised, on the streets and in their own homes. This cannot continue.

"Getting ahead of this crime problem requires consequences for those offenders who drive fear in our communities combined with ongoing swift arrests and proactive operations.

"But it will also require a fundamental shift in how Victoria Police operates. We need to change how we police, so that we can get ahead of the criminals and stop the offending before it happens.

"Prevention and deterrence, these are the hallmarks of our strategy moving forwards as we seek to drive our crime rate down.

"Victoria Police is an exceptional organisation. We have almost 22,000 police, PSOs and VPS staff who turn up every day to keep the Victorian public safe. But it is clear to me that we have not been giving our frontline members the support they need.

"While specialist services within Victoria Police have benefitted from considerable investment, and necessarily so, our general duties officers, the backbone of our organisation, have not received the same levels of focus or investment.

"They are loaded past their capacity, burdened by bureaucracy and systems that don't talk to each other. Our structures do not support them as effectively as is needed and nor do our back-of-house functions, technology or processes.

"If we are to prevent crime, then it starts with properly resourcing and enabling our frontline police officers.

"Right now, police spend more than 4000 hours per day, or 1.4 million hours per year, staffing reception counters in police stations. This is poor use of their invaluable skills and it's not what they want to be doing.

"We must get more police, your police, out of their stations and onto the streets where they can respond to and deter crimes.

"What is important to me, is that our members on the frontline know that help is coming, and it is coming soon.

"The structural changes we are making, and the new initiatives I have detailed, are a significant departure from how Victoria Police has gone about its business in recent years.

"We are doing this because it is clear that we can't keep doing things the same way and expecting different results.

"These changes will put us in the best possible position to achieve our goals, reducing crime, building trust and confidence, and making sure everyone is safe and feels safe."

Crackdown on illegal rubbish dumping

THE Victorian Government is cracking down on illegal dumping across Victoria, cleaning up parks and reserves, and holding illegal dumpers accountable for the mess they leave behind.

Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos announced \$21.5 million to bolster the Illegal Dumping Taskforce and deliver extra financial support for councils and public land managers to clean-up illegally dumped waste.

Councils and land managers who are facing an increase in dumping, so the government is delivering \$8.5 million to help ease the burden of clean-up costs for illegally dumped and toxic waste in public spaces.

This will help public land managers clean up priority waste, like public health hazards, and will cover up to 50 per cent of the clean-up costs in situations where all avenues to trace the perpetrator and recover costs have been exhausted or are not feasible.

To catch more people flouting the law and hold them to account, \$13 million will help the Illegal Dumping Taskforce ramp up surveillance, enforcement and clean-up efforts across Victoria.

The taskforce will be led by the EPA, who will work with Conservation Regulator and undertake enforcement activities using expanded intelligence and monitoring to detect and respond to waste crimes in key locations.

The taskforce will also review fines and cost recovery for illegal dumping, hold offenders to account through the courts and step up naming and shaming of those who do the wrong thing.

Rubbish dumping and littering on public land is illegal with a maximum penalty of \$3,951,800 for businesses and \$800,000 for individuals or five years imprisonment, or both.

All Victorians have a part to play in preventing waste dumping. To report illegal dumping contact the EPA on 1300 372 842.



Yea Cruise Night rolls in for a new season

YEA Cruise Night returned to the streets of Yea on Saturday, October 11, marking the start of the new season. The weather was perfect for the occasion, with visitors and locals enjoying the day, checking out the amazing variety of vehicles on display. The event continues on the second Saturday of the month throughout the warmer months.



-photos by Dale McKeon, Plymouth Dale Photos





Matthew reaches to return Jessica's shot. -S

First round of term four for Alexandra Squash Club

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition

Blue Vein versus Camembert

ETHAN versus Jordan: One player held control of the court all match. It was a very one-sided match with Jordan winning with a solid lead. 79 to 47.

Randy versus Liane: Consistency was key. Liane kept the pressure on throughout the match. The third game saw Randy break out to claim the game, but Liane was back in the fourth to squash his hopes of winning. Liane was crowned victorious. 77 to 57.

Jared versus Chris: Jared shot out taking a 10-point lead in the first game. Chris claimed some points back over the next two games, only to have Jared taken them back in the final game to win the match. 61 to 52.

John versus Derrick: Derrick kept the 'T' to run John around the court. With his

opponent in control John tried to get creative but couldn't take the win. Derrick took the match. 59 to 44.

Feta versus Gouda

Tyler versus Lochlan: These two had some great rallies. Tyler opened strong to take the first game with a good lead. With consistency Lochlan won the next three games, however he lost the match on points. Tyler for the win. 57 to 55.

Jess versus Laura: With more experience under her belt, Jess was consistent throughout. Laura gave Jess a challenge, but Jess's skills prevailed. 60 to 49.

Matt (fill in) versus Ben F: The spectators did not want this match to end. It was a terrific contest with some outstanding rallies. Ben held the upper hand in the beginning until Matt fired up in the second half taking the last game with enough points to win the match. 64 to 56.

Andrew versus Michael H: It was a close match. Andrew made Michael work hard for his victory with each game having a difference of a few points. Michael was triumphant. 61 to 57.

Thursday competition

Barracudas versus Hammerheads

Matthew versus Jessica: It took Matthew two games to get a read on his opponent and when he did, it made all the difference. Jessica was leading going into the third game. Matthew made some changes and dominated game three to take and hold the lead until the end. A brilliant victory for Matthew. 56 to 51.

Daniel K versus Daniel W: Battle of the Daniels is always an interesting show of varying talents. Daniel W has the ability to seemingly always get to the ball and make a shot while Daniel K has superb placement and the skill to read the next play. Daniel K was triumphant in this enjoyable match. 62 to 35.

Orcas versus Piranhas

Beth (fill in) versus Ben H: Beth was finding the going easy against her less experienced opponent. Beth's use of the side wall in the first half saw her leading. Putting some extra power into his shots Ben won the last two games, but he didn't have enough points to win the match. 59 to 52.

Sam versus Travis: There's no rivalry quite like sibling rivalry. It's always a close and interesting game between these two. Game one went to Sam with a few points in the kitty. Travis won the next two games, taking back his lost points. Going into the final game the score was even and when the smoke settled the match was a draw. 60 to 60.

Michael M versus Justin: With tenacity Michael kept the 'T' under control, pushing Justin to the back of the court. Despite his efforts, Justin could not displace Michael. Michael was victorious. 65 to 53.

Round two of golf's men's championships

by Alan Pell

WITH the golf course in great condition, 30 men contested the second round of the championships which was also the monthly medal. Winner of the medal and leader of B Grade was Peter Johnston (16) with 85 off the stick nett 69. Second on countback was Chris Dunne (seven) with 76 off the stick. Third was young Jobe Dunne (25) with nett 70 on countback from five other fellas on nett 70, Cody Dunne (28), Mal Bett (25), Phil Armstrong (21), Gary Pollard (14) and Anthony La Grutta (20). Nearest the pin on the 11th was Jobe Dunne and Brendan Chenhall making a return to golf, took out the club award. Greg Clements with 26 putts won the putting.

Leading players after two rounds are A Grade; Andrew Bohn 159, Rick Wills 164, Mic Spagnolo 167 and Alan Pell 170. In B grade Peter Johnston 175, Zach Pell 179, Tony Rule 180 and Anthony la Grutta 182. C Grade sees Phil Armstrong 185, Mic Sheather 197, Steve Rumney 199 and Malcolm Bett 200. The Clarke Trophy for best overall nett score has Anthony La Grutta 142, Peter Johnston 143, Phil Armstrong 143, Rick Wills 144, Alan Pell 144, Kevin Coghlan 144 and Andrew Bohn 145. The final round will be played in two weeks as the Yea Races are on next Saturday.

Saturday also saw the final of the Men's Knockout Cup with Gary Pollard and Brian Simmons in the final. Gary with a nett 70 to Brian's

74 was this year's Knockout Champion. There were 10 ladies playing stableford also on Saturday with Carolyn Webber (45) taking home the chocolates with 38 points from second DI Elliott (28) with 36 points on countback from third Cindy Armstrong (29).

Wednesday saw 35 players in total with 19 men playing stableford. Winner was Gary Pollard (14) with 38 points on countback from Anthony La Grutta (20) with a birdie on the 18th. Third was Neil Peterson (16) with 37 from fourth Alan Pell (13) on 35. Phil Armstrong was nearest the pin on the 11th and Rob Gill won the club award. In the Ladies Stableford Sharon Grogan with 45 points won from Marg Bailey 44 and Vicki Clements 42.

Grants available for regional all abilities participation

EARLIER in the month the Victorian Government announced that applications are open for a second round of the *Regional All Abilities Participation Grants*.

Grants of up to \$25,000 are available in three categories: Equipment and Travel, Inclusion Workforce, and Programs and Disability-led Initiatives.

The grants can be used to purchase specialised or modified equipment and uniforms, such as sports wheelchairs, sensory balls, throwing frames, accessible starting systems, modified bats and racquets and other adaptive technologies enabling safe and inclusive participation.

For clubs that already have the right equipment and uniforms, funding can be used to subsidise wages or salaries towards creating a skilled workforce to help boost participation, such as disability sports coaches, support workers

or volunteers who are keen to broaden their skillset.

The funding can also be used to cover travel to competitions and festivals, and for clubs to create their own all-abilities sports programs.

Organisations that support community participation in sport and active recreation such as local clubs, state sporting associations, disability or self-advocacy groups, and health or disability providers are encouraged to apply.

Increasing opportunities for more Victorians to participate in sport and active recreation is a key objective of the state government's *Active Victoria 2022-2026*, a strategic framework for sport and active recreation in Victoria.

For more information and to apply visit sport.vic.gov.au/funding

The Chronicle Sport

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Grant to support newcomers at Yea Bowls Club

by Viv Cavanagh

THE Yea Bowls Club was fortunate to receive a 2024-25 Volunteer Grant of \$2000 from Helen Haines, Independent Federal Member for Indi.

This money was used to provide the 'Rookie Rollers' program. This program is initiated by Bowls Australia to encourage school-age children to learn and participate in the game of bowls. It also includes an element to cater for disabled and elderly people.

A 'Rookie Roller Kit' was purchased with part of the money. This kit contains 32 light-weight rubber bowls with a bias similar to a lawn bowl. It also includes jacks, cones, mats and additional items required for playing lawn bowls.

These rubber bowls are small enough for primary age school children to participate

in the game of lawn bowls, giving them the opportunity to gain skills at an early age.

Ideally, the program is played on a bowl's club green but can be used on any flat surface, including carpet, concrete and wooden floors.

The grant also included the costs for a member of the Yea Bowls Club to do online training and attend a training session at a lawn bowls venue where they will learn how to utilise the program to its fullest, under the guidance of a qualified instructor.

Once this member is familiar with the program, they will then teach other members how to deliver the program to local primary age school children.

The Yea Bowls Club is very grateful to Robin Muller for applying for the grant and hope that the outcome will produce a younger generation of people enjoying the game of lawn bowls into the future.



The 'Rookie Roller Kit' in action. -S



Doug from Yea Bowls Club making the presentation of the trophy to the Yarra Glen Bowls Club last week for the annual Yea-Yarra Glen Bowls Club Tournament. Unfortunately the photo was missing from last week's edition of the Chronicle. -S



The 'Rookie Roller Kit' purchased by Yea Bowls Club. -S