

The Yea Chronicle

92 High Street, Yea. PO Box 5, Alexandra Vic. 3714

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

Ph: (03) 5797 2468 or (03) 5772 1002; Fax: (03) 5797 2257; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Your community newspaper since 1885 Wednesday, December 24, 2025 \$2.00 inc. GST

Most trusted news source in the Murrindindi Shire since 1890

murrindindibusiness.com.au



2026



01 January							02 February							03 March						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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04 April							05 May							06 June						
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07 July							08 August							09 September						
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10 October							11 November							12 December						
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26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31			

Public Holidays 2026

New Year's Day
Australia Day
Labour Day
Good Friday
Easter Sunday
Easter Monday

Thursday, 1 January
Monday, 26 January
Monday, 9 March
Friday, 3 April
Sunday, 5 April
Monday, 6 April

ANZAC Day
King's Birthday
AFL Grand Final
Melbourne Cup
Christmas Day
Boxing Day

Saturday, 25 April
Monday, 8 June
Friday, 25 September
(Subject to AFL schedule)
Tuesday, 3 November
Friday, 25 December
Saturday, 26 December

Victorian School Holidays 2026

Term 1
School Holidays
Term 2
School Holidays
Term 3
School Holidays
Term 4
School Holidays

January 27 - April 2
April 3 - April 19
April 20 - June 26
June 27 - July 12
July 13 - September 18
September 19 - October 4
October 5 - December 18
December 19 - January 27, 2027

Most trusted news source in the Murrindindi Shire since 1890

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Top of the state in Agriculture and Horticulture

ANNIE Dignam achieved the highest score in Agriculture and Horticulture in Victoria this year, with a remarkable study score of 48. She was also on the state honour roll for scoring 43 in English.

She knew that the ATAR and study scores were due on Thursday, December 11, so she was keeping an eye out for the email.

After it arrived, "I was getting lots of messages from my family congratulating me, and then one of my aunties sent me a message and goes, 'wow, top of the state, that's amazing,'" she said. "Was I? I didn't know that. She said that my other auntie had called and said I was in *The Age*. So Mum was at work, so she went down to the newsagents and got a copy of *The Age*, and yeah, there I was."

Annie attended Sacred Heart Primary School in Yea up to grade six, then spent years seven to 10 at St Mary's in Seymour. For year 11 and 12, she boarded at Ballarat Grammar thanks to a scholarship.

She explained that Agriculture and Horticulture is a more recent interest in her education. "Definitely in year 11 and 12 it was my favourite subject, so I think that helps, that makes it a lot easier to study for. But it definitely wasn't my only thing that I was studying for," she said.

She grew up on a small farm and always enjoyed helping her father when she could. "I've just always liked it," she said. Her mother's side of the family are involved with cropping in Western Australia, and they would head over there every Christmas to spend some time. She said, "My brother and I would always be out riding with someone on the chase bin or the header."

She added, "I liked that the subject was something that I could apply. I also studied biology and I found that the two linked in a lot and were quite similar. I liked biology as well. It was interesting to me to learn something so specific and almost complicated in biology that I could apply to something that I knew really well from prior experience in an agriculture setting. Studying agriculture, we were learning stuff that I understood because I had that real life experience and it just made it that much more interesting to learn about things that I could apply when I got home."

She added, "My year 11 teacher was different to my year 12 teacher. I liked both of them. My year 12 teacher helped me a lot. She was very encouraging and she definitely pushed me a bit. Sometimes it was a bit annoying, she didn't let me get away with not doing the stuff."

The gender balance in her class was quite even. "There might have been a couple more boys than girls but it was quite a mix. It definitely wasn't just me and one other girl in a room full of boys. It was always a mix and the girls liked it and did just as well as the boys."

Annie is planning a gap year next year and is aiming to head to Queensland to work on a station. When she returns, she hopes to study Agricultural Science at Melbourne University.

Mother Jo Dignam said, "Brandan and I are so proud of Annie and all the hard work she has put in. She's really worked hard to achieve this result. We couldn't be more proud."

Annie is the granddaughter of Tom Dignam, who owned the Yea Chronicle from 1936 to 1984.



Annie Dignam. -S

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Thank you for your continued support

Our office will be closed from 1pm, December 24 until 9am Wednesday, January 14, 2026.

Our first edition for 2026 will be available on Wednesday, January 21, 2026

POLICE REPORT



Letters to the Editor

THE Christmas period is always a busy time on the road, so police are reminding people to be patient and take care while driving.

Statewide Operation Roadwise will be active until midnight on January 1, with a focus on poor driver behaviour including impaired driving, speeding, fatigue, and vulnerable road users such as bikes, motorbikes and pedestrians. During the operation, there will be increased police activity, detecting and enforcing the road rules for everyone's safety.

As the weather gets warmer, they are also asking that people behave responsibly in the heat, wear sunscreen and hats and drink plenty of water. Know where to find refuge in cool locations, and have a contingency plan if there's a blackout.

There have been a number of burglaries in the Murrindindi Shire over recent months, so make sure that everything is locked up securely and a security camera can be a good investment.

Alexandra District Health
5772 0900
Yea & District Memorial Hospital
5736 0400
In an emergency dial
000

Standard *The Yea Chronicle*

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Scapegoating and cover up

THE response to the recent violent extremist attack must focus on a clear and unequivocal system failure, not scapegoating lawful firearm owners to cover up and divert focus and blame away from this government's proven antisemitic inaction documented over the last two years.

Yes, one of the offenders was licensed, and that makes the system's failure more serious, not less. This scrambling to divert attention from what this government has allowed to propagate is disgusting.

Authorities had visibility. They had powers to monitor, suspend or revoke licences. Those powers were not acted on as known extremist behaviour escalated.

This terrorist attack was extremist ideology, not firearms licensing. As radicalisation emerges, authorities should have intervened a year ago. Ignoring warning signs and blaming the law after the fact is not public safety.

Existing firearms laws already allow authorities to act when warning signs emerge. If those mechanisms had been used, this incident may have likely been prevented. The problem was inaction. The powers already exist. The failure was that they were not used and the government admitted these fanatical Islamists were known to them and still did nothing.

Attempts to pivot toward firearm caps, category restrictions or Western Australian-style administrative crackdowns are being used to distract from the real issue. This was a radicalisation and security failure, not a numbers problem.

Australia already has some of the strictest firearm's laws in the world. Further punishing compliant, licensed firearm owners will not fix failures in intelligence, early intervention or enforcement.

Lawful firearm owners should not be scapegoated to cover this Labor government's failure punishing people who followed the law does nothing to improve public safety.

The Australian people will remember the Labor, Green, Teals and pathetic independent politicians who jumped on bandwagons with those radicals who supported Palestine. They are the ones who have blood on their hands.

Malcolm Price, Alexandra

Can We Celebrate Christmas?

IN the Northern Hemisphere, December 25 was regarded as the Winter Solstice (the shortest and thus the darkest, and coldest, day of the year). The Winter Solstice is associated with a pagan festival of light when birthdays of mythological characters were celebrated. It is because of this festival of light that the Christian church took this day to celebrate Christ's birth. Even before this, the Jews had their own festival of light, Hanukkah, the tragic events at which in Bondi, have put a blight over all our celebrations this Christmas.

Well, Christians believe that Christ is the 'light of the world'. This is the key but what does it mean? Firstly, Christ illuminates the path of life. He shows us what it is to be fully human. If we believe, as I do, that Jesus is the Son of God, then Jesus shows us the nature of God in terms that humans can apprehend.

Secondly, Christ illuminates the depth of our hearts.

To help us to understand what this means we have to remind ourselves what it is to be human. We are physical and emotional beings and much of our enjoyment is physical and emotional. We are intellectual beings; we can think and reason. Friendships are often based on a meeting of minds. But we are also, and most importantly, spiritual beings. It is this spiritual aspect which sets human beings apart from the rest of the animal world. Why do we exist? What is the purpose of life? From whence comes our spiritual strength? What makes us want to help others, often those we don't know or who are from a different tribe? And so on.

For me, the best answers to these questions come from God as revealed in Jesus Christ. That is why I want to celebrate the birth of a child born in humble and risky circumstances. But week by week we also remember his death and resurrection as a sign that love overcomes evil and can never be extinguished. We have already seen how the light of love and courage have shone in the face of the murderous evil committed at Bondi, and while mourning those murdered we can give thanks for the light of love that will always shine.

As we celebrate by showing and receiving love in the form of gifts and celebratory gatherings, we remember those from whom we are separated; and we remember those whose lives are ruined through grief, poverty, violence, and natural and man-made disasters. We do everything we can to make the world around us a better place. This, for me, is a way of showing the love of the God who sent his Son into the world to redeem the world.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas.

Fr John Jessop, Marysville and Buxton

printing | photocopying
flyers
& posters



Alexandra Newspapers
43 Grant Street
Alexandra 3714

ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS Pty Ltd



Weekly Weather

December 24 - December 30, 2025

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra

DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	9	21
Thursday	8	18
Friday	9	22
Saturday	13	28
Sunday	16	32
Monday	17	33
Tuesday	13	26

Yea

DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	10	22
Thursday	9	17
Friday	9	21
Saturday	12	28
Sunday	16	33
Monday	17	34
Tuesday	13	25

Standard

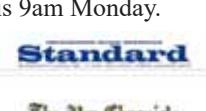
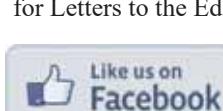
The Yea Chronicle

ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS Pty Ltd

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 be published. Deadline for Letters to the Editor is 9am Monday.



RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT

STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon (TW)	11.00AM Mon	1.64	LGH	steady
Rubicon River at Rubicon	11.00AM Mon	0.60	LGH	steady
Acheron River at Taggerty	11.00AM Mon	0.95	LGH	steady
Home Creek at Yarck	10.44AM Mon	0.14		LGH steady
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	11.25AM Mon	0.68	LGH	steady
Murrindindi River Above Colwells	11.00AM Mon	0.51	LGH	steady
Yea R at Old Killingworth Rd	11.00AM Mon	1.39		steady
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	12.00PM Mon	3.92	LGH	steady
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	11.00AM Mon	0.55	LGH	steady
Goulburn River at Trawool	11.00AM Mon	1.59	LGH	steady
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	11.00AM Mon	0.29	LGH	steady
Goulburn River at Seymour	11.00AM Mon	1.84	LGH	steady
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	11.00AM Mon	1.02	LGH	steady

*ISSUED AT 12:09 PM AEDT MONDAY 22 DECEMBER 2025

DISTRICT RAINFALL

Alexandra	23mm
Buxton	64.9mm
Eildon (AWS)	30mm
Flowerdale	24mm
Jamieson	53mm
Kinglake	31mm
Lake Eildon	26mm
Mansfield	51mm
Taggerty	41mm
Yarck	23mm
Yea	52mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

LAKE EILDON

Height above sea level this week	275.23m
Capacity as at 9am Monday	54.5%
Metres below full supply	13.67m
Daily inflow	4000ML
Release	4000ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change)	87%

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

The launch of the Murrindindi Mobile Health Van

THE official launch of the Murrindindi Mobile Health Van will take place at 11am for 11.30am on Wednesday, January 7 at the Yea Saleyards. A light lunch will be supplied.

The guest speakers for the event include Mayor Damien Gallager, acting chair of the Yea and District Memorial Hospital (YDMH) Ian Marshman, The Unbreakable Farmer Warren Davies, Caolan O'Connor from the Alexandra Events Corporation Ltd, and Gerry Ryan from Jayco Australia.

The new mobile health van will help deliver medical and mental health programs across the Murrindindi Shire.

At the launch, people will be able to hear from key partners, explore the van, and learn more about the exciting programs that it will deliver.

Caolan O'Connor, Chair of Alexandra Events explained that the idea for the van "started as a simple conversation with the YDMH team about their Farmer Health Sales Yards program delivered monthly at the Yea Saleyards. YDMH were doing incredible outreach work, but stuck in the corner of the lunchroom. When they said, 'Wouldn't it be great if we had a mobile clinic?' we realised it wasn't just a great idea, it was a necessary one."

Fundraising by Alexandra Events at the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show raised a remarkable \$114,000 at the sponsors dinner.

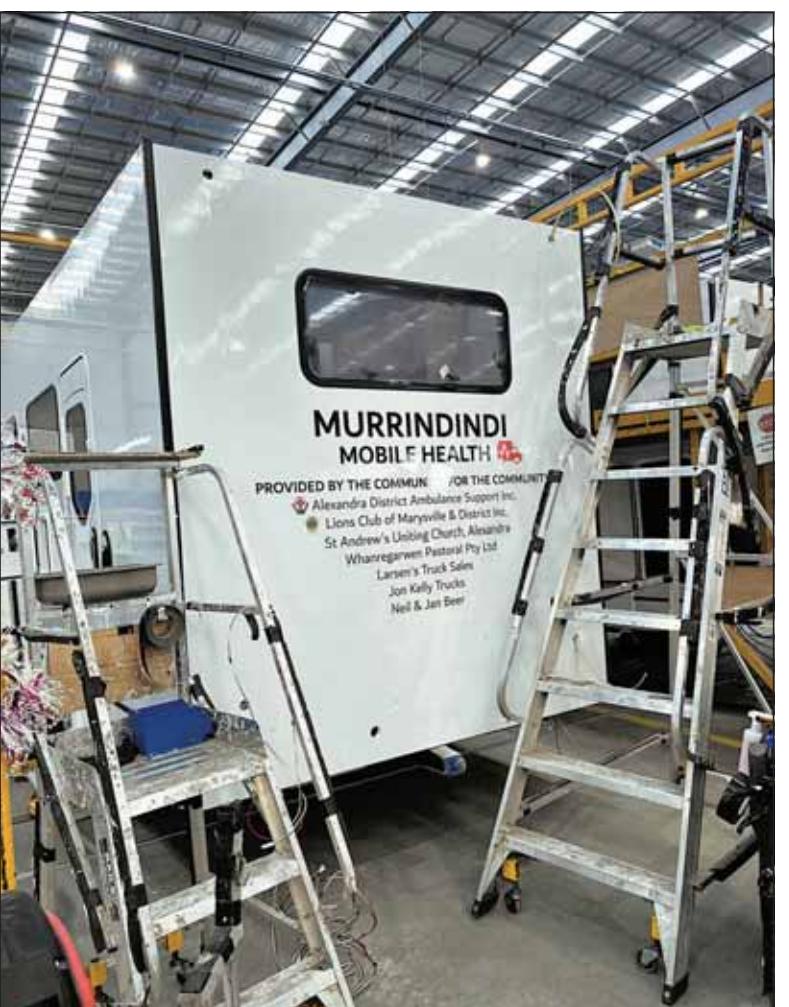
This project has been enthusiastically supported by healthcare providers across the shire. As well as supporting

mental health, the mobile clinic could help provide flu vaccinations, health screenings, serve as a base for school visits, aged care outreach, community health engagement programs, and much more.

Ian Marshman, Chair of YDMH, said, "This initiative will allow our team to expand successful outreach programs like the Yea Saleyards health clinics, delivering care to

residents in communities without ready access to GPs or allied health professionals. We are enormously grateful to the organising committee, to Andrew and Ayden Embling, and to everyone who has donated so generously."

You can RSVP for the launch event by visiting alexandraevents.com.au/murrindindi-mobile-health



The Murrindindi Mobile Health Van while it was under construction. -S

Saddle up for the Alexandra Pro Rodeo

THE Alexandra Pro Rodeo will be back in town on Saturday, January 10, and for the first time this year, there will be Lady Ranch Bronc Riding.

Organiser Andrew Embling said, "This is a new event to rodeo in Victoria after Tup Forge from Oxley, Victoria, won the Lady's Ranch title the World Title over in the United States earlier in the year. We'll have about eight ladies riding and they'll all be going for a buckle."

This year once again Alexandra Pro Rodeo is putting up a buckle for the winners.

Andrew added, "We'll have Terry Murray who is renowned rodeo announcer coming back from up at Casino. He'll be back down for our rodeo to entertain everybody. We'll have music, the gates will open at three o'clock, we'll have music at four o'clock with Paul Costa. He'll entertain for around

about 45 minutes and it'll be five o'clock, then right into rodeo action."

As previously, Eddie Gill and Destiny Downs will be supplying all the livestock for the rodeo. The rodeo has plenty of entries coming in, so there will be plenty of action in all of the rodeo events.

There will also be a Steer Ride for locals. People keen to take part will need to get their entries in by January 6, but there is a limit of 12 people so get onto it quickly. A \$250 buckle will up for grabs for the winner.

The rodeo will go through until about 9pm or 9.30pm, and then it will be straight to the music from Danny Phegan, through until midnight.

Tickets are available online at alexandrarodeo.com.au, through Try Booking or you can certainly purchase tickets right up until the rodeo from Embling Rural on Grant Street in Alexandra.



THUMBS DOWN:

To the new bin contractors.

Is it possible you could shake the bins to empty them completely and not leave them half full all the time?

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.



An open art studio of organic metal sculptures and pen & ink artworks of Australian animals.

Sat. 3 and Sun. 4 January

10.00am to 4.00pm each day

5 Giffard Street, Yea. VIC. 3717

or arrange another time 0421 378 451

Open the first weekend of every month.

Up to date Open Studio information on

www.monkeytaildesign.com



Burglaries in the shire

THE Murrindindi Shire area has experienced a recent spike of burglaries and thefts that have occurred at rural or secluded or unattended premises and dwellings.

Detectives from the Alexandra Crime Investigation, over the past few weeks have made several arrests in relation to reported incidents and crimes. One offender in particular has been remanded in custody to appear at Ringwood Magistrates Court in January. This may possibly have contributed to reported crime subsiding somewhat in the last fortnight.

Investigations being conducted in relation to burglaries and thefts in the area continue and remain ongoing by Alexandra CIU detectives, and they encourage anyone with information to contact Crimestoppers by calling 1800 333 000 or visiting crimestoppersvic.com.au

It is Victoria Police's job to hold offenders to account, but to achieve this, police are heavily reliant on information being conveyed to investigators by members of the public. They continue to investigate information received that relates to persons of interest and their suspected involvement in crimes that have occurred within the local community. Police are encouraging anyone who is offered power-tools or farm related machinery or chainsaws at a lower than expected price to convey this information to Crimestoppers.

Investigators strongly urge owners of rural and secluded properties, or holiday homes that are sporadically resided in or attended by owners, to register their details on Absence from residence, police.vic.gov.au/absence-residence

This allows proactive patrols by local units, when available, to patrol these areas and to provide a visible presence in the area. Police also encourage owners to 'target harden' their properties by locking gates, installing CCTV that notifies owners of unusual movements at properties when not in attendance, install motion sensor lights, divert mail or have a neighbour collect it. These are all simple, but effective measures that have been proven to deter offenders from entering private properties.

Police assured the local community that our local government area (LGA) is one of the safest in Victoria as per statistics attainable via the Crime Statistics Agency, and our area defied the upwards trend of crime that occurred across much of the state over the past year, despite the challenges that investigators can face with crimes occurring in secluded and remote areas that have been unattended for extended periods, and environmental factors which are not always conducive to the retention of forensic evidence. Alexandra CIU will always investigate reported crimes with the goal of holding offenders to account and presenting them at court.

Foundation Murrindindi report

FOUNDATION Murrindindi's work in 2025 has been made possible by the generosity of their many donors, partners and supporters.

In 2025, they supported their vision of thriving, vibrant and connected communities within Murrindindi Shire by distributing over \$24,000 to 21 community organisations to enable a wide variety of community led projects and events.

The Murrindindi Community Food Share program continued to grow. Through the generosity of community and several funded grants, this year they were able to make significant improvements to the Food Share shed infrastructure. The number of attendees and households supported has grown and they are averaging over a tonne of food distributed at each monthly event. They now have people attend from 15 different townships within Murrindindi Shire.

This year, they coordinated the formation of the Murrindindi Food Relief Network, a collective group

of organisations and stakeholders who currently provide food relief programs and initiatives within Murrindindi Shire. A priority project for the network was to create an up to date directory of free and low cost food that is available in Murrindindi Shire. The directory is available to download to print or access online from Foundation Murrindindi's website and is a resource for those in need in our community.

It is always wonderful to see funded activities in action in the community. This year there were a wide range of community led initiatives from men's cooking classes, a program specifically for young LGBTQIA+, purchasing a trailer to help volunteers store and move equipment at local events, and a coding club program for kids just to name a few of the projects Foundation Murrindindi has supported. By supporting local organisations at a grass roots level, we can drive meaningful change and ensure our shire remains a place where everyone has the chance to flourish.



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from GVW

Goulburn Valley Water's offices will be closed from 1.00pm on Wednesday 24 December, reopening from 8.30am on Monday 5 January 2026.

For faults or emergencies, please call 1800 454 500.



Remember to follow the Permanent Water Saving Rules, and make every drop count!



Out & About

WHAT'S
ON?

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.

This is the final edition of The Standard and The Chronicle for 2025. Our first edition for 2026 will be published on January 21. Our office reopens on January 14 at 9am.

Congratulations to our final Let's Eat voucher competition winner for 2025; Noel McIlwraith of Alexandra. Noel has chosen to use the \$50 voucher at Sedona Estate. Make sure to get your entries in for our next Let's Eat competition in February 2026.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25 - MERRY CHRISTMAS

Will you be alone for Christmas? Family out of town? No-one around to enjoy the day with? Embassy of Ideas is hosting a community Christmas lunch. Everyone is welcome. Singles, couples, families. St Johns Hall, Alexandra. All food provided, cold meats, salads and desserts. Bookings are required for catering purposes. Text Sasha 0422 225 801

COMMUNITY DIARY

Yea District Hospital
5736 0400

Non-emergency police assistance
131 444

EMERGENCY 000

Local Radio Frequency
UGFM 88.9 Yea / Highlands
UGFM 98.9 Flowerdale/Hazeldene
UGFM 94.5 Kinglake Ranges

MONTHLY COMMUNITY GROUPS

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

**ALEXANDRA
NEWSPAPERS**

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

Church Services

ST PETER'S MEMORIAL ANGLICAN CHURCH

Cnr Bald Spur/Whittlesea Kinglake Rds,
Sunday Services, 8.30am Communion.
Minister: Rev. Ruwan Palapathwala
0458 113 099

ST LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH OF YEA

Sunday Service time 11am
Prayerful Reflection - held each Tuesday,
10am to 11am - all welcome
Father Mario Hendricks
Ph: 0435 953 777

CATHOLIC PARISHES OF ALEXANDRA AND YEA

Parish Priest, Father Jose Mathew
0459 402 547
St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 5pm
Immaculate Conception Parish
Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am
Sacred Heart Yea, Sunday 10.45am

CATHOLIC PARISH OF KINGLAKE

Fr Martin Ashe, Parish Priest
Ph 9717 6482
St Mary's Kinglake: Sunday 8.30am

SCOTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, YEA

Station Street Yea
Sunday Service 10.30am
Colin Whiteway
Ph 0457 340 525

UNITING CHURCH

1st and 3rd Sundays 9am, 1050 Main Road,
Kinglake West. 9716 2330

or email embassyofideas@gmail.com

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27

Alexandra Race Club will be holding the Alexandra Country and Western Meeting. Gates open at noon. Book the return bus for \$10, online at country.racing.com/alexandra

2026

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4

Darren Gilbert open studio, Saturday and Sunday 10-4pm each day. Other times

by arrangement 0421 378 451; 5 Giffard Street, Yea.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7

Yea Saleyards, VLP Inaugural Weaner sale and Murrindindi Mobile Health Launch, Bus launch and Warren Davis, The unbreakable farmer.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

Nutrien Yea Upper Goulburn Rivers annual classic weaner sale and free skin checks and mental health support.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

Alexandra Pro Rodeo is back. Live music, food, bar, clothing sales, women's Ranch bronc riding, saddle bronc, barrel racing and much more from 5pm at Dame Pattie Menzies Centre, Alexandra. Full details contact Andrew Embling 0418 266 038 or visit alexandrarodeo.com.au

Yea High School congratulates students

YEA High School is delighted to congratulate Freya Foster, the 2025 Yea High School School Dux, on her outstanding academic achievements, including an exceptional study score over 40 in English.

They also commended Year 11 student Jasper Bastion for achieving a study score over 40 in Health and Human Development, a remarkable accomplishment at this stage of his schooling.

Congratulations to incoming 2026 School Captains, Nina Callander and Jasper Bastion. The school looks forward to their leadership in the year ahead.

Finally, the school would like to extend sincere thanks to Rose Burt and Finn Hargreaves for their dedication and leadership in captaining our school throughout 2025.

These achievements reflect the hard work, commitment, and spirit that Yea High School is so proud of.



Nina Callander. -S



Jasper Bastion. -S



Freya Foster, Yea High School's Dux. -S

Statement of Support from council: Bondi Beach Terrorist Attack

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has taken decisive action in response to the recent terrorist attack at Bondi Beach, moving an urgent motion at its meeting on Wednesday, December 17.

The motion condemns the attack in the strongest terms, expresses heartfelt condolences to those affected, and calls for unity and leadership at every level of society. It reaffirms council's commitment to compassion, inclusion and community safety, and sets out three clear calls to action, for councillors, for the community, and for Australia's national leaders, to stand together against hatred and division.

Speaking to the motion, Mayor Damien Gallagher said, "On behalf of Murrindindi Shire Council, I extend our deepest condolences to the victims, their families and loved ones, and to all those whose lives have been profoundly affected by the terrorist attack at Bondi Beach.

"This deliberate act of violence against innocent people has shaken communities across Australia and caused deep grief and sorrow. It stands in direct opposition to the values we share as a society and as local communities, care for one another, respect for human life, and responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of all.

"On Monday, December 15, Murrindindi Shire Council lowered its flags to half-mast as a mark of respect and remembrance. This action reflected our collective empathy, our solidarity with those affected, and our recognition of the lasting impact this attack will have on families and communities.

"Violence has no place in our society. Acts of terror and hatred have no place in Australia. As leaders and as a community, we have a responsibility to respond with compassion, integrity and resolve, supporting those who are grieving and reaffirming council's commitment to safe, respectful and inclusive communities.

"We also acknowledge and thank the first responders, emergency services and healthcare workers who acted with courage, professionalism and care in the most confronting of circumstances. Their actions remind us of the strength that exists within our community and across our nation.

"As we approach the holiday period, a time that can be especially difficult for those experiencing loss, I

encourage our community to look out for one another. Small acts of kindness, patience and care matter. They strengthen our resilience and reflect the values that bind us together.

"As a council and as a community, we stand united in support of peace, safety and humanity. We hold the victims, their families and all those affected in our thoughts, and we extend our ongoing care and solidarity as communities across Australia continue to reflect, grieve and heal.

"We further condemn attempts to exploit grief for political point-scoring, fuel division or scapegoat communities. What our country needs now is united leadership and a bipartisan approach, just as we saw after the Port Arthur massacre when parliament stood together to introduce lifesaving gun laws. We must stamp out blame-shifting and the ugly rhetoric that tears at the fabric of our democracy."

Council resolutions

Lead by Example: Council commits to model calm, compassion and integrity in all words and actions; to actively counter misinformation and division; and to reaffirm our Community Vision of inclusion, "Together we are a vibrant rural community where everyone feels welcome and valued, young people see a future, every person is supported and empowered, and diversity is genuinely embraced. Our heritage and landscapes are celebrated, and our economy is thriving. We cherish all that makes this shire unique. Murrindindi is the destination of choice, to live, to visit, and to enjoy."

Unite as a Community: We plead with our community to stay united, choose kindness over anger, and speak up whenever racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia or any discriminatory behaviour appears. Such behaviour is not tolerated in Murrindindi. Don't stand quietly. If you see it, call it out, report it and support those affected. Our strength is our diversity and our care for one another.

Call on National Leadership: We call on Australia's federal leaders to step up together. Lead the nation with dignity, strength and unity; work across the aisle to strengthen our democracy; and commit to stamping out hatred and division. Stop the point-scoring. Put people first. In this dark period, Australians deserve a single, steady voice of hope and resolve.

Power Saving Bonus

grants available

CHRISTMAS is a financially challenging time for many people. If you are a concession card holder, a bonus \$100 is available from the Victorian Government via the Power Saving Bonus.

The Power Saving Bonus is a \$100 payment providing real help to address the cost of living and drive down energy bills for Victorians in need. Victorian households with an eligible concession card can visit the Victorian Energy Compare website at compare.energy.vic.gov.au to apply online or apply through the Community Outreach Program.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, households will need to: Have a recent residential electricity bill; hold one of the following concession cards: Health Care Card; Pensioner Concession Card; Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card; Veterans' Affairs Gold Card. Only one payment per household is available.

Applications opened on August 25 and can be submitted on this website, over the phone, or through a participating community organisation.

Help to apply

Concession card households who need assistance to apply for the \$100 payment can receive over-the-phone or in-person support via the Community Outreach Program. Phone support is also available at the Victorian Energy Compare helpline of 1800

000 832.

The Victorian Energy Compare helpline assists Victorian businesses and households to use the Victorian Energy Compare website to find the best energy deal for them. The helpline also provides information and advice on the \$100 Power Saving Bonus including direct assistance for eligible households to apply over the phone.

In person support is available through Neighbourhood Houses Victoria.

Neighbourhood Houses are local community-based organisations staffed by dedicated volunteers which offer a range of social, educational, recreational and support activities, for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. To find a participating site in your area enter your postcode.

How it works

Check you are eligible for the \$100 Power Saving Bonus. Get the following documents ready: a copy of a recent electricity bill; an eligible concession card; your driver's licence or Medicare card.

You'll need to provide information from these documents to confirm your identity and eligibility. Contact one of the community organisations listed above to apply over the phone or in-person. If your application is approved, we'll send you \$100.

Further information on the \$100 Power Saving Bonus is available at compare.energy.vic.gov.au/psb-faq

ALEXANDRA PRO RODEO



**SATURDAY
10 JANUARY
2026**

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- Saddle Bronc
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RODEO 5PM

Murrindindi Shire Council

SHANON GROUP

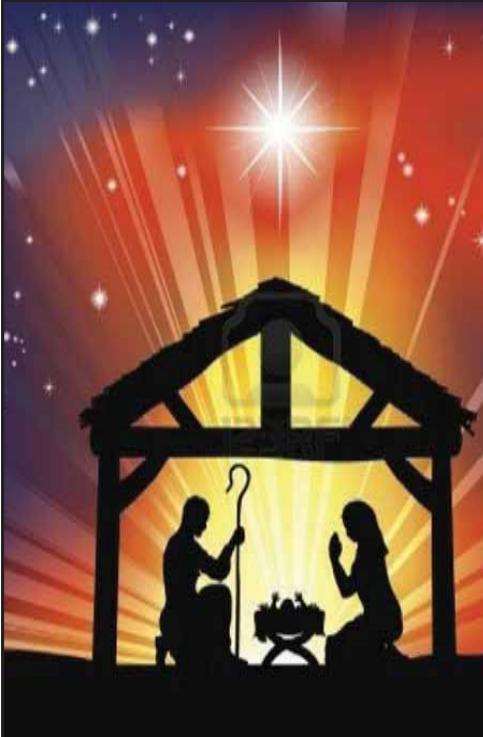
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www.alexandrarodeo.com.au



CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION
The Anglican Parishes of
Alexandra, Yea, Marysville and
Buxton

Christmas Eve: Wednesday, December 24.
6pm, Marysville: Family Eucharist

Christmas Day: Thursday, December 25.
9am, Buxton: Christmas Eucharist
9am, Alexandra: Christmas Eucharist
11am, Yea: Christmas Eucharist

For further information contact:
Fr Mario 0435 953 777 or
Fr John 5774 7655

Merry Christmas

Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year



Cindy McLEISH MP

STATE MEMBER FOR EILDON

Shop 10, 38 - 40 Bell Street, Yarra Glen 03 9730 1066

CindyMcLeishMP cindy.mcleish@parliament.vic.gov.au

CindyMcLeish.com.au

Authorised by Cindy McLeish MP, Shop 10, 38-40 Bell Street, Yarra Glen

Student of the Week

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

YEA PRIMARY SCHOOL



Emma, Saxon, Indie, Emily, Clara and Clancy



Hazel, Hudson, Kalsee, Marco and Joey

SACRED HEART SCHOOL

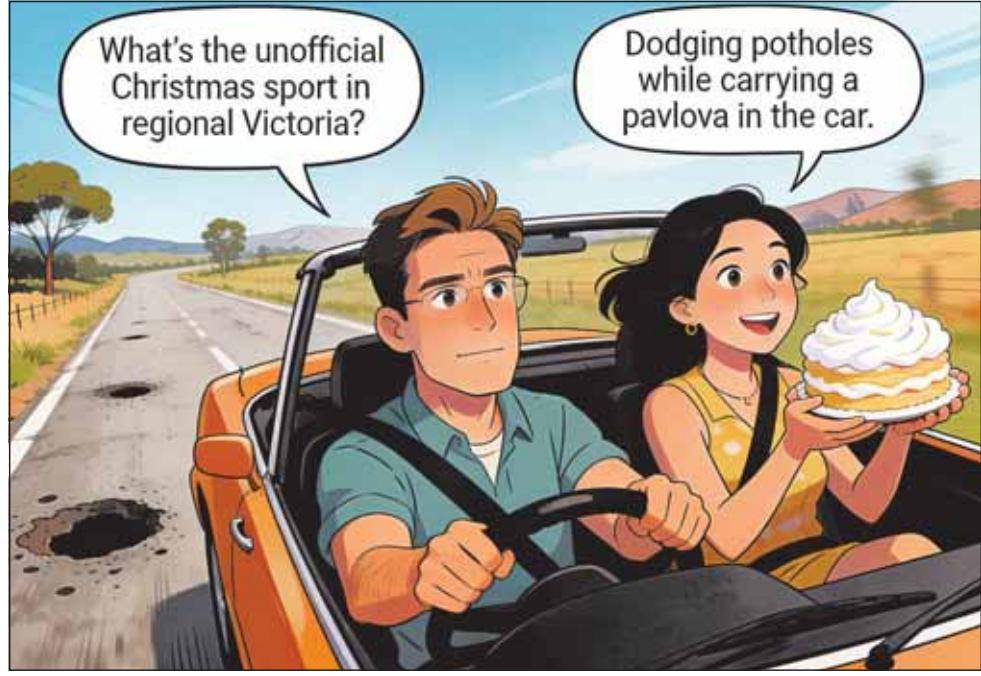


Ted, Sophie and Toby were recognised for their commitment to outstanding actions that align with our school values of Respect, Resilience and Safety.

Student of the Week

Proudly supported by Kinglake branch

Bendigo Bank



Local youths help with Flowerdale Christmas hampers

THE Flowerdale Community House Christmas hampers are heading out to homes in the area, thanks to the help of local students.

Rebekah Grant from Flowerdale Community House explained, "Every year we do Christmas hampers for people in need, and this year we've got two kids who are doing work experience with us. They have come from our youth group program and now coming in as work experience kids."

Mikaela Bartlam and Kael McKinna, on work experience from Whittlesea Secondary College helped to pack the 50 hampers, which will be handed out to members of the local community.

Rebekah added, "And the best part about it was that other kids came down to hang with the kids on work experience and they pitched in as well, which they didn't have to do, but that's the kind of kids they are. They're gorgeous."

They all came into contact with the community house via the Flowerdale Youth Group, attending schools as far afield as Yea High School, Whittlesea Secondary College and Seymour College.

"They've been coming to things here for ages and so they know us well and feel comfortable just coming to hang out, which I love, and then they washed the car. A 75 year old man had started to wash the van for us, and I said, go out and help him, and so they did.

"I love it that they just come here. They're not made to come. They just come."

Rebekah said, "Sometimes people just can't afford it, and meat is really expensive this year. I've noticed that a lot of the elderly people are not buying meat."

Rebekah was also keen to add, "I just want to tell everybody that it's not all bad in the youth sector. Kids are amazing and if you put the time into them and give them a chance, they will shine."



Yea School Crossing Supervisor Casual position during school terms

Council is seeking a reliable and safety focused School Crossing Supervisor to assist children, families and pedestrians to cross safely to and from school in Yea, commencing Term 1, 2026.

Key responsibilities include supervising designated school crossings during rostered times, assisting pedestrians to cross safely, and monitoring and reporting incidents, hazards and near misses.

For more information including how to apply:

- scan the QR code to visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/jobs
- visit one of our Library and Customer Service Centres
- call Council's Manager Development Services on 5772 0333.

Applications close 11.45 pm 11 January 2026.



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to create your personalised
fire plan now.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW FIRE?



Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

The Farmer's Ag News



Virtual fencing greenlit for Victorian farmers

VICTORIAN livestock farmers are set to be boosted by huge productivity gains after the Victorian Government green-lighted virtual fencing technology for use across Victorian farms.

The cutting-edge technology allows livestock farmers to guide and contain livestock without physical fences.

Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) President Brett Hosking said the long-awaited decision was set to transform farm management, animal welfare, and industry sustainability in one of Australia's largest livestock sectors.

"This is a huge step forward that will deliver real, on-farm productivity and welfare benefits for dairy and livestock farmers across Victoria," Mr Hosking said.

"We've been working hard to get to this decision from the very beginning. Victoria's livestock and dairy sector is poised to see productivity gains in excess of tens of millions of dollars and is now ready to step into the future."

"This announcement is the culmination of years of behind the scenes work and we thank Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence for backing this technology and working with us to get it done."

United Dairyfarmers of Victoria President Bernie Free said the green-lighting of the technology will help ensure Victoria's dairy industry has certainty they need to innovate and remain globally competitive.

"Virtual fencing technology is an absolute game-changer for Victorian dairy farmers. It allows farmers to rotate pastures more efficiently, protect environmentally sensitive areas, improve animal health outcomes and provides a safer work environment," Mr Free said.

"Victoria is already Australia's dairy industry powerhouse. This move is set to reinforce that mantle and set the platform for the potential of huge growth in our local sector."

"We have continually advocated for a regulatory framework that keeps pace with innovation, while maintaining strong animal welfare standards. The outcome announced today achieves exactly that and it sets an exciting precedent for the years ahead."

Rabobank predicts favourable conditions for livestock in 2026

EXPORT market demand has supported elevated prices for Australian lamb, mutton and beef through much of 2025, with favourable market conditions expected to continue into the new year, according to agribusiness banking specialist Rabobank.

In its *Global animal protein outlook 2026*, the bank's RaboResearch division says high cattle inventories will maintain elevated Australian beef production, while sheepmeat production takes time to recover.

Sheep and lamb production

Report co-author, RaboResearch senior animal proteins analyst Angus Gidley-Baird said Australian lamb and sheep output is expected to contract in 2026 after dry seasonal conditions hit large areas of the country's sheep-producing regions in 2024 and into 2025.

"The smaller flock, following high sheep slaughter in 2024 (the highest in over 15 years) and 2025, is likely to result in lower lamb slaughter in 2026. And improved seasonal conditions will spark efforts to rebuild the flock, further compounding the reduction in lamb slaughter," Mr Gidley-Baird said.

"Meat and Livestock Australia projects lamb slaughter to contract two per cent in 2026 after a six per cent tumble in 2025 and sheep slaughter to plunge 18 per cent in 2026 after a 15 per cent drop in 2025," he said.

"Lamb production is expected to fall one per cent to 607,000 million tonnes in 2026 after a three per cent reduction in 2025."

Mr Gidley-Baird said with lower supplies, better seasonal conditions and ongoing strong demand from export markets, RaboResearch expected lamb prices to remain strong, though lower than the current historic highs.

"Given current conditions, we believe lamb prices of AUD9 to AUD10 a kilogram would be more sustainable," he said.

Beef production

Mr Gidley-Baird said successive favourable seasons have allowed Australia's cattle breeding inventory

to build, and cattle were now flowing through to markets.

"Even southern areas, which experienced dry conditions throughout 2024 and into 2025 and offloaded stock at the time, are likely to have seen production levels recover in the second half of 2025," he said.

"As such, 2025 production is projected to reach 2.86 million tonnes, up 11 per cent year-on-year and a new record."

Mr Gidley-Baird said with large cattle inventories in Australia, "we anticipate beef production in 2026 to remain steady at historically-high levels, reaching 2.85 million tonnes, the second highest production volume in Australia's history."

"Substantial production volumes will translate to ongoing elevated export volumes, with the US likely to remain the key market, accounting for 29 per cent of total Australian beef exports in 2025," he said.

"South Korea (which accounted for 15 per cent share of Australian beef exports in 2025) and Japan (16 per cent) will remain important markets, while volumes to China (18 per cent) are expected to rise, given the ongoing tensions between China and the US."

With sizable volumes of beef in the market, Mr Gidley-Baird said, cattle prices in 2026 will depend on producer sentiment and seasonal conditions.

"We believe that cattle prices will remain close to current levels, with some potential upside given the strong US market, and that the National Young Cattle Indicator will sit around AUD 4.30 to AUD 4.80/kg. However, if seasonal conditions deteriorate and producers lose confidence, high cattle inventories and increased slaughter numbers will see prices contract," he said.

Global protein outlook

According to the RaboResearch outlook, the global animal protein industry is set to experience a slowdown in production growth in 2026, driven by both cyclical and structural factors.

Seafood and poultry will lead growth, while pork and beef production will contract. The sector faces challenges from disease outbreaks, trade disruptions and sustainability pressures, requiring strategic adaptation and technological integration from industry players.

Rising costs

RaboResearch global strategist animal protein Eva Gocsik said globally, while the bank expected feed costs to remain steady, a combination of lower protein supplies, rising volatility and trade costs and disease pressure will weigh on margins.

"Processors (in regions where supplies are limited) may face ongoing challenges around capacity utilisation, as well as trade disruptions resulting from tariffs and other protectionist measures. All of this could raise costs, pressure demand and ultimately squeeze margins. In both mature and developing markets, a focus on increasing efficiency and productivity will be critical at the farm and processor level," she said.

Price sensitivity

According to Ms Gocsik, with global gross domestic product growth projected to decelerate, consumers are likely to become increasingly price-sensitive, altering their consumption patterns.

At the same time, the rising use of glucagon-like peptide-1 agonists (GLP-1) weight loss medications is also likely to influence dietary choices.

"Price pressures within animal protein categories may lead consumers to trade down or switch between proteins, while consumers seeking protein-rich foods will potentially boost animal protein demand," she said.

Trade resilience

Despite disruptions, the Rabobank report said animal protein trade has shown resilience, with strategic front-loading, like shipments of Brazilian beef into the US, helping to sustain volumes amid volatility and shifting tariffs that are reshaping

global flows.

Meanwhile, supply-demand imbalances continue to seek equilibrium, a trend that is likely to persist in 2026. Geopolitical tensions and evolving policies will continue to influence trade, but new trade agreements may provide a boost.

Disease challenges

Global disease outbreaks have also disrupted trade, squeezed margins and pressured productivity in the animal proteins sectors, the report said.

Disease outbreaks such as African swine fever and avian influenza continue to disrupt trade and squeeze margins, RaboResearch said.

"Combined with emerging diseases like New World screwworm and Bluetongue, these challenges are driving greater adoption of biosecurity measures and increased focus on new approaches to managing disease pressure, though implementation remains complex," it said.

Sustainability and technology

In an uncertain operating environment, sustainability-related risks linked to climate and nature are increasingly critical, the outlook said. Regulatory momentum is pushing sustainability to the forefront of strategic planning for animal protein companies, it said.

The report said technology, particularly artificial intelligence, offers potential benefits for managing operational risks and advancing sustainability goals, though investment remains weak.

"While not all AI applications will transform the industry, strategic integration into existing workflows could spark meaningful progress in a sector that is traditionally slow to adopt new technologies," it said.

"Maintaining consumer trust is paramount. In times of heightened risk, consumers continue to prioritise animal welfare, supply availability, price, food safety and quality, and these demands are driving advancements in transparency and traceability," Ms Gocsik said.

FREE Health Checks for the Farming Community

Mobile Health Bus Launch



+ 'The Unbreakable Farmer' – Warren Davies
Wednesday 7 January

Skin Checks & Mental Health



Friday 9 January & 6 February

YEA SALEYARDS
What's coming up

WED 7 JAN	VLP INAUGURAL WEAVER SALE + Murrindindi Mobile Health Launch – Bus Launch + 'The Unbreakable Farmer' – Warren Davies
FRI 9 JAN	NUTRIEN YEA UPPER GOULBURN RIVERS ANNUAL CLASSIC WEAVER SALE + FREE Skin Checks & Mental Health Support
FRI 16 JAN	ELDERS YEA BLUE RIBBON WEAVER SALE
FRI 6 FEB	COMBINED AGENTS STORE SALE + FREE Skin Checks & Mental Health Support
FRI 6 MAR	COMBINED AGENTS STORE SALE
FRI 10 APR	COMBINED AGENTS STORE SALE

2026

Nutrien Ag Solutions **Elders** **VLP** **ALEX SCOTT** **VETERINARY PROPERTY STAFF**

Further information on Yea Saleyards website and Facebook page

Alexandra Events Corporation Ltd



Yea & District Memorial Hospital

Murrindindi Shire Council

YEA
SALEYARDS

TRAVELLING THIS FIRE SEASON? DON'T FORGET TO PACK THE VIC EMERGENCY APP.



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HOW WELL
DO YOU KNOW FIRE?





People were keen to buy unique Christmas presents at the market on December 20. -photos by Dale McKeon, Plymouth Dale Photography



The coffee van was very popular.

Christmas at the Yea Railway Market



Santa made an appearance, bringing Christmas cheer.



As always, people were welcome to bring their pets along to the market.



Crochet by Eloise.



The market was a great place to buy something special.

VICTORIA'S
CONTAINER DEPOSIT
SCHEME

HIT ASIX FOR THE PLANET

Donate your refund or
containers to your local club
and feel like a million bucks.



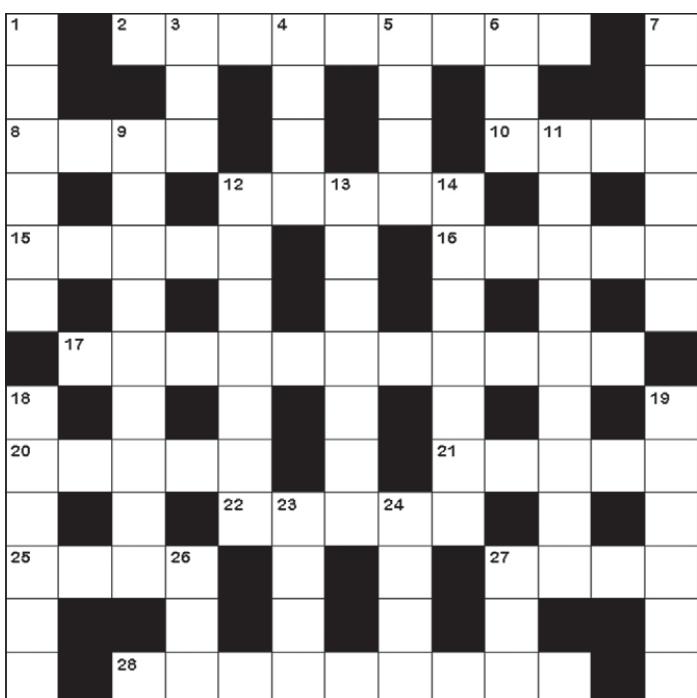
Proud Partners



PUZZLES

SOLUTIONS
Page 12

Crossword

**ACROSS**

- A feeling of thankfulness and appreciation.
- An irregularly shaped mass.
- Australia's most famous gemstone.
- An enclosed car for four or more people.
- Person who does not acknowledge your God.
- Both come to the same opinion.
- A person who hates all mankind.
- Moving quickly and lightly.
- The eighth letter of the Greek alphabet.
- A variety of different things or activities.
- Lacking civility or good manners.
- A widely held but false idea or belief.
- Relating to the sky or the heavens.

DOWN

- A car that is old and unreliable.
- A stretch of turbulent water in the sea.
- A large heavy book or volume.
- Tinned fish often used in salads.
- Two singers who perform together.
- Extremely pleasant in a gentle way.
- Enlarged to an abnormal degree.
- The outermost boundary of an area.
- A canvas shoe with a pliable rubber sole.
- The manner of enunciation in speaking.
- Provide commentary for a film.
- Obeying the rules and not cheating.
- A thin slice of bacon or ham.
- The highest level or degree attainable.
- A natural ability or talent.
- A fully grown female sheep.
- Extinct flightless bird of New Zealand.

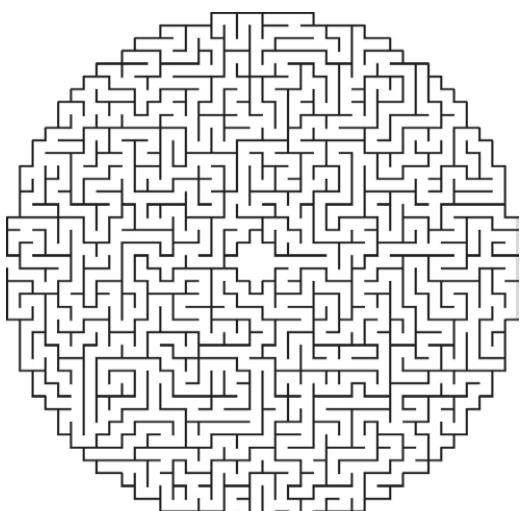
Word Search

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

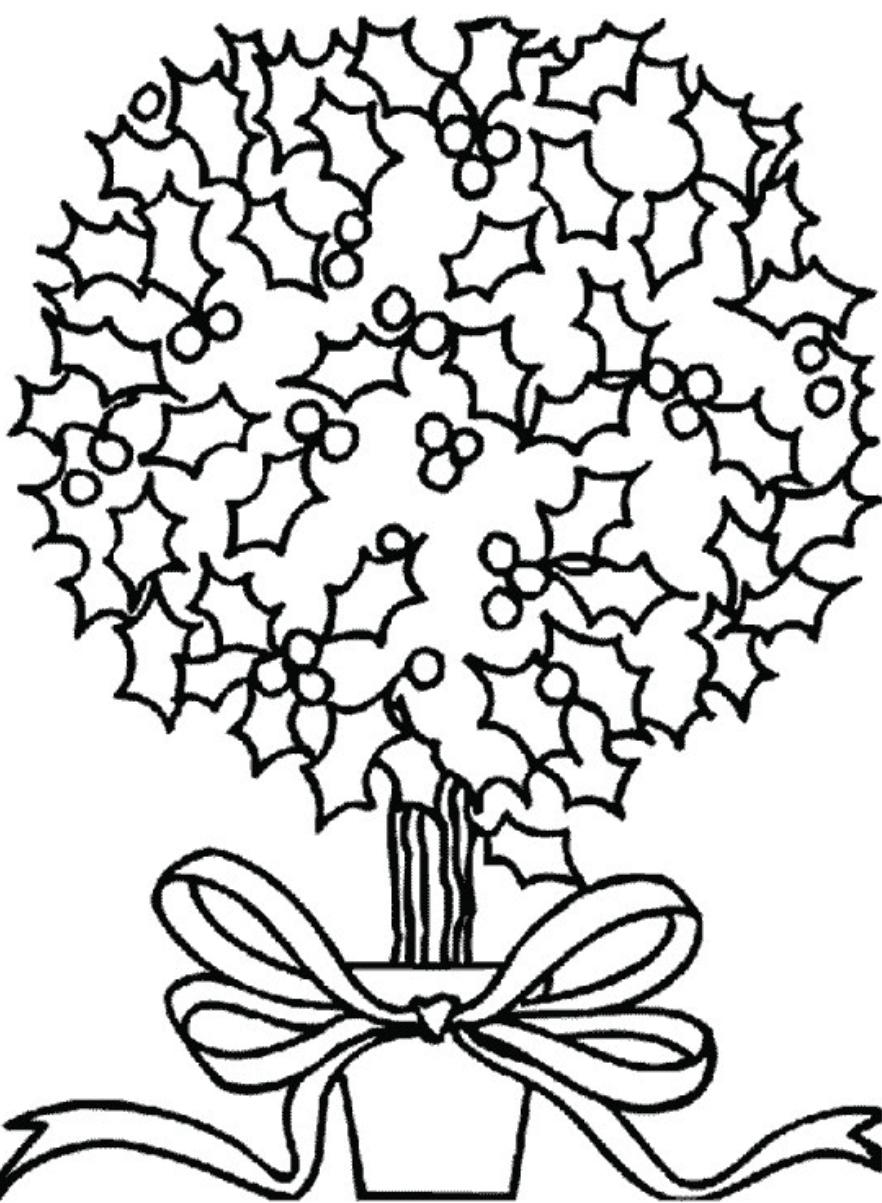
AIRPLANES	MOUNTAINS
CRUISESHIP	OCEANS
DINOSAUR	PYRAMID
ELEPHANT	SKYSCRAPER
GIANTS	TRAIN
GRANDCANYON	TRUCKS

Maze

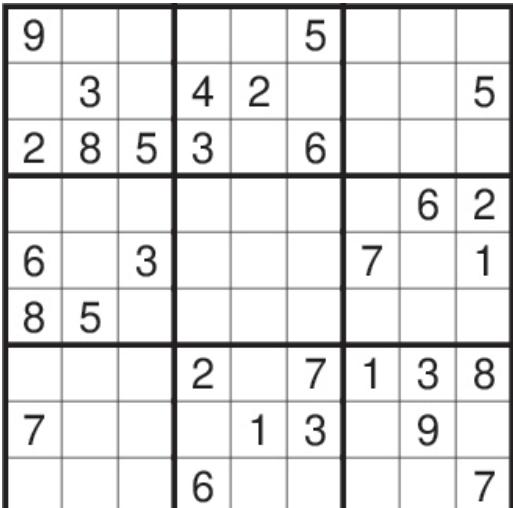
**SOLUTIONS**
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KID'S PUZZLES

Colouring Page

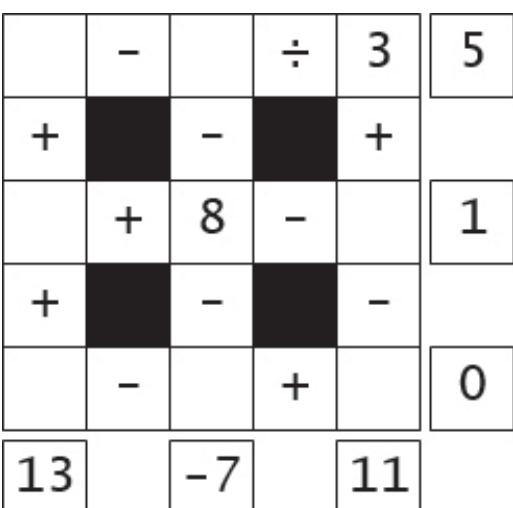


Sudoku

**Difficulty: Very 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.

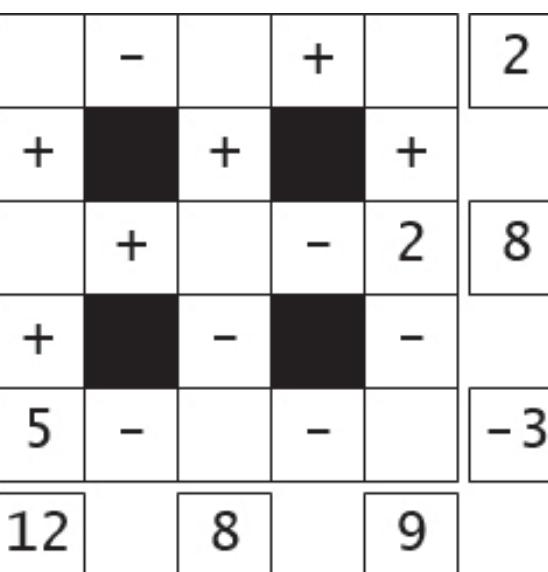
Math Square

**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.

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

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: Who is the favourite rock star at the North Pole?

A: Elf-ish Presley

Q: What do snowmen do on the weekend?

A: Chill out

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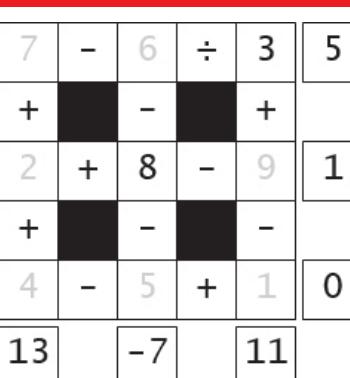
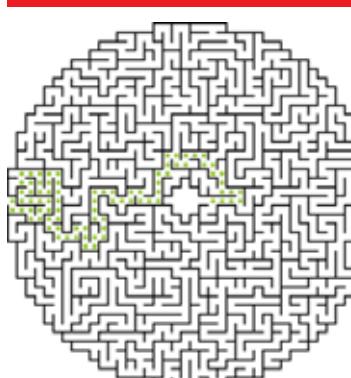
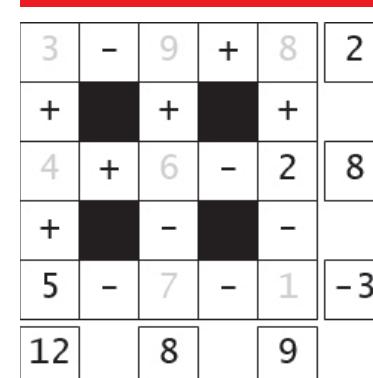
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**PUZZLES
SOLUTIONS****CROSSWORD****SUDOKU****MATH SQUARE****MAZE****KIDS - MATH SQUARE****Council CEO's term extended**

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has unanimously resolved to offer Chief Executive Officer, Livia Bonazzi, a further five-year contract of employment, commencing June 7, 2026.

Ms Bonazzi was appointed as Murrindindi Shire Council's Chief Executive Officer on June 8, 2021, for an initial five-year term, which concludes on June 6, 2026. In accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, council is required to provide notice of its intentions regarding the CEO's employment within prescribed timeframes prior to the expiry of the current contract.

Council appreciates Ms Bonazzi's strong performance against the key performance indicators set by council and her leadership through periods of significant organisational and external challenges.

Council also recognised her advocacy on behalf of council at both state and federal levels, her leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent emergencies, and her role in reshaping council's organisational

structure and operating model to support delivery of the Council Plan and evolving community expectations.

Council is very pleased with Ms Bonazzi's contribution to building a capable executive and management team, her demonstrated commitment to the Murrindindi Shire community, and the constructive working relationships she has established with the community and key stakeholders.

Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said the decision reflected council's focus on long-term leadership stability and strategic delivery.

"We are navigating a roadmap to financial sustainability. This resolution provides certainty and continuity at a critical point in council's planning and delivery cycle," Cr Gallagher said.

"Council is confident that Ms Bonazzi's leadership will continue to support the implementation of our Council Plan, strengthen organisational capability, and deliver outcomes that align with the long-term interests of the Murrindindi community."

Urgent warning: iPhone 12 users may not be able to contact Triple Zero

AN urgent message has been issued for iPhone 12 users, after a critical issue has affected users being able to contact Triple Zero.

Apple recently pushed out an urgent software update (iOS 16.2) to fix a critical issue affecting calls to Triple Zero (000). If you or a family member owns an iPhone 12, please stop and check your device immediately.

The official release notes state that this update: "Addresses a mobile network issue for iPhone 12 models when establishing a connection to emergency services in Australia."

This means without this update, there is a risk your device may encounter network

failures when trying to call for help during an emergency.

Who needs to update?

This critical patch is specifically for the iPhone 12. (Note: It is strictly for the iPhone 12 model only, not the 13, 14, or later models, though keeping your phone updated is always recommended).

Action Required: Do not wait until you have an emergency to find out your phone isn't working correctly; open Settings; tap General; select Software Update; download and install iOS 16.2.

Please tag friends and family who use an iPhone 12 to ensure their devices are safe and ready.

Council adopts Domestic Animal Management Plan

MURRINDINDI Shire Council has endorsed its Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 (DAMP) at its meeting last week, confirming a clear approach to promote responsible pet ownership, enhance animal welfare and ensure community safety across the shire.

The plan has been shaped by strong community input gathered during consultation held in July and August 2025. Almost half of all households in the shire own a cat or dog, with survey respondents highlighting the important role pets play in family life, wellbeing, exercise and social connection.

Community feedback provided strong support for key measures including mandatory desexing of cats, cat curfews, and exploring designated fenced off-lead dog parks.

The adopted plan sets council's priorities and actions for managing cats and dogs over the next four years, with a focus on supporting pet owners, improving animal welfare outcomes and reducing negative impacts on the community and environment.

The DAMP also reinforces council's role in education, enforcement and collaboration to keep public spaces safe, accessible and enjoyable for all.

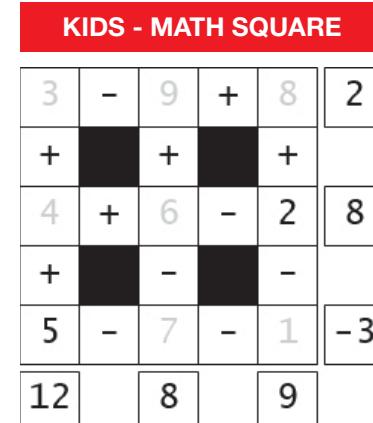
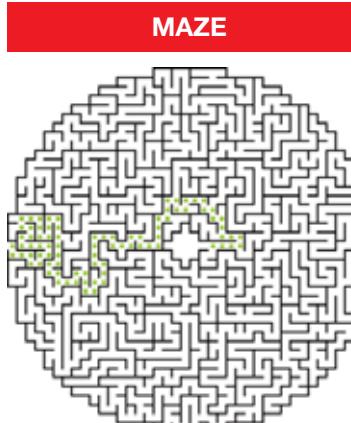
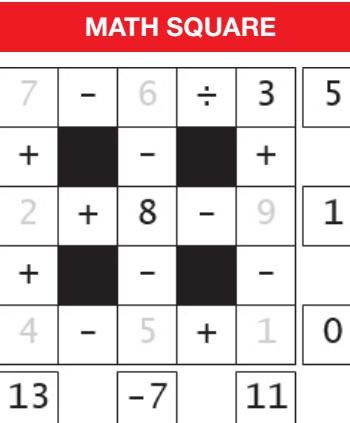
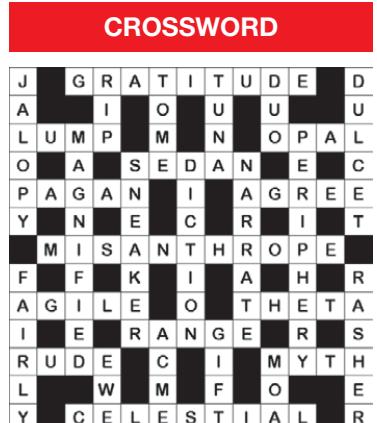
The adopted plan provides a clear and balanced framework to help people and pets thrive together in Murrindindi Shire. For more information, visit murrindindi.vic.gov.au/damp or call 5772 0333.

Mayor Damien Gallagher said the plan provides a clear and practical roadmap for animal management across the shire.

"This plan recognises the important place pets hold in many households while clearly setting expectations of our shared role as responsible pet owners," Cr Gallagher said.

"We thank everyone who got involved in the development of this plan. We look forward to working with the community over the next four years to manage our pets in a way that balances pet welfare, community wellbeing and the natural environment."

"Owning a pet is a privilege, and it is the responsibility of the owner to have their pets under effective control at all times."



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DEATH NOTICES

MOORE,
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Beloved father of Tim and Nick and husband of the late Beryl Moore died peacefully at Alexandra Hospital where he was treated with love and respect by all the staff who attended to him.

May God bless him.
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Clandestine laboratory discovered in Kinglake

POLICE Media have advised that officers from the VIPER Taskforce on Sunday, December 21 arrested two people after locating a clandestine laboratory during a routine Firearm Prohibition Order (FPO) compliance search in Kinglake.

Police attended the address at 10.30am and upon entry, located glassware, what appears to be methylamphetamine, hypophosphorous acid and a substance that was crystalising in a jug.

A 56 year old man and a 36 year old woman were taken into custody

and detectives from the Clandestine Laboratory Squad deployed to the scene.

The man was charged with possessing methylamphetamine.

He will appear at court at a later date.

The woman was arrested for possession of methylamphetamine and is expected to be charged on summons.

Anyone with information on illicit drug activity is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or submit an anonymous report at crimestoppersvic.com.au

Stay safe at water storages

GOULBURN-Murray Water (GMW) is reminding people to stay safe and follow the rules when visiting its storages over the summer holidays.

GMW Water Storage Services Manager Jon McKeown said it was important that visitors remained water smart when visiting storages. He said that included wearing a lifejacket and always having someone with you on a boat.

"Other matters to keep in mind include sticking to the speed limits on the water, not drinking and boating, and checking the conditions and water levels when launching boats," he said.

"It's also crucial that people are aware of hazards like submerged rocks and shallow water and that they don't dive from dam walls or ledges."

Visitors are also reminded to pay attention to safety signage at storages including Boating Safety Information Signs.

These signs are found at various locations around storages and display key information such as the speed limit in the area, what recreational activities are allowed there, and waterway rules. They also display information around safely operating vessels, what equipment people are required to carry as a water vessel operator, as well as emergency contacts.

Mr McKeown said it was also important that people behaved well and were respectful of others and the environment when visiting GMW's storages.

"Our storages are fantastic places to visit but it's important that everyone plays their part to ensure they remain this way," he said.

"During busy times we do see people looking to reserve inlets or parts of the foreshore for exclusive use by installing gazebos, inflatable pontoons and other structures before their visit.

"This is not permitted and isn't fair on others who want to enjoy the area."

Leaving temporary structures unattended on the foreshore is an offence that can result in a fine of up to 10 penalty units (a penalty unit is currently \$203.51) under the Water (Recreational Area) Regulations 2023.

Lighting campfires outside of designated areas is similarly an offence under the Water Regulations.

Campfires are not permitted at most GMW storages and are only allowed in certain areas at storages where they are permitted.

"Fire safety is particularly crucial at this time of year," Mr McKeown said. "People should check online to see if campfires are permitted where they plan to visit ahead of time and should never light a fire on a Total Fire Ban Day."

Other activities GMW is looking out for over the summer holidays include people camping on lakebeds, and littering.

All visitors to GMW storages must take their rubbish with them when they leave.

People can view the Water (Recreational Area) Regulations 2023 on the GMW website at gmwater.com.au/recreation

People can report a breach by contacting 1800 013 357 or emailing compliance@gmwater.com.au

More information about the risks and hazards to be aware of at storages can be found on the 'Water Smarts' page of the GMW website, gmwater.com/watersmarts

Yarck collision

SUNDAY, December 21, saw heavy rain fall across the shire, resulting in flooding and road accidents, including a serious collision in Yarck.

The single vehicle accident, which occurred around 12.30pm resulted in four separate ambulances transporting patients to hospitals in Melbourne, with two of the patients in critical condition. The HEMS Ambulance helicopter was unable to land and transport the patients due to the poor weather conditions.

Heavy rain likely contributed to the accident. Alexandra SES crews were on their way to Yea to assist with flooding at two buildings in High Street, Yea, but were diverted to the road accident. They were the first emergency services on scene, confronted with three injured children and an adult. The emergency services were on scene quickly to treat the injured.

Police diverted traffic around the scene via Gobur from Kanumbra and Yarck while emergency services were on scene.

A reminder to please slow down when road weather conditions are poor.



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TRADES ADVERTISING DEADLINE NOON THURSDAY

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Be aware: Changed speed limit on Melba Highway near Devlins Bridge

THERE has been a change to the speed limit on the Melba Highway around the Devlins Bridge Murrindindi Road intersection, with the limit dropping from 100km/h to 80km/h.

Signage for the new speed limit was installed December 11, 2025, and is a permanent speed zone change.

Any changes to speed limits are considered by Department of Transport and Planning road safety specialists in line with the Speed Zoning Policy and Speed Zoning Technical Guidelines.

Decisions to change speed limits are subject to extensive reviews which consider a range of factors, including types of road users, the surrounding environment, crash risk and history, and traffic volumes.

"An 80km speed limit along the Melba Highway near Devlins Bridge was introduced in December 2025," Executive Director Loddon Mallee Hume Department of Transport and Planning, Anthony Judd said.

"Safety is our top priority and these lower speeds are key to improving road safety in the area."

Last council meeting of 2025

THE December Murrindindi Shire Council (MSC) meeting was held in the Yea Chambers. Cr Adams was an apology for the meeting. No conflicts of interest were declared.

Bondi terrorist attack

In urgent business, Cr Gallagher spoke about the tragedy at Bondi Beach in Sydney. On behalf of council, he extended his deepest condolences to the victims, the families and their loved ones, and to all those whose lives have been profoundly affected by the terrorist attack. He also noted that on December 15, MSC lowered its flags to half-mast as a mark of respect and remembrance.

He added, "Violence has no place in our society. Acts of terror and hatred have no place in Australia." He encouraged the community to look out for each other, saying "Small acts of kindness, patience and care really matter."

He said, "We further condemn attempts to exploit grief for political point scoring, fuel division, or scapegoat communities. What our country needs now is united leadership and a bipartisan approach."

Council resolved to lead by example, to model calm, compassion and integrity in all words and action, to actively counter misinformation and division, and to reaffirm our community vision of inclusion; to unite as a community, pleading for the community to stay united, choose kindness over anger, and speak up whenever racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, or any discriminatory behaviour appears; and to call on national leadership to step up together and lead the nation with dignity, strength and unity, committing to stamping out hatred and division. "Australians deserve a single steady voice of hope," Cr Gallagher said.

Cr McAulay also speaking in support, saying, "Let love prevail, not hate."

Cr Lording spoke about losing six acquaintances in the shooting, who all lived in a gated environment near Bondi. Cr Lording's best friend from the air force would often invite him up, often having a barbecue with everybody. "Those people who were killed were really nice people," he said.

Cr Lording also noted that part of his income is from guns, working with the military to make it safer for troops. "It sort of tears on me," he said, adding how important it is to weed out terrorists. "There's a whole lot of work to be done and I feel really sorry," he said.

Cr Hildebrand said his heart goes out to the family and friends who lost loved ones.

Cr Gallagher's motion was carried unanimously.

Open Forum

Trak Buller spoke about his concern over the impact that the Bondi terrorist attack may have on firearms owners. He believes that there may be a move to remove firearms and tighten the laws around firearm ownership. He spoke about farmers, hunters and recreational shooters in the shire, and said that taking away their guns would be scapegoating when they do not pose a threat. Cr Gallagher suggested that he contact the local member of Federal Parliament or the Minister responsible, as council does not have a role in the enforcement of firearms laws or issuing firearms licences.

Lloyd Butler also spoke about the guns issue, saying it's a knee-jerk reaction, and about the proposed Yea dog park in the railway station area with a six foot mesh fence. Cr Lording said that they were unable to respond but asked which area he would suggest. The recreation reserve was suggested as there is already a fence in place. Cr Gallagher advised that there are no plans in place for a particular site for a dog park, and no plans to construct a dog park. He did however note the Domestic Animal Management Plan which council would consider later in the evening, and said that some of the feedback has suggested a dog park and it may become a future plan or priority.

Val Jones also expressed strong opposition to the idea. She also said that the consultation was inadequate. She instead suggested the Yea oval near the cricket cage.

Progress on disaster recovery works across Murrindindi Shire

MURRINDINDI Shire Council is continuing disaster recovery works across the shire, following several declared natural disaster events in recent years. A number of major road and infrastructure projects have now been completed, with others close to finishing. These works form part of council's ongoing effort to repair damaged assets, improve safety and strengthen infrastructure to better cope with future weather events where possible.

Council is working closely with state and federal agencies to secure funding and deliver repairs in line with prescribed Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) conditions and approval timelines. Council has supplemented DRFA funding with significant contributions from their

Capital Budget to improve resilience to future disaster events.

One of the most significant projects recently completed is the Snobs Creek landslip repair, with the road now reopened to full traffic after being partially closed for more than two years. The project involved major strengthening and reconstruction of the road pavement and layers underneath the surface to ensure long-term stability and safety for all road users. While the road is now open, some works on the road shoulder are still underway and expected to finish soon.

Works at Coonan's Culvert are now complete, with the full rebuild replacing temporary flood repairs and removing previous load restrictions. The upgraded

culvert eliminates a high-risk crossing, improves safety for all vehicles and reduces the likelihood of future flood-related disruptions. The upgrade has enhanced load capacity, enabling access for CFA, Forest Fire Management and heavy vehicles in the event of fire and other emergencies.

Rehabilitation works have also been completed at the two cemeteries in Yea, which were impacted by floodwaters flowing through the sites, restoring safe access for families and visitors, while protecting important community and heritage assets.

Council has now completed approximately \$4 million worth of disaster recovery works across more than 180 individual sites, with a further \$18 million in recovery projects planned or underway, subject to state funding approvals and timelines.

Murrindindi Shire Council Sustainability and Assets portfolio Councillor Paul Hildebrand said disaster recovery was a complex, long-term process requiring sustained effort and advocacy.

"Council recognises the significant and ongoing impacts of repeated disaster events on our communities and infrastructure. While some locations have experienced significant disruption, reopening key roads and upgrading critical assets like bridges and culverts is a major step forward for safety, access and community confidence."

"Council is committed to making the most of DRFA funding and, wherever possible, rebuilding infrastructure that is stronger and more resilient than what existed before. We continue to advocate for additional state and federal support to help reduce the risk of repeated damage and costly repairs into the future," Cr Hildebrand said.

Find out more about ongoing infrastructure projects in Murrindindi Shire on our website at murrindindi.vic.gov.au/projects



Coonan's Culvert. -S

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Cr Carpenter introduced the plan. She explained that extensive community engagement, benchmarking with other councils, and cross-departmental collaboration have shaped the development of the plan. Council invited the community to contribute feedback, ensuring that the perspectives of pet owners, non-pet owners, and those concerned with the natural environment are thoughtfully balanced.

Key priorities addressed in the plan include promoting responsible pet ownership through education, providing better spaces for dogs to exercise safely, managing cat nuisance and containment, improving pet registration and identification, delivering customer-focused compliance, meeting statutory responsibilities, and using data to guide decisions and allocate resources.

Andrew Paxton, Director Community and Development, confirmed that there is no plan for a dog park anywhere, however a number of people made submissions that could look at having dog parks and where they could go. The plan does not look at any designs or locations. He spoke about the survey and the articles in this newspaper outlining the results of the survey. The plan includes exploring in year one dog off-leash areas, and exploring cat confinement and desexing. No budget has been set aside for dog off-leash areas. Community consultation, using a variety of methods, would again take place about locations, etcetera, should council look at developing the off-leash concept. They would work with groups what have an idea but would also test this with the broader community. The plan was accepted unanimously.

Complaints Policy Review

Officers initiated a full review of the Complaints Policy to ensure it remains contemporary, easy for customers to understand, and aligned with council's

increased focus on service excellence, transparency and organisational values. The revised policy now reflects updated definitions and clearer scope; a simplified, customer-centred complaints process; strengthened principles of fairness, accessibility, and accountability; standardised timeframes for acknowledgement, updates and decision making; and a stronger emphasis on learning from complaints and improving services. Council adopted the review unanimously.

The Audit and Risk Committee minutes were also confirmed.

Councillor and CEO reports

Cr Carpenter commented on how busy it is at this time of year, and was particularly pleased to hear from Yea High School students at their presentation night. She also congratulated Annie Dignam on achieving the highest score in the state for Agriculture and Horticulture. She reminded people that it's illegal to operate a campground or caravan park without the necessary permits. Key Worker Housing can now go ahead at Eighth Street in Eildon, after the sole objector withdrew their objections.

Cr McAulay commented on the success of the Cathedral Invitational, and reminded people to put Murrindindi on their table this Christmas.

Cr Hildebrand reminded people that there will be no kerbside bin collection on Thursday, December 25, Christmas Day, or Thursday, January 1, New Year's Day. Following these public holidays, Thursday collections will move to Friday, and Friday collections will move to Saturday. All Resource Recovery Centres and the Alexandra Landfill will be closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day. They are also closed on days of Total Fire Ban.

Cr Lording announced that fire prevention slashing has commenced around the shire and that road grading continues, with about 120

kilometres completed so far. He acknowledges that there are some more potholes breaking out, and that he is seeing and reporting them.

Cr Carr talked about going to the Alexandra Secondary College's presentation night to hear the achievements of students in 2025. Four long standing staff members are leaving the school, in Jacki Tossol, Anne and George Nadj, and Anita Rennie.

Cr Gallagher spoke about the honour of being able to officially launch Kirk Mercuri's book, 'Step by Step: Living with Autism', edited by Kath Stewart. He provided an update on Breakaway Bridge, stating there is no modelling of the bridge restoration resulting in more traffic than used the bridge prior to the 2022 flood event, and it is not proposed that ratepayer funds will be used to cover the restoration expense.

Murrindindi Shire Council CEO Livia Bonazzi spoke about the priorities laid out in the Financial Sustainability Roadmap, the continuing work on progressing the roadmap, and the community engagement with it. She advised that council are seeking Expressions of Interest to join the Facilities Review Advisory Group, with space for 25 community members. Applications close on February 8. Council has published the draft Health and Care Services Plan, which sets out a coordinated approach to improving health and wellbeing in Murrindindi. The document is open for community comment, with consultation extended until January 7. Ms Bonazzi also said that council is actively advocating to Alexandra District Health to delay any decision on the proposed amalgamation with Eastern Health, so that the outcomes can be collectively and properly considered. Council's Customer Service Centres and Libraries will close from December 25 to January 1, reopening on January 2. Pools close Christmas Day but have extended holiday hours of 1pm to 6pm daily from late December.



There were 96 Christmas hampers distributed by St Luke's. -BD



The entire building was full of hampers for distribution. -BD

St Luke's Yea gives the gift of Christmas hampers

LAST Friday, December 19, St Luke's Anglican Church in Yea distributed their Christmas hampers.

The hampers, which are an annual occurrence, went to 96 different groups, including singles, couples and families, and will help around 165 adults, 51 teenagers and 63 under 12s.

They were the result of a number of donations from the wider community, and 30 plus volunteers who worked over four days to prepare the hampers.

St Luke's would like to thank all those who assisted in putting the hampers together,

including: Sacred Heart Primary School students and community, Flowerdale Farm, Yea Community House, Yea Rotary, Friends of Yea Book Shop, Yea Child Care Centre, Bunnings Seymour, Kmart Seymour, WACKAS Group, Yea and District Memorial Hospital staff, St Luke's Op Shop and volunteers, Yea Men's Shed members, Station 7 Café, Yea CWA members, FoodWorks Yea, Ritchies Yarra Glen, Yea Meat Supply, Bendigo Bank Yea, Yea Library, and all the people who provided gifts of money, books, toys and food.



Donated fruit and toys for the hampers. -BD



Volunteers packing the Christmas hampers. -BD



The act of putting together and distributing the hampers is a Christmas gift. -BD



The Christmas hampers ready for distribution. -BD



Just a few of the many volunteers who prepared the St Luke's Christmas hampers, along with Natalie (left) and Carly (third from right) from the Yea

The Chronicle Sport

Sports Editorial: sports@alexandranewspapers.com.au

ISSN 2200-6486
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Sunburn posing painful threat to Victorian's health

RECORDS released last week reveal the true scale of Victorians requiring emergency assistance for sunburn every year for the past 20 years, according to government records.

The data comes as SunSmart urges the community to be vigilant when enjoying the outdoors this summer, even on cool and cloudy days when the UV is still high.

In the 2024-25 financial year, Victoria recorded 330 emergency department presentations for sunburn, marking a 14 per cent increase from the 289 presentations the previous year.

The latest figures supplied by Victoria's Department of Health take the presentations to public hospital emergency departments for sunburn to a total of 5672 people over a 20-year period since 2004-05.

Children and young people were most likely to present to emergency with sunburn, with people aged zero to 14, 15 to 19 and 20 to 24 years making up two thirds (66 per cent) of total hospital presentations over the past two decades, representing 3738 cases all up.

While this data captures the most severe sunburn cases requiring emergency medical attention, SunSmart warns that any sunburns, and especially sunburn during childhood, can have lasting health impacts that increase lifetime skin cancer risk.

Meanwhile, 2023 data from the latest Victorian Population Health Survey shows that one quarter (26 per cent) of all Victorian adults, equivalent to more than 1.3 million people, had one or more red and tender sunburns that lasted a day or more in the year prior to the survey.

Head of SunSmart Emma Glassenbury said now was the time to remind Victorians, especially young people, that every day activities put us at risk of exposure to harmful UV, the leading cause of skin cancer, at this time of year.

"People may associate sunburn risk with just a day at the beach or by the pool on holidays, but most people are caught out in everyday places: At home, in the backyard, at work, walking down the street, or enjoying a

local park. It's a reminder that UV protection matters whenever we're outdoors."

"This data also shows that UV overexposure remains an ongoing public health challenge in Victoria. It's important that continued investment in sun safety education is prioritised to shift behaviours. If the UV is three and above, sun protection is required," Ms Glassenbury said.

The survey data showed that rural Victorians were three or more times more likely than those living in metropolitan areas to experience sunburn.

Sunburn was most common among 18 to 24 year olds with 29 per cent reporting one to two sunburns in the past year prior to the survey, and 14 per cent reporting three or more sunburns. SunSmart see an inverse relationship between sunburn frequency and ageing, whereby for people aged 75 to 84 just four per cent reported one to two sunburns in the past year and just one per cent reported three or more sunburns in the same timeframe.

Director of the Victorian Melanoma Service at The Alfred, Professor Victoria Mar, said sunburn is a sign of significant trauma to the skin cells, and this damage is cumulative, adding to lifetime skin cancer risk.

"Sunburn can be agonising and sometimes so severe it requires hospital treatment. Anyone with severe sunburn should seek medical care. Ultimately, making sun protection part of our daily routine is the best way to avoid the pain, fever, and blistering altogether."

Melbourne melanoma survivor Rhi Birch, 43, experienced her fair share of sunburn in her younger years, despite being relatively sun smart. Her story is a powerful reminder to take sun protection seriously.

"My melanoma was first spotted on a snorkelling trip on the Great Barrier Reef. A friend noticed a spot on my back and urged me to get it checked. I was diagnosed with stage two melanoma. My surgeon advised I'm incredibly fortunate it was caught relatively early. It's very scary to think what could have happened otherwise."

"If I could go back in time, I'd be so much more careful with sun protection. You'll rarely catch me without a hat, sunnies or sunscreen in my bag these days. My diagnosis was a real wake-up call; skin cancer is so common in Australia, and it's nothing to mess around with," Ms Birch said.

Ms Glassenbury says most emergency presentations due to sunburn in Victoria occur between November and February, when UV reaches its most extreme levels.

"Do everything you can to protect your skin this season with all five forms of sun protection: cover up with clothing, wear a wide-brimmed hat, use sunscreen, seek shade, and wear sunglasses whenever the UV is three or above," Ms Glassenbury concluded.

For reliable UV forecasts and alerts in your area, download the free SunSmart Global UV app today.



Jarrod Mahoney batting for Merton. -S

Merton cricketers beat Milawa in last match of the year

MERTON cricketer's travelled to Milawa for the final game before the Christmas break needing to win to consolidate their position in the top six, and consolidate they did with a strong win finding the local side third on the ladder with good momentum into the new year.

Milawa won the toss and invited Merton to bat first with the visitors making 8/231 in hot conditions. Jarrod Mahoney with a blistering 89 off 56 balls including nine fours and four sixes punished the home sides attack, he and skipper Jai Lerch-McKinnon 57 really set up Merton's victory in the middle overs playing their hard hitting style.

Opener Murray Sutton with 25 also batted positively helping Merton to a good start. Matt Hardy 3/57 the leading wicket taker for Milawa. The home side trying to take the game up to Merton

started well, however tight bowling from Lerch-McKinnon put the pressure on Milawa's top order with Merton's young bowling combination off Harry Craddock 3/18 and Henry Berriman 2/31 reaping the rewards for their side.

Great catching from McKinnon and the Mahoney brothers saw Milawa play out the game frustratingly for Merton and finishings on 8/157 after 36 overs. Jason Papworth 38 and Russell Ferguson 40 showing stubborn resistance for the Merton bowling attack. James Benton Ross McKinnon and Lerch-McKinnon the other wicket takers.

Merton host Rutherglen in the new year on January 17 with a very tight top six or seven places up for grabs in the very competitive 13 side Wangaratta District Cricket Association b grade competition.

Best score at Yea Golf Club

by Alan Pell

LAST Wednesday saw 30 players in the Christmas Stableford and lunch at 'Royal' Yea Golf Club. The predicted heat didn't arrive until most players had finished playing.

Winner of the men's competition was Zach Pell (15) with 41 points, shooting 80 off the stick, his best ever score. Second was Tony Rule (16) with 38 on countback from Mic Spagnolo (8) third with Mic Sheather (23) fourth with 36. Brian Simmons was nearest the pin on the 14th and Rob Gill won the Club Award.

In the ladies' competition Christine Simmons (24) continued her excellent form to win with 40 points from Penny Britton (32) with 38 and Di Elliott (29) with 37 points.

followed by Kris Kringle with lots of laughs and merriment.

Last Saturday saw 39 competition players on the course with many actually playing early to avoid the heat again.

Winner of the men's competition was Paul Heyen (25) with an incredible 44 points. Second for the day with 43 points was the unlucky Jonathon Fisher (second last week also). Third was Martin Lowe (16) with 40, fourth was Luke Gregory (11) 38 on countback from fifth Mic Spagnolo. Mic was also nearest the pin on the 14th and Brad Clements won the Club Award.

In the ladies' competition Christine Simmons (24) continued her excellent form to win with 40 points from Penny Britton (32) with 38 and Di Elliott (29) with 37 points.



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Tomatoes are growing,
The grass needs mowing,
The Christmas lights on the streets are glowing,
Berries need picking,
Spoons need licking,
Stamps on envelopes need sticking
So Christmas cards will all arrive
In the letterbox at the end of the drive,
And proudly go up on display,
Wishing Happy Christmas Day
And New Year too,
Here's Cheers to you!
Good luck in everything you do,
Presents underneath the tree,
I wonder what each one might be...
Maybe socks, or sweets or soap?
How about some joy and hope?
Those gifts we may have lately missed
Are at the top of this year's list,
This Christmas time, may it be true
That the light of Christmas shines on you.