

The Yea Chronicle

PO Box 5, Alexandra Vic. 3714

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

Ph: (03) 5772 1002; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Your community newspaper since 1885 Wednesday, May 27, 2026 \$2.50 inc. GST

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Department steps in over Yea hospital board selection

CONCERNS have been raised about the selection process for the Yea and District Memorial Hospital (YDMH) board appointments in the new round.

The board has four available places, and three retiring members due to the amount of time they have spent on the board.

The standard process for selecting board members is for the government to advertise that positions are available, and people then apply or may be recommended by the department. The panel will then conduct interviews and make selections.

It's understood that for the YDMH board selection in this round, there has been a change, and the process will be re-run, with the selected candidates from the initial round de-selected.

In the re-run, there will also be a new selection committee, comprising one person from the YDMH board and two people from the Victorian Department of Health. Two more people have also been added to the list of candidates by the department. Compounding the challenge, the new board is meant to have been appointed by the start of the new financial year.

A person with knowledge of the situation said that there may be little local representation on the new board.

The hospital has been very innovative in recent years, implementing a variety of actions to support the health of the community. Some of these are even being looked at internationally. They have also been maintaining a healthy financial position.

It's understood that the local applicants who were initially selected for board positions were very well qualified, with backgrounds in areas including health, business and enterprise management.

Concerns have also been raised that the new board may set the stage for a merger with a larger health entity, such as the one being proposed between Alexandra District Health and Eastern Health, currently being decided on by the Health Minister.

A person with knowledge of the situation said, "I think there's always opportunity to either amalgamate or cooperate or do lots more things together... There are huge pluses in trying to do more locally. But I still think it's very important to maintain a fair degree of local input to the decision-making process."

Although the new selection process is getting underway, applications for board roles at the hospital have now closed.

The person added, "I think as a community, we've got to fight back to see what we can do. That's my belief."

When contacted with questions, a Department of Health spokesperson said, "As part of the annual board recruitment round there is an active recruitment process underway for Yea and District Memorial Hospital. This process has not concluded."

They also provided the following information. Board recruitment and appointments are led by the Department of Health in accordance with the *Health Services Act 1988*, and guided by the *Appointment and Remuneration Guidelines* and the *Diversity on Victorian Government Boards Guidelines*. The Boards Ministerial Advisory Committee provide independent advice to the Minister for Health on proposed board appointments to public health service to ensure all boards are highly skilled, independent and objective. The Department of Health works closely with boards to ensure appointments reflect the right mix of skills, experience and diversity to support strong governance. Advice is then made to the Minister for Health to make an appointment in line with the Act.

Yea Fountain Restoration Appeal

YEA won the *Herald Sun* 'C Section' Ideal Town competition in late 1927. The Yea Shire Council was presented with a cheque for 200 pounds. They decided to use it to erect a fountain in the town's botanic gardens, a lovely attraction in Yea's main street and

something which the whole community could enjoy. It was duly erected in 1928.

Sadly in 2026, the Yea Ideal Town Fountain is a very sad and sorry sight.

Yea Garden Club member Jan O'Neill noticed that the Yea Fountain

will turn 100 in 2028 and Yea Garden Club believe it would be a great community project to see the fountain restored to its former glory in time for the 2028 centenary.

Garden Club members are starting a public appeal to raise the funds to restore the fountain with a \$5000 donation. All proceeds from the club's Mother Day Bouquet stall have also been donated to this appeal, a total of \$1566, plus the first public donation of \$500 from a member for the club.

A bank account has been opened at the Yea Community Bendigo Bank as the 'Yea Fountain Restoration Appeal' and the members hope the community will enthusiastically get behind the appeal to restore what should be the 'jewel' in the main street. Club members also felt a highly respected and prominent community member should be appointed as a signatory to this account and as a public overseer to maintain total community trust and propriety for the public appeal. Gary Pollard has accepted this role on behalf of the community.

The Garden Club is working with council and seeking quotations from Heritage Fountain Restoration firms for firm costings. The 'tulip style' finial or fountain head has been missing from the fountain for many years, this will be replaced as well as other repairs.

Rusted pipes are causing the discolourisation and are possibly partially blocked causing the 'dribble' and running gear including pump may need to be replaced.

Experts have said the fountain itself is in reasonably good repair but to bore out the piping the fountain will need to be taken apart. A special 'coating' will be applied to the fountain after all the works are complete to assist in preservation.

At this stage Yea Garden Club has a guesstimate of between \$50,000 to \$70,000 for full restoration. A full itemized quote will be given after an on-site inspection and the public will be informed as soon as they have the final figures. As the Murrindindi Shire Council maintains the Triangle gardens and fountain, all planning and works will be completed under council approval and supervision.

There will be more details next week on how Yea won the Ideal Town competition. The community will be kept fully informed on the appeal totals and full costings of the proposed restoration. The banking account details will be also announced next week.



An appeal is underway to restore the Yea Ideal Town Fountain. -S



Letters to the Editor

Our farming zone

IT should be simple. The primary use of our quality agricultural land in the Murrindindi Shire is farming. It's the backbone of the shire's economy, employment and rural identity. The Victorian Planning Scheme

is clear that subordinate uses including dwellings require permits (on properties less than 40 hectares). While many landowners may find the planning process frustrating, its purpose is important. It's to prevent land use conflicts and protect productive farmland for future generations.

Too often, people purchase rural land believing they can do as they please. Some proceed with unapproved uses on the assumption that 'it is easier to ask for forgiveness later'.

However, once a landowner's actions begin to interfere with neighbouring farming operations or undermine the intent of the planning scheme, simple forgiveness is no longer enough.

Then there are the quieter forms of non-compliance, such as sheds converted into

accommodation without approval, often introduced gradually and with little scrutiny. Some may see this as harmless. But problems arise when those occupying sheds in the Farming Zone treat their land like their castle with no respect for realities of legitimate farming operations nearby and the healthy acres on the other side of the fence.

On the other side of the coin, you have the real farmer living from the land looking forward to a peaceful weekend after a long working week, to find his or her amenity disturbed by the noise of recreational motor bikes or a private shooting range or overseas hunters chasing wombats across paddocks.

This raises an important question: what is the role of council?

Council has the duty and responsibility to uphold the *Victorian Planning Scheme* and protect agricultural land from incremental encroachment by recreational or incompatible uses.

Who gets the stamp of approval? Does council fulfill its duty by prioritising and protecting legitimate agricultural activity in the Farming Zone, or allow ongoing non-compliance and gradual erosion of the zone's primary purpose?

Name and address supplied but withheld by request. The author is 'just a farmer'

Carbon emissions

WITH respect to Ken Collier's data and good intentions expressed in the May 13 edition of the paper, I have a different point of view. Very roughly, Australia's contribution to global CO2 emissions is four times the global per capita average.

I believe that it is vital that Australia leads by example by heading towards 100 per cent renewables. We can be South Pacific renewable industry leaders and help our neighbours with expertise and hopefully equipment sales.

The total projected land use for renewables in Victoria is less than one percent. Land used for solar farms and turbines can also generally be used for grazing animals. I think it is likely that in the future, the US and other countries that do not participate in renewable energy developments will become technologically outdated by countries that are developing industries based on green energy.

Other reasons for developing towards 100 per cent renewables are both short term and long term. We have a younger generation that is searching for optimism in an increasingly difficult world. The abandonment of environmental regulations by the Trump regime is a shattering blow and terrible example for those of us who look towards a clean and healthy planet earth. Australia's renewable transition is a cause for optimism by many.

Thinking generations ahead, Australia's vast coal reserves may be more profitably left in the ground for now. Wood for building is becoming increasingly expensive and massive deforestation in other countries is an addition to global warming. Coal consists mostly of carbon, along with smaller amounts of hydrogen, sulfur, oxygen and nitrogen. Future developments will make coal valuable as a source for materials like green concrete, bricks, carbon fiber and no doubt, commodities that are yet to be invented.

Andrew Bottomley, Alexandra

Solar panels

WHAT you are not told when installing hot water solar panels on your roof is that when they stop working they leach chemicals onto your roof causing rusting and holes and leaks. For an 80 year old who does not venture up ladders onto the roof this came as a huge shock.

Val lethbridge, Alexandra

Alexandra District Health
5772 0900

Yea & District Memorial Hospital
5736 0400

In an emergency dial 000

Standard The Yea Chronicle

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ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS

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Independently owned and operated with no association with any other media outlet in the Murrindindi Shire.

THUMBS UP THUMBS DOWN

THUMBS UP: To Yarck. The hall committee, the volunteers, the donors, those who always have a nice word or a hug. Strong and supportive in tough times. Such a caring and helpful community to be part of.

THUMBS UP: To whoever is painting the roads pink to highlight potholes and problems.

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

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

COMMUNITY DIARY

Local Radio Frequency

UGFM 88.9 Yea / Highlands
UGFM 98.9 Flowerdale / Hazeldene
UGFM 94.5 Kinglake Ranges

WEEKLY

Thu Town Club, RSL Hall, 6-8pm. Ph 5797 2179
Sun AA Anglican Church, Alexandra 7pm PH 0402 428 086
Sun Alanon Recovery, start 5.30pm. Ph Sheila 0402 428 086

MONTHLY

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 Sat Alex Repair Cafe 1-3pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
2nd Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
2nd Thu Yea Garden Club Yea RSL Hall 1.30pm Ph 0439 870 315
4th Wed Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
4th Thu Yea CWA Yea RSL Hall, 1.30pm Ph 0400 424 888
Last Fri Yea-Kinglake RSL, 11.30am RSL Hall, Ph 0409 819 040

ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS

For a \$5 annual fee for one line, your club or organisation's regular meeting dates will be listed each week. Not only is this a reminder to your regular members but also a good source of what groups are available in the community, when they meet and a contact phone number.

RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT

STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	7.00AM Mon	1.08	steady	below flood level
Rubicon River at Rubicon	7.00AM Mon	0.48	steady	
Acheron River at Taggerty	7.00AM Mon	0.58	steady	below flood level
Home Creek at Yarck	10.30PM Sun	0.18	steady	
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	7.27AM Mon	0.50	steady	below flood level
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	8.00AM Mon	0.25	steady	
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	8.00AM Mon	0.63	steady	
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	8.00AM Mon	3.25	steady	
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	8.00AM Mon	0.42	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Trawool	8.00AM Mon	0.78	steady	below flood level
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	8.00AM Mon	0.33	steady	below flood level
Goulburn River at Seymour	8.00AM Mon	1.14	steady	below flood level
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	8.00AM Mon	0.79	steady	

***ISSUED AT 7.00 AM AEDT MONDAY 25 MAY 2026**

ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS

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

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

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

Like us on Facebook

Standard The Yea Chronicle

Weekly Weather
May 27 - June 2, 2026

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra Yea

DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	6	17	Wednesday	10	17
Thursday	10	16	Thursday	11	16
Friday	8	16	Friday	9	15
Saturday	7	14	Saturday	7	14
Sunday	6	12	Sunday	6	13
Monday	7	12	Monday	7	12
Tuesday	7	12	Tuesday	7	13

Standard The Yea Chronicle

DISTRICT RAINFALL

Alexandra	14mm
Buxton	7mm
Eildon (AWS)	9mm
Flowerdale	49mm
Jamieson	20mm
Kinglake	37mm
Lake Eildon	10mm
Mansfield	6/9mm
Taggerty	25mm
Yarck	22mm
Yea	27mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

LAKE EILDON

Height above sea level this week	269.44m
Capacity as at 9am Monday	40.5%
Metres below full supply	19.45m
Daily inflow	800ML
Release	800ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change)	67%

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

Council calls for recovery funding reform with new bushfire impact video

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has released a video highlighting the scale of devastation from the January 2026 bushfires, reinforcing its call for a more equitable and impact-based disaster recovery funding model that better reflects the needs of affected communities.

The video supports council's submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the 2026 Summer Fires and provides a clear account of the ongoing impacts on residents, primary producers, local businesses and the visitor economy.

Murrindindi was the hardest-hit municipality, with almost one-third of the shire burnt. More than 200 homes and 520 outbuildings were destroyed across 22 localities, and around 450 kilometres of council roads and dozens of bridges were damaged.

Data shows Murrindindi suffered close to half of the state's structural losses in the January 2026 fires. Despite that, council has received only around eight per cent of government funding which is intended to assist local councils with recovery.

In reality, that means that neighbouring councils who lost about five per cent or less of the number of homes that Murrindindi lost, receive the same funding. Councils who had a handful of roads damaged and trees burnt receive the same funding that Murrindindi did with over 450km of roads impacted.

Murrindindi Shire Mayor Councillor Damien Gallagher said it is clear that the

current funding model does not work and this video highlights the disconnect between impact and resourcing on the ground.

"Frontline in the disaster, back of the queue in recovery; that has been the experience for Murrindindi," Cr Gallagher said.

Cr Gallagher said many residents were still navigating insurance, trauma, uncertainty and the complex path to rebuilding, in a community that has now faced major disasters in 2009, 2022, 2023, 2024 and again in 2026.

Council continues to work alongside residents and partner agencies to support recovery, with a focus on practical measures to help people rebuild faster and safely.

These include additional planning and building capacity, waived planning and building fees, support navigating planning requirements and overlays, wastewater system inspections, and access to specialist planning advice.

"The video shows why communities like ours are calling for a more proportionate and practical approach to recovery support," he said.

Council's submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the 2026 Fires includes 15 recommendations to improve disaster preparedness, response and long-term recovery.

A key issue is the use of uniform funding allocations across councils, which Murrindindi argues does not adequately

reflect the scale, geography and complexity of impacts between regions.

Cr Gallagher said this approach has had real consequences for recovery progress in rural communities.

"Equal funding did not result in equal outcomes. Where impacts are widespread and communities are dispersed, recovery takes longer and needs more sustained support," Cr Gallagher said.

Council is advocating for funding models that are based on verified impact, recognise regional differences, and support recovery over the longer term, not just the immediate response phase.

Council's advocacy priorities identify more than \$100 million in recovery and rebuilding needs, including support for residents, primary producers, local businesses, tourism and damaged community infrastructure.

Cr Gallagher said that the scale of recovery now demands partnership beyond the local level.

"We are inviting government, industry and philanthropy to partner with us, not just to recover, but to build a stronger, more resilient future, because recovery doesn't happen alone, it happens together," Cr Gallagher said.

The video also captures the scale of agricultural and economic loss, including 7796 livestock lost, 4861 kilometres of fencing destroyed, damage to orchards and crops, and a \$3.47 million drop in spending in just 24

days as visitor numbers fell sharply across towns including Yea, Yarck, Marysville, Alexandra and Eildon.

Cr Gallagher said the focus of the Inquiry should now be on delivering practical, evidence-based reform.

"This is an opportunity to make sure recovery systems better reflect what communities actually experience," he said.

"The video makes clear that communities bearing the greatest impact cannot be left to recover with inadequate support, and that funding reform is urgently needed.

The video can be found at tinyurl.com/yeynj998

Alexandra Newspapers acquired by North East Media

ALEXANDRA Newspapers, a leading provider of news services in the Murrindindi Shire, would like to announce that its mastheads have been acquired by North East Media (NEM) effective July 1, 2026.

The transaction marks a significant milestone in the company's history and positions the business for continued growth under new ownership.

The *Alexandra Standard* masthead was founded in 1868 and the *Yea Chronicle* in 1885. Through these newspapers, Alexandra Newspapers has built a strong reputation as a trusted and reliable news source for the Murrindindi Shire. Our print media service prides itself on trust, honesty and integrity.

We deliver every week over the year for the benefit of the community (Christmas holidays excluded). This is no mean feat.

The sale will officially go through with the new financial year so from July 1, North East Media will take control of the business and assets.

Customers can expect a seamless transition, with all existing services continuing uninterrupted.

NEM CEO Edward Higgins said the additional mastheads come with strong historic connections and award winning coverage of their towns and regional communities.

"They fit well with our regional papers at Mansfield and Euroa and will be supported by our Wangaratta based print and publishing technologies," he said

We want to thank all our customers, advertisers, and staff current and former, that have made the newspaper great. This decision was the right one and we have confidence that North East Media group is a very competent operator to take the paper into the future.

Why did the temporary accommodation take so long?

THE Victorian Government is offering temporary accommodation to support uninsured and underinsured households by providing them with a temporary place to stay while their homes are repaired or rebuilt.

Residents from areas impacted by the January bushfires, including those in Murrindindi Shire, can apply for temporary accommodation if they are unable to live in their home due to the bushfires. Temporary accommodation is allocated based on community need, not local government area.

A Department of Families, Fairness and Housing spokesperson said, "We are supporting communities as they navigate their journey from disaster to recovery. More than \$420 million in recovery assistance has been made available to communities affected by the January 2026 bushfires, including communities in Murrindindi Shire."

Member for Northern Victoria Wendy Lovell has spoken out against the state government however, claiming there is

a delay in providing housing support for bushfire-affected people.

Ms Lovell spoke in parliament last week to demand that the Minister for Natural Disaster Recovery take immediate action to provide proper housing support to those affected by the fires.

She noted that after the Black Saturday fires and the October 2022 floods there was a rapid and concerted effort to ensure that people in immediate need were given housing.

"It is vital that after a disaster housing is provided that allows families to remain present and connected in their communities as they recover, and enables children to stay in their local schools," Ms Lovell said.

Almost 500 homes were destroyed or damaged across the state in this summer's fires.

Over the past few weeks Ms Lovell has been extremely disappointed to hear from residents in the Longwood and Harcourt fire zones that the government has failed

to provide an adequate housing response for people who lost their homes.

Many are still living in caravans without adequate heating as cold winter weather arrives, and there are children who have not yet returned to their local school. Others who are still relying on the hospitality of family or friends continue to seek alternative long-term accommodation while attempting to rebuild their homes and lives.

"The Allan Labor Government has let these communities down, and taken far too long to provide adequate housing support to those who lost their homes in the fires. I am pleased to hear that the government has finally committed to providing 100 modular homes, but this is clearly not enough and has arrived far too late as the cold winter weather has already set in," Ms Lovell said.

People affected by the January fires in the Murrindindi Shire are encouraged to seek support through the Emergency Recovery Support Program by calling 1800 560 760.

Grant funding for three new council road safety projects

MORE safety upgrades will soon roll out on local roads and streets across Victoria, with another 100 projects announced under the Safe Local Roads and Streets Program. A further \$28.7 million will be invested in the program, with \$17.2 million directed to regional Victoria.

The funding will help councils deliver projects including pedestrian crossings, intersection upgrades and traffic calming measures.

More than 430 projects have now been approved across Victoria, with all 79 councils participating in the program.

Murrindindi Shire Council has successfully secured grant funding for three new road safety projects under the program's supplementary round.

These projects build on council's ongoing commitment to improve safety outcomes across the municipality, following the adoption of the *Murrindindi Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan 2025-2030*. Keeping community and visitors safe remains a key priority for council's advocacy and grant program.

The successful projects stretch across Eildon, Alexandra and Caveat.

In Eildon, there will be speed limit reductions and improved signage and line marking on the Eildon-Jamieson Road. These works respond to a history of serious accidents on this road corridor and are designed to improve driver awareness and reduce risk.

In Alexandra, installation of a raised priority pedestrian crossing, commonly known as a wombat crossing, on Webster Street, will replace the existing school crossing to improve pedestrian safety in this area.

And in Caveat, speed limit reductions will be implemented on Highlands Road and Caveat-Dropmore Road, complementing and extending broader safety improvements already underway on Highlands Road through the initial phase of the program.

Together, the three projects represent just under \$1 million in investment in safer local roads for the Murrindindi community.

These newly announced projects are separate to the Grant Street pedestrian safety improvements previously announced by council. The Webster Street wombat crossing is an additional project focused specifically on improving safety near the existing school crossing.

Council was also successful in securing approximately \$2 million in road safety projects under the first phase of the Safe Local Roads and Streets Program.


The program is funded by the Victorian Government through the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), in partnership with the Transport Accident Commission (TAC), and supports councils to deliver targeted safety upgrades on local roads where they are needed most.

The Safe Local Roads and Streets Program is part of Victoria's Road Safety Strategy, which aims to halve road deaths by 2030 and eliminate road deaths by 2050.

T R A W O O L

TRiVIA

Hosted by
Trawool owner & local lad
Wes Old!




Friday
26th June, 7pm

Think you know your stuff?

BOOK HERE

Put it to the test
at Trawool Trivia!
Free to play & prizes





Learn a lesson from 'Waltzing Matilda': Don't go shoving anything into a tucker bag

WITH recent discussions around the illegal wildlife trade, it seems timely to remind people that stealing animals from our bush is a crime.

Under the *Wildlife Act 1975*, it is an offence to take native animals from the wild or to trade wildlife without the appropriate licence, permit or authority.

The maximum penalty for illegally taking protected wildlife is \$10,175 and/or six months imprisonment, with an additional penalty of more than \$1018 per animal.

There is a high demand in Australia and internationally for native species as pets.

Wildlife that is illegally trafficked for profit is often transported without adequate air, food or water, resulting in significant animal cruelty.

The Conservation Regulator partners with Crime Stoppers Victoria to give the community a safe and anonymous way to report suspected wildlife crime.

Manager of Wildlife Crime and Intelligence, Steph Andreatta, said people should remain alert for people illegally stealing wildlife.

"The community can help protect wildlife by being alert to suspicious activity in forests, parks, and reserves, such as people carrying nets, buckets or egg cartons," Ms Andreatta said.

These items may be a sign of wildlife, or wildlife eggs, being taken from the wild."

Every Victorian can play a role in stopping wildlife crime by reporting what they know to Crime Stoppers Victoria on 1800 333 000 or online at crimestoppersvic.com.au

Out & About

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

Congratulations to all the Winton ticket giveaway winners. We hope you have a great time. Thank you to everyone who entered. The winners were: Lynette Bennett (Alexandra)

Iain McPherson (Glenburn); Ron Moroney (Eildon); Stewart Potter (Marysville); James Stewart (Alexandra); Sandra Whitning (Chirside Park); Gusty Gale (Alexandra); Laurence Franklin (Alexandra); Lyn O'Kane (Eildon); Kelly Peterson (Alexandra).

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27

Yea Water Tigers Amateur Swimming Club AGM will be held at Yea Community House

from 6-7pm. General meeting will follow. Enquiries to yeawatertigerscommittee@gmail.com. New members welcome.

SUNDAY, MAY 31

Clearing sale Maroondah Highway Yarck. Farm machinery, farm sundries, general tools and hardware, cattle showing gear and more. Contact Embling Rural for more details 0418 266 038.

Whanregarwen Fire Brigade will hold its AGM at 9am at the fire station. All welcome.

Eildon Bowling Club AGM will be held at 11am at the bowling club.

SUNDAY, JUNE 7

2026 Alexandra Truck Ute and Rod Show. Trucks, rods, music, amusements, food and much more.

TUESDAY, JUNE 9

Eildon/Alexandra Mens Shed AGM will be held at 1pm at McKenzie Street, Alexandra.

SUNDAY, JUNE 21

Don't miss the new musical by Steve Paix. *Mr Pres!!!! The Fake Musical*. 2pm at The Memo, Healesville. yarraranges.vic.gov.au/culturetracks or phone 1300 368 333.



Yea Primary School students walk to school

ON Friday, May 15, students from Yea Primary School took part in National Walk Safely to School Day. Students wore their house colours for the occasion. The students met at the rotunda behind the Yea Pool and walked together to the school. The aims of the day were to help students to build healthy habits, increase fitness and wellbeing, develop road safety awareness, and to enjoy time with friends and community.

When the students arrived at school, they were welcomed by the House Captains and received a sticker.

In the afternoon, the students participated in the annual House Sports Cross Country. During the event, students demonstrated determination and resilience, house spirit and encouragement, and pride in giving their best effort.



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 leaders come together to shape the future of events in Murrindindi

IDEAS, collaboration and community spirit were front and centre at the 2026 Murrindindi Events Forum, as event organisers and volunteers from across the shire gathered in Strath Creek on Wednesday, May 13, to share practical ways to build stronger, more sustainable local events.

Hosted at the Strath Creek Public Hall by the Strath Creek Progress Association, with

support from Murrindindi Shire Council, the forum focused on helping local events thrive for the long term through environmental responsibility, volunteer attraction and community resilience.

More than 30 attendees took part in discussions and presentations covering practical sustainability initiatives, volunteer retention strategies and opportunities

for greater collaboration between event organisers across the region.

The forum created space for community groups to exchange ideas, learn from shared experiences and strengthen connections with others working to deliver local events through Murrindindi Shire.

This event is part of council's Community Capacity Building Program, supported

through funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action Community Development Fund.

While the Community Capacity Building Program comes to an end in June, council will continue working with local communities and event organisers to support vibrant and sustainable events across the shire.

For more information about this event, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/eventsforum26

President of the Strath Creek Progress Association, Lisa Mack said of the event, "Strath Creek Progress Association were beyond grateful to Murrindindi Shire Council for bringing local communities together and providing an informative forum. Everyone attending found it worthwhile, insightful and enjoyed connecting with others from neighbouring communities."

Council's Economic Development, Local Jobs and Skills Portfolio Councillor, Sandice McAulay said the forum highlighted the importance of events for our local community and economic growth.

"Events play a vital role in strengthening our local economy, creating jobs and building the skills and capacity of our communities. It was inspiring to see so many passionate organisers and volunteers come together to share ideas and support one another, helping ensure events across Murrindindi continue to grow and thrive into the future," Cr McAulay said.

"Thank you to everyone that supported this event, from the hosts at the Strath Creek Progress Association to all attendees that took part."



Council's Community Capacity Building Officer, Bill Bate presenting to attendees at Strath Creek Public Hall. -S

Remote Sensing Bushfire Detection project

THE Remote Sensing Bushfire Detection testing is underway at some of the state's fire towers, with the aim of detecting fires quickly to enable fast action.

FFMVic Chief Fire Officer Chris Hardman AFSM explained, "Early detection of bushfires is critical. It provides the best opportunity to suppress bushfires while they are still small and before they impact communities, the environment and assets such as drinking water and energy infrastructure.

"The Remote Sensing Bushfire Detection project is complementing the work of FFMVic's specially trained Fire Lookout Observers, who are located at 64 lookouts across Victoria. The project is currently analysing the data from phase three trials.

"FFMVic is committed to exploring the best combination of approaches to speed up fire detection and response times. The latest satellite and drone scanning cameras is game-changing technology, with the heat maps they generate able to be in the hands of fire operations within 20 minutes."

Remote sensing bushfire detection technology has been trialled over several fire seasons as another way to help keep Victorians safe from bushfire.

The trial is being conducted over three phases and is exploring how remote sensing technologies and artificial intelligence can be used to help detect bushfires early.

This includes assessing the reliability and timeliness of smoke-detecting AI software. The cameras ran in parallel with FFMVic's specially trained Fire Lookout Observers this fire season, and have helped fire operations teams detect smoke.

Over the three phases of the trial, cameras have been installed in DEECA lookouts located at Mt Gordon near Marysville and Mount Wombat which partially overlooks the northern part of Murrindindi Shire, as well as Mount Tarrengower, Mount McLeod, Mount Arapiles, Stawell, Mount Mittamatite, Mount Ida, Peters Hill and Crowes Lookout, with two mobile camera units deployed to Beecher Hill and Mount Gar. Phase three trials also included installing cameras in third party infrastructure located at Mount Pendergast and Mount Marimingo.

The trial is progressing as planned with the available and emerging data from the trial to be used to inform a future remote fire detection strategy. Recommendations are expected in the 2026-27 financial year.

Local arts project on display

LOCAL musician, Steve Paix premieres his new comedy, *Mr. Pres!!!! The Fake Musical* at 2pm on Sunday, June 21 at Memo Healesville.

With a cast of characters that includes billionaires, a model turned First Lady, and a ghost with parenting issues, the show dishes up song after song of tongue-in-cheek fun.

In the words of Mr. Pres, "Nobody has ever seen anything like it before!"

Steve is joined on stage by tenor Julian Dunham and jazz chanteuse Tamara Kuldin. "They are fantastic singers," Steve said. "It's going to be a great show."

For tickets call 1300 368 333.



Cast members Steve Paix, Julian Dunham and Tamara Kuldin. -S

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Student of the Week

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Prices strong in Yea weaner sale



THE Nutrien Weaner Sale took place last Friday at the Yea Saleyards. 2934 head of cattle were yarded, averaging 522 cents per kilogram (c/kg).

In the top steer pen, highest weight was 372.5 kilograms and it sold for \$2000 per head, making for 537c/kg.

The top weight for heifers was 400.8 kilograms that sold for \$1830 per head, making for 457c/kg.

The next cattle sale at Yea will be this Friday, with the Combined Agents Feeder and Weaner Sale.

Nutrien were the vendors for last Friday's weaner sale in Yea. -BD



Prices were steady with the lower weight of the weaners. -BD



There was a large crowd for the weaner sale. -BD

YEA SALEYARDS		STOCK REPORT 22 MAY 2026	
Nutrien Weaner Sale	Total Yarding	Steers	Heifers
Number of head	2,934		
Average \$ per head	\$1,441		
Average weight per head	276.3 kg		
Top price per head		\$2,000	\$1,830
Top weight		372.5 kg	400.8 kg
Turnover	\$4.2 million		



Watching the sale with interest. -BD

Haines releases plan to strengthen bushfire recovery

MEMBER for Indi, Dr Helen Haines, has met with the Minister for Emergency Management to present her plan to strengthen bushfire recovery and resilience.

The plan draws directly from the Longwood and Upper Murray bushfires, which destroyed around 300 homes and burned more than 250,000 hectares in Indi.

Dr Haines said it focuses on improving coordination between local and state governments and the Commonwealth, ensuring mental health support is delivered flexibly through local mental health services, primary care providers and outreach services, building more resilient telecommunications including mandatory power back-up for mobile towers and disaster roaming, and ensuring recovery funding systems are streamlined and improved.

“As communities across Indi continue to recover, it’s clear we need a disaster response and recovery system that works better to ensure communities are not left waiting, confused or overlooked once the immediate fire event is over,” Dr Haines said.

Dr Haines has formally presented her plan to Minister for Emergency Management, Kristy McBain, after consultation with fire-affected residents, local governments, emergency services, health providers and community organisations.

“I’ve taken what I’ve heard directly from fire-affected communities to the Federal Government and developed a practical plan to improve how we prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.

“In the immediate aftermath of the fires, I brought the Minister to the fire ground to see the scale of devastation firsthand and hear directly from those impacted.”

Dr Haines said disasters are becoming more frequent and severe, and governments must stop treating recovery with short-term assistance.

“Recovery doesn’t end when the flames are out. For many communities, it takes years, and too often people are forced to navigate fragmented systems while dealing with trauma, financial stress and uncertainty,” Dr Haines said.

“We need a recovery framework that is long-term, locally driven and designed around our realities.

“Our communities have shown extraordinary resilience and generosity in the face of disaster.

“They deserve governments that match that effort with systems that are faster, fairer and built for the long haul.”

Dr Haines also made a submission to the Victorian Inquiry into the Summer Bushfires in April.

Diphtheria outbreaks a reminder to stay up to date with vaccination

THE Australian Medical Association is urging Australians to check that they and their families are up to date with their vaccinations, as diphtheria spreads to more states.

There have been 223 diphtheria notifications in 2026 at May 19, already exceeding any full calendar year recorded since national reporting began, with public health authorities warning of increasing notifications since late 2025. Fortunately, at this stage, there have been no appearances of the disease in Murrindindi Shire according to the Victorian Department of Health’s Notifiable Diseases summary report.

Diphtheria is a serious bacterial infection that can affect the nose, throat, airways or

skin. In severe cases, respiratory diphtheria can obstruct breathing, and the toxin can cause life-threatening complications, including heart and nerve damage.

The Australian Immunisation Handbook recommends routine vaccination as a primary course for infants and routine boosters for adolescents and adults in certain circumstances, because vaccination remains the strongest protection against this preventable disease. The primary course for infants is one dose at two, four and six months old.

Australian Medical Association President Dr Danielle McMullen said the rise in diphtheria cases was a serious reminder of the importance of vaccines.

“Immunisation is one of the greatest achievements in modern medicine, but when vaccination rates fall, serious diseases, which we had largely eliminated, can make a come back,” Dr McMullen said.

The AMA is encouraging parents, carers and adults to review their vaccination status, including any booster doses they may be due for, and to book an appointment with their GP to discuss the vaccinations recommended for them and their family. Catch-up vaccinations may be available for families with missed or delayed vaccinations.



VACCINATION IS THE BEST PREPARATION

Influenza, COVID-19 and RSV viruses are always changing, and the risk of serious illness goes up if you’re over 65. By vaccinating regularly, you can protect yourself before a new strain goes around.

Speak to your health professional and book your vaccinations today or visit health.gov.au/winter-vaccinations



Australian Government

POLICE REPORT

POLICE have advised that a stolen white Subaru crashed into the wire rope barrier on the Goulburn Valley Highway, near the corner of Abes Lane, in Killingworth at approximately 6.45am on the morning of Tuesday, May 19. No-one was in the vehicle when the police attended. Police are keen to speak to anyone who may have seen the occupants. Please contact the Yea Police if you are able to provide any further information. The collision led to significant delays on highway as the clean up took place.



Organisers Pam Petersen, Carolyn Weeks, Sue Wynn, Judy Gallie and Marcia Turner. -AR



The Alexandra Cub Scouts created a wonderful display of decorated beanies. -AR



Natalie from Faunistry. -AR



Melanie with some of her wonderfully decorated op shop hats. -AR

Many grabbed a baa-gain at the Beanie Festival



The Yea Primary School grades four, five and six display at the Murrindindi Beanie Festival. -AR



In addition to the beanie displays, school students also participated, creating a colourful displays which added to the atmosphere. -AR



The Alexandra Timber Tramway team created a fabulous beanie for their train during the Murrindindi Beanie Festival weekend, bringing a smile to the faces of the children and adults who attended. -AR



The event drew a large crowd. -AR

THE PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE BIT

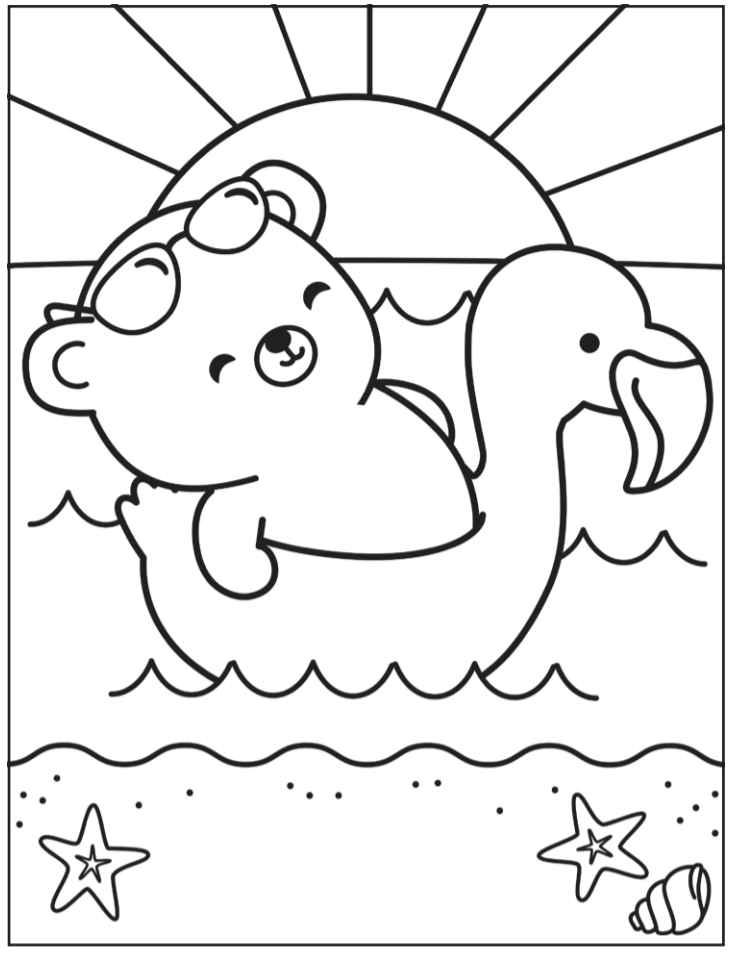
Head for the hills and discover Victoria's regional events. Try your hands (and feet) at various things you've never done before. You could find yourself cider quaffing, tulip sniffing, star gazing, maybe even grape stomping.

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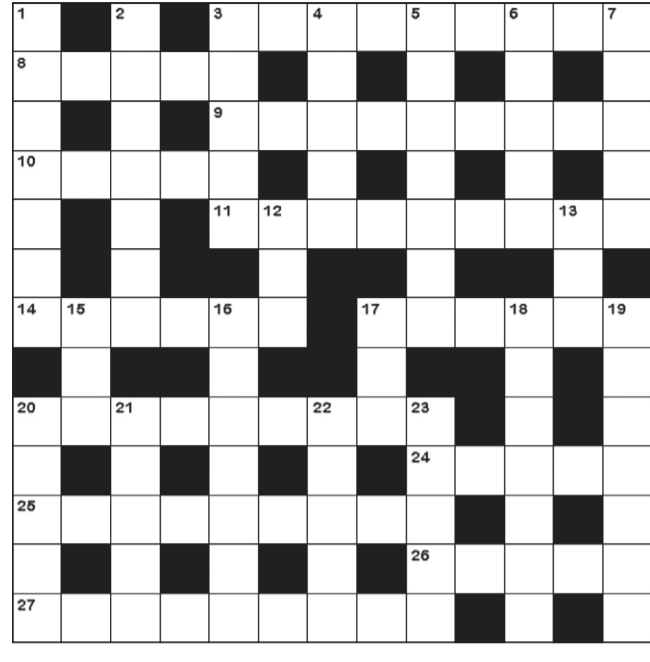
KID'S PUZZLES PUZZLES

Colouring Page



Crossword

- ACROSS**
- Anything that causes damage, harm, or loss.
 - A loop in the end of a rope or cord.
 - Lengthened and drawn out in duration.
 - Skill in doing or making something.
 - Farming, when regarded as a science.
 - Machine to remove material from a riverbed.
 - A written message addressed to a person.
 - Killed by squeezing the throat to suffocate.
 - Competed in a contest of speed.
 - To say or do again or repeatedly.
 - Resembling the colour of growing grass.
 - Dark purple egg-shaped vegetables.



- DOWN**
- Rapped on the door with the knuckles.
 - A novel about an affair of the heart.
 - The degree of richness or intensity of colour.
 - Implements used in the performance of a trade.
 - To set apart or cut off from others.
 - Moved away gradually or hesitantly.

- Drink made with whisky, hot water and sugar.
- The great Australian paddock vehicle.
- The mass of eggs in a female fish's ovary.
- A deep track made by the passage of wheels.
- Marked by refinement in taste and manners.
- Present an intentionally false statement.
- Gives instructions or lessons in a subject.
- Speaking the words from a book out loud.
- A twilled woolen fabric often used for suits.
- Feeling remorse for one's own wrongdoing.
- Gain knowledge through experience or study.
- Sediment settled at the bottom of a liquid.

Word Search - Words starting with "Q"

QUAIL	Z	O	J	Q	K	F	V	J	D	R	B	P	O	R	J
QUAKE	D	L	I	A	U	Q	M	I	G	K	M	M	Z	Q	V
QUARTET	Z	N	M	H	Y	E	U	Q	L	J	B	D	G	U	W
QUEEN	D	G	O	Y	C	Q	E	D	V	N	U	J	W	I	J
QUEENSLAND	O	N	V	I	A	R	C	N	E	Q	P	X	Z	E	G
QUERY	R	E	A	Y	T	Q	U	A	K	E	U	Q	C	T	D
QUESTION	O	E	Q	L	Z	S	I	V	Q	Q	U	O	D	F	U
QUICK	H	T	C	G	S	W	E	U	S	I	V	X	T	I	X
QUID	W	I	N	K	L	N	A	U	Z	B	A	R	D	E	I
QUIET	Q	U	I	C	K	R	E	S	Q	Y	K	R	I	U	Q
QUIRKY	Q	Q	R	K	T	P	L	E	H	S	P	T	H	S	F
QUITE	U	Y	R	E	J	L	B	J	U	P	N	V	H	R	T
QUIZ	E	L	T	L	G	Q	F	H	Z	Q	T	I	A	L	E
QUOTE	R	M	Y	O	R	J	J	C	D	C	M	I	U	K	T
	Y	G	J	D	O	S	Q	H	T	A	H	I	F	G	G

Word Search

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

Fruit & Veg

APPLES	BROCCOLINI	POTATO
AVOCADO	CAULIFLOWER	PUMPKIN
BANANAS	GRAPES	SQUASH
BEANS	ORANGES	ZUCCHINI

Cryptogram

Fruit & Veg

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

21 3 25 4 4 24 3
 18 12 3 16 26 21 26 12
 18 12 8 17 17 4 21 1 1
 4 7 7 7 24 14

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.

7	-		+		10
+		+		+	
4	+		+		8
-		-		+	
	-		+		5
3		-4		12	

Math Square

1	-		+		4
x		x		+	
	÷		x		8
-		+		-	
9	-		+		10
-3		13		1	

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.

Sudoku

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

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

Jokes

Q: When is an apple not an apple?
A: When it's a pineapple

Q: What sound do porcupines make when they kiss?
A: Ouch!

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Entries open for GBCMA 2027 nature calendar

ENTRIES for photographs to feature in the 2027 Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) community calendar are now open. The calendar is known for its stunning collection of local images of flora, fauna and natural landscapes from across the catchment, taken by amateur photographers.

Goulburn Broken CMA project coordinator, Janice Mentiplay-Smith, said the calendar photo competition is a great way for local people to showcase their photographic skills of plants, animals and the environment.

"The competition has been running for 20 years and entering it has become quite a tradition for keen photographers and nature lovers," Ms Mentiplay-Smith said.

"The images in this year's calendar were chosen from approximately 280 entries. Each year we produce and distribute the calendars across the region."

Preference is given to photographs of local plants or animals in their natural state, insects, waterways or other natural features that tell a story about the Goulburn Broken catchment.

"We always receive extremely positive feedback on the quality of the calendar and the fact it contains amazing images of the local environment, taken by local people," Ms Mentiplay-Smith said.

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

Photos must be between two to 10MB in landscape format (not portrait) and submitted as a jpeg file attachment (not as a picture inserted into the text of an email). Include a description of the image in the email subject line (ie. Emu). No USBs. Entries close Friday, August 14.



The 2026 GBCMA calendar cover photo, Emu. -Rebecca Polonski

PUZZLES SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

MATH SQUARES

1	-	2	+	5	4
x		x		+	
6	÷	3	x	4	8
-		+		-	
9	-	7	+	8	10
-3		13		1	

CRYPTOGRAM

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
15 23 4 18 13 19 3 22 25 7 20 11 5 16 24 10 8 12 6 1 9 14 17 21 26 2

MEAT AND THREE VEG FOR SUNDAY DINNER

SUDOKU

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

KIDS - MATH SQUARES

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



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THE two Bruce Watson music workshops, coinciding with the Murrindindi Beanie Festival, attracted a wide variety of stringed and non-stringed instruments.

host venue, Murrindindi Shire Quick Grants and staff, and Ukulele Heaven for organising the event.

Bruce was a perfect tutor, inclusive, very interesting and fun. The organisers would like to thank the Alexandra Library as the

Ukulele Heaven meets on the last Friday of the month at Alexandra Library 5 to 7pm and everyone is welcome. It's completely free. Just turn up.



The Ukulele workshop in the Alexandra Library, where the participants practiced before performing at the Murrindindi Beanie Festival. -S

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MEETINGS

AGM Eildon/Alexandra Mens Shed. Being held on Tuesday 9 June, 2026 at 1pm at Kenzie Street, Alexandra.

DEATH NOTICES

CLIFFORD, Graham Ronald 15/11/1941-19/05/2026 Devoted loving husband of Lettie, devoted father of Greg and Cindy, cherished father in law of Andrea and David, much loved Pa of Mitchell, Brandyn, Owen and Heath. Forever in our hearts, always my grumpy bear.

PETS & LIVESTOCK

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MEETINGS

EILDON BOWLING CLUB Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 31 at 11am at the club, Sixth Street, Eildon.

YEA Water Tigers Amateur Swimming Club AGM. Meeting will be held at Yea Community House. Wednesday, May 27th from 6-7pm. All positions declared vacant, three year cycle. General meeting will follow. Enquiries to the secretary yeawatertigerscommittee@gmail.com New members are always welcome.

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- *Food and Beverage Attendant with housekeeping duties (casual-strong hours availability)
- *Food and Beverage attendant (casual)
- *Housekeeping Attendant (casual)

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Commencement: August 2026 **Apply now.** Please email your resume, cover letter and the position you are applying for to: emma.ring@cathedralgc.com.au

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HEGGIE-Phyllis
 26/07/1924-15/05/2026
 The President, Committee and members of the Yea-Kinglake RSL sub branch regret the passing of our esteemed member, Phyllis, and offer their deepest condolences to the family. RIP Phyllis.

DEATH NOTICES


Bassett, John
 The Rotary Club of Alexandra deeply regrets the passing of Honorary Member John Bassett. He made an outstanding contribution to the local community and to Rotary over many years. John joined or club in 1987 after years as a member of Montrose Rotary. He held the positions of club President in 1995/96, community Service Director twice, Art Show Director for many years and Secretary. He was made a Paul Harris Fellow with Sapphires. We'll greatly miss his friendship and involvement in Rotary. Our condolences to Vera and all of John's family, from President John Allcock and club members.

Fire safety risk from lithium-ion batteries

VICTORIAN fire services are warning of the fire risk of everyday household products after a recent significant incident in Upwey, where a family lost their home in a fire linked to a lithium-ion battery charger.

Firefighters are continuing to respond to around one fire each day caused by rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, he said.

CFA crews were alerted to the structure fire at around 10.57pm on Sunday, April 19.

"These batteries become more of a fire risk when they are overcharged or incompatible chargers are used, when they are overheated or damaged, and when they malfunction or have faults," he said.

On arrival, crews found an elevated home fully involved with fire, with flames reaching well above the roofline. The fire had started in a workshop beneath the property, on a steep section of road, before spreading through the home. Multiple local brigades worked to bring the fire under control at 11.28pm.

"While these types of batteries are in many devices we use every day, the good news is that we can minimise the fire risk by knowing what to look for and following a few steps in choosing and handling lithium-ion battery-powered devices.

A fire investigation the following morning indicated the cause was consistent with an older incompatible charger being used with newer lithium-ion batteries.

"By following these guidelines, we can look to reduce the frequency of these fires which are a significant cause of preventable fires across the state."

Victorian fire services have identified lithium-ion batteries, which are widely used in rechargeable devices such as laptops, mobile phones, e-bikes, e-scooters, power banks, and power tools as an emerging fire safety risk.

To minimise your risks of a fire caused by a rechargeable lithium-ion battery: Purchase products from a reputable supplier and follow the manufacturer's instructions; only charge items in rooms with smoke alarms; charge away from doors and escape routes so you can safely exit a property if your product catches alight; only use chargers and cords that are originally supplied with that device; using chargers with incorrect power delivery (voltage and current) can cause damage to the battery or overheating that can lead to fires; only use batteries that are designed for that device; check that chargers have the Regulatory Compliance Mark, to show that they meet the relevant Australian Standards; avoid charging on soft locations such as couches, beds and carpets; don't use batteries or devices that show signs of swelling or bulging, leaking, overheating, or signs of mechanical damage.

Combined data from CFA and FRV shows firefighters responded to more than 3600 residential fires across Victoria in the 2024-25 Financial Year.

CFA Acting Chief Officer Garry Cook said the Upwey incident was a reminder of how quickly lithium-ion battery fires can escalate.

If your e-product does catch fire: Call Triple Zero (000) immediately; stop using the product if you notice overheating, bulging, leaking or unusual sounds; leave the area and call Triple Zero (000), even if you no longer see flames or smoke; it's not safe to attempt to put the fire out yourself, as batteries involved in fire can release toxic gases and generate multiple explosions; ensure firefighters attend to make the area safe.

"Lithium-ion batteries have become part of everyday life, but many people still underestimate the fire risk," Garry said.

"These fires can start quickly and spread just as fast, which is why it is so important people take simple precautions when charging and storing these devices.

Safe disposal of lithium-ion batteries: Never throw lithium-ion batteries in your regular waste or recycling collection bins; many battery-related fires start in household bins, garbage trucks and waste facilities.


"Always use the charger supplied with the device, or one recommended by the manufacturer. Avoid charging batteries on beds, couches or other soft furnishings, and never leave charging devices blocking a doorway or exit.

"If a battery is overheating, swelling, leaking, making unusual noises or giving off a strong smell, stop using it immediately.

"Make sure you also have working smoke alarms that are interconnected in your home, because early warning can make all the difference."

Victorians can learn more about lithium-ion batteries and how to safely use these products online at cfa.vic.gov.au/batterysafety and frv.vic.gov.au/battery-safety

FRV Deputy Commissioner Community Safety and Operational Training Joshua Fischer said Victorians should be aware of the range of causes that could lead to lithium-ion batteries catching fire.


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The Alexandra Standard and The Yea Chronicle are printed by North East Media, Wangaratta.
 Print Post Approved - PP 100000292.

Victoria's farmers drive nation-leading export success

VICTORIA has secured its position as Australia's top food and fibre exporter for the second consecutive year.

Minister for Agriculture Michaela Settle last week released the *2024-25 Victorian Food and Fibre Export Performance Report*, which shows the state's exports have reached a record \$22.1 billion, increasing Victoria's share of national exports to 28 per cent.

"Behind these results are hardworking farming families and regional communities who continue to adapt and produce world-class products despite tough seasonal conditions," Ms Settle said.

This reflects the hard work of Victoria's farmers and producers, who have delivered a fourth consecutive year of record-breaking export growth despite challenging seasonal conditions.

Exports were up almost \$2 billion on the previous year, with Victoria surpassing its \$20 billion 2030 target for the second year in a row.

Meat remains Victoria's biggest food export at \$8.2 billion, with beef and sheep meat exports lifting the state's national market share from 28 to 30 per cent and cementing the state as Australia's second largest meat exporter.

This was supported by strong results across the grains industry at \$4.6 billion, dairy at \$2.8 billion and a record year for horticulture exports, which reached \$1.9 billion.

Farmers have adapted to a dynamic global market and are producing higher value products.

China still remains Victoria's largest export market, totalling almost \$5 billion in 2024-25.

Victoria's top food and fibre export markets were China, the United States, Japan, Indonesia and New Zealand, with nearly half of export income now coming from markets outside these top five countries, the result of a deliberate trade diversification strategy.

The state government's Economic Growth Statement also identifies Agribusiness as a priority sector and trade as a critical driver for boosting Victoria's economic growth.

Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs Steve Dimopoulos spoke about the government's support for the agriculture sector.

"Victoria is an export powerhouse because we recognise trade as a key driver of economic growth. We're supporting more jobs, stronger wages and higher productivity across the state," Mr Dimopoulos said.

To read the report visit, global.vic.gov.au/victorias-export-report



Cindy McLeish on the Melba Highway at Yarra Glen. -S

McLeish: "Spending differently" doesn't fill potholes

MEMBER for Eildon Cindy McLeish says the Victorian Government's claims of record road funding have been exposed as a sham.

This week in the Victorian Parliament the Roads and Road Safety Minister was forced to defend massive cuts to road repairs as the government is "spending differently."

Ms McLeish said that the latest Victorian Budget shows road resurfacing and rehabilitation works have fallen by 75 per cent in just four years, while road patching has plunged by 87 per cent.

Ms McLeish said motorists were paying more and getting less.

"Victorians are handing over more in taxes, charges and registration fees, yet the Allan Government is fixing fewer roads," she said.

"We are dodging potholes, crumbling road edges and rough surfaces every single day, but the government wants applause for spending money differently.

"This Victorian Government must be measuring road repairs in millimetres instead of kilometres, with the state budget revealing what we already knew, a dramatic collapse maintenance works despite claims of 'record' funding."

Budget papers show regional road patching will be slashed from 556,000 square metres two years ago to just 76,000 square metres.

Ms McLeish said regional motorists were tired of spin. "We don't care how the government describes it. We care whether the pothole gets fixed before it destroys another tyre or suspension," she said.

"How does the government expect to fill 200,000 potholes when its own maintenance targets have fallen off a cliff?"

"Regional roads are deteriorating faster than they are being repaired, and we're paying the price through vehicle damage, safety risks and taking longer to get anywhere."

HIA says housing shortage to get worse

HOUSING Industry Association (HIA) says the Federal Budget will make Australia's housing shortage worse by reducing the supply of new homes at a time when the country is already struggling to house a growing population.

The government's own budget papers admit that changes to negative gearing and capital gains tax will reduce the supply of new housing by around 35,000 homes over the next decade.

HIA Chief Economist Tim Reardon said the budget was attempting to solve a housing shortage by discouraging the investment needed to build more homes.

"Australia's housing challenge is simple. Consider it as if we are trying to fit 11 million households into around 10 million homes," Mr Reardon said.

"The solution to a housing shortage is to build more homes. This budget does the opposite."

From July 1, 2027, negative gearing for residential property will be limited to new builds, while the 50 per cent capital gains tax discount will be replaced with cost base indexation and a 30 per cent minimum tax rate on capital gains.

Treasury estimates the reforms will support around 75,000 additional owner occupiers over the next decade, but at the cost of reducing the supply of new homes.

"The government is stopping 35,000 private homes from being built in order to raise enough revenue to build around 4000 public homes," Mr Reardon said.

"That is a terrible trade-off in the middle of a housing crisis."

Mr Reardon said the reforms misunderstood how housing investment supports new home building.

"Investors are critical to funding new housing supply and commenced around half of all new home builds in the past," he said.

"If investors leave the housing market, fewer projects proceed and fewer homes get built.

"The government assumes investors will simply redirect their money into new homes, but housing investment doesn't work like that.

"If the overall attractiveness of residential investment falls, fewer investors participate overall."

HIA welcomed the budget's additional \$2 billion investment in housing-enabling infrastructure, including water, sewerage and roads, intended to unlock up to 65,000 homes.

"These infrastructure investments are important because the industry desperately needs more shovel-ready land," Mr Reardon said.

"But infrastructure and planning reform take years to deliver new homes. The adverse tax changes hit the market confidence immediately."

Mr Reardon said the tax changes risk worsening rental affordability over time by reducing the supply of future rental housing.

"At a time when vacancy rates remain critically low, reducing the number of investor-funded homes being built will inevitably place upward pressure on rents," he said.

"The government deserves credit for recognising that infrastructure, planning and approvals are barriers to supply.

"But you cannot tax your way out of a housing shortage. The only lasting solution to housing affordability is more homes."

ABS data confirms strong start to 2026 for beef production

NEW data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), analysed by Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA), shows Australia's beef industry has begun 2026 with its strongest start on record, underpinned by high throughput, favourable seasonal conditions in northern regions and increased yardings in parts of New South Wales.

Australia produced 730,077 tonnes of beef in the March quarter, up two per cent on the December 2025 quarter and eight per cent higher year-on-year, marking the largest first quarter production on record.

Cattle slaughter reached 2.3 million head, representing a six per cent lift on the March 2025 quarter, reinforcing the strong supply pipeline following record production levels last year.

MLA Market Information Manager Stephen Bignell said the results highlight the continued momentum across the cattle sector, with regional dynamics playing a key role.

"The latest ABS data confirms a very strong start to 2026 for the Australian beef industry, with production lifting on both the previous quarter and year-ago levels," Mr Bignell said.

"Favourable seasonal conditions across northern Australia are supporting productivity, while dry conditions in northern New South Wales have contributed to higher yardings and turn-off in that region."

Carcase weights also continue to trend upward, reaching 317kg in the March quarter, reflecting improved conditions and high grainfed turnoff.

The national female slaughter rate lifted slightly to 53 per cent, indicating ongoing herd adjustment, but remains below recent peaks.

State-by-state, processing trends were mixed: Queensland slaughter lifted one per cent to 951,000 head; Victoria rose two per cent to 552,900 head; New South Wales eased slightly, down one per cent to 539,000 head; Western Australia dropped eight per cent to 112,200; South Australia eased one per cent to 85,800; and Tasmania lifted five per cent to 61,000.

Meanwhile, the value of cattle transactions reached a record \$6 billion for the quarter, highlighting the continued strength in the sector despite shifting market dynamics.

"Record transaction values demonstrate the resilience and underlying demand for Australian cattle, both domestically and internationally," Mr Bignell said.

"While we are seeing some moderation following the exceptional highs of 2025, the fundamentals of the beef sector remain strong."

Sheep and lamb production ease
Sheep and lamb sectors recorded a pullback in throughput during the March quarter, reflecting a tightening in supply following elevated turn-off in 2025.

National sheep slaughter fell to 2.05 million head, down 23 per cent quarter-on-quarter and 32 per cent year-on-year, while mutton production declined to 51,720 tonnes, a 31 per cent drop compared to the same quarter last year.

Mr Bignell said the decline points to a rebalancing phase across the sheep sector.

"We're seeing a contraction in sheep supply following a period of

high turn-off, particularly through 2025," he said.

"Lower slaughter volumes this quarter reflect reduced availability, with several southern processing regions recording notably softer throughput."

Key processing states recorded sharp declines, with volumes easing across New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia.

Sheep carcass weights also slipped to 25.2kg, down on both the previous quarter and the five-year average, suggesting a higher proportion of lighter stock entering the system.

Lamb production followed a similar trend, with slaughter at 5.8 million head, down 15 per cent year-on-year, and production easing 10 per cent to 150,551 tonnes.

However, lamb carcass weights increased to 25.8kg, up six per cent year-on-year, partially offsetting lower throughput.

"While lamb volumes have eased, improved carcass weights are helping support overall production," Mr Bignell said.

"That lift reflects ongoing gains in productivity, including the continued uptake of improved feeding and finishing systems."

Outlook

Mr Bignell said the March quarter results position the industry strongly for the remainder of 2026.

"We expect production to remain elevated in the near term, supported by herd dynamics and seasonal conditions," he said.

"Australia continues to play a critical role in global red meat supply, and these results reinforce the industry's capacity to meet ongoing domestic and export demand."

SPORT

Alexandra Squash Club: Round five of term two pennant

by Kristelle Leary

Monday competition

Orb Weavers versus Red Backs

LEIGH (fill in) versus Matt: Matt showed his experience and played with confidence and consistency. Leigh had some great shots and is getting better, but Matt claimed the win. 68 to 35.

Jessica versus Sally: A see-sawing contest. Sally jumped to the early lead, but Jessica fought back to be in the lead going into the final game. Sally used her experience to come from behind in the final game and take the match. 61 to 55.

Chris versus Mick: Chris looked very casual as he ground his opponent down for a convincing victory. Mick needed to tighten his shots up to be able to put pressure on his opponent. 83 to 48.

Michael H versus Jim: Lots of lead changes. The battle seemed to be within themselves rather than between each other. It was a very even game that resolved in a draw. 54 to 54.

Trapdoors versus White Tails

Tyler versus Ethan: If Tyler had remembered to call 'let' he may have had a few more points in the end. Ethan had control and his serving was great, helping him to victory. 57 to 35.

Laura versus Liane: A tight contest for the first three games with Liane up by a point, having come from behind. Laura brought it together in the final game to finish on top. 62 to 55.

Rob versus Travis: A great match with the lead changing regularly throughout. Travis playing a strong long game while Rob had many winning drop shots. Travis won by a single point. 58 to 57.

Daniel W versus Andrew: Daniel clawed out an early lead, but Andrew played consistently and took control in the third game when Daniel lost his rhythm. Daniel fell behind to make way for Andrew's victory. 52 to 45.

Wednesday competition

Sand Flies versus Wasps

Ben H versus Beth: Ben held the advantage in the first half giving the impression that he was going to take a straight win. Beth put those assumptions to rest by taking control and winning the last two games. Unfortunately, Beth couldn't win enough points to take the match, and it ended in a draw. 57 to 57.



Ben watches for Mark's return. -S

Jess versus Lucas (fill in): Jess was expecting Daniel, but had Lucas as the surprise last minute fill in. Lucas was in the drivers' seat with full control of the match all the way through. Jess didn't stand a chance on the night. Lucas was victorious. 76 to 35.

Phil versus Michael M: Phil took a strong lead in the first game and kept it easily through the match. Phil could not put a foot

wrong, claiming the match with an excessive lead. 72 to 33.

Hornets versus Mosquitoes

Nicole versus Jordan: Such a close game. Really great to watch. Jordan has the power, but Nicole just kept it steady to win by two-points. 62 to 60.

Kristelle versus Mick: It was close all the way. Kristelle's serves were giving Mick

trouble while his ability to hit the 'nick' kept catching Kristelle off guard. In the final seconds Mick won a point to clinch the match with that single point. 64 to 63.

Ben F versus Mark: It was a family feud with father and son battling for supremacy. Ben was in good form and kept his shots tight. Mark wouldn't go without a fight, but in the end the youth won out. 65 to 45.

KBA seeking senior players for next season

AS Kinglake Basketball Association (KBA) head towards mid-year, the club are searching for seniors to play next season. KBA will be holding a seniors competition on Thursday nights, so if you are interested, please contact them. It doesn't matter if you are an expert who plays regularly, or just someone looking to get back into the game, they would love to have you on board.

As the KBA season progresses, the club are seeing so many fantastic matches. The Mini Ballers are improving their skills every week, and more importantly, their confidence.

Last week's games included:

Under eights, Nuggets seven versus Wizards 18.

Under 10s, Thunder 32 versus Aces 11. Sparks 13 versus Magic 24.

Under 12s, Hornets 34 versus Nets 27. Mavericks 25 versus Cavaliers 12.

Under 14s, Raptors 24 versus Rockets 30.

Congratulations to all KBA players on another great round. They look forward to seeing how the players go this week.

BPL Cup to be played at Yea Bowls Club

by Viv Cavanagh

BOWLERS from several clubs have entered to play the BPL

Cup at the Yea Bowls Club on Saturday, May 30. As the world's biggest club-based



The BPL Cup will be taking place at Yea Bowls Club on May 30. -S

bowls competition, the BPL Cup is a key pathway competition, giving club bowlers the chance to experience the intensity and excitement of the Bowls Premier League (BPL) format.

Winning teams from Preliminary Rounds at local clubs progress to Regional Finals and then State Finals, with the ultimate goal being to win a trip to the BPL Cup National Final in November 2026.

Bowls clubs from across the country have embraced the opportunity to host these events, vying for the opportunity to attract new members, generate excitement by showcasing bowls in its most dynamic format, and providing their players with a pathway to the spotlight.

The BPL Cup continues to grow in popularity and is proving to be a major highlight

on the Australian bowls calendar, appealing to both seasoned bowlers and newcomers. Bowls Australia General Manager Bowls Operations Andrew Howie said, "The BPL Cup is such a scintillating format of bowls that gives players of all ability and experience levels a taste of what it's like to compete at the BPL."

"It doesn't matter if you've played the game for 40 years or are just starting out, the BPL Cup is for everybody and a great way to have fun and test your skills."

Members of the public are invited to head along and watch the game being played at the Yea Bowls Club commencing at 10am.

Yea junior football and netball results

Football

Under 10

by Jess Robinson

WHILE all the Yea club's junior teams had a bye, the Under 10s played Seymour at Seymour due to a fixture update.

The little tigers are becoming very confident and consistent players showing true tiger spirit, everyone is contributing to the team and showing their own moments of brilliance.

Awards: Yarra Valley Gas Improvement, Tanner; Delux Rods Tiger Spirit, Elliott; Cathkin Farm Services Coach's, Ava.

Netball

by Joanne Madden

Eleven and Under

Awards: Just Great Coffee Player of the Day, Jake Alldrick; Yarra Valley Gas Ignite Award, Ollie Manning.

Thirteen and Under Yea Yellow

Awards: Sprout Wellness Player of the Day, Evie McKay; Yarra Valley Gas Ignite Award, Alexis Rowson.

Thirteen and Under Yea Black

Awards: Deluxe Road Shop Player of the Day, Milly Krickic; Yarra Valley Gas Ignite Award, Sophie Garlick.



The Yea Under 10 football award winners, Tanner, Elliott and Ava. -S



Thirteen and Under Yea Black award winners, Milly and Sophie. -S



Eleven and Under award winners Jake and Ollie. -S



Thirteen and Under Yea Yellow award winners, Alexis and Evie. -S

First round of Prideaux Cup at Yea Golf Club

by Alan Pell

WINTER has arrived at Yea Golf Club with conditions on the course proving much harder. The cold and recent rain affected all golfers with scores difficult to attain. Best of the 16 men who played was Peter Johnston (15) with 33 points, from Phil Armstrong (18) with 32. Third was Michael Spagnolo (9) with 31 on countback from Brian Simmons (12) fourth.

Rick Wills was nearest the pin on the 18th and Curtis Westworth took out the Club Award. Brian Simmons, Mic Spagnolo, Michael Sheather and John Phillips all won their first round matches in the Club Knockout and progress to round two to be played by the end of June.

The ladies' stableford was won by Di Elliott (28) on countback from Cindy Armstrong (28) with 31 points. Last Wednesday the ladies played a stableford round for the Margaret Samblebe Brooch. Winner on 30 points was a delighted Cindy Armstrong (28) from second Sharon Grogan (21) with 29 points.

Last Wednesday also saw the men play a "four stick" event with 20 players. Winner with 34 points on countback was Gavin Houldcroft (32) from second Bob Glenister (11). Tony Rule (15) with 32 was third and Luke Gregory (8) fourth with 31 points.

Rob O'Halloran was nearest the pin on the 14th and Martin Lowe won the Club Award. Luke Gregory, Tony Rule and Bob Glenister won their first round Knockout matches.



Cindy with her brooch. -S

The Chronicle Sport

ISSN 2200-6486



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Yea football netball teams struggle against Seville

THE various Yea Football Netball Club teams travelled to Seville Football Netball Club for last week's matches, with challenging results. The Yea women's football team claimed victory to continue their season-long winning streak.

Football

Seniors

Seville 97 defeated Yea 30

Reserves

Seville 78 defeated Yea 42

Yea women's team

Seville 14 defeated by Yea 28

Netball

A Grade

Seville 100 defeated Yea 33

B Grade

Seville 78 defeated Yea 20

C Grade

Seville 61 defeated Yea 21

D Grade

Seville 63 defeated Yea 12



Straight into the pack.



Sending the ball on its way.



Jumping competition.



A leaping intercept.



The Yea netballers applying pressure to the Seville players. -Photos by Savannah Gregory Photography