

# Standard

INCORPORATING THE ALEXANDRA TIMES - THE YARCK, GOBUR, TAGGERTY, THORNTON, AND ACHERON EXPRESS

P.O Box 5, Alexandra, 3714. Ph: (03) 5772 1002; Fax: (03) 5772 1603; Email: reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au Wednesday, April 10, 2024 \$2.00 inc. GST

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Vehicles arriving at the Highball Cars and Coffee event, between Buxton and Taggerty, on Sunday, April 7. More images on page 19. -AR

## Meeting to discuss Breakaway Bridge

COUNCIL met last Thursday to discuss what needs to be done regarding Breakaway Bridge, a historic connecting bridge between Alexandra and Acheron, that was damaged beyond usability in the October 2022 floods.

The meeting, which took place at 7pm on Thursday, April 4, discussed the available options for Breakaway Bridge moving forward, as well as the key factors that influence what can be done about the bridge.

The presenters included the mayor of Murrindindi Shire, Damien Gallagher, the director of community and development for the shire, Andrew Paxton, the manager of flood recovery, Kim Chadband, and senior planner for the council, Cameron Fraser.

The Minister for Emergency Services, Jacinda Symes, was an apology for the evening, along with MPs Cindy Mcleish and Helen Haines, councillors McAuley, Gerencser, Carpenter and Lording.

The current options for Breakaway Bridge include repairing the bridge, which would not guarantee its stability in future flood events, replacing the bridge with a modern structure, or leaving the situation as is and conducting no repairs or restructuring.

There were discussions around the historical significance of Breakaway Bridge and how that relates to any actions moving forward, in relation to whether to keep the

historic bridge or upgrade to a modern, up to code, bridge.

The bridge is of Regional Significance according to the Victorian Heritage Database, and is listed in Murrindindi Shire Council's Heritage Overlay, meaning that a planning permit is required before moving forward with any of the options.

*Continued Page 10*



**Free admission**



## Murrindindi Jobs Expo

Monday 6th of May 2024 - 11am - 5pm - Alexandra Football Club

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**Our office will be closed Thursday, April 25.**  
 Early display advertising deadlines will apply. Bookings and artwork deadline is 5pm Wednesday, April 24.  
 All other deadlines remain the same.  
 We will reopen Friday, April 26, at 9am.

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## Standard The Yea Chronicle

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## COMMUNITY DIARY

### Local Radio Frequency

UGFM 106.9	Alexandra / Lake Eildon
UGFM 88.9	Yea / Highlands
UGFM 98.5	Marysville / Lake Mountain
UGFM 98.9	Flowerdale / Hazeldene
UGFM 94.5	Kinglake Ranges

### WEEKLY

Tues	Art Group Eildon(Alex Tennis Rooms) 10am-3pm Ph 5773 2306
Tue	Seniors Carpet Bowls 1.15pm
Wed	Social Bowls 11am Alexandra Bowls Club Ph 5772 1150
Thu	Take off weight naturally 5.45pm 5773 2427
Fri	Seniors Social Club 1pm
Sun	AA 7pm Anglican Church, Alexandra Ph 0402 428 086
Sun	Alanon Recovery 5.30pm. Ph Sheila 0402 428 086
Sun	Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training. Ph 5772 1057
Thu	7.00-10pm SES, SES/CFCA complex Ph 0418 576 666
Fri	Communitia 10am-12pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801

### MONTHLY

1 <sup>st</sup> Wed	Alexandra Lions dinner meet, Corner Hotel 0427 595 318
1 <sup>st</sup> Sat	Alexandra Quilters RSL Hall 10am-4pm Ph 5772 3257
1 <sup>st</sup> Sun	Crop/Produce swap 10.30am-noon @ Embassy of Ideas
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tue	Alexandra District Garden Society Meeting Ph 5772 2285
2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed	Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sat	Alexandra Market - at Station Street Ph 0427 509 988
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sat	Alex Repair Café 1-3pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sat	Murrindindi Men 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801
3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed	Alex Lions business meeting, rear RSL hall 0427 595 318
3 <sup>rd</sup> Thu	Alexandra Ladies Probud Club 10am RSL Ph 5772 2946
3 <sup>rd</sup> Thu	Community Potluck dinner 6-8pm @ Embassy of Ideas
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun	Alexandra RSL Ph 0409 950 913
4 <sup>th</sup> Tue	Yarck CWA Meeting, 10.30am Yarck Hall.
4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	Molesworth Patchwork & Craft, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.
4 <sup>th</sup> Thu	Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517
Last Fri	Carers Group 10am. Free morning tea. 0418 402 455



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



## Letters to the Editor

### Yea doctor departs

IT is with mixed feelings that I would like to inform the Yea community and surrounding districts that I am leaving my general practitioner role at Yea Medical Centre.

After 11 years at Yea Medical Centre and 28 years in general practice, I am very grateful and humbled by the privilege I have had in sharing and supporting many patients through some significant and varying health issues at various stages in their life, the highs, the lows and everything in between.

I appreciate your trust, patience and willingness to share your physical and/or mental health journey in some challenging times. Floods, COVID-19, bushfires, cost of living increases, hospital system stressors and the general speed of life have all added to the complexity of helping people manage their health concerns.

I have enjoyed working with all the Yea Medical Centre staff and appreciate the expertise of my colleagues, the Yea and District Memorial Hospital and Alexandra District Health, and the many allied health professionals that together support the community in health and wellbeing. I am keen to keep learning and improving my skills and look forward to another stage in my life whatever that may be.

Thank you for your support and especially your patience waiting in the waiting room.

*Dr Natasha Ward, Yea*

### Great Victorian Rail Trail

LAST month I spent four glorious days travelling the Great Victorian Rail Trail (GVRT) from Tallarook to Alexandra, fulfilling a long held ambition to undertake the journey by foot.

The weather was marvellous, the birds in full voice, the views inspiring. Fellow trail

users (all cyclists and one rider) were all curious about my chosen approach to such a highly walkable route with its gentle inclines and declines, no scrabbling up steep hills.

Staying overnight at Trawool, Yea and Alexandra broke the journey into manageable chunks with wonderful local food and rest.

Adding value along the way, were the informative signs, quirky public art and occasional seats to take in the views (and rest one's legs).

I hope to complete the Alexandra to Mansfield sections of the GVRT in the spring. It's a truly wonderful asset for the community and testament to all who had the foresight to create a truly special journey through some of our most beautiful countryside. A hidden treasure.

*Jane Sharwood, Gisborne*

### Lake Mountain

AT a public meeting in Marysville on March 27, about 75 people discussed the impact that changes to the winter operation of Lake Mountain would have on Marysville and the Triangle.

Most felt that the \$20 fee to enter the toboggan slope would have an extremely negative impact on visitation to the mountain. And of course, there will be a major flow-on to food and accommodation businesses.

In the past, families had to pay the car entrance to the mountain, and any hire charges. Now, a family of four will need to find another \$80 on top of the car entry and hire costs. In these difficult economic times, it's hard to see that this will not have a significant effect on the numbers visiting the mountain, and indeed, on the mood of visitors to the area.

Despite the claims of Alpine Resorts Victoria staff, a charge like this has never

been applied anywhere in Victoria. Mt Buller is the closest to it with a \$15 charge to toboggan at Mt Buller, but that includes the hire of a toboggan.

A major difference between Lake Mountain and other resorts is that tobogganing is the primary reason for most visitors to Lake Mountain, whereas it's a novelty add-on at the other resorts.

Further, while the major resorts cater to a middle to upper income bracket, Lake Mountain firmly attracts the lower to middle income earners. Applying a one rule to fit all simply cannot work.

People are already discussing ways to circumvent this \$20 impost.

Strong arguments were presented by schools against closing the resort on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Schools typically do not go skiing on Mondays and Fridays, so the large majority of schools will be wanting to go to the mountain on Thursdays, and there will most likely be a shortage of instructors for that.

Local schools are bemoaning the loss of the shuttle buses from Marysville to the mountain.

With no ski lessons to be available on school holidays and weekends, combined with the severe disruption to school skiing, the whole future of skiing at what used to be promoted as 'Australia's premier cross country ski destination' seems to be in jeopardy.

It's disappointing that the community has only heard about these changes on the cusp of a new season and has had no opportunity to influence the decision. Together with the cessation of logging in the area (regardless of anyone's opinion on that), the future for the Triangle area looks bleak.

*Rosemary Sisson, Mystic Mountains Ski Hire and Outdoors, Narbethong*

## Weekly Weather

April 10 - April 16, 2024

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra			Yea		
DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	10	17	Wednesday	10	17
Thursday	7	18	Thursday	7	17
Friday	7	19	Friday	7	19
Saturday	7	20	Saturday	8	20
Sunday	9	22	Sunday	9	22
Monday	10	21	Monday	10	21
Tuesday	10	21	Tuesday	10	21

**Standard**      **The Yea Chronicle**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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

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

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RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT				
STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon D/S	12.00pm Mon	1.56	steady	below minor
Rubicon River at Rubicon	12.00pm Mon	0.49	steady	
Acheron River at Taggerty	12.03pm Mon	0.62	steady	below minor
Home Creek at Yarck	11.52am Mon	0.17	steady	
Yea River at Devlins Bridge	10.24am Mon	0.52	steady	below minor
Yea River at Yea	11.22am Mon	0.58	steady	
Goulburn River at Ghin Ghin	12.00pm Mon	3.70	steady	
King Parrot Creek at Flowerdale	12.00pm Mon	0.48	steady	below minor
Goulburn River at Trawool	12.00pm Mon	1.32	steady	below minor
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	12.00pm Mon	0.33	steady	below minor
Goulburn River at Seymour	12.00pm Mon	1.62	steady	below minor
Whiteheads Creek at Seymour	11.07am Mon	1.16	steady	

\*\*ISSUED AT 12.15PM ON MONDAY, 8 APRIL 2024

DISTRICT RAINFALL	
Alexandra.....	61.7mm
Buxton.....	82.5mm
Eildon (AWS).....	45mm
Flowerdale.....	52mm
Jamieson.....	59mm
Kinglake.....	86mm
Lake Eildon.....	46mm
Mansfield.....	50/10mm
Taggerty.....	65mm
Yarck.....	46mm
Yea.....	53mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

LAKE EILDON	
Height above sea level this week.....	286.99m
Capacity as at 9am Monday.....	92.4%
Metres below full supply.....	1.91m
Daily inflow.....	800ML
Release.....	3000ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change).....	90.6%

## 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
Thumbsup/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

# Anzac Day services require a permit

FOLLOWING concerns from local RSL groups over the requirement that Anzac Day and other services during the year require a permit, Murrindindi Shire Council provided the following response.

“Local Law Permits are required for all public events and functions undertaken on land managed by Council. The permit process ensures our public land is used appropriately and that event organisers are supported to plan and deliver safe and enjoyable events. It considers traffic management requirements, as well as covering insurance and liability protection for the organisers from any claim or incident that may occur during the event. There is no charge to apply for a Local Law Activity Permit.

“It is understood that the permit requirement also applies to Remembrance Day, as well as any other public event or function held on land managed by council.

“Our Community Safety and Events staff work closely with event organisers, supporting the application process. We are pleased to be engaged with all nine Anzac Day event organisers across the Shire and haven’t been informed of any issues with the application process.

“Some Anzac Day events have not sought permits in the past. This leaves them vulnerable to risk and liability exposure, as technically, they are not authorised to conduct public events on council land, hence their insurance is void.

This is why we have initiated a change this year to ensure that all events are treated the same and have permits.

“The event permit process is simple and council officers work closely with event organisers to step them through what’s required. If they are unable to apply for a permit, we will discuss with them the best path forward for a safe and smooth event.

“Council is proud to support the celebration of Anzac Day and we continue to work with the organisers of the events to ensure they are all run safely and successfully.”

For further information or to apply for a permit, please visit [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/permits](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/permits) or call 5772 0333.

## Free green waste disposal in April

WITH autumn leaves falling and the weather beginning to cool down, now is the perfect time to clean up your garden.

From April 1 to April 30, local residents can dispose of green waste for free at council’s Resource Recovery Centres (RRCs) in Alexandra, Yea, Kinglake, Eildon and Marysville.

This includes domestic quantities of grass clippings, leaves, garden trimmings, branches, and tree trunks.

For more information on green waste disposal, including what is and isn’t accepted, visit council’s website.

## Alexandra and District Senior Citizens report

by honorary secretary Mike Jennings

THE Alexandra and District Senior Citizen’s hope all of their readers had a lovely Easter break and are now enjoying the autumn weather.

The bridge players have been busy but with only three members being available the Tuesday committee meeting was postponed to the end of the month.

Friday’s business meeting was well attended, and as well as the usual stuff members were reminded to get their names on the list for the

trip to Lilydale International Hotel for *Morning Melodies* on Wednesday, May 1.

The club has decided that with the ever increasing use of electronic communication they no longer need the post office box. People can contact the club via email [secretaryadscc@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryadscc@gmail.com) or message 0456 456 263.

All are welcome to come along to the meetings on a Friday afternoon at the Bayley Street clubroom. Alexandra District Health people will be giving a presentation as part

of April Falls 2024 on fall prevention and its effects in the Alexandra Community pharmacy on Thursday, April 11 between 10am and noon. Come along. It’s something that seniors should be aware of.

The club has a great picture of King Charles III on the clubroom wall organised by Josie, and a big thank you to Bob Gale and Chris Jackson from the Masonic Lodge for providing it. It is good to see cooperation between local clubs and organisations. Meanwhile, stay safe and keep smiling.

## NAB ATM repaired after outage

NATIONAL Australia Bank was contacted about their Alexandra ATM being out of action over the Easter long weekend.

A NAB spokesperson responded, “A technician is booked tomorrow [April 3] to fix a fault with the ATM. Due to the public holidays over Easter, it’s taken longer than usual to have this repaired. We’re sorry for the interruption.”

The ATM was back in action on April 3.

## Report from Alexandra-Redgate CWA

THE Hume Goulburn Group Conference was a great meeting for the Redgate-Alexandra Country Women’s Association (CWA). The club thanks all members for their contributions, as well as everyone who purchased a scone or cake at the recent hugely successful cake stall.

The next monthly meeting will be held a week earlier, on Thursday April 18 at 1pm at the club rooms on Perkins Street, Alexandra. The hostesses are Maureen, Maria, and Tanya, with

flower of the month and competition and Easter card. The discussion will be around organising a soup and coffee kitchen for the upcoming Alexandra Truck, Ute, and Rod Show, on the June long weekend. The club will also discuss participants for the upcoming CWA Annual General Meeting and State Conference in Melbourne from May 31 to June 1.

The next coffee catch up will be Thursday May 9, at 11am at Elie & Ivy Café.

Watch out for the club’s next Mother’s Day Cake Stall and Trading Table on Saturday May 11, outside FoodWorks.

Craft sessions are held every Tuesday from 10am to 2pm, and Fridays from 10am to noon, at the CWA club rooms. Everyone is very welcome and to find out more contact Sue Wynn (President) on 0412 435 946 or Holly Wal (Secretary) on 0429 123 846.

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# Church Services

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### St Johns Alexandra

9am Eucharist each Sunday  
Children welcome.  
Rev Mario Hendricks -  
Rectory 0435 953 777

## CATHOLIC

Immaculate Conception Parish  
Parish Administrator Fr Jose Mathew.  
Presbytery 0468 810 871  
St Matthews Eildon, Saturday 5pm  
Alexandra, Sunday 8.45am  
Sacred Heart Yea, Sunday 10.45am

## UNITING CHURCH In Australia

St Andrews, Downey Street,  
Alexandra  
Worshipping, Welcoming  
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Jesus. Services 10am each Sunday  
Contact 5772 2362

## OASIS COMMUNITY CHURCH

Loving God, Loving People,  
Loving Life  
118 Grant Street, Alexandra  
Contact: Ps Steven Turner  
Ph: 0413 127 283  
Meeting every Sunday @ 10am

## MOUNT CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY

### BAPTIST CHURCH

37 Grant Street, Alexandra  
Pastor Daniel Kriss  
Services 10am every Sunday  
Phone 0400 282 536  
mccbc.com.au

## THE VINE

A Christian community of the Baptist  
Union of Victoria Sunday 4.30pm service  
Kids program during school term  
St Andrew's, 37 Downey Street,  
Alexandra  
Pastor - Geoffrey Johnstone  
0481 472 152

# Out & About

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

**THE WINNER OF OUR SEYMOUR EXPO FAMILY TICKET COMPETITION WAS Bruce Wilson of Alexandra.** Thank you to everyone who entered.

**DISPOSAL OF GREEN WASTE IS FREE DURING APRIL;** Domestic quantities of garden waste, if not mixed up with other materials, needs to be no longer than 1.5m and less than 25cm in diameter. [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/greenwaste](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/greenwaste)



**THUMBS UP:** A huge thumbs up to all the children who use the crossings when I am on duty. You are all so very polite and lovely and are a credit to your parents and teachers. Thank you for putting a smile on my face daily with your smiling faces and beautiful manners.

**THUMBS DOWN:** At times when the ATM is out of order, please don't take it out on the post office.

**THUMBS DOWN:** To the bloke who consistently parks his black car in any of the disabled parking spaces in town while he visits the coffee shops using a relative's disabled sticker.

**THUMBS UP:** To instructor Jennifer and the Yea Social Ballroom group for running dance practice every Wednesday night in Yea. It's a great way to keep fit and mentally active.

**THUMBS DOWN:** A packet of prunes in Alexandra (large) is \$15 yet in other supermarkets, they are \$4.79. That is quite a mark up for one item.

**THUMBS DOWN:** For not having a rubbish bin at the bus stop on Nihil Street. Cigarette butts and litter are everywhere, under the seat and surrounds. There are also no rubbish bins at the skate park and new playground.

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](mailto: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

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10

Alexandra P & A Ladies Committee AGM will be held today 2.30pm in the admin building at the showgrounds caravan park. All welcome.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 12

*Superstar - The Carpenters Songbook* at Yea Shire Hall. Bookings [trybooking.com/cosst](http://trybooking.com/cosst). More information available at [carpenterssongbook.com](http://carpenterssongbook.com)

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SATURDAY, APRIL 13

*The Stony Six* - a group of musicians creating joyous and buoyant contemporary acoustic music, are performing at MiRA Marysville. Workshop at 4pm, tickets \$10. Concert at 8pm, \$15. Workshop and concert tickets \$25. 16 and under free. For bookings contact Rita 0411 168 840 or email [rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au](mailto:rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au)

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SUNDAY, APRIL 21

Buxton CFA is turning 80. They would like you to help them celebrate at their open day 11am-3pm. Trucks and demos, kids activities, memorabilia, barbecue lunch, and much more.

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TUESDAY, APRIL 23

Join in on information sessions to learn more about Shaping Murrindindi's Future Project and see how you can get involved in the next stage. Noon-2pm at Taggerty

Hall or 3.30 to 6.30pm at the Alexandra Shire Hall. For more information contact Allisha Milestone 0458 758 379 or email [amilestone@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:amilestone@murrindindi.vic.gov.au), or visit [shapingmurrindindifuture.com.au](http://shapingmurrindindifuture.com.au)

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24

Join in on information sessions to learn more about Shaping Murrindindi's Future Project and see how you can get involved in the next stage. 10am-1pm at MiRA Marysville. For more information contact Allisha Milestone 0458 758 379 or email [amilestone@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:amilestone@murrindindi.vic.gov.au), or visit [shapingmurrindindifuture.com.au](http://shapingmurrindindifuture.com.au)

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SATURDAY, APRIL 27

You are invited to the open of *The Life of Anne Frank* at the Alexandra Library, at 11am. RSVP by visiting [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/annefrank](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/annefrank) or call 5772 0333.

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Murrindindi Jobs Expo is on again. 11am-5pm at the Alexandra Football Club. Skill development, networking, resource sharing and plenty more. Free business booths and spaces available. Locally catered event. [murrindindifoodandwine.org.au](http://murrindindifoodandwine.org.au)

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## Workshop and concert with 'The Stony Six' in Marysville

HAVING a strong connection with Marysville, when she served with her late dad on the Whanregarwen CFA truck during the 2009 Marysville bushfires, Jenneke Kylstra returns to Marysville to perform at Marysville Information and Regional Artspace (MiRA) on Saturday, April 13, with her band "The Stony Six".

The "Stony Six" are a group of musicians from South Gippsland who, together, create joyous and buoyant contemporary acoustic music. Their influences are broad, and the resulting sound is eclectic and marvellous. Delightful vocal harmonies are the bedrock of the band, with strings, wind and sticks rounding out their sound. The "Stony Six" present their own originals as well as recreating covers in new and surprising ways. All members are passionate about inclusive music making.

The line-up includes Jane Coker (clarinet, mandolin), Jenneke Kylstra-Shone (accordion, percussion, uke, guitar), Tanya Nolan (guitar, ukulele, percussion) Dave Paxton (guitar, clarinet) and Caitlin Pilkington (fiddle, percussion, uke). They all sing too.

From 4pm to 6pm, the workshop will be led by UK folk singer and vocal coach legend Jane Coker and ukulele teacher and singer Tanya Nolan with support from the band. Jane grew up in the UK folk scene. Surrounded by harmony singing since she was tiny, she has a deep love for songs that can be sung in harmony by as many people as possible. Jane has taught singing and voice for 25 years, and is passionate about helping people to use their natural voice with ease. Tanya's dusky voice is great as a lead voice as well as blending to create fabulous harmony.

Workshop fee is \$10, free for children 16 and under. For RSVP by April 8, send a text to Rita (0411 168 840) or by mail: [rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au](mailto:rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au). All ages, abilities and instruments welcome, and people are free to bring their own instruments. The concert begins at 8pm (\$15 admission, with kids free).

Tickets for the evening concert can be bought over the phone by ringing MIRA on 5963 4567, or on the night at the door by cash or card.

# Standard

INCORPORATING THE ALEXANDRA TIMES - THE YARCK, GOBUR, TAGGERTY, THORNTON, AND ACHERON EXPRESS

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15TH APRIL 2024

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# Lake Eildon assessment finds no viable options for flood mitigation

THE Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)'s technical assessment of Lake Eildon's operating arrangements, conducted by Hydrology and Risk Consulting, has been released. The aim of the assessment was to find ways of reducing downstream flooding, and particularly referenced the October 2022 flood event.

The technical assessment "does not identify any option at Lake Eildon which warrants further consideration."

Six options were explored for their potential to improve protection for downstream communities. The report states, "All options explored were found to be ineffective or unreliable as flood mitigation strategies, or created costs and impacts that outweigh the benefits of a change to how the storage is managed."

It adds, "The assessment report highlights that tributaries that flow into the Goulburn River downstream of Lake Eildon have a more significant impact on flooding in communities downstream, including Molesworth and Seymour, than releases from the lake."

The options assessed were:

**Option one:** Changing target filling curves so that Lake Eildon is full later in the year (for example December/January instead of October/November) and under less conservative inflow statistics (for example, reaching full supply in 85 years out of 100 instead of 95 years).

**Option two:** Reducing target storage levels by holding the lake, where possible, at a maximum volume of 78, 85, 90 or 95 per cent of full supply level (FSL) all year round.

**Option three:** Reducing target storage based on climate signals by holding the lake, where possible at a lower FSL based on industry-standard climate indicators indicating a wet year. This was dismissed as "climate signals tested

for this were generally poor predictors of monthly inflows and storage volumes at Lake Eildon."

**Option four:** Pre-releasing based on forecast rainfall by releasing water to create airspace within the lake, two to three days prior to forecast rainfall and resulting inflows. This was dismissed due to uncertainty regarding the rain location and "the event-based analysis of the October 1993 and October 2022 floods showed that increasing pre-releases to the moderate flood class level flow threshold downstream of Lake Eildon exacerbated the peak flows estimated at Seymour."

**Option five:** Changing maximum surcharge by increasing the amount of water that is held in the lake above the FSL during a flood. This was dismissed as the "option would increase the duration of Lake Eildon outflows above the minor, moderate and major flood classifications at Eildon as well as materially increase the likelihood of the dam overtopping during back-to-back floods."

**Option six:** Restricting maximum outflows by restricting the outflows to match the minor, moderate or major flood class levels downstream of Lake Eildon, and allowing the reservoir to surcharge more often. This option was dismissed as the "option would increase the duration of Lake Eildon outflows above the minor, moderate and major flood classifications at Eildon."

Options three, four, five and six were not deemed to be robust flood mitigation options.

The report states, "The two options that progressed to the detailed technical assessment were changing the target filling curve (option one) and reducing the target storage (option two). These options could increase the flood mitigation provided by Lake Eildon;

however, the cost of offsetting supply reliability impacts outweighed the avoided flood damages."

It adds, "The main reason for the low benefit to cost ratio is that the flood mitigation benefits provided by the changes to target filling curve (option one) and reduced target storage (option two) diminish the further downstream the flood frequencies are assessed. Namely, the degree of difference between the frequency estimates reduce by Molesworth, and the difference is then minor at Seymour. This is because the tributary flows downstream of Eildon from the Rubicon River, Acheron River, Yea River, King Parrot Creek, Sugarloaf Creek and Sunday Creek influences the peak flows at towns such as Seymour. This means that changes to operations at Eildon have less influence on reducing the overall avoided damages downstream. In contrast, the approximate initial capital cost of water shares to implement these options ranges from \$7.5 million to \$266 million."

"When looking at the 1993 and 2022 floods, the only option that would have made a difference to what was actually observed during these floods, would have been holding the storage to a reduced level of 78 per cent FSL. However, this option still had a low cost to benefit ratio. If option one or any other target storage within option two was implemented, there would have been no material difference to the flows observed downstream of Lake Eildon, Molesworth and Seymour."

They also commented on the negative environmental impacts of the two options and for community and recreational facilities, the water's edge would increase.

A public webinar was held on the evening of Tuesday, April 9.

## Anne Frank exhibition coming soon to Alexandra

MURRINDINDI Shire Council is inviting both locals and visitors to join the official opening of the exhibition titled *Let Me Be Myself - The Life Story of Anne Frank* on Saturday, April 27, at 11am at the Alexandra Library.

This remarkable exhibition, produced by the Anne Frank House, brings to life the touching story of Anne Frank, a Jewish German girl, and victim of the Holocaust, who is now famous for keeping a diary of her experiences while she and her family were in hiding, avoiding Nazi persecution.

The exhibition is being held at the library from May 1 to June 29, during usual library opening hours and entry is free. It is suitable for families and highlights prejudice and discriminatory issues, then and now, through young voices.

Red Gate Ward Mayor, Damien Gallagher, said "We are delighted to bring this incredible exhibition to Murrindindi Shire and host it at our wonderful Alexandra Library.

"Anne Frank is a well-known historical figure and one of the most prominent relating to the Holocaust. Her story is moving, devastating, hopeful, and provides an opportunity

for us to remember and educate ourselves about the Holocaust, recognising those who suffered during this horrific time and those who continue to face discrimination and persecution in the present day."

"I'd like to congratulate council's library team for all their work in making this exhibition possible for our communities to experience."

'Let Me Be Myself' includes eight historical modules that weave Anne's personal story with the broader context of her time. Visitors will gain insight into Anne's joyful childhood in Frankfurt, her immigration to Amsterdam, and her life in hiding. The exhibition also sheds light on the rise of the National Socialists, the Holocaust, and the impact of anti-Jewish measures on individuals like Anne Frank.

Explore her extraordinary story and how it's relevant today through the historical modules, a model of the Anne Frank House, extracts from her diary, Second World War memorabilia and a copy of her diary.

For more information and to register for the opening event, visit [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/annefrank](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/annefrank) or call 5772 0333.



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## Exhibition Opening Event THE LIFE STORY OF ANNE FRANK

Saturday 27 April 2024 | 11.00 am  
Alexandra Library, 49 Grant Street

Celebrate the official opening of the exhibition titled 'Let Me Be Myself - The Life Story of Anne Frank', as we reflect on the past, and consider the contemporary relevance of Anne Frank's story.

RSVP for this free event by visiting [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/annefrank](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/annefrank) or by calling 5772 0333.

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## St Mary's Catholic Primary School Enrolments for 2025



St Mary's Catholic Primary School welcomes enrolments for Foundation 2025 during Term 2 2024.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Alexandra, offers the richness of Catholic Education and tradition to the growing child in a safe and engaging environment.

At St Mary's School we experience and promote the gospel values of love, empathy, trust, respect, honesty and fairness.

We aim to develop the whole child spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.

School Tours can be arranged by:

In person at our front office

Phone call: 5772 1500

Email: [admin@smalexandra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@smalexandra.catholic.edu.au)

Times are available Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 3:30pm.

During your tour you will meet with our staff, see our classes, playground, learn about our curriculum and have the opportunity to ask questions.

Enrolment packs and information can be collected from our office, emailed or posted to you by request.

Enrolments close June 2024.

Please call or email to register your interest and to make an appointment for an enrolment tour.

10 Myrtle St (PO Box 151) Alexandra Vic 3714

Phone: 03 5772 1500

E-mail: [principal@smalexandra.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@smalexandra.catholic.edu.au)

Web: [www.smalexandra.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smalexandra.catholic.edu.au)



# Murrindindi Community Food Share initiative

FOUNDATION Murrindindi is proud to announce the launch of its new food share initiative, Murrindindi Community Food Share. Designed to address the pressing issue of food insecurity in our community, the program aims to provide accessible food to those in need.

*The Foodbank Hunger Report 2023* reports that the rising cost of living is the most common reason why people in Australia are struggling to put food on the table. Recognising the urgency of this issue, Foundation Murrindindi has taken proactive steps to establish Murrindindi Community Food Share for people experiencing financial hardship in a non-judgemental and respectful way.

"We recognise the need to address food insecurity in our community, and the launch of the Murrindindi Community Food Share initiative reaffirms our commitment to supporting the well-being of residents in Murrindindi Shire," Robyn Hill, Executive Officer of Foundation Murrindindi said.

"By harnessing the power of community support, we believe that we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those experiencing food insecurity. The philosophy behind Murrindindi Community Food Share is 'Share what you can, take what you need'. This initiative is a tangible way

that community can support community in addressing food insecurity."

Murrindindi Community Food Share will be open on the first Thursday of every month, from 9am to noon at the rear of 88a Grant Street, Alexandra accessed via Bayley Street. Non-perishable food and personal care items will be available. No appointments are necessary, simply drop in to the Community Food Share and bring your own bag if possible. The food share gratefully accept donations of fresh fruit and vegetables during opening hours on the day the Food Share is open.

This free initiative aims to complement the existing service providers addressing the increasing demand for food relief in our community.

Foundation Murrindindi encourages individuals and businesses interested in supporting the Food Share project to get involved by donating food items or providing financial contributions to sustain the program's operations.

To learn more about Foundation Murrindindi and how to get involved in the Foodshare initiative, please contact Robyn Hill on 0488 007 688 or [robyn@foundationmurrindindi.org.au](mailto:robyn@foundationmurrindindi.org.au)

Foundation Murrindindi will also have a new office location at 88A Grant Street in Alexandra, so you can pop in and visit them. The new office opened on April 1.

## UPCOMING INFORMATION SESSIONS

### Shaping Murrindindi's Future Project

Come along to the following information sessions to learn more about the Shaping Murrindindi's Future Project and how you can get involved in the next stage.

- Tuesday 23 April from 12 noon - 2.00 pm at the Taggerty Hall
- Tuesday 23 April from 3.30 - 6.30 pm at the Alexandra Shire Hall
- Wednesday 24 April from 10.00 am - 1.00 pm at MiRA Marysville

This Project is focused on assisting communities who are directly affected by the transition away from native timber harvesting, particularly the areas of Marysville, Taggerty, Buxton and Alexandra, to identify and develop opportunities for economic diversification.

A representative from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) will be at each of the sessions to provide information on access to the Forestry Transition Fund.

This project is made possible through funding from the State Government's Victorian Forestry Plan and is supported by Murrindindi Shire Council, DEECA and RMIT University.

For more information, please contact:  
Allisha Milestone – Project Manager  
M: 0458 758 379 E: [amilestone@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:amilestone@murrindindi.vic.gov.au)  
[shapingmurrindindisfuture.com.au](http://shapingmurrindindisfuture.com.au)  
Facebook: @ShapingMurrindindisFuture



## AGL grants for local community organisations

LOCAL community organisations could be eligible for up to \$5000 in grants from the AGL Hydro Community Fund.

The fund, which aims to support the community located around AGL's hydro assets, is open for applications from April 1 to April 30.

AGL representative, Belinda Young, said of the fund, "We aim to work in ways that give lasting benefits to the communities that we operate in, and our goal is to create positive social, environmental and economic outcomes as our business grows."

To be eligible for the grants, organisations must be not-for-profit and located close to

AGL's hydro assets. This, in particular, relates to the communities of Eildon, Mount Beauty, and Rubicon. However, other local community organisation applications are also accepted.

Organisations that AGL considers for the grants include local sporting clubs, grassroots community groups, toy libraries, writers' festivals, kindergartens and schools, to name just a few. The company is also willing to provide grants to local support services, for things that help the community in times of need.

Ms Young said that AGL moves forward "with the view that we hope we can create resilient communities, we can help with climate action, cost of living, and First Nations empowerment, they are all really important."

The guidelines for the AGL Hydro Community Fund has information on the groups that are eligible to apply for a grant.

Announcements regarding successful applications and distribution of grants will be made sometime before the end of May, and invoices are required before the end of the financial year.

Applications can be completed via an online form, found on the company's website, [agl.com.au/hydro](http://agl.com.au/hydro) and navigating to the community tab, or a paper version can be provided. For further enquiries, contact Belinda Young on 0429 597 535.

## Drumming workshops in Yea

MURRINDINDI Shire Council is hosting two African Drumming Workshops, taking participants on a memorable journey into West African Music. The workshops will be held on Thursday, May 9 in Alexandra and Yea.

Drums play an important role in every aspect of African life, including the physical, emotional and spiritual. Come along for an exciting experience filled with energy. Boost your mental wellbeing and help foster a sense of community and camaraderie.

During the workshops, the participants will learn about instruments, songs and rhythms. Every participant gets a djembe drum for the session. Sessions are inclusive regardless of age or ability. The sessions encourage mindfulness and provide stress relieving benefits.

The Yea workshop will be held at the Yea Wetlands from 10.45 to 11.15am, followed by a lunch.

The Alexandra workshop will be held at the Alexandra Shire Hall from from 5.30 to 6pm, followed by a barbecue dinner.

There are 100 spots available for each session, so get in quickly. Please register with council for catering purposes. For more information, please call council on 5772 0333.

This event is proudly supported by Council's Flood Recovery Unit. Flood recovery across Murrindindi Shire Council is jointly funded by the Australian and Victorian Governments through Emergency Recovery Victoria.

## The Dame: a shop for social good

MENZIES Support Services has announced the creation of The Dame, a community-integrated and connected pop-up vintage, retro, new and recycled boutique clothing store. It will stock clothing for children, teens, adults as well as bespoke upcycled, recycled and new homewares and gifts.

This program, operated by Menzies, will support NDIS, return to work placements and trainees through partnerships, providing people with meaningful and engaging connection with the community while gaining life and pre-work skills within a safe and supportive retail environment.

Menzies has partnered with Foundation Murrindindi as a suitable value aligning not-for-profit community service, bolstering Menzies delivery of responsive and effective support programs.

Foundation Murrindindi have leased the property 88A Grant St Alexandra in the heart of town, and Menzies are subletting the shop-front from them.

The Dame philosophy is promoting inclusiveness and support for persons with disabilities and those who require a safe environment to regain self-confidence, self-esteem and the necessary work skills to re-enter the workforce after disconnection, while reducing stigma and creating positive relationships within the community.

The Dame will be launched on the week of the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show to capture the enormous foot traffic and street-front exposure.

There will be a big call for donations of clothing, etcetera, to set up the shop, and the organisation is happy to accept these donations now.

The name of the shop, The Dame, maintains the connection with Dame Pattie Menzies who was born in Alexandra, lobbied, campaigned and became the patron of Dame Pattie Menzies Centre in 1980 after the purchase of The Mount.

A portion of the money generated from the sale of items from The Dame Boutique will also help to support the Murrindindi Community Food Share.

# MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL NEWS



## FREE GREEN WASTE DISPOSAL IN APRIL

From 1 - 30 April, you can dispose of your green waste for FREE at Council's Resource Recovery Centres.

This includes domestic quantities of garden waste. For green waste to be accepted, it must:

- not be mixed up with other materials
- be no longer than 1.5 m in length and less than 25 cm in diameter (branches and stumps larger than this will incur a fee)

For more information on green waste disposal, give us a call on 5772 0333 or visit [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/greenwaste](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/greenwaste)

## RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS NO LONGER FREE

RATs are no longer free or available from Council locations. Please visit your local supermarket or pharmacy to purchase tests.

For more information on COVID-19, visit [betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://betterhealth.vic.gov.au) and search 'COVID-19'.

## SLEEP & SETTling INFO SESSIONS

Join our FREE Sleep and Settling Information Sessions, facilitated by our dedicated Maternal and Child Health experts.

Topics will include frequent overnight waking, bottle dependency, bedtime or nap refusal, cot to bed transition and catnapping.

The next session is in Yea, Tuesday 16 April 2024.

Scan the QR code to book, or visit our website to view more information and other Maternal and Child Health Programs and Activities  
[murrindindi.vic.gov.au/mch](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/mch)



## SHAPE THE FUTURE OF STATE FORESTS

Help the Victorian Government understand the Central Highlands State Forests by completing an online feedback form or dropping a pin on their map.

For more information and to participate, visit [engage.vic.gov.au/central-highlands-forests](http://engage.vic.gov.au/central-highlands-forests)

## THE MOBILE LIBRARY IS 'ON THE ROAD'

Join us for an evening, real people talking about real books, eBooks, magazines, films and other great works.

- Marysville, 17 April, 7.00 pm
- Eildon, 24 April, 6.00 pm
- Glenburn, 21 June, 7.00 pm
- Highlands, 13 September, 6.00 pm
- Flowerdale, 18 September, 7.00 pm
- Buxton, 25 September, 7.00 pm
- Taggerty, 16 October, 7.00 pm
- Toolangi, 23 October, 7.00 pm

Please RSVP by calling 5772 0333.

## ATDW - IS YOUR BUSINESS LISTED?

Business listings and events on most official tourism websites come from the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW). This includes [discoverdindi.com.au](http://discoverdindi.com.au)

For an annual fee of \$295 your business will be listed on tourism websites all over the country. For more information, visit our website, we can even help get you started!  
[murrindindi.vic.gov.au/atdw](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/atdw)

## DRAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Council's draft Economic Development Strategy is now ready for you to review and provide feedback. Visit our online engagement platform, The Loop, and search 'economic strategy':

[theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au](http://theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au)

Feedback closes Sunday 12 May.

## AFRICAN DRUMMING WORKSHOPS

Council is hosting two African Drumming Workshops, taking participants on a memorable journey into West African Music.

There are two sessions on Thursday 9 May:

- Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre: 10.45 - 11.15 am
- Alexandra Shire Hall: 5.30 - 6.00 pm

Both sessions will be followed by a meal.

There are limited spots available for each session – so get in quick! Please register for catering purposes at [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/africandrumming](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/africandrumming)

## STAY INFORMED

To stay up to date with the latest Council news, visit [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/news](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/news) or follow us on Facebook.

## GET IN TOUCH

[customer@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:customer@murrindindi.vic.gov.au)  
[murrindindi.vic.gov.au/request](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/request)  
5772 0333

# Role changes for Eildon CFA

THE Eildon Fire Brigade held their Biennial Elections last night with the new Brigade Management Team (BMT) to take effect as of July 1 through to June 30, 2026.

As of July 1, there will be a few changes to the BMT, with Captain Nicki Lund choosing to step down as captain after 10 years and Len Timmins choosing to step down as lieutenant after 18 years. Both will remain within the BMT in other positions.

Lieutenant Brian Lowry has also chosen to step down as lieutenant after 12 years and Ken Dare as secretary after four years.

The Eildon Fire Brigade would like to thank Brian and Ken who will continue to remain an integral part of the brigade.

The Eildon Fire Brigade Management Team and members would like to thank everyone for their support and dedication over the past two years and wish everyone all the best for the next two years.

The following members were elected to positions effective from July 1, through to June 30, 2026: Captain John Bird (previously Fourth Lieutenant), First Lt (Operations), Nicki Lund (previously Captain), Second Lt (Training) Darren McGrath (no change), Third Lt (Marine) vacant, will be managed by BMT, Fourth Lt (Asset and Maintenance) Neil Campbell (new), Secretary Tim (new), Treasurer Dale Harrison (no change), Communications Officer John Hughes (no

change), Non-Operational Coordinator Joan McGrath (new role), Community Safety Coordinator Nicki Lund (no change), Health and Safety Coordinator Len Timmins (previously First Lt), VFBV Delegates Darren McGrath and Brian Lowry (no change), and Group Delegates John Bird and Nicki Lund (no change).

Congratulations everyone and thank you for your continued support and dedication to your community.



Members of the Eildon Fire Brigade. Some members are missing from this image. -S

## We're proud to support our local communities

Each year, our AGL Hydro Community Fund awards grants to community-based initiatives, projects and events in and around Mount Beauty and Eildon.

To see if you are eligible for one of our grants, download our guidelines or call us, then submit your application between 1 April 2024 and 30 April 2024.

[agl.com.au/hydro](http://agl.com.au/hydro)

1800 039 600



## Fire restrictions set to end April 15

THE Fire Danger Period (FDP) will finish at 1am on Monday, April 15 in Murrindindi Shire. While the restrictions being lifted, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) still expects the grassfire risk to remain across the state so Victorians need to remain alert and prepared.

CFA District 22 Assistant Chief Fire Officer Rohan Taylor said with weather conditions changing they're able to lift restrictions to assist people in the agricultural sector with preparations for cropping and farming.

"It's also an opportunity for people to start cleaning up around their properties. The fuels are still very dry in the Goulburn Valley, so we're urging everyone to stay safe, whether you're living in or travelling to high bushfire risk areas" he said.

"Please monitor the conditions on hot, dry and windy days, as we may still see some days of elevated fire risk."

The end of the FDP will be an opportunity for some landowners to burn-off again, however it's important that residents check that local conditions are safe before undertaking these activities.

"You must register your burn-offs, check weather conditions and follow local council laws and regulations," ACFO Taylor said.

"Registering your burn-off ensures that if smoke or fire is reported, the incident is cross-checked with our register, which prevents firefighters from unnecessarily responding."

"When conducting burn-offs, remain alert and always have resources on hand to extinguish the fire. Landowners can register their burn-off online at [firepermits.vic.gov.au](http://firepermits.vic.gov.au) or call 1800 668 511. If possible, landowners should also notify their neighbours and others nearby who may be sensitive to smoke so they can take necessary precautions.

80

**Buxton CFA is turning 80**  
we'd love to celebrate with you  
at the station

**Open Day Sunday April 21**  
11am - 3pm

**FREE**




**1944 - 2024**

- Trucks & Demos
- Juniors Demos
- Kids activities
- Displays
- Memorabilia
- Little Pat firetruck
- BBQ Lunch
- Birthday Cake
- Home Fire Safety Demo at 12 noon
- UGFM live broadcast



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# Meeting to discuss Breakaway Bridge

Continued from Page 1

There were also discussions around the state of funding for the bridge, with regards to flood recovery money being available to repair the bridge back to its original stage, which was affected by the floods. Upgrading the bridge was estimated to lead to a \$5 million shortfall.

“For Breakaway Bridge, our costs range from hundreds of thousands of dollars, to approximately \$6 million,” Kim Chadband, manager of flood recovery for the shire, said.

“And we’ve got other issues in relation to timing. I suppose the bottom line is primarily that political advocacy will be the key to achieving a positive outcome,” she said, when discussing the funding issue.

There was a significant amount of community engagement, with many questions directed to the council, displaying the concern the community has for the issue.

The bridge acts as a cut-through for local residents from Alexandra to the Maroonah Highway, and the loss of the bridge affects transport and emergency services.

Jamie Duggan from Breakaway Twin Rivers Caravan Park said, “Breakaway Bridge

for our area, is practical to have in place. It’s an emergency in and out point, so we have two in and out points out here. It’s something that I don’t think should be considered, not being rebuilt at all. I think we need it.

“Replacing whatever is there now is fine, as long as there is still a bridge. We’ve managed with a one way bridge for a while, a few years now. A two-way would be great, but a two-way isn’t practical because they’d have to take land either from the caravan park or the farmer across the road who’s already lost land,” he said.

Jamie has launched a petition to garner support for fixing the bridge.

“That’s to prove to council, because there are people in the Acheron area that are retired, and they’re happy to have no bridge put back there, because they think for some reason that there’s less traffic now that the bridge is closed, which is not possible because we go over Breakaway Bridge to go into town, and now we’re going up Acheron Road. Council needs to realise that it’s a vital part of the area,” he said.

Moving forward, the council is seeking to determine the state of funding for the bridge, at which point further discussion will be had with the community surrounding the options and their feasibility.

## Digital drivers licences

VICTORIANS will now have the option to carry their licence on their phone, with the Victorian Government’s digital driver licences set to begin rolling out across the state next month.

Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Melissa Horne, and Minister for Government Services, Gabrielle Williams, announced the rollout.

Throughout April, consultation will ramp up with organisations that rely on photo identification including bars, restaurants, retailers, Victoria Police, and Australia Post to ensure they’re prepared for the rollout.

In May, more than 4.5 million Victorians who are fully licenced drivers, motorcyclists, or heavy vehicle operators will be the first eligible to download digital driver’s licences as part of the state-wide launch.

This follows a successful trial in Ballarat last year, where more than 15,000 Victorians accessed their digital licences via the myVicRoads and Service Victoria apps.

Digital licences have undergone rigorous privacy and security testing, boasting features like a dynamic hologram and a timed QR code that businesses and authorities can scan to verify authenticity and prevent fraudulent use.

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

Victorians who have downloaded either the VicRoads or Services Victoria app will automatically receive their digital licence through their app once it has been processed in May and will be alerted either by push notification or email.

Learners and probationary licence holders will be able to access their digital licence by 2025. Visit the VicRoads or Service Victoria websites to find out more about digital driver licences.

Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne said, “Our digital driver licences will make it easier for Victorians when they go about their day-to-day lives, whether that’s driving around, renting a car, collecting a parcel, or visiting a licensed venue.”

Minister for Government Services Gabrielle Williams added, “Victorians have been asking us for a digital driver licence, and from next month millions of Victorians can access them on their phones alongside other government-issued cards like a Working with Children Check, seniors card or fishing licence.”

## Alexandra Rotary Art Show



Art show committee members Jenny Paul, Ian Gibb, Trevor Holmes, Chris Jackson, and Bob Flowers, in their abstract colourful shirts. -S



A large crowd was in attendance for the Easter Art Show’s opening night, which included live music and drinks and nibbles. -S



Purchaser Chris Smith with creator of ‘Red Fox’, Vicki Cambridge. -S

## Night strike training in Fawcett

THE Koriella Fire Brigade located at 10 Stoney Creek Road, Fawcett, is to conduct another night training exercise as part of the Koriella Fire Brigade’s annual series of ‘Night Strike’ training exercises on Friday, May 10.

The exercise will include most of the local brigades from within the Alexandra Group. The Australian Defence Force as well as State Emergency Services (SES), Victoria Police (VICPOL) and the Department of Energy, Environment, and Climate Action (DEECA) have all been invited to attend again.

The exercise will be conducted in the Fawcett and Koriella areas from 6pm through to 11pm.

The exercise itself will involve local brigades ‘Turning Out’ to a lightning strike which has subsequently started a grass and scrub fire threatening building assets. There will be no live or active grass fires, however, a Country Fire Authority (CFA) car prop will be in position and utilised.

This training is conducted to expose crew members to situations that they will often come across when ‘Turning Out’ to real incidents. The better trained they are the better the response is. This is to ensure that the CFA remain a trusted and reliable capability for their communities and to build stronger ties and better cohesion with local emergency services.

Lastly, being a night exercise, the CFA would appreciate that if you need to travel along Spring Creek Road Koriella or Fawcett that night, please exercise caution when doing so, so that CFA volunteers are not put in harm’s way with the additional risk of speeding traffic. Please observe the required 40kph speed limit when approaching flashing red and blue lights. Victoria Police will be on site.

All queries can be directed to the Koriella Fire Brigade Captain, Scott Reeves, via e-mail [scott.koriellafb@gmail.com](mailto:scott.koriellafb@gmail.com) or by mobile phone 0417 584 910.

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## Keeping the honey bee population healthy

WITH over 47,900 registered beekeepers who own approximately 855,300 hives, keeping Australia's honey bee population healthy is no mean feat.

'Bee Pest Blitz' is an annual month-long national campaign to increase awareness of the importance of bee biosecurity and encourage beekeepers to inspect their hives for high priority exotic and established pests.

Launched in 2023, the annual campaign calls on all Australian honey bee beekeepers to undertake biosecurity surveillance activities.

"Surveillance is key to the timely detection of new pests and provides the best chance for industries and governments to respond before pests become established and widespread," Sarah Hilton, Bee Biosecurity Manager at Plant Health Australia said.

Under the *Honey Bee Industry Code of Practice* beekeepers are required to inspect their hives twice per year, using a method that looks for the presence of arthropod pests, including *Varroa* spp. (*varroa*) and *Tropilaelaps* spp. (*tropilaelaps*) mites.

By participating in 'Bee Pest Blitz' beekeepers will fulfil one of their annual bee biosecurity obligations and requirements.



Beekeepers are being asked to help keep the local bee population healthy. -John Sullivan

This time of the year is ideal to conduct hive inspections which are crucial for the early detection of exotic and reporting of high priority established bee pests.

Beekeepers are asked to keep samples of suspected pests and report their findings via the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881.

Surveillance reporting will be handled at a jurisdictional level and

all personal information will be kept confidential.

"Maintaining honey bee health and sustainable bee populations is essential for the future production of Australian honey and supporting those agricultural sectors that depend on honey bee pollination services," Sarah said.

Visit [beepestblitz.com.au](http://beepestblitz.com.au) for free surveillance resources and video tutorial.

## Seeking farms for demonstrations

AGRICULTURE Victoria, in partnership with Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA), is conducting a new producer demonstration program with the opportunity to establish five new on-farm demonstration projects.

Agriculture Victoria Project Leader Farming Systems, Bindi Hunter, said the program is inviting expressions of interest from Victorian sheep and beef producer groups to design and conduct their own three-year project.

"The demonstrations are conducted on group members' farms (preferably three sites per project per year) and involve participation by members in group activities, including skill development, site monitoring and discussion of results.

"Projects must be focused on increasing adoption of key management practices or commercially available technologies that improve business profitability, farm productivity and sustainability," Ms Hunter said.

Selected projects will focus on demonstrating systems or technologies in one of four priority areas: Manage and adapt to a changing climate or specific regional conditions (e.g. addressing feed gaps, grazing system, enterprise mix); reduce emissions or emissions intensity, (e.g. reproductive efficiencies, feed types and quality, soil fertility management); manage animal health and welfare risks resulting from increasing or emerging biosecurity threats in a changing climate; or implement on-farm innovations that improve production and management efficiencies (e.g. recent research findings, genetics, ag tech).

Expressions of interest close on Monday, May 13.

For more information and to receive an expression of interest form, contact Bindi Hunter, Project Leader Farming Systems on 0428 589 016 or email [bindi.hunter@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:bindi.hunter@agriculture.vic.gov.au)

**MARCH PHOTO COMPETITION**

'Bulls' March competition winner  
Bronwyn McFadyen

Judge Sam Hicks comments: Gorgeous boy!!!  
The image is a clear capture, and he is cheeky poking his tongue out, so he is the winner.

# WINNER

\$50 voucher kindly sponsored by

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Submit your photo entry to [manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au](mailto:manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au) by April 30, for your chance to win a \$50 gift voucher from Dindi Country Clothing in Alexandra.

The April theme is 'CHANGING TREES'.

\*Professional photographers are ineligible to enter\*

### The Rabbit Trap

www.indcartoons.com.au

By Jed Dunstan

**PHOTO COMPETITION**

Submit your photo competition entry for April, for your chance to win a \$50 gift voucher from Dindi Country Clothing in Alexandra.

The April theme is 'changing trees'.

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Professional photographers are ineligible to enter.

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Consulting at Alexandria District Health - Starting in April 2024



GENERAL BREAST AND THYROID SURGEON, ENDOSCOPIST Mr Binh T Nguyen MBBS(Uni Melb) FRACS

Mr Binh T Nguyen was trained in Melbourne, Australia. He completed his medical degree through the University of Melbourne. He is a Consultant Surgeon at Northern Health, Kilmore Hospital, Western Health (Bacchus Marsh) and Kyneton District Health. He operates privately at Northpark, Warringal and Epworth Hospitals. His subspecialty areas of interest are as follows:

- General surgery: skin lesions, ingrown toenails, hernias, varicose veins, circumcision, haemorrhoidectomy, gallbladder surgery, carpal tunnel, vasectomy, pilonidal surgery, perianal surgery, laparoscopic abdominal surgery
- Endoscopy
- Thyroid Surgery
- Breast Surgery

\*Fees Apply



# General surgical services commence in April at Alexandria District Health

by Director of Medical Services, Dr Poranee Buttery, Alexandria District Health

IT gives me great pleasure to announce that Mr Binh Nguyen, an experienced general, breast and endocrine surgeon has commenced practice at Alexandria District Health.

Mr Nguyen's range of surgical management offerings include, but are not limited to hernia surgery, endocrine conditions including thyroid, breast lesions and lumps, surgical endoscopy, and other soft tissue lesions.

While there is a preference to look after everyone as near to home as possible, sometimes conditions need a higher level of

care. With a public hospital appointment at the Northern Hospital, and private consulting at the Epworth, Warringal, and North Park Private Hospitals, Mr Nguyen can treat more complex surgery and support patients who require additional medical care.

For more information, his rooms can be contacted on 9017 1617. Please fax all referrals to 8888 4969. Email [reception@gilbertroadspecialists.com.au](mailto:reception@gilbertroadspecialists.com.au)

Bookings are now open, for consultations that will commence in April.

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# Here for You

## APRIL COMMUNITY UPDATE - GOULBURN VALLEY PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT

### STAY AHEAD OF FLU AND COVID THIS SEASON

This winter, we know what to do to stay well against the flu and COVID. Get your flu shot and up-to-date COVID vaccine. It's the most effective way to stay protected this winter.

You can get both vaccines at the same time, and the flu shot is free if you're

- aged 65 and over
- pregnant
- an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander over 6 months old
- and people with medical conditions that put them at increased risk of severe flu.

Remember, the flu shot protects children from serious illness caused by the flu. Children and babies six months or older need to get the flu vaccine every year. It can be given at the same time as other routine childhood vaccines and it's free for kids aged 6 months to under 5.



### BOLO APRIL REPORT (Be On the Look Out)

#### COVID-19, FLU & RSV

COVID-19, flu and RSV are increasing in our community and we all need to help stop its spread. More people are getting sick in the community because our protection from both infection and vaccination decreases with time. We need to help and take care of people who are at greatest risk of getting sick – this includes older people over 65, people with a disability or other medical problems and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. If you feel sick or have any cold or flu like symptoms, it's important not to visit people who are at higher risk of getting very sick from the virus.

Book now with your doctor or pharmacist, find out where through the vaccination finder by scanning the QR code.

For more information visit [betterhealth.vic.gov.au/stay-well-this-winter](http://betterhealth.vic.gov.au/stay-well-this-winter)



# What's happening at the state's hospitals?

THE state Liberal Party have claimed that "regional and rural health services across Victoria are facing forced amalgamations, service cuts and closures as the state government slashes millions in health funding."

Leader of the Opposition, John Pesutto, said, "Victorians should make no mistake, these are not changes to improve efficiency, but desperate and savage cuts triggered by Labor's financial mismanagement."

"Under the Allan Labor Government, regional and rural communities across the state will be stripped of their voice in local health services."

Shadow Minister for Health, Georgie Crozier, accused the government of "funding cuts by stealth... it is patients across rural and regional Victoria who will suffer."

Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas spoke to Richard Willingham on ABC Melbourne on Thursday, April 4, in response to media reports saying that regional hospitals may be forced to close if they are unable to find savings.

She said that the article in the *Herald Sun* on Thursday was "at best misleading and at worst it's just simply wrong."

She pointed out that the government has invested \$24.8 billion, almost a third of the state's budget, in the health service system and they want to see it spent on care delivery. They're keen for health services to look at their use of consultants and public relations staff, and to see if there are duplicated processes.

She noted pressure that COVID-19 put onto the state's budget as well as on medical services, and the extended lifespan of Victorians. She also acknowledged the staffing challenges in regional hospitals.

She said, "There will be no hospital closures under my watch."

Contacted for further comment, including whether amalgamations or budget cuts are in play, a Victorian Government spokesperson said, "There are no plans to close any Victorian hospitals, unlike the Liberal National Party. We are not in the business of shutting down, privatising or slashing funding to our hospitals."

"Victorians rightly expect us to prioritise the frontline health services they need and that is what we have done. Streamlining back of house functions will not impact our frontline health workers."

"We have a world-class health system in Victoria. It continues to be our largest investment and this will continue to be the case."

It's understood that the Department of Health has requested that services look at options to reduce any back of house inefficiencies, as it was not acceptable to learn that some rural health services were using taxpayer funds on expensive PR firms and other consultants.

Member for Eildon Cindy McLeish said, "These funding cuts by stealth are the real-world consequence of Labor's financial mismanagement and, it is patients across rural and regional Victoria who will suffer. These cuts and threats of large-scale amalgamations demonstrate the disregard Labor has for our local community. This is not the first-time health services have been amalgamated, there are already a number of hospitals in the west of the state that have been forced to amalgamate to survive. Make no mistake, these are not changes to improve efficiency, but desperate and savage cuts triggered by Labor's financial mismanagement."

## Property damaged in Eildon

POLICE are investigating damage to property in the vicinity of High Street, Eildon overnight on January 28 and 29. Police have released images of two people who may be able to assist police with their enquiries.

Police are appealing for anyone who can assist in identifying the people in the images, witnesses or anyone with information regarding the damages, to contact Eildon Police Station on 5774 2104 or Crime Stoppers at [crimestoppersvic.com.au/report-a-crime](http://crimestoppersvic.com.au/report-a-crime)



Are you able to identify the people in this image? -S

## Extension for e-scooter trial

THE government is extending the current e-scooter trial for the next six months to investigate additional safety and compliance measures ahead of introducing permanent regulatory settings later this year, ensuring e-scooters are safer for all road users.

Victorians, especially shift workers, have embraced e-scooters as another mode of transport for getting home, with more than eight million trips recorded during a closely monitored trial – making the public hire share scheme one of the world's most popular.

Minister for Public and Active Transport, Gabrielle Williams, commented on the e-scooter program, saying, "E-scooters are here to stay – they've proven popular among commuters, especially shift workers, providing an additional option to travel home safely."

Data gathered during the trial period shows most e-scooter users are doing the right thing, however it also indicates that more time is needed to improve compliance and make e-scooters safer, and support riders to understand the rules.

"We have more work to do on safety and compliance to ensure that e-scooters are safe when they're made permanent later this year," Ms Williams said.

The government is investigating extra measures to ensure e-scooter riders and other road users are fully aware of and comply with the rules for e-scooter use. During this time, the current settings will continue.

To assist with this, a refreshed education campaign is being developed for roll out across trial areas, focusing on safe rider behaviour, helmet use and e-scooter parking.

Riders must not ride on footpaths, always wear a helmet, be at least 16 years old, not carry a passenger and not drink and ride. E-scooters must not travel at more than 20km/h and only be ridden on roads with a maximum speed limit of 60km/h or less.

User surveys conducted by share scheme operators revealed that around 28 per cent of e-scooter trips in metropolitan areas and up to 40 per cent of trips in Ballarat replaced a vehicle trip (private car or rideshare vehicle) on the riders' most recent e-scooter ride, helping to alleviate traffic congestion and reduce emissions.

Share hire e-scooters are only legal in councils that have an agreement with an operator.

The government will continue to help councils who choose to introduce share hire schemes by developing a guide with best practice advice on how to manage e-scooter share schemes, including parking management and operator insurance requirements.

The current settings will now end on October 4.



Make sure you get your flu shot in time for winter. -Mcfarlandmo

# Time for Aussies to shoot flu

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia is urging all eligible Australians to get their flu shot following an alarming number of flu cases across the country.

In the first quarter of 2024 there were 26,836 influenza cases reported by the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS).

By February, case numbers were already double those reported at the same time last year.

Pharmacy Guild National President Professor, Trent Twomey, says Australians should get ahead of the flu season and get their vaccination now.

"The flu season typically runs from May to October," Professor Twomey said. "However, flu vaccines for the 2024 season are available now in community pharmacies across Australia."

Professor Twomey said that getting vaccinated ahead of the flu season is important for protecting yourself and your loved ones from the flu and its complications.

"Although the vaccine will last throughout the year, it is most effective in the first three to four months following its administration."

According to the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI), people who received an influenza

vaccine in late 2023 are still recommended to get the flu vaccine in 2024.

ATAGI also advises that flu vaccines can be given on the same day as other vaccines, such as COVID-19.

The Australian Government funds influenza vaccines for eligible patients under the National Immunisation Program (NIP).

Further information will be available from the Department of Health and Aged Care when NIP-funded influenza vaccines become available.

Ask your community pharmacist about your flu vaccine or visit [findapharmacy.com.au](http://findapharmacy.com.au) to book an appointment.

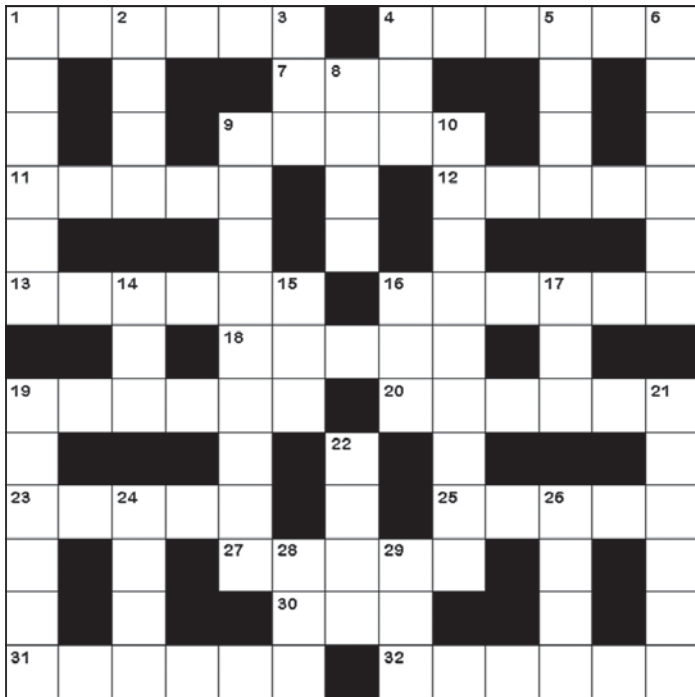
# PUZZLES

**SOLUTIONS**  
Page 17

## Crossword

### ACROSS

1. Not private.
4. A light refreshing wind.
7. An alcoholic drink.
9. Main force of a blow.
11. A very dark black.
12. Make corrections to.
13. Material for starting a fire.
16. A keen insight.
18. Born in Wales.
19. Went back to bad behaviour.
20. Take and hold for ransom.
23. A descriptive heading.
25. A high sheen.
27. Put on clothes.
30. Be in debt.
31. Put together two or more pieces.
32. Australia's floral emblem.



### DOWN

- |                           |                                |  |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Set in advance.        | 9. Covered with precious gems. | 21. Hand tool used to grind and pulverise. |
| 2. A cutting remark.      | 10. Schools of thought.        | 22. Masticate.                             |
| 3. An automobile.         | 14. A small sharp bite.        | 24. A duplicate copy.                      |
| 4. A Buddhist doctrine.   | 15. A carpet for celebrities.  | 26. Leave undone.                          |
| 5. A fish similar to cod. | 16. Inquire about.             | 28. A fishing pole.                        |
| 6. Covered with fleas.    | 17. Adult males.               | 29. Stitch together.                       |
| 8. A small cube of sugar. | 19. Capable of causing death.  |  |

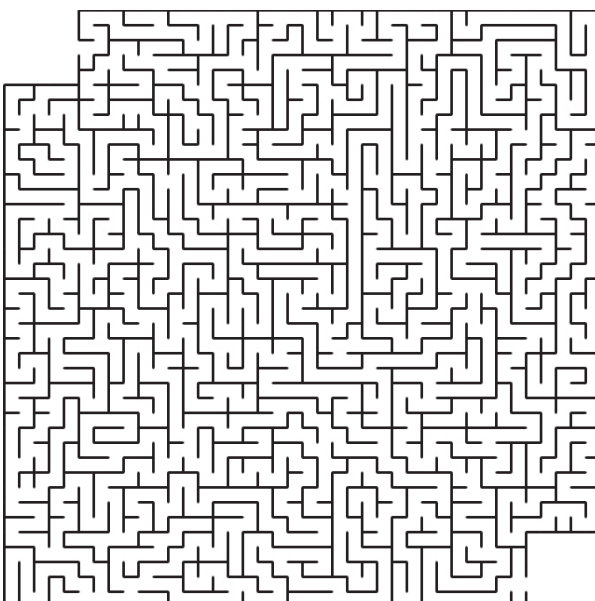
## Word Search

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

### OUTER SPACE

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| ASTEROID  | METEOR    |
| ASTRONAUT | MOON      |
| BLACKHOLE | NEBULA    |
| COMET     | ORBIT     |
| ECLIPSE   | SATELLITE |
| GALAXY    | SUN       |

## Maze



## Sudoku

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

### Difficulty: Hard

Fill in the boxes using the numbers 1 to 9.

Every row and column and every group of 9 boxes inside the thicker lines must contain each number and letter only once.

## Math Square

4	÷		+		9
×		+		+	
	×		+		48
+		+		+	
	-		-	1	-3
42		15		11	

### 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.

# Princess Alexandra's knee

WHILE the focus of Alexandra's attention of late has been on Princess Alexandra's missing head, much attention was given to the state of her knee in times past. So much so that a copycatting fashion trend developed, called the Alexandra Limp.

In 1867, Princess Alexandra of Denmark, Princess of Wales, gave birth to her third child and was diagnosed with rheumatic fever, a combination of strep throat and scarlet fever which was sometimes deadly, given that this was prior to the advent of antibiotics.

While the princess survived, she needed to learn to walk again with the aid of walking sticks, and she continued to limp both during and after her recovery. The limp may also have been caused by migratory arthritis or gonococcal arthritis, with the latter possibly transmitted to her husband, the future King Edward VII.

Princess Alexandra often wore choker necklaces or dresses with high collars, both of which were intended to hide a small scar on her neck. Many noblewomen followed the trend, changing the fashion of the day.

When the limp developed, this too developed into a trend, later known as the Alexandra Limp. Among both the nobility and the lower classes in both England and Scotland, the limping trend took off after it was discovered that a limp could be mimicked through wearing an uneven pair of shoes.

The fashionistas sought out uneven shoes, initially from an Edinburgh-based cobbler who provided shoes to the queen. They asked for shoes which would help them to replicate the limp.

Other cobblers soon followed suit, providing pairs of shoes in which one shoe had a low heel and the other had a high heel.

Able-bodied women were frequently seen limping around the towns and cities. The trend began to fade after a year or two, possibly due to the unpleasant side-effects of chronic limping, or possibly because they found other ways to torture themselves for fashion.

The North British Mail said in 1969, "A monstrosity has made itself visible among the female promenaders in Princes Street. It is as painful as it is idiotic and ludicrous. Taking my customary walk the other day, observant of men, women and things, I met three ladies. They were all three young, all three good-looking, and all three lame! At least, such was my impression, seeing as they all carried handsome sticks and limped; but, on looking back, as everyone else did, I could discover no reason why they should do so. Indeed, one decent woman expressed her pity in an audible 'Puir things!' as she passed, but I was enlightened by hearing a pretty girl explain to her companion, 'Why that's the Alexandra limp! How ugly!'"

An influential fashion journal of the day said, "The Alexandra Limp is to be discontinued forthwith. The skirt of the season, we are informed, is to cling closely round the feet, in consequence whereof ladies will be obliged to walk as if their feet...were tied together."

Author Jeremy Clay called it the most thunderously daft episode in the entire history of fashion.

# One giant leaf for plant-kind

NASA has announced that when humans take their first steps back on the moon after 50 years during the Artemis III mission, astronauts will cultivate and return lunar-grown plants to Earth for the first time. The mission is slated for a September 2026 launch.

Known as Lunar Effects on Agricultural Flora (LEAF), the project will collect plant growth and development data that will help scientists understand the use of plants grown for both human nutrition and life support on the moon and beyond.

The project involves the University of Adelaide, University of Western Australia, and La Trobe University, as well as various United States departments and universities.

"This research will be a pivotal step toward understanding how we might use agriculture in space to support human crews, paving the way for sustained lunar exploration and even missions to Mars," said Project Lead and Space Lab Vice President, Christine Escobar.

Associate Professor of Plant Synthetic Biology at the University of Adelaide and P4S Chief Investigator, Jenny Mortimer, said the mission will tell us how plants respond in an off-Earth environment, and how well we can build a robust, fully contained environment that allows them to thrive.

"The data we capture from the mission, both from the lunar surface and what we learn when we analyse the samples upon return, will help us to design the lunar and martian crops of the future," Associate Professor Mortimer said.

The LEAF experiment includes a plant growth chamber with an isolated atmosphere, housing red and green varieties of *Brassica rapa* (Wisconsin Fast Plants), *Wolffia* (duckweed), and *Arabidopsis thaliana*.

Experiments undertaken as part of the LEAF program will progress P4S goals to develop novel plant-based foods and biomanufacturing technologies that assist humans to explore deeper into space than ever before, while also advancing on-Earth sustainability and efficiency.

# Thousands busted during Operation Nexus

VICTORIA Police ran a statewide operation, dubbed Operation Nexus, over the Easter long weekend.

Designed to prevent unnecessary road deaths due to dangerous road behaviour, the operation ran from Thursday, March 27, through to midnight on Easter Monday, April 1.

Results for the operation were released on Tuesday, April 2.

Statewide, over 8000 traffic offences were detected during Operation Nexus, while over 4000 Victorians were caught speeding. 378 people were caught driving under the influence

of either alcohol or drugs, 728 people drove an unregistered vehicle, and 283 people used their mobile phones while driving.

In the Benalla Police Service Area, which includes the Shire of Murrindindi, there were six drink drivers and one drug driver caught, as well as three disqualified drivers and five unlicensed drivers.

Across the shire, 69 speeding offences were detected, 16 unregistered vehicles were discovered, two impoundments were made, and two cyclist offences managed.

Three fatalities were reported for the Easter long weekend in Victoria.

# Cost of letter postage increases by 25 per cent

THE price of posting a domestic letter rose by 30 cents on Wednesday, April 3, an upwards jump of 25 per cent.

Australia Post made the decision to increase the price from \$1.20 to \$1.50 earlier in the year, with no objection from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC).

Australia Post made a statement justifying the price inflation.

"Australian households only receive two letters on average each week and letter volumes are expected to halve in the next five years. On average, for households that regularly send letters, the increase to \$1.50 will cost them about \$4.50 extra per year," Australia Post said.

Other cost increases include changing the price of large letters up to 125 grams from \$2.40 to \$3, and large letters between 125 and 250 grams from \$3.60 to \$4.50.



# Skate Park Workshop a hit during school holidays

MURRINDINDI Shire Council teamed up with Al's Skate Co to deliver a free youth skate event in Alexandra on Wednesday, April 3.

The event provided free skateboard and scooter lessons, grip tape art workshops and a Freedom Frame to enable persons with disabilities to have a go at skating.

It was for all ages, and all the gear was provided. Isabella Weston, Youth and Community Development Officer at Murrindindi Shire Council, said that the event was put on as a school holiday program.

It was the first time that the event had been run by Al's Skate Co, but council has previously run skate days in Yea and Kinglake.

Isabella said, "It's exciting to use the new facilities and get it activated."

*Whizzing around the pump track was one of the first steps in learning to ride. -AR*



*Hands on learning of various skate techniques, including how to stop by slamming the back of the board down. -AR*

*Participants decorated grip tape with spray paint and stencils, which can eventually be applied to their skateboard or scooter. -AR*



*Youngsters gave scootering a go under scooter coach supervision. -AR*

*Guidance was provided to the next generation of skateboarders on stance and stability. -AR*

*Young scooter riders made the most of expert coaching and smooth ramps to learn to drop in. -AR*



*Some locals found other ways to skateboard. -AR*

*Dropping in for the first time can be a daunting challenge. -AR*

*The event featured face painting as one of its attractions. -AR*

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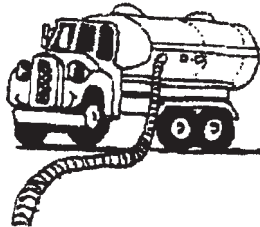
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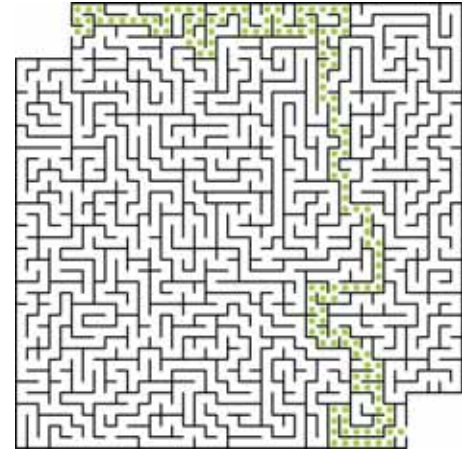
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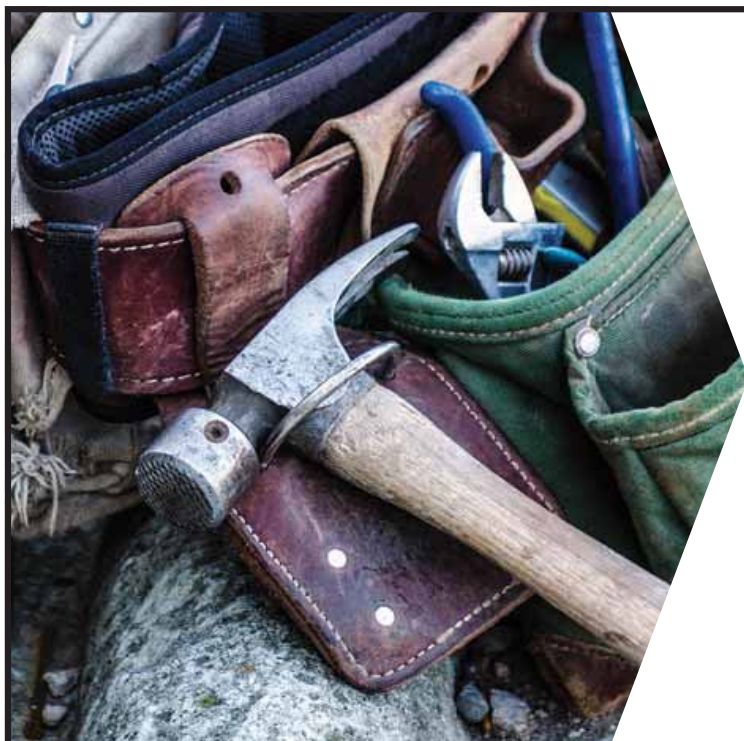
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## Removal of right to appeal renewables projects



A wind farm in the USA. -Erik Wilde

MEMBER for Indi Helen Haines has written to the Victorian Government expressing her dismay with its decision to remove the right for third parties to appeal renewable energy planning decisions through the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

From April 1, third parties will no longer be able appeal to VCAT about planning decisions of renewable energy projects.

“I’m listening to my communities, including people from Dederang and Meadow Creek, who are telling me about their genuine concerns about large-scale renewable energy projects proposed close to where they live,” Dr Haines said.

In her letter to the Minister for Energy and Resources, Lily D’Ambrosia, and Minister for Planning, Sonya Kilkenney, Dr Haines expressed concern that under the current system, there are not enough safeguards to ensure communities are heard and their issues acted upon by developers.

“The State Government is not listening to these concerns, and project developers are not consistently offering real benefits to regional communities expected to host these projects. The removal of the right to appeal to VCAT will exacerbate this situation,” Dr Haines said.

“I am with my communities 100 per cent on this. Fast-tracking projects and silencing communities is terrible governance.”

To address the concerns of regional and rural communities about renewable energy infrastructure projects, Dr Haines and Independent Senator for the ACT, David Pocock, worked with the federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen, in 2023, to establish an independent review into community engagement and benefit sharing for renewable energy developments.

“The Community Engagement Review final report was clear - the state and federal governments must improve community engagement and consultation,” Dr Haines said.

“The decision to remove the right to appeal to VCAT is contrary to the recommendations of the review’s final report.

“In my letter to the state ministers, I asked how the Victorian Government will act to implement the recommendations of the review to ensure community engagement and community benefit are delivered for the communities in Indi impacted by renewable energy projects.

“The federal government needs to put money behind the recommendations in the review and work with the states to legislate best practice community engagement for the energy transition.

“I support the transition to renewables but regional people should be given opportunities to benefit from the renewable energy transition, this must be done with us, not to us.

“I will continue to fight for regional and rural communities who should be benefitting from the shift to renewables, not punished for speaking up when the government gets it wrong.”

When contacted about the issue, a Victorian Government spokesperson said, “Victoria’s old coal fired generators are closing and the cost of fossil fuels are rising globally. That’s why we’re streamlining planning approvals for renewable energy projects to keep the lights on and bills down.

“These changes bring renewable energy project approvals in line with other significant economic projects in Victoria, including for affordable housing and hospitals.

“Of course Victorians will still be able to have their say and our planners will consider all submissions and unresolved issues will be referred to our advisory committee.”

More than one in five renewables projects end up getting stuck in VCAT and in the overwhelming majority of cases the initial decision to support the project is upheld.

Community consultation will continue to form a key part of the renewable project planning process. There are no changes to the public notice process and all members of the community will be able to make submissions. All objections and feedback will be considered as part of the usual assessment of any application.

# Duck hunting at GMW storages



A female freckled duck. Freckled ducks are one of the species which are protected from this year's duck hunt through the closure of 32 wetlands areas. -Dick Daniels

GOULBURN-Murray Water (GMW) is reminding duck hunters to be aware of designated hunting areas at the water corporation's lakes, dams, and reservoirs this hunting season.

The Victorian Government has announced the 2024 duck season will open at 8am on Wednesday, April 10 and close 30 minutes after sunset on Wednesday, June 5.

The announcement detailed that the hunting start time will be 8am until 30 minutes after sunset for the entire season and that the daily bag limit will be six ducks per day. Bluewinged shovellers and hardheads cannot be hunted for the 2024 season due to their threatened status.

GMW acting Water Storage Services General Manager, Craig Kellow, asked people to make preparations before going hunting at GMW lakes, dams, and reservoirs.

"It is important hunters familiarise themselves with the duck hunting arrangements for the 2024 season," he said.

"Duck hunting is permitted at several of our lakes, dams, and reservoirs, but there are still areas at these storages where hunting is prohibited.

"It is important hunters are aware of these locations before they visit. We have maps on our website showing people where hunting is not allowed, and we encourage people to get in touch with us if they need something clarified.

"Hunters will also need to get landholder consent to hunt or pass through private property that adjoins GMW land, waterways, and storages.

"We ask everyone to be considerate of other members of the public and the environment, and to make safety their priority."

Duck hunting is permitted at the following GMW storages: Cairn Curran Reservoir, Tullaroop Reservoir, Lake Hume, Lake Eppalock, Laanecoorie Reservoir, Greens Lake, Lake Eildon, Lake Buffalo, Waranga Basin, Lake Charm, Kangaroo Lake, Lake Nillahcootie, and Lake Nagambie.

However, wetlands can be closed to hunting by the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Outdoor Recreation under the *Wildlife Act 1975* for various reasons, including to protect significant numbers of threatened species or breeding waterbird colonies.

Hunters are reminded to regularly monitor the Game Management Authority (GMA) website for updates to wetland closures and other management actions at [gma.vic.gov.au/hunting/duck/wetland-closures-duck-season](http://gma.vic.gov.au/hunting/duck/wetland-closures-duck-season)

The Victoria Police, and authorised officers from partner agencies, will patrol wetlands across Victoria to ensure people are abiding by the rules.

People can report illegal hunting and breaches to public safety laws to the GMA, by phoning 136 186 or visiting the GMA website, [gma.vic.gov.au](http://gma.vic.gov.au)

The GMA website also contains the details of the 2024 duck hunting season arrangements at [gma.vic.gov.au/hunting/duck/duck-season-arrangements](http://gma.vic.gov.au/hunting/duck/duck-season-arrangements)

More information on duck hunting at GMW storages, including maps specifying where duck hunting is permitted, can be found on the GMW website [gmwater.com.au/duckhunting](http://gmwater.com.au/duckhunting)

## Concern wetlands closures fall short

REGIONAL Victorians Opposed to Duck Shooting Inc (RVOTDS) welcomed the closure of the 32 wetlands to protect threatened species, but slammed the Victorian Government for ignoring evidence put to it, to close a small list of additional waterways for other "critically important" reasons.

The not-for-profit recently submitted to the minister, a list of 26 public duck-shooting sites it requested be closed not just for the presence of threatened species, but for aboriginal culture, proximity to residents, and public health or safety concerns.

Six of these requests have been fully granted and two partially, on the basis of protecting threatened species. However, none were granted on the basis of Indigenous culture, proximity to residents, or health and safety or social and economic reasons.

RVOTDS spokesperson, Kerrie Allen, said, "My question is this. How many tens of thousands of Victoria's public waterways do less than half of one percent of the population who like to shoot birds, need to be able to shoot on? And what is the mental, physical, social and economic cost to everyone else?"

"Shooting hampers tourism and more popular (and financially beneficial) pastimes such as boating, fishing, and birdwatching. Incessant gunfire from duck shooters' shotguns is audible within three kilometers, a nuisance (legal term) which has an adverse impact on people's mental health as well as their ability to earn a living. Eco tourism businesses are forced to close. Shift workers cannot sleep. People cannot work from home. Farmers cannot attend their crops, irrigation pumps nor stock, for fear of being

shot. Ammunition (sometimes lead) lands on rooves which collect water supplies."

RVOTDS said feedback from regional communities was critical, as no cost-benefit analysis has ever been done by authorities. Similarly, only two risk assessments have ever been done and both of those wetlands were closed to shooting (in 2019) as a result.

"We are appalled the government is not heeding community feedback, nor taking public health and safety more seriously.

"Closing a number of waterways to shooting would go a long way towards ensuring the regulator can actually perform its job and monitor the shooting, that nearby residents and landowners' rights are protected, and that tourism could thrive in regional areas where it's needed most.

"As most native bird shooting occurs on private land, removing these 26 public sites from the shooting list, does not restrict the shooters' recreation. But it does benefit the wider community, significantly.

"The government appears to have very low regard for our native wildlife and regional communities. It can't fund our hospitals, but it can find millions of dollars to support the minority recreation of native bird hunting, and it lets it happen at so many thousands of public waterways they can't possibly be monitored.

"Why have a requirement in the *Game Management Authority Act* which states the regulator must consider social/economic impacts of hunting on community, when over the last decade it has continually refused to do so?" she said.

## Some wetlands closed to hunting

THE Victorian Government has closed or partially closed 32 wetlands to hunting for the 2024 duck season to prevent losses or disturbance to significant numbers of threatened species and breeding waterbirds.

The number of wetlands closed to hunting in 2024 is partly due to an increase in the presence of threatened species currently present at Victorian wetlands.

The increase in the presence of threatened species is due to favourable environmental conditions, including extensive flooding in late 2022, resulting in increased waterbird habitat and breeding activity. As wetlands dry, birds are concentrating on remaining wetlands.

Wetlands have been closed to duck hunting to protect significant concentrations of threatened species including the blue-billed duck, blue-winged shoveler, freckled duck, curlew sandpiper and brolga.

Other wetlands have also been closed to prevent disturbance to colonies of breeding waterbirds, and three wetlands (Kow Swamp, Reedy Lakes and Richardson River) are routinely closed each year to reinforce their status as wildlife sanctuaries where game hunting is prohibited.

Signage will be installed to alert hunters to the closures and wetlands will be monitored throughout the season. If the reason for

closure no longer exists, the wetland may be reopened to hunting.

Closing wetlands or regulating hunting methods at wetlands ensures that threatened species are protected and duck hunting remains sustainable.

Other wetlands may be closed or further regulated if significant concentrations of threatened species are found.

Hunters should check the GMA website regularly for updates to wetland closures at [gma.vic.gov.au](http://gma.vic.gov.au)

Hunters are reminded that the hunting start time is 8am every day of the season, from Wednesday, April 10 to Wednesday, June 5 (inclusive). Hunting must stop 30 minutes after sunset. The daily bag limit is six game ducks.

The blue-winged shoveler and hardhead must not be hunted in Victoria this year.

Hunters are responsible for understanding their legal, ethical and safety obligations when hunting, including knowing where it is legal to hunt.

GMA Game Officers, Victoria Police and Authorised Officers from DEECA, DJSIR and Parks Victoria will be patrolling wetlands across Victoria.

For more information on game hunting in Victoria, visit [gma.vic.gov.au](http://gma.vic.gov.au)

## Seymour Alternative Farming Expo is right around the corner

THE Seymour Alternative Farming Expo is fast approaching, and there is not only fun to be had but also lessons to learn and questions to answer.

The farm lectures and learning hub talks are among the many ways visitors can make their trip both educational and entertaining.

One of the businesses attending is Australian Bee Supplies, which will provide beekeeping tips for beginners and demonstrations.

"We'll go through cost, how to get bees, the required equipment and the different types of frames and their advantages and disadvantages," Andrew Stanish from Australian Bee Supplies said.

"We will also do some demonstrations on smoking, and there will be beekeepers there to answer anyone's questions."

During the three-day event, the Seymour Agricultural and Pastoral Society will also be present to answer any questions.

Those interested in fluffy, furry friends can chat with the Mayfield Poll Highland Cattle team about their unique breeds.

Plus, the Eden Rise Alpacas will be present to dispel any myths about alpacas as pets.

One of the highly anticipated features at the expo for both experienced anglers and casual fishers is the Berkley Supertank.

The Berkley Supertank is one of the biggest mobile fish tanks in the southern

hemisphere and will take visitors of all ages on an underwater journey with up to 20 live fish, including barramundi.

The 12,000-litre tank is a portable fishing show and educational program designed to give the public a fish-eye view of the world of angling.

Michael Cooke, a seasoned angler with over 60 years of fishing experience, will demonstrate lure and bait fishing techniques from on top of the tank during a 20 minute show.

"This is a show for the whole family, even non-fishing people, and we don't use any hooks," he said.

"The presentations include catch and release techniques, mastering lures and gear tips for the first timers.

"The team will also demonstrate how the many different types of fish react to different lures and techniques used by many of today's top anglers."

The live demonstrations are educational, exciting, entertaining and will run throughout each day of the event.

The clear perspex sides of the tank provide a good view of how the lures work and the action in the water.

If learning is what you love, there's plenty to enjoy at this month's Seymour expo.

The Seymour Alternative Farming Expo will be held from Friday, April 12, to Sunday, April 14, from 9am to 4pm each day at Kings Park Reserve on Tallarook St in Seymour.

## Call to check smoke alarms

DID you remember to check your fire alarm when daylight saving ended last weekend? Victorian firefighters are asking all people to test their smoke alarms after concerning new data revealed 14 people died in preventable house fires last year.

Discarded smoking materials, lighters and matches were the most frequent cause of the fires, resulting in five incidents and seven deaths.

Of the victims, five were female (36 per cent) and nine were male (64 per cent). There were 11 single fatality incidents and one incident that resulted in the deaths of three people.

CFA and Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) are urging Victorians to make it a priority to check their smoke alarms.

CFA Chief Officer, Jason Heffernan, says it's essential that families are conducting monthly testing of their smoke alarms to keep their loved ones safe.

"The number of fatalities in the last year is very alarming and devastating to know they could have been prevented," CO Heffernan said.

"In the past 10 years, CFA have responded to more than 13,000 residential fires that have seen more than 330 casualties.

"The best way to keep your family safe is to install interconnected smoke alarms, so that when any alarm activates, all smoke alarms will sound, allowing you to evacuate early.

"We recommend the use of smoke alarms powered by a 10 year lithium battery to ensure their longevity."

FRV Deputy Commissioner for Community Safety, Joshua Fischer, said every fire fatality was a tragedy.

"This heartbreaking data reveals that in the past year, 14 people's lives were tragically cut short in incidents that could have been prevented," Deputy Commissioner Fischer said.

"The best way to protect yourself and your family from fire is by installing smoke alarms in all bedrooms, living areas, hallways and garages and to test that they are working.

"When you sleep you lose your sense of smell, and smoke will put you into a deeper sleep, rendering you unconscious.

"Only a working smoke alarm will wake you up and give you time to escape."

When checking, installing, or replacing your smoke alarms, CFA and FRV recommend: Only working smoke alarms save lives; choose smoke alarms powered by a 10 year lithium battery; smoke alarms should be installed in every bedroom, living area, hallway and garage; smoke alarms should be installed on the ceiling at least 30cm from the wall, or installed on the wall at least 30cm from the ceiling to avoid dead air space; smoke alarms should be interconnected, so that when any alarm activates, all smoke alarms will sound; smoke alarms should be tested monthly by pressing the test button on the alarm and waiting for the test alarm to sound; smoke alarms should be cleaned with a vacuum cleaner or dusted at least once a year to remove particles that will affect smoke alarm performance; replaceable batteries in a smoke alarm need to be changed yearly; smoke alarms, including those attached to mains power, should be replaced every 10 years; to check your smoke alarm, press 'test' and wait for the beeping sound, then each month continue to test, vacuum, and dust your alarm to remove any particles that may affect its performance.

# Multi-agency exercise in Trawool



The exercise involved 90 first responders from CFA, SES, Ambulance Victoria, Victoria Police and St Johns Ambulance. -S



An emergency services multi-agency training event was held in Trawool last week. More on page 4 of this edition. -S

THE Country Fire Authority (CFA) last week led a multi-agency exercise to test and strengthen how emergency services respond to mass casualty incidents similar to the 2023 Eynesbury bus incident.

The exercise was a huge undertaking with 90 first responders from CFA, SES, Ambulance Victoria, Victoria Police and St Johns Ambulance taking part as well as 27 students from La Trobe University who acted as casualties.

Trawool Captain Sean Kerris said the exercise required significant planning and wouldn't have been possible without the hard work of all involved.

"It was a challenge to bring the exercise vision to life but the learnings will be invaluable for our first responders," he said.

"Our emergency service personnel will have a better understanding and ability to navigate very confronting emergencies if they arise after this exercise."

First responders were first briefed on the scenario when the exercise got underway to ensure their response was as realistic as possible.

The scenario involved a hypothetical bus accident in which the bus driver suffered a cardiac arrest while in transit. The bus then veered off the road as a result and into the back of a music festival hitting several campers. There were more than 30 passengers on board the bus at the time who suffered injuries of varying degrees from the bus rollover.

The scenario was influenced by recent tragic events such as the 2023 Eynesbury bus incident and the 2023 Hunter Valley NSW incident.



Emergency services at the scene of the bus crash, part of the training exercise in Koriella. -S

The objective of the exercise was to test and improve the way emergency services work together when responding to large scale emergencies.

VICSES Seymour Unit Controller Christine Welsh said it's important VICSES volunteers are prepared for any scenario and these exercises play a vital role in upskilling and nurturing important inter-agency teamwork.

"These relationships are particularly important in regional areas and have been an ongoing focus of VICSES' Seymour Unit volunteers over the last 12 months .

"VICSES volunteers pride themselves on being there to support their communities during a challenging emergency response, and these training exercises only strengthen that resolve."

The scenario was chosen because music festivals are commonly held within the region and the scale of such events can present unique challenges for emergency responders.

More than 30 people were on site in a supporting capacity.

# Dog obedience training at the Leisure Centre



Some of the beginners. -VG



The Alexandra and District Dog Obedience Club held a training session on the morning of Sunday, April 7. -VG



Although cloudy, the rain generally held off. -VG



Pooches spent the morning learning new tricks as well as learning social skills with other people and dogs. -VG



This dog needed a little rest. -VG



Dog training is vital for all people who own a dog. -VG



The training event was held at the Alexandra Leisure Centre. -VG



Club president Jeanne, with her dog. -VG



There were a variety of dog breeds in attendance. -VG



Learning to sit and stay. For more information, visit alexandradogclub.org.au -VG



# Highball Cars and Coffee rolls in

*A vehicle driving through the spectacular autumn leaves. -AR*



*A micro coupe. -AR*



*The driveway trees provided a great backdrop to the event. -AR*



*A huge array of cars were on display. -AR*



*Fortunately, the rain held off during the event. -AR*



*The event was a great fundraiser for the Buxton CFA. -AR*



*A Commer. -AR*



*The food at the event was provided by Grant Street Grocer and the Marysville Lions Club. -AR*



*A modified Nissan. -AR*

## Season celebrations for Alexandra swimmers



Winners Emma, Emily, Clay, Xanthe, Charlie, Charlotte, and Levi. -S



Emily, the winner of the 200m freestyle. -S



Recipient of the Brenda Perry Memorial Encouragement Award, Charlotte. -S



The Advanced Learn to Swim class, with Ethan, coach Lee, Sem, and Jack. -S

## Single point win at Eildon Golf Club

by Puttomatic

LAST Saturday, 14 players braved the grey morning skies that cleared just in time for a noon hit off at Eildon Golf Club.

The competition was sixers and Rod Taylor with (8) points, held on by the barest of margins to win by just a single point, ahead of Wayne Kupke (9) who finished in second place. A further point back was Grant Walters (10), securing a ball run, as did Ken Coller on (11), Adam Kupke (12), and Phil Dally (12).

Ken Coller was successful with his second shot to claim nearest the pin (second shot) on the par four, third, Adam Kupke on the fifth, Grant Walters the 11th, Rod Taylor the 12th, and Ian Lakeland the 14th. There were no recorded birdies on the nominated holes. Grant Walters was the entry draw winner while John Matthews tried his luck at the swindle.

At play's end, the club's resident chef, Peter McNair, cooked up a treat with help from Wayne Kupke for all to enjoy. The club thanks them. Sunday, April 7, the Eildon pennant team took on Marysville at Alexandra and had a win, 3/2.

## Monthly Medals played in Alexandra

by Elizabeth Goss

EVEN after a lot of golf over Easter, there was still a good turnout for last Tuesday's stableford round. The winner was again Greg Millard with an even better score of (19) 41 points. The runner up was Matt Jenkins with (19) 38 points. Third place went to Jeff Andrews with (18) 37 points. Nearest to the pin on the seventh and 17th went to Dave Silverman and on the 18th to Brad Newton. Ball run down: Nigel Waterhouse and Paul Martin.

The ladies played their April Monthly Medal on Wednesday, April 3. The medal winner with a great score was Julie Lyon with 89 (24) 66. The runner up was Ruth Worland with 87 (16) 71 on a count back from Barb Doyle 88 (17) 71, on a count back from Deb Richardson 84 (13) 71. Nearest the pin on the second and fifth went to Barb Doyle and on the 18th to Ruth Worland. Next Wednesday, April 17, is a stableford round.

It was Monthly Medal again last Saturday for the men. Some very good scores on the day but best of all was the winner of the April Monthly Medal, Daniel Burns, with 86 (22) 64. Close behind was Jan Petrzela with 91 (26) 65, followed by Michael Holohan with 77 (9) 68 on a count back from Dylan Jack with 72 (4) 68. Chris Hutchings was next with 89 (18) 71. Nearest the pin on the second went to Alli Hutt, on the fifth to Dylan Jack, on the seventh and 12th to Michael Holohan, and on the 18th to Brendan Smith.

Dylan Jack and Russel Purcell tied for the fewest putts with 28. There was an eagle on the 15th from David Silverman, a rare occurrence. Daniel Burns won the raffle. Saturday, April 13, is a stableford round.

mugs at \$15, peaked caps and beanies at \$25, bumper stickers are free.

The Seymour District Junior League season will start Sunday, April 14, with Alexandra hosting Broadford in games of football and netball. The canteen will be open, free entry, go along and support the juniors. Junior football and netball training continues on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at Rebel Park, so check with your coach to confirm times and days for your particular team.

## Grants available for regional racing clubs

REGIONAL racing clubs could be eligible for grants worth up to \$100 thousand under the government's Regional Customer Facilities Program.

The program, which aims to support regional racing clubs to improve infrastructure and facilities, is open for applications until July 31.

Speaking about the program, Acting Minister for Racing, Enver Erdogan, said "we want to develop facilities that support participation and inclusion of the broader community in regional racing clubs – it's about bringing communities together and boosting local economic activity.

"These grants will give regional communities and racegoers access to top notch facilities that go beyond race days and can be used for cultural events and community celebrations," he said.

Racing clubs that are eligible for the grants include those licensed under section 24A of the *Racing Act 1958*, and clubs licensed by Racing Victoria Limited as a picnic racing club.

Applicants can request up to \$100 thousand per project involving upgrading club facilities. Further information can be found at [vic.gov.au/regional-customer-facilities-program](http://vic.gov.au/regional-customer-facilities-program)

## Events ahead for Alexandra Football and Netball Club

by Ray Steyger

THURSDAY, April 11, will see the under 12, under 14 and under 16 junior football jumper presentations after training at the Alexandra Football and Netball Club, followed by meals (adults \$20 and juniors \$15 for a two-course meal). The senior footballers will also have their jumper presentation after training, followed by meals. Everyone is welcome. The Joker Jackpot raffle will kick off at \$200 and tickets can be bought for \$1 each for a chance to win money or another great prize.

Senior football training is at 6pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Rebel Park, senior netball training at 6pm on Thursdays at Rebel Park. All are welcome.

The outer east season starts Saturday, April 13, with Alexandra hosting Yea in games of football and netball at Rebel Park. Canteen and bar facilities will be available, adult gate entry is \$10 and social rooms open after the games to enjoy club hospitality and then the trivia night.

On Thursday, April 18, the club will have junior and senior football and netball training as usual followed by junior and senior sittings for meals. At around 8pm they are hosting a comedy evening with two Melbourne based comedians, Evan Hocking and Tom Siegert,

coming to Rebel Park to entertain. Entry is free and everyone is welcome.

Round two is on Saturday, April 20, where the club will travel to Warburton Millgrove, before round three on April 27, being the Anzac round, where Alexandra will host Powelltown at Rebel Park. The club, working together with the Alexandra RSL, is celebrating the Anzac spirit as well as grass roots sport and community with everyone asked to pay the regular \$10 entry as a minimum, the proceeds going to the Alexandra RSL. The day is supported by Murrindindi Shire Council and *Alexandra Newspapers*, there will be an Anzac commemoration at 2pm, as well as a complimentary afternoon tea at half time of the senior football and everyone is invited to come along and support the community event. The Club Dream Team Auction will also be held in the social rooms in the evening.

Membership and sponsorship options are available with \$100 adult membership, \$150 family membership and \$200 patron membership, \$600 rebel raiser sponsor together with business, corporate, executive and major sponsor packages available. If you would like to support the club, contact Ray Steyger on 5772 2627. Do not forget to order your club merchandise – polo shirts, warm up shirts at \$50, hoodies, vests at \$70, netball top at \$40, club stubby holders at \$10, travel

THE ALEXANDRA · EILDON · MARYSVILLE

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## Season celebrations for Alexandra swimmers

by Lee Collier

A GREAT swim season was had for the Alexandra Amateur Swimming and Lifesaving Club over the 2023/24 summer. Plenty of warm days, enthusiastic children, and a great pool to learn and build skills. Last Monday there was a celebration of all the efforts from both children, coaches, and the committee.

All swimmers were acknowledged for their progress and commitment to improving, no matter where they were at. The coaches were

recognised for their ongoing contribution to the club and the success of the swimmers at all levels; Joss, Kat, Lee, Magenta, and Lara, with a special mention to newcomers Emily and Ruby. No club exists without a committee, so the club thanks all committee members for making it all happen.

There were chocolate frogs and a delicious barbecue to celebrate the season and all the accomplishments of the swimmers. Individuals who had participated in time-

trials received certificates with their times, and many had improved their times out of site. Congratulations to all trophy winners.

The Jacinta Perry Learn To Swim Coach's Awards went to Tyler Cavill, Nellie Thomas, Sonny Crouch and Leo Jager. The Advanced Learn To Swim Coach's Awards were received by Jack Kidd, Ethan Boulton, and Sem Kjljstra.

Junior Squad Coach's Awards went to Chase Hilder and Abby Wise. Intermediate

Squad Coach's Awards were Hannah Weeks and Kloe Morton, and Senior Squad Coach's Awards went to Archie McGahey and Levi Campbell.

Following a terrific swim club championships late in the season, age group champions were as follows: eight and under, Shaylah Smith; 10 and under, Lila Friswell and Clay Hilder; 12 and under, Charlotte Boulton and Levi Campbell; 14 and under, Lucy Bowdern and Charlie Irwin; 16 and under, Xanthe Campbell and Louis Matheson; 21 and under, Emily Irwin and Toby Prothero; Open, Emma and Justin Stevenson.

The Morrison Memorial Women's Open 200 metre Freestyle trophy went to Emily Irwin and Men's Open 200M Freestyle to Toby Prothero. The Morrison Memorial Boys 10 and under Individual Medley was awarded to Clay Hilder and the Brenda Perry Memorial Encouragement Award was received by Charlotte Boulton. The Robert Pritchett Memorial Most Improved in Junior Squad was Declan Baker.

Congratulations to all and well done to many of the young people who then went on to represent their schools in local, regional and division swim sports. The club looks forward to continuing to support young people and adults to improve their swimming ability, build confidence, have some fun, and contribute to an active and healthy community.

More images on page 23.



Levi and Kloe from the senior squad. -S



The winner of the under 10 individual medley, Clay Hilder. -S



Hannah, from the intermediate squad, with her trophy. -S



The junior squad of Chase, Magenta (their coach), Declan, and Abby. -S



Coaches Ruby and Emily with Learn to Swim protege, Leo. -S