

# 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, July 5, 2023 \$2.00 inc. GST

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Nicole, Rupert and Jenna with the new Menzies hay art creation, adding some colour to Alexandra's winter scenery. -S

## How can the shire's childcare challenges be solved?

WITH the rising cost of living and the financial pressure that comes along with it, families are relying on the use of early education services more than ever, but there are some significant challenges to overcome to ensure that there are enough places.

The roll out of the Victorian Government's \$9 million commitment will expand kindergarten programs across the state over the next decade. Four year old kindergarten will transition to 'pre-prep', increasing to a universal 30 hour a week program of play-based learning for every four year old child in Victoria. Pre-prep will be delivered through sessional kindergartens and long day care centres. For three year old kindergarten, the government is investing in \$5 billion over the decade to deliver 15 hours per week for every three year old child.

It was also announced that 50 Victorian government owned and affordable childcare centres will be established. These centres will be built in areas that have unmet demand and will make it easier for families to access childcare. The first of the centres will be available in 2025.

In Murrindindi, access to early childhood education places are few and far between. Many families are needing the service and one of the big challenges is not having enough qualified educators to adhere to mandatory early childhood ratios. The situation has become so dire that childcare centres are forced to cap enrolments because of the staff shortage.

Government financial incentives for educators to take up a role in a kindergarten program at selected services have been available. There are early childhood teaching courses where students will be able to stay in the workforce while they learn, and financial support packages will assist with course fees, study materials and other expenses.

Scholarships and financial incentives have been available to complete an Accelerated Bachelor of Early Childhood Education program for educators looking to take the next step in their career at Australian Catholic University, Deakin University and Victoria University. These degree programs mean Victorian educators can upskill to become an early childhood teacher in a compressed timeframe of between 18 months and two years.

In the area of Long Daycare, not much incentive has been put in place to attract educators to train or upskill. It's all been geared to the new kindergarten changes which are for three and four year olds, but we still need qualified educators for children aged zero to two to help working families.

In the 2021 Census, statistics showed there were 651 children in the Murrindindi Shire aged zero to four years of age (4.3 per cent) and the available approved places to cater for these numbers doesn't even come close to these statistics.

Waitlists for daycare centres are growing as families try to make ends meet. The centre director at Yea Uniting Early Learning, Fiona Purvis, reported the centre is at capacity and currently holds a minimum wait list of nine and can be up to 20 per day. This centre has 67 approved places at the centre with another 34 places in their daycare section of the centre.

Privately owned centre Alexandra Baby Care provides long daycare for families who live in the Murrindindi Shire. The centre caters for 24 children and babies. They also have a waitlist for children's spaces. Centre director Kate Goschnick explained, "We do our best to fulfill parents requests when able, unfortunately, it's not always possible. The challenge this centre is facing is getting qualified staff on board as educators."

"Within the whole Murrindindi Shire, there may well be a need for more childcare,

whether it be in a care facility or family daycare home based environment, but more importantly, a real need for educators with a genuine interest in the caring for children and babies and meeting their requirements of care as individuals and some, with more complex needs."

Marysville Preschool is a 60 place centre with 30 allocated spots for long day care. They have a waitlist of four families at present, but they could also offer more if they had more qualified staff.

Centre Director, Katie Gelbert said, "At Marysville we have enough space for further growth, however we are limited by the lack of educators in the area. We offer above award wage, petrol and accommodation vouchers, paid training for anyone entering the sector and very flexible working conditions. With the whole of Australia experiencing staff shortages in this sector, I don't believe we are alone in this scenario."

Murrindindi Shire Council has a family daycare service and are also finding it difficult to provide that service with such high demand and minimal educators.

Murrindindi Shire Council's Director Community and Development Andrew Paxton said, "Currently, we have 15 registered educators, out of which five are based in Murrindindi Shire. These dedicated educators cater to over 200 children from 154 families residing in Murrindindi and surrounding shires, taking care of their developmental and learning needs.

"Family Day Care does not have a fixed number of approved places as it depends on the number of available educators and their working hours. The capacity is flexible and varies accordingly. Regarding waiting lists, they are managed collaboratively with the educators. While we cannot provide an exact timeframe for the current wait, it's worth noting that most of our educators have closed their waitlists for this year.

Approximately 15 families are currently awaiting placements.

"In Murrindindi Shire, we have around 100 children attending Family Day Care, with approximately 31 children attending on a daily basis. It's important to note that not all enrolled children attend services every weekday, and some are enrolled with multiple Family Day Care educators.

"The shortage of Early Childhood Education and Care is affecting our shire, especially in Alexandra and Eildon. Murrindindi Family Day Care plays a crucial role in supporting our communities and local economy. However, it is currently challenging for parents to access the care they require.

"To address this issue, council is actively seeking more early childhood educators. We encourage individuals with early childhood education experience who are interested in trying something new to consider a career as a Family Day Care educator. By joining this key service, they will make a significant impact on the local community and support the future of our shire."

At last weeks council meeting Councillor Carpenter mentioned that council are aware of the challenges ahead with the introduction of the increase to kindergarten hours due to the best start best life reforms.

"As our population increases, we must plan for the increasing need for these services. We hope to secure government funding to support infrastructure planning for the early years education services in Alexandra and Yea. The roll out of pre-prep, 30 hours a week under the Best start Best Life reform will bring challenges. Consultation with all key stakeholders including schools, kindergartens and childcare centres will be crucial to successful outcomes."



# Beanie festival cheque handover

MURRINDINDI Beanie and Fibre Festival is supporting the TAC L2P learner driver mentor program at Alexandra Community Hub with the handover of a \$1000 cheque from funds raised at the event.

The TAC L2P Program is funded by the Department of Transport to assist learners

under 21 years of age, who do not have access to a supervising driver or vehicle, to gain the 120 hours driving experience required to apply for a probationary licence.

TAC L2P Program was launched in Victoria in 2008 and the program was first delivered by Berry Street locally before their services ceased in town.

So that the program opportunities would continue to be offered to the younger community, Alexandra Community Hub, with some interim support from Murrindindi Shire Council, took on the responsibility in 2018.

This program ensures learning to drive has become easier for the young people in Murrindindi thanks to the TAC L2P Program. Since the program began in the community, over 70 young people have gained their P plates, already three this year.

Alexandra Community Hub coordinator Sue Sedelies said, "After gaining their P plates, some of the participants have secured employment which may not have been possible if it were not for the program. Road safety and good driving habits are something that the whole community benefits from and it's pleasing to see the results achieved by the Murrindindi TAC L2P Program to date.

"Funds for the new car are one of our many focal points for the program going forward. Last week we also received approval to expand the number of learner places we can offer. As a result, we are currently looking for volunteers with driving experience to help learner drivers gain on-the-road driving experience".

Stephen Wright has been a mentor since 2018. John Herridge, another valued volunteer, commented, "It's very rewarding

to see the learners progress through to become safe and courteous drivers."

Professional training is provided, and anybody interested in becoming a volunteer mentor can visit the Alexandra Community Hub or call 5772 1238.

When receiving the cheque, Sue Sedelies from the Alexandra Community Hub exclaimed, "Wow. That is fantastic. Thank you. We love the Murrindindi Beanie and Fibre Festival. We hang donated beanies on our veranda to support the festival and those who may need one to keep warm at this time of year. The donation of funds is a huge kick start towards replacing our much-loved L2P car in 2024, after its 10 years of service to this invaluable community program. Car replacement is one of the aspects that the program funds cannot be used for, so this contribution is very much appreciated."

**Standard The Age 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 1300 222 222

Sun Alonon Recovery Phone 0402 428 086.

Sun Alex & Dist Dog Obedience, training, Ph 5772 1057

Thu 7.30-10pm SES, SES/CFCA complex Ph 0418 576 666

Fri Commutea 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 Crafty Critters, 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 Cafe 1-3pm @ Embassy of Ideas 0422 225 801

2<sup>nd</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 Probus 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 Crafty Critters, Molesworth Hall 10am-4pm.

4<sup>th</sup> Thu Alexandra Redgate CWA Meeting 1pm, Ph 0402 804 517

Last Fri Carers Group walk 9.45am @ Rotary Park. 0418 402 455

**ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS**

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



Murrindindi Beanie and Fibre Festival event coordinator Carolyn Weeks, Alexandra Community Hub coordinator Sue Sedelies, L2P mentor Stephen Wright, and Murrindindi Beanie and Fibre Festival secretary and treasurer Pam Petersen. -5

**Weekly Weather**  
July 5 - July 11, 2023

Temperatures may be subject to change from date of publication

Alexandra			Yea		
DAY	LOW	HIGH	DAY	LOW	HIGH
Wednesday	7	13	Wednesday	7	12
Thursday	7	11	Thursday	7	12
Friday	7	10	Friday	7	11
Saturday	7	9	Saturday	7	10
Sunday	7	11	Sunday	7	11
Monday	6	12	Monday	6	12
Tuesday	6	12	Tuesday	6	12

**Standard** **The Age Chronicle**

**ALEXANDRA NEWSPAPERS**

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**  
can now be submitted via email to [editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au](mailto:editorial@alexandranewspapers.com.au) or mail to PO Box 5 Alexandra 3714, or drop them into the Alexandra office.

**Letters must be 300 words or less.**

We will not publish defamatory letters, or content which is offensive, threatening or containing personal attacks. Submitted letters may be edited before going to print. All letters must contain writers name, address and contact number. (not necessarily for publication). Letters without these details supplied cannot be published. Deadline for Letters to the Editor is 9am Monday.

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## RIVER HEIGHTS FOR THE GOULBURN CATCHMENT

STATION NAME	TIME	HEIGHT	TENDENCY	FLOOD CLASS
Goulburn R at Lake Eildon D/S	9.00am Mon	2.91^	falling	below minor
Rubicon R at Rubicon	9.00am Mon	0.79	steady	
Acheron R at Taggerty	9.22am Mon	1.36	steady	below minor
Home Ck at Yarck	7.59am Mon	0.35	steady	
Yea R at Devlins Bridge	9.59am Mon	0.78	steady	below minor
Yea R at Yea	9.09am Mon	1.66	steady	
Goulburn R at Ghin Ghin	9.00am Mon	5.48	steady	
King Parrot Ck at Flowerdale	9.00am Mon	0.80^	steady	below minor
Goulburn R at Trawool	9.00am Mon	3.51^	steady	below minor
Sunday Creek at Tallarook	9.00am Mon	0.40^	steady	below minor
Goulburn R at Seymour	10.00am Mon	3.40	steady	below minor
Whiteheads Ck at Seymour	8.34am Mon	1.39	steady	

**\*\*ISSUED AT 10.16AM ON MONDAY, JULY 3, 2023\*\***

## DISTRICT RAINFALL

Alexandra.....	N/Amm
Buxton.....	17mm
Eildon (AWS).....	9mm
Flowerdale.....	8mm
Kinglake.....	22mm
Lake Eildon.....	16mm
Marysville.....	N/A
Strath Creek.....	N/A
Taggerty.....	9mm
Yarck.....	2mm
Yea.....	2mm

Above details for 7 days to 9am Monday

**LAKE EILDON**

Height above sea level this week.....	288.24m
Capacity as at 9am Monday.....	97.4%
Metres below full supply.....	66cm
Daily inflow.....	9000ML
Release.....	12000ML
Eildon Pondage (may be subject to rapid change).....	.67%

## Standard

**DEADLINES**

Real Estate	Thursday noon
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](mailto:reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au)

We thank you for your continued support



**THUMBS UP:** What a wonderful dance we had at the Alexandra Shire Hall on Saturday, June 24. Thanks to Jan Fallon and her crew, a considerable amount of money will flow to Kellock Lodge and we had the joy of a live band. The company and the atmosphere was everything that we hope for in Alexandra. Well done everyone. And, by the way, the new toilets beside the Hall are perfectly okay.

**THUMBS UP:** To the Friends of Kellock fundraising committee's Dance the Night Away. What a fantastic night. Congratulations to all concerned.

**THUMBS UP:** To the people at Country Tech in Alexandra who assisted on Wednesday with supporting a vulnerable community member in a time of need.

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

### Alexandra Senior Citizens Club Report

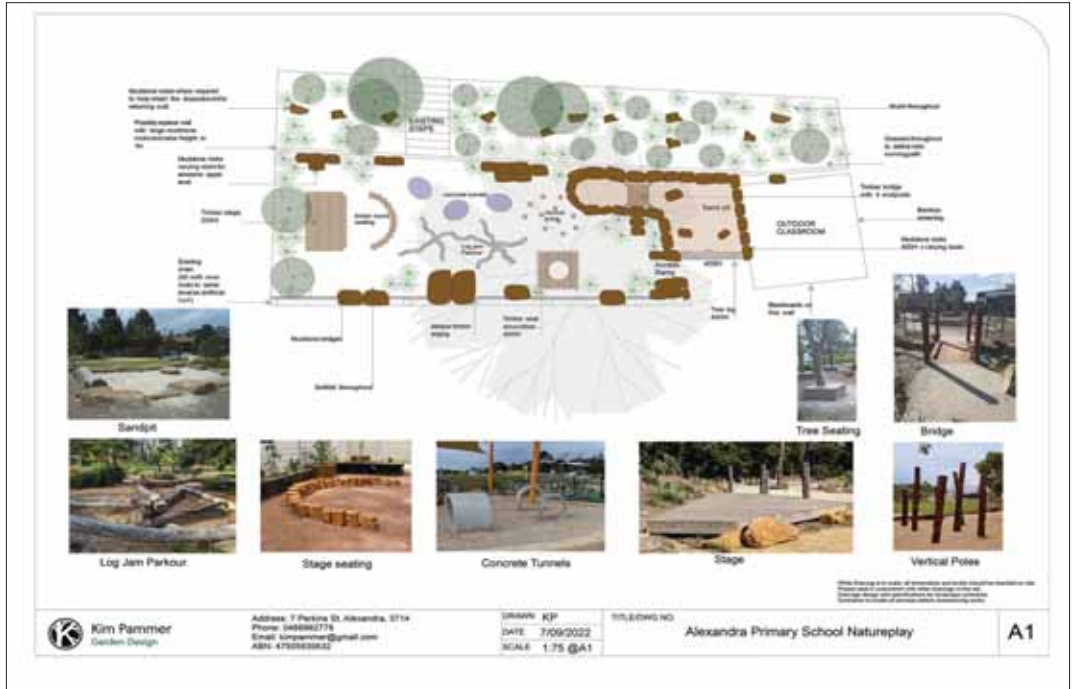
by honorary secretary Mike Jennings

THE week opened with the bridge players gathering for a few hands, then on Tuesday the carpet bowlers tested their skills. We also had a visit from Val and Geoff from the community hub who helped members complete the Power Savings Bonus applications and then joined them for a cuppa. The club thanks them for their efforts.

The bridge players were in action again on Wednesday. On Thursday, we had a good turnout of ukulele players strumming along and improving their muscle memory with new songs to sing. A reminder that there will be no ukulele lesson this Thursday, July 6 as members are having lunch at the Rubicon Hotel in Thornton. The happy strummers will meet up again on July 13.

Friday's meeting was well attended and there was talk about the upcoming AGM which will be held on Friday, July 21 at the club room. Members are reminded that items for the agenda should be passed to the secretary the week before the meeting.

Treasurer Dave had us smiling with the Comedy Corner and Ron spun the wheel to see Frank, Joyce and Joan go home with the chocolate. Tuesday's committee meeting was cancelled due to apologies and lack of agenda items. If you would like to join any of the activities please come to the hall on the appropriate day or call Mike on 0456 456 263 for details. Meanwhile, stay safe and keep smiling.



The plan for the new play space.

## New sensory garden for Alexandra Primary School students

ALEXANDRA Primary School (APS) is currently installing a new sensory garden, a nature play space for students to enjoy. The new garden will be located at the top end of the school, near the art room.

The school is keen to develop a more natural play area for children of all years to enjoy.

There are three stages of work to be carried out. Funding is still needed to complete stage two and three of the project. Stage one was funded by the APS parents group and donations from local organisations and businesses.

Earthlogic will be completing the work. Stage one is due to commence during the September school holidays, and they are hoping to commence stage two in early 2024, depending on funding.

Donations are open for anyone wanting to help out with stage two and three. If you have any questions about the project or if you want to know how to donate, contact Jess at Alexandra Primary School on 5772 1006.



On Friday, Murrindindi Shire Council workers removed the stumps from around the swale in Leckie Park. The area will soon be mowed, and council will consult regarding the re-start of a trail in a new location. -AR

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Call Intake - 5772 0908 for more information

ALEXANDRA DISTRICT HEALTH | Murrindindi Shire Council

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**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*.

by Friday, June 30 to Ruth Crockett 5797 3057 for catering.

A light lunch will be provided. Enquiries to [secretary@murrindindiastu3a.org.au](mailto:secretary@murrindindiastu3a.org.au)

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**SATURDAY, JULY 15**

*Suade* in concert at Yea Shire Hall 7pm. Book now \$35 [trybooking.com/CIXGO](http://trybooking.com/CIXGO)

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2**

Goulburn Fishing Festival 2023. Free event at Eildon. 10am-4pm. Lions Park, Riverside Drive. Live music, market stalls, Snobs Creek Hatchery tours, Vic Fish Kids clinics and more. Fireworks at 7pm. [vfa.vid.gov.au/goulburnfishfest](http://vfa.vid.gov.au/goulburnfishfest)

**THURSDAY, JULY 6**

Yea Hospital and Rosebank auxiliary AGM invites you to their AGM at 2pm at the Grace Bennetts Centre Meeting Room Yea. RSVP

Murrindindi East U3A will hold their AGM at 10.30am at the Alexandra Bowling Club.

**MONDAY, JULY 17**

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**Local landholders seeking changes to dam operating procedures**

A GROUP of local landholders, many still recovering from the October 2022 flood, have been lobbying for Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) to reduce the level of Lake Eildon, and they believe that GMW is legally liable for the damage caused, potentially opening the way for a class action lawsuit.

A quick response the current high water levels at Lake Eildon. As of Monday, July 3, Lake Eildon was sitting at 97.4 per cent. Between June 16 and July 3, GMW has been releasing 10,000 to 12,000ML per day from the dam.

of a function under part eight, part nine, division two, three or five of part 10, or part 11 or any corresponding previous enactment, a flow of water occurs from its works onto any land; and (b) the water causes (i) injury to any other person; or (ii) damage to the property (whether real or personal) of any other person; or (iii) any other person to suffer economic loss – the authority is liable to pay damages to that other person in respect of that injury, damage or loss. (2) If it is proved in a proceeding brought under subsection (1) that the water has flowed from the works of an authority onto any land, it must be presumed that the flow occurred as a result of intentional or negligent conduct on the part of the authority unless the authority proves on the balance of probabilities that it did not so occur.” Further clauses in the same section are also of relevance.

Landholder opinions vary, and they may not necessarily choose to pursue a class action, however should they choose to do so, it may occur at any time in the next six years due to the statute of limitations.

The landholders believe that they have been met with resistance to change from GMW, with a seeming preference for defending the status quo.

Under GMW’s statutory obligations, Section 122ZL(2), GMW is required to “mitigate flooding, where possible.”

Ultimately, their desire is to see a change to the operating procedures of Lake Eildon, particularly with regard to flood mitigation. They are also seeking

Section 157 provided information on the liability of authorities arising out of flow of water. It states, “(1) If – (a) as a result of intentional or negligent conduct on the part of an authority in the exercise

The legal argument proposed by the landholders is that GMW operates Lake Eildon under the policy that in wet years. The lake is to be at or near 100 per cent capacity in late winter or early spring under the current procedures. This appears to be to maximise the water available therefore maximise revenue potential. Inflows over 100 per cent must be discharged to protect the structural integrity of the dam. If the inflows are of flood proportions, the discharge of the inflow will itself cause a flood. Any flood occasioned by Lake Eildon being at or near 100 per cent capacity is caused by the intentional policy of GMW. It is therefore argued that GMW is liable for loss and damage caused by the flood under Section 157 of the Water Act. The same argument applies when Lake Eildon is near capacity, and the landholders question whether GMW would also be in breach of its statutory duty to mitigate flooding. The implementation of the current policy means that there is no scope for flood mitigation. It was noted that GMW would not be liable for flooding if it was in the exercise of its function under part six of the water act.



The Lake Eildon spillway. -AR

**This week's Church Services**

**ANGLICAN St Johns Alexandra**  
9am Eucharist each Sunday  
Children welcome  
Fr Mario Hendricks - Rectory 0435 953 777

**CATHOLIC**  
Immaculate Conception Parish  
Parish Administrator, Father Jose Matthew  
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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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  
[www.mccbc.com.au](http://www.mccbc.com.au)

**THE VINE**  
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**What's happened to the NAB ATM?**

ALEXANDRA residents may have noticed that the National Australia Bank ATM recently went offline due to the power being switched off at the now-vacant bank building.

Contacted about the issue, a NAB spokesperson said, “We’re working hard to get our NAB ATM back up and running as quickly as we can after a power issue. In the meantime, customers can withdraw or deposit cash using Bank@Post at the Alexandra post office.”

The bank advised that the power to the site was turned off prematurely and they have asked for it to be turned back on. Once the power is back on, a technician will need to visit the site to restore the ATM.

The ATM is expected to be back online this week, however it depends on how long it will take for the power to be restored.

# Local businesses express concern over proposed rent controls

THE Alexandra and District Tourism and Traders Association were approached for their views on the potential outcomes of rent controls, as proposed by the Victorian Government.

The issue arose after Treasurer Tim Pallas responded in writing to Victorian Greens leader Samantha Ratnam. It was a part of the discussion around seeking the support of the Greens for the Victorian Budget. The letter stated that rent controls would be considered.

When contacted about the issue, ADTTA ran a survey of members. Seven business owners responded, with 50 per cent considering themselves an 'employing business'.

## What do you envision the consequences of rent controls would be on the availability and prices for rental properties in the region?

Overall sentiment: The majority of respondents expressed concerns about the consequences of rent controls on the availability and prices of rental properties in the region. They believe that rent controls would lead to negative outcomes, such as increased rents, reduced availability of rental properties, and discouragement of property investment. There was a sense of scepticism about the effectiveness of rent controls in achieving both availability and affordability simultaneously.

A variety of comments were received, including, "Immediately, all landlords would increase rents at the maximum allowable rate at every chance due to fear of what could change next year," "Rent controls have the potential to discourage people from considering the purchase of an investment or rental property as they may see that it will be too controlled and limit their investment going forward," "The business case for renting a property becomes less and less viable," "This assumes that rental controls are applied to conventional leases and not short-stay accommodation," and "Reducing rent at a time when mortgage rates and general costs are significantly increasing will reduce the appeal of long-term rentals and push people to short-term rentals for higher income."

There tended to be a negative sentiment towards rent controls, suggesting that such controls may have unintended consequences, and may not be effective in achieving the desired outcomes of availability and affordability.

## Do you think rent controls will achieve the goal of relieving rental price increases?

Overall sentiment: The majority of respondents do not believe that rent controls will achieve the goal of relieving rental price increases. They express scepticism about the effectiveness of rent controls and suggest alternative measures such as introducing incentives for investors or focusing on increasing rental availability. Some respondents also emphasize that rental price increases in their area are reasonable and not as drastic as in metro areas. There is a general sentiment that the rental market should be left to operate freely without government intervention.

The key quotes included, "While some landlords, at the recommendation of real estate agents, have already hiked rents excessively, many regional rental properties are privately managed and have not had rent increases," "No, not at all. If the government wants to increase house rental availability, they should instead look to introduce incentives for investors to purchase houses that can be made available for rent," "Yes. If that's the aim, then regulation of rent controls to cap the price of rentals, but is that a problem that needs solving? The problem seems to be availability," "No, it should be a free market," "No, it is market-controlled," and "No, generally in our area the increases are reasonable. We are not seeing local increases by thousands as they do in metro areas. Rent is increasing at a lower rate than mortgage payments."

The responses show a lack of confidence in rent controls as an effective solution for relieving rental price increases. Respondents highlight the importance of considering other factors such as availability and suggest alternative approaches to address rental market challenges.

## Can you foresee any unintended consequences of these measures?

Overall sentiment: The majority of respondents foresee unintended consequences resulting from the proposed measures. These consequences include a shift of landlords towards the short-term rental market, which reduces long-term rental availability and negatively impacts the regional labour market. Additionally, the measures are expected to discourage potential investors from purchasing properties for rental purposes and may lead to higher rents. The removal of tenanted properties to platforms like Airbnb and private off-the-book rentals is also mentioned as a potential consequence.

The key quotes included, "Increasing controls on long-term rentals will push

more landlords into the short-term rental market, reducing the long-term rental stock available, and consequently reducing the regional labour market," "It will further reduce the availability of rental properties as it becomes a less viable option for investing funds," "The potential is there to reduce potential investors from purchasing properties for rental purposes," "If rentals are capped, then the motivation to invest/develop is impacted. If the intention is to set a rent-price floor to improve availability, then affordability is impacted," "I see fewer rentals being made available if landlords cannot cover costs and continue to make a profit," "Removal of tenanted properties to Airbnb and private off-the-book rental," and "Yes, much, much higher rents."

These concerns suggest a need for careful consideration and evaluation of the potential effects of implementing rent controls.

**At a time when local businesses are struggling to find staff because there is nowhere for them to live, and are begging landlords to change their properties from holiday rentals to long-term to solve this problem, is it likely that those landlords will be discouraged from making the change because they'd be forced to absorb any costs that arose as a consequence of the rent controls and they were fearful of their ability manage those?**

Overall sentiment: The majority of respondents believe that landlords would be discouraged from changing their properties from holiday rentals to long-term rentals due to the potential costs associated with rent controls and their concerns about managing those costs. They express concerns about the attractiveness of renting properties as a business case and emphasize the importance of allowing landlords to manage their properties as they see fit. There is a consensus that rent controls could have a negative impact on the availability of long-term rentals and discourage landlords from participating in the rental market.

The key quotes included, "Anything that further adds to the costs of a landowner will make it less attractive to rent a property

as the business case becomes less and less attractive with much more risk," "At the end of the day, if a landlord owns a property, they are entitled to manage that property how they see fit," "It would take more analysis, I would think, to understand if the implementation of rental controls to discourage short-stay rentals would be a motivator for owners to make properties available for longer-term leases," "Yes, it will discourage people from providing rentals to the market."

It was noted that the change may exacerbate the challenges faced by local businesses in finding housing for their staff.

## ADTTA also asked their members about alternate strategies which Murrindindi Shire Council could consider implementing (via changes to the rates system or via local laws controls)?

Thirty-three per cent believed that council should charge a premium rate for vacant developable residential land, 33 per cent suggested measures to treat short-stay accommodation properties as commercial operations, and 67 per cent suggested 'something else'. In the 'something else' category, there were suggestions that the shire could release more residential and commercial land, and that there be incentives for landlords, such as cheaper rates or rental guarantees.

Some additional suggestions were also made in regard to rent controls. One said to modify planning regulations temporarily to encourage the development of vacant land in the short term. Another was very much opposed to the premium rates for vacant residential land and short stay as commercial operations, and instead said "interfering with market forces might sound attractive however, the consequences will be most counterproductive. Murrindindi Shire Council should be lobbying for a reduction in taxes on property (ie. land tax) to make it more viable for people to invest." Another respondent said, "There absolutely should be set limits on how many Airbnb and short-stay accommodations can operate in a shire."



## Flood recovery update - AgVic grants closing 13 July



Applications for Victorian Government Primary Producer Flood Recovery financial support for the October 2022 floods close at 4.00 pm on Thursday 13 July. These grants are designed to provide financial support to flood affected farmers and primary producers.

Grants closing on 13 July:

- Primary Producer Flood Recovery Grant
- Rural Landholder Grant
- Flood Recovery Transport Support Program
- Primary Producer Flood Recovery Concessional Loan

For more details on available grants and other available support, visit the Agriculture Victoria website at [agriculture.vic.gov.au/floods](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/floods)

For assistance in understanding what's available to you and the application process, call Agriculture Victoria on 136 186 Monday to Friday between 8.00 am and 6.00 pm.

### For more flood recovery information

For more information about resources available to you during recovery, you can visit the Flood Hub on Council's website. This hub has information on available grants, infrastructure updates, and support services available. Find out more at [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/floods2022](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/floods2022)

You can sign up to our free email Flood Recovery Newsletter for updates straight to your inbox at [murrindindi.vic.gov.au/recoverynewsletter](http://murrindindi.vic.gov.au/recoverynewsletter)

## Goulburn Valley Water

### Notice of fees and charges: 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

Goulburn Valley Water would like to advise all customers of new tariffs, which have been approved by GVV's Board and the Essential Services Commission. These are applicable to all customers in GVV's serviced areas, unless alternate special fees apply.

Water service fees (daily)	\$
Standard residential (20mm)	0.4859
Vacant land - unconnected	0.2429

Water usage fees (per kilolitre, based on meter readings)	\$
Potable water (drinking)	1.2241
Non-potable water	0.8566
Raw water	0.6117

Trade waste (daily)	\$
Category 1 and 2	0.6571

Bills are issued three times a year. Properties with fire services are charged a fee equivalent to 10 per cent of service fees.

If you are having difficulties paying your bill, support is available. We offer flexible payment options, concessions and access to government grants and programs - call us to ask about available options to suit you.

For a full list of all other fees and charges for 2023-24, please visit our website or call 1300 360 007.







# Thirty one years as Terip Terip Captain

GEOFF Penny has stepped down as Captain of the Terip Terip CFA brigade after 31 years in the role.

Geoff began volunteering with the CFA as a boy. Firefighting was in the family. "My father was in the CFA, and as a young boy I was just asked to go to a fire locally. I was probably 15 or 16 and I just progressed on from then," Geoff said.

Thirty-one years as captain is an impressive length of service, but Geoff has actually been an active fire fighter for around 45 years. "I was probably going to fires before I was even registered because back then it wasn't such a big deal. As a youngish one I was just put on the truck and told to put out the fire," he said.

He explained that the CFA has "changed quite significantly now, what with training and minimum skills and general fire fighter requirements before you can go on a truck. Back then it was just 'hop on the truck and there's the hose and put out the fire,'" he said

Geoff shared a couple of his more memorable experiences. One was "Driving en route to the Creighton's Creek fire in 1990, observing the rapidly growing column of smoke and weather conditions. We entered a small dirt road and traveled a small distance. Upon seeing the fast approaching fire, we found somewhere to turn around and make a hasty retreat. We turned back on the main road and entered a gateway to a paddock. Visibility was very

limited. We were told we could cross a creek to a hayshed but by this time it was fully involved, so we retreated to the main road as fire had jumped it. There we attempted to extinguish the fire until out of water all to no avail. Fire traveled up a hill and into next valley very quickly.

"During the 2009 fires, the Euroa Group and the Terip truck were sent to Yea, where we were situated for a considerable time. Our brigade manned our tanker every second day, helping with blacking out, back burning and helping residents. For a small rural brigade I thought this was a commendable effort, especially as the threat of fire in our area was considered a possibility."

Geoff farms sheep and cattle on his 640 acre family property in Terip Terip, as well as managing another property of 1300 acres in Ruffy. But while he's no longer captain, Mr Penny has no intention of quitting fire fighting any time soon.

"I still think I'm a valued member and I can still drive the truck while I can. I might decline to go big distances now, but I think the community still needs personnel, particularly mid-week. We have a lot of members that work away out of the district. I'm one of the fortunate ones that works here."



Geoff Penny. -Dale Mann



Outgoing Terip Terip CFA Captain Geoff Penny. -Dale Mann

**2023 GOULBURN FISHING FESTIVAL**

**FREE EVENT EILDON**

**Saturday, 2 September, 10am - 4pm**  
New location: Lions Park, Riverside Drive, Eildon

- Live music & market stalls
- Spinning wheel prizes
- Snobs Creek Hatchery tours
- 2000 'stonker' rainbow trout to be released at 11 sites
- Vic Fish Kids Clinics Eildon Pondage (bookings essential)
- Meet VFA Ambassador Bachar Houli

**Fireworks 7pm**

[www.vfa.vic.gov.au/goulburnfishfest](http://www.vfa.vic.gov.au/goulburnfishfest)

VFA Ambassador Bachar Houli

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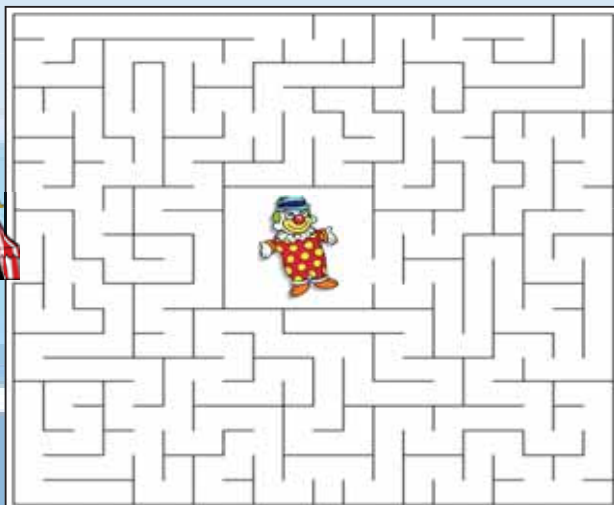
D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_



## WORLD JOKE DAY JULY 1.

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Help the clown find the circus



Did you know that ..... July 1 is International Joke day

The first joke is often attributed to the Greeks, specifically Palamedes, who is also credited with the invention of many other things.

Greece also boasts the first comedy club, though its purpose was sharing jokes among friends rather than stand up performances as we have now.

daysoftheyear.com/days/joke-day/

If you lift a kangaroo's tail off the ground, it can't hop.

Most people fart around 14 to 23 times a day!

A crocodile can't poke its tongue out.

Pirates wore earrings because they believed they improved their eyesight.

An apple, potato, and onion taste the same if you eat them with your nose plugged.

thefactsite.com/top-100-random-funny-facts/

### NUMBERS AND LETTERS

What word means the action or sound of laughing?

6 + 6 = \_\_ G

3 X 3 = \_\_ N

20 - 1 = \_\_ L

12 - 6 = \_\_ I

9 - 2 = \_\_ K

4 X 1 = \_\_ A

7 - 4 = \_\_ H

7 + 8 = \_\_ U

19

4

15

12

3

6

9

12

Solution is 'Laughter'

### WINNER

The winner of our NAIDOC WEEK colouring competition is

**Hudson W**

Congratulations, you have won a \$10 voucher from Country Tech.





# Real Estate GUIDE



## Concern rent freezes could make regional rent situation worse

CONCERNS have been raised that proposed rent controls may have unintended consequences in regional Victoria. Rent controls are currently being considered by the state government as a means of making rentals more affordable for Victorians.

Rents in regional Victoria rose by 6.3 per cent in the year to March 2023, significantly above the long-term average of 4.2 percent, according to the state government's figures. Renting is the most unaffordable it's been since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Victorian parliament is holding an inquiry into rental and housing affordability in Victoria, aimed at identifying the factors contributing to the low availability and high costs of rental properties.

As part of their budget negotiations with the Greens, Victorian Treasurer Tim Pallas has agreed to consider "rent caps or other forms of rent control", "regulation or taxation" of the short-stay industry and "improvements" to the state's vacancy tax, according to Guardian Australia, who have reported sitting a letter to that effect sent to the Greens by Mr Pallas.

Tenants Victoria, the peak body for the state's nearly two million renters, would also like to see more government intervention. Farah Farouque, Director of Community Engagement for Tenants Victoria told *The Alexandra Standard*, "solving the rental housing crisis is complex and requires ongoing effort from the ground up." Tenants Victoria are advocating for more legislation

to assist renters. "Housing affordability remains a huge concern for regional renters ... the private rental market requires additional regulation to ensure fairness for all," said Ms Farouque.

"Whist there is no single silver bullet solution for the rental housing crisis, much more ambition is needed by all tiers of government, ranging from sustained investments in more social and affordable housing to strengthening renters rights through the National Cabinet process which is on the cards," Ms Farouque said.

But there are concerns that the unintended consequences may instead be higher prices, less supply and the rise of a black market in rental properties, making the regional situation even worse than it already is.

*The Alexandra Standard* approached the Alexandra and District Tourism and Traders Association for their view on what the effect of potential rental controls would likely be. The ADTTA surveyed their members and replied "The majority of respondents express concerns about the consequences of rent controls on the availability and prices of rental properties in the region. They believe that rent controls would lead to negative outcomes, such as increased rents, reduced availability of rental properties, and discouragement of property investment. There is a sense of scepticism about the effectiveness of rent controls in achieving both availability and affordability simultaneously."

With steep increases in mortgage rates, growing land taxes and the rising costs of property maintenance, some rental property owners are concerned about their ability to cover the costs of holding their properties, let alone the return on investment which is their inducement to provide properties to rent in the first place.

The underlying causes of rental supply shortages are more than just the costs of borrowing money or maintenance charges. Issues such as government policies regarding land release and red tape in construction approvals, as well as increases in material costs and lengthy delays in the supply of building materials have all had a significant impact on the availability of properties for rent.

Rental bidding is another factor. It is illegal in Victoria, so agents are forbidden from asking prospective tenants to make offers on properties above the advertised rent. However, agents are not prohibited from accepting offers when they are made without inducement, so it has become increasingly common for desperate people to try to improve their chances of a successful rental application by offering money significantly above the advertised price.

This has already led to a situation where significant numbers of rental properties are leased at prices well above what they were advertised at, giving well-off renters an advantage over those with lesser incomes.

Rent control regulations also have the potential to lead to a black market in rental properties, where landlords do things 'off the books' so they can maintain control over what they charge for their properties, allowing them to be sure they can meet the costs of holding that investment.

Tenants Victoria are "calling for the introduction of a 'fairness formula' in Victoria to regulate future rent increases. This would be essentially a very modest market intervention which would offer more certainty for renters in the private rental market. It would not be a prohibition on rent increases but set up a cap, if you will," said Ms Farouque.

Tenants Victoria have also recognised the impact that the short stay rental market has had on the regions. "Tenants Victoria is looking forward to seeing the State Government's upcoming housing statement which should also address issues such as the lack of regulation of the short-stay market. We really need more AirBnB homes to return to the long-term rental market to house workers in need of homes in regional areas," Ms Farouque said.

Victorians interested in making a submission to the government's inquiry into the rental crisis and housing affordability have until Friday, July 7.

Visit [new.parliament.vic.gov.au/rentalandhousinginquiry](http://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/rentalandhousinginquiry)



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# ON THE LAND

Agriculture, Horticulture, Viticulture, Aquaculture and Silviculture

## CSIRO introduces national data and information tool for soil

THE CSIRO has launched a new tool that will help Australia sustainably manage a critical natural resource which sustains lives and livelihoods.

Now live and available for use, the Australian National Soil Information System (ANSIS) brings together soil data from across Australia, connecting multiple

data sources to provide access to nationally consistent soil data and information.

The new system will equip farmers, policy makers and researchers with the data and information they need to better manage, restore, and protect Australia's soils.

Speaking at the Soil Science Australian conference in Darwin, ANSIS project

lead at CSIRO, Peter Wilson, said it was an important step forward for the future sustainable management of soils in every part of the country.

"Soil is the backbone of our food security, and it is critical that we manage it effectively for climate change adaptation and economic and environmental prosperity to support national and global agrifood priorities," Mr Wilson said.

"Until now, it's been exceptionally difficult to find, access, integrate and compare soil data.

"This new system brings together all this information providing easy access to soil data and information that will underpin the effective management of soil."

ANSIS will be a valuable tool for farmers and farm advisors, allowing them to compare the condition of their soil with other soils in their region. This will help monitor how their soil has changed over time and inform opportunities for change or improvement in land management practices.

Governments and industry bodies will be able to use data and information through ANSIS to support the development of effective policies to ensure our soil is sustainably used and enhanced for future generations, and to inform policy decisions

in areas such as drought resilience, climate adaptation, natural capital accounting and biodiversity conservation.

Australia's National Soils Advocate, the Hon Penelope Wensley AC, said the launch of the new national soil information system was an exciting development.

"It represents a major advance in implementation of the National Soil Strategy. Good data, available in a consistent, accessible form, is essential for better understanding and management of Australia's soil.

"I know development of the system has been a challenging task and extend my compliments and thanks to CSIRO and everyone involved in delivering this important new tool for soil stakeholders and policy makers," she said.

Mr Wilson said ANSIS would enable researchers to better understand the way our soil works, its role in climate change adaptation and mitigation, and the impacts we have on this valuable natural resource.

ANSIS is supported by funding through the Australian Government National Soil Strategy (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) in collaboration with CSIRO and partner organisations.

### PHOTO COMPETITION

Remember to submit your photo competition entry to win a \$50 gift voucher from Dindi Country Clothing in Alexandra.

This month's theme is 'landscape'. See our June 28 edition for details.



The new Australian National Soil Information System has been launched. -SuSanA Secretariat

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# ON THE LAND

Agriculture, Horticulture, Viticulture, Aquaculture and Silviculture

## New technology to sharpen horticultures traceability

THE horticulture industry is on the look out for emerging technologies that can be deployed to make it easier for growers to trace their produce along the supply chain, to support maximum food safety and quality and support sustainability claims.

Supported by a \$471,000 grant from the Australian Government, the initiative is being led by Hort Innovation in partnership with key players within the horticulture supply chain field such as Freshcare and Fresh Markets Australia.

This month, the Australian Government announced \$6 million in funding for innovative solutions through the Regulatory Technology Research and Insights grant round of the National Agriculture Traceability grants program.

The RegTech grants aim to help businesses and exporters meet regulatory requirements

more efficiently, giving Australian agriculture a trade advantage.

Hort Innovation chief executive officer Brett Fifield said the funding would boost the horticulture sector's efforts to enhance and protect their supply chains.

"Having robust traceability systems in place assures consumers and trading partners that Australia's produce is fresh and safe," Mr Fifield said.

"Australia is a world leader when it comes to having trustworthy processes and systems in place, but this funding gives us the opportunity see what else is out there and identify technology that can both bolster our traceability systems, while also reducing costs for growers."

Freshcare chief executive officer Jane Siebum said she was looking forward to seeing what technology could be

implemented in Australia to make grower's lives easier.

"This project will see us identify 'regulatory technology' solutions that increase efficiency for growers and our industry as a whole," Ms Siebum said.

"The solutions identified through this work will be made available to the whole sector, so that, together, we can future proof Australia's horticulture industry."

National Farmers Federation Horticulture Council executive officer Richard Shannon said this program is a critical focus for horticultural businesses.

"This announcement marks the start of a collaborative approach within the horticulture sector to remove unnecessary red tape and also bolster the way we trace product claims throughout the supply chain," Mr Shannon said.

"It is great to see key players within the horticulture industry join forces in an effort to reduce duplication for growers and increase efficiency."

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Recipe kindly submitted by Kaye Baynes of the Yea Branch of the CWA

### BERRY BREAD AND BUTTER PUDDING

by Kaye Baynes

#### INGREDIENTS

3 Eggs  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla essence  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
2 1/2 cups milk  
6 slices fruit bread crusts removed  
1 cup frozen raspberries  
1tablespoon margarine

#### METHOD

Preheat oven to 160 (fan forced)  
Whisk the eggs, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon and milk together in a bowl  
Spread the bread with margarine and cut slices diagonally  
Layer the bread in rows in an ovenproof dish  
Sprinkle with Raspberries  
Pour over the egg mixture  
Place the ovenproof dish into a baking dish  
Pour boiling water into the baking dish until halfway up the side of the ovenproof dish  
Bake for 40 minutes or until golden and set  
Now enjoy!

## Australian broadacre farmland prices reported strong growth

THE average price of broadacre farmland per hectare has almost doubled over the last three years, increasing by 93 per cent from 2020 to 2023.

Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) Executive Director Dr Jared Greenville said recent growth in farmland prices has been extraordinary, and likely reflected a combination of factors including low interest rates, recent good commodity prices and seasonal conditions, and increased demand for land in general.

"Farmland is often used to secure lending, so increases in value can both improve equity and drive investment," Dr Greenville said.

Median farmland prices have grown most in the high rainfall zone, increasing by 125 per cent over the last 3 years to almost \$9000 per hectare. Price growth in the wheat sheep zone was also strong, increasing by 80 per cent over the same period to \$3465 per hectare.

Coming off a lower base, the average price of pastoral zone farmland increased by 130 per cent since 2020 to reach \$1528 per hectare in 2023.

Dr Greenville said the latest farmland price estimates can be accessed by anyone through ABARES' new Farmland Price Index online tool.

"Through an innovative and simple to operate dashboard on our website, users can gain valuable insights into market trends, access reliable information on the value of their farmland assets and track annual changes over time," Dr Greenville said.

"Users can make price comparisons between farming zones or download data for their own analysis.

"The Index utilises a robust and effective method developed by ABARES ensuring estimates reflect market conditions."

This is the first release of the ABARES Farmland Price Index, a statistically robust measure of Australian broadacre farmland prices using CoreLogic data and a stratified median approach. Further expansion of this product is already underway to include detailed regional estimates and quarterly indexes.

ABARES' new Farmland Price Index can be found at [agriculture.gov.au/abares/data/farmland-price-index](http://agriculture.gov.au/abares/data/farmland-price-index)

### SAVE THE DATE

**July 10** - Wagga Wagga  
Carbon Conversations  
- AgriFutures  
**July 11** - Wallup  
Young Farmer Business Bootcamp  
- AgVic  
**July 12** - Online  
Irrigation Webinar Series  
- AgVic  
**August 13-15** - Wagga Wagga  
Thriving Women Conference  
- AgriFutures

### UPCOMING CATTLE SALES DATES

**July 7** Combined agents store sale  
**Aug 4** Combined agents store sale  
**Sept 1** Combined agents store sale  
**Oct 6** Combined agents store sale



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### The Rabbit Trap

By Jed Dunstan



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# Murrindindi Shire Council's June meeting

MURRINDINDI Shire Council's monthly meeting was held on the evening of Wednesday, June 28. All councillors were present.

A petition was received on June 1, titled *Save the Swale, Leckie Park*, from Ruth Selover. The petition called for council to continue the Leckie Park swale trial for its planned two year duration. It was signed by 56 people, and met the requirements of council's governance rules.

Cr Gallagher commented that he was looking forward to the sharing of views about Leckie Park when the community preferences are surveyed.

No community members spoke during the Open Forum section.

In Questions of Council, a question was submitted by Steve Joblin. He said via a letter that council may be aware that December 2024 marks the 200th anniversary of Hume and Hovell passing through what is now Murrindindi Shire. On their travels, they named the creek, referred to as Narangurnung or Narrangarnong, as King Parrot Creek. The creek was still referred to by the Taungurung name for many years. Mr Joblin asked, "Will council undertake to work with the Taungurung and regulatory authorities to have the creek returned to its original name and the sign placed in particular at the bridge over the creek on Goulburn Valley Highway for the 200th anniversary of Hume and Hovell passing through Taungurung land."

In response, shire CEO Livia Bonazzi said council officers will raise the creek naming with the Taungurung traditional owners to understand their priorities and the potential to align with the December 2024 timing. Such a change would also require community consultation, and it would need to follow Victoria's required process for place naming. Ms Bonazzi said that the request is consistent with council's Reconciliation Action Plan and state policy.

An update to the Grants and Contributions Policy was to be considered during the council meeting, so Cr Walsh suggested that the current round of applications occur first, as they would be assessed under the pre-existing policy.

The council officer recommended funding of \$17,000 for the Lions Club of Marysville and District Inc's Marysville Music Weekend. This was approved by council. Decisions made under delegation were a fee reduction of \$75 for the Murrindindi Film Society and \$136.50 for a planning permit extension for Kinglake Ranges Cemetery Trust.

The Grants and Contributions Policy was then reviewed. A smaller number of grant streams was recommended without limiting the types of applications currently being made. It was proposed that grants be made on a quarterly basis, the business planning stream removed, removal of fee reductions, introduction of a minimum request value of \$200, raising delegated authority to \$2500, the streamlining of forms, CFA and SES application exemptions for fee reductions, special purpose grants, and other changes. It was also proposed that the name be changed to Grants and Sponsorships. Council approved the changes.

During the last financial year, the scheme made funding allocation total of \$126,184.50

The Audit and Risk Committee received council endorsement to re-appoint Dr Craig Nisbet as an independent member for a second three year term, ending June 30, 2026. In addition, they adopted the revised Audit and Risk charter, noting the increase in chair remuneration from \$500 to \$650 per meeting, commencing in July 2023.

Instruments of Delegation and Authorisation to Council Staff were also adopted.

Council was also invited to consider an adjustment to the total contract for plumbing services. The total five year contract for the

six suppliers, commencing September 2020, was \$1,500,000. However, as of May 3, the total amount paid since commencement is \$1,039,415. It was anticipated that due to increased work from unanticipated grant funding and unanticipated increased maintenance and emergency works, the total contract amount had been underestimated. The officer recommended an increase to \$2,863,636 over the term of the contract. The full funding may not be spent, and it's not an increase to budget. Council approved the adjustment.

The Asset Management Strategy recommendation, that council note the significant work required in advancing strategic asset management practices and improved asset maturity as outlined by the Asset Management Strategy 2023-2027, was approved by council.

In Councillor Reports, Cr Carpenter spoke about council services for children and young people. She noted that council are looking to recruit more Family Day Care childhood educators as the demand for care exceeds the number of places available. She also noted that, as the population increases, there needs to be planning for the increasing need for these services. She said that council hopes to gain government funding to support infrastructure planning for the early years education services in Alexandra and Yea. She said that the rollout of the pre-prep 30 hours per week reform will bring local challenges, and consultations with schools, kindergartens and childcare centres will be crucial to successful outcomes. The maternal and child healthcare building in Alexandra has been undergoing extensive renovations and is nearing completion.

Cr Carpenter also said that the Reconciliation Action Plan has been implemented by council, and council will soon be recruiting for representation on the advisory group.

She congratulated Alexandra District Health and the Yea and District Memorial Hospital on the launch of their initiative to develop Murrindindi Restart, a community response to the harms of substance use and addiction.

Cr Gallagher extended the community's appreciation to the CEO and directors for rapidly assembling a stakeholder forum to learn more about the sudden accelerated cessation of native timber harvesting. The government representatives in attendance learnt a great deal about the anxiety of local contractors most acutely impacted by the transition. He spoke about the need for certainty. The contractors learnt that the state is keen to maintain their local presence, machinery and intergenerational experience.

He also spoke about the Alexandra Art Show, the Alexandra Rotary changeover event, and the Kellock fundraiser, Dance the Night Away, and acknowledged the two Murrindindi recipients of Fire Service Medals, Paul Denham and Dawn Hartog, and new OAMs Natalie Wischer and Larry Fallon. He also acknowledged the work and legacy of Tara Carter at council as she departs.

Cr Gallagher said he "wanted to continue the discussion on one of the great governance matters of this generation. It's the referendum to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. The Constitution of Australia is our country's governance framework, and it's a very intentionally understated document, a concise document of about 30 pages... A referendum is the legal mechanism to change Australia's constitution. In the history of Federation, there have been eight changes to the constitution and 36 unsuccessful attempts... My point is that constitutional change is uncommon and so the opportunity for us to consider what better looks like for the founding document for our country is a rare and valuable gift... Personally, I think that a chapter nine change is a solid step

towards national reconciliation and supports the 86 per cent of Indigenous Australians in support of a yes vote." He said that he would be happy to discuss his personal views with members of the community.

Cr Gerencser spoke about accessibility upgrades at two locations, and the work being done on the Maternal and Child Health building. The Yea Caravan Park bridge was opened this week after it was damaged in the October flood, and the Break O'Day Road bridge opened on June 26, on schedule.

She said that a consultant has been appointed for the road safety strategy and action plan, with Regional Roads Victoria participating in the action group. She said that there has been an increase in potholes in the shire, but that road and drainage programs are continuing. She asked that people drive to conditions and report any damage. Flood studies are underway, including UT Creek and Flowerdale, with funding received jointly with Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.

Cr McAulay welcomed Ben Hardwell as Manager of Economic Development. She also spoke about the artwork on the Great Victorian Rail Trail, now completed. Signage and promotional material are also underway. She is looking forward to seeing the locational specific promotional brochures for different parts of the shire, and council has put \$5000 towards a Lake Eildon episode of *The Fishing Show* on Seven Mate. The new Eildon Blue Gums Trail is already being used by walkers and cyclists and will be promoted in spring. Officers are also working with Murrindindi Food and Wine on a range of events. In addition, Cr McAulay spoke about NAIDOC Week plans at the Yea Wetlands.

She commented on Murrindindi Shire Council being pleased to support the Alexandra Truck, Ute and Rod Show as a major sponsor. She congratulated the committee and owner drivers.

Cr McAulay also spoke about the council meeting with timber contractors to discuss concerns. Council will be developing a communications plan and a website with support information. She asked that people impacted by the end of native timber forestry continue to engage with council.

Cr Haslam spoke about the container deposit system which will commence in November 2023. Visy is the network operator in the north east. They are inviting businesses and community groups to apply to become a collection point.

She was pleased that the Blue Gums trail is being used, but was concerned after discovering a parked car on the trail and the occupants had lit a fire on the trail. She said that there had also been other reports of vehicles on the trail. Additional bollards may be installed to prevent this from happening. She asked that people report such poor behaviour to council. She was also concerned about the fencing at the AGL gates. She reminded people that they are in place for safety.

The Eildon Biggest Morning Tea raised over \$3000 for breast cancer research and she thanked the organisers, value hosts and the community.

Cr Walsh spoke about some of the events he attended in the last month, describing them as interesting and uplifting. He attended, along with the shire CEO, the Australian National Government Association National Assembly. Around 1100 delegates from councils attended. The Australian Government also hosted the first meeting in 10 years of the Australian Council of Local Governments. The mayor and CEO also met with Murray Watt, Minister for Emergency Management, the advisors for Brendan O'Connor, Minister for Jobs and Skills, and Member for Indi, Dr Helen Haines. Ms Haines arranged the meetings for them.

One of the key messages was that the Australian Government is keen to support

projects, but only after gaining state government support. They will be looking at post-secondary education opportunities.

He said that council is continuing their advocacy to have the Minister for Water change the regulation in relation to the water levels at Lake Eildon, to be met prior to the summer irrigation loads, from 100 per cent down to 95 per cent. The minister's communication states that the Bureau of Meteorology is predicting an early El Niño and therefore the current settings should remain. He said that they will continue to argue that an incorrect assessment of risk by them will have a major impact on Murrindindi and communities downstream.

Shire CEO Livia Bonazzi said that the shire partnered with Emergency Management Victoria to conduct an exercise in Yea Shire Hall. Around 60 people participated. Commissioner Andrew Crisp was in attendance. The focus was on the use of emergency response centres.

Murrindindi Shire was successful in their grant application for \$125,000 under the National Disaster Ready Fund for the mid-Goulburn flood study. The shire has also been allocated \$30,000 under the circular economy household education fund for the new four stream waste service.

Ms Bonazzi provided an update on Breakaway Bridge in Acheron. Council has received the relevant hydrology information from the catchment management authority which allows the bridge consultants to finalise the assessment of the condition to the damaged bridge. Rectification options will be considered and a further meeting will be held with the community.

## Tourism spend up by 73 per cent in high country

VISITOR expenditure in Victoria has hit a record high of \$35 billion annually, reaching the Victorian Government's 2024 tourism target more than a year ahead of schedule.

The latest data, released by Tourism Research Australia has showed visitor expenditure in Victoria for the year ending March 2023 surpassed the 2019 pre-COVID peak of \$32.5 billion.

In other news, Victoria is leading the nation's tourism recovery. The state attracted 22.1 per cent of Australia's total visitor expenditure over the 12 month period and made the largest market share gains in the country with a 2.9 percentage point growth.

The research also revealed that Melbourne has kept its crown as the number one interstate overnight leisure destination in Australia, with 3.6 million visitors staying 14.6 million nights and spending \$5.1 billion.

Regional Victoria continued to deliver outstanding results with all tourism regions hitting all-time highs, with visitor spending in Phillip Island increasing by 75 per cent, High Country up by 73 per cent, and the Grampians rising by 66 per cent since 2019.

Overall intrastate overnight visitation numbers to regional Victoria were up six per cent since 2019, with total nights increasing by eight per cent and expenditure up 58 per cent.

International markets continued to recover, reaching \$4.2 billion in visitor expenditure in Victoria in the year ending March 2023, which is approximately 50 per cent of 2019 levels.

China has returned as the number one international market after only reopening in January and India continues to be a growing international market with visitor expenditure now 11 per cent higher than in 2019.



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0	5	1	1	0	3				10
1	6	5	3	4	2				21
0	3	5	6	5	4				23
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  - The recovery of six (6) existing panel antennas, from the existing headframe
  - The installation and removal of associated ancillary equipment, including RRUs, junction boxes, TMA, feeders, cables, etc.
  - Works within the existing equipment shelter
2. Telstra Corporation Limited (A.C.N 086 174 781) regards the proposed installation as a Low-impact Facility under the *Telecommunications (Low-impact Facilities) Determination 2018* ("The Determination") based on the description above.
3. In accordance with Section 7 of C564:2020 Mobile Phone Base Station Deployment Code, we invite you to provide feedback about the proposal. Further information and/or comments should be directed to: Ken Hsieh on behalf of Telstra, 0488 725 667, [ken.hsieh@ericsson.com](mailto:ken.hsieh@ericsson.com) by **Thursday 20 July 2023**.



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- Telstra plans to upgrade an existing telecommunications facility located at Cottons Pinch, Goulburn Valley Highway, Molesworth Victoria 3718  
[www.rfnsa.com.au/3718002](http://www.rfnsa.com.au/3718002)
1. Telstra Limited (A.C.N 051 775 556) are currently upgrading existing mobile network facilities to allow for the introduction of 5G to Telstra's network. As part of this network upgrade, Telstra proposes the installation of NR850 (5G) technology at the Molesworth locality and surrounds.
2. The proposed works at the above site include the removal of six (6) existing panel antennas, and the installation of four (4) new panel antennas (each no more than 2.8m long). The installation of four (4) new RRUs and the installation of associated ancillary equipment. All internal equipment will be housed within the existing equipment shelter located at the base of the facility.
3. Telstra regards the proposed installation as a Low-impact Facility under the *Telecommunications (Low-impact Facilities) Determination 2018* based on the above description.
4. In accordance with Section 7 of C564:2020 Mobile Phone Base Station Deployment Code, we invite you to provide feedback about the proposal. Further information and/or written submissions should be directed to: Matilde Tobon, Aurecon Australasia Pty Ltd (A.B.N 54 005 139 873) via email to: [Matilde.TobonMaya@arecongroup.com](mailto:Matilde.TobonMaya@arecongroup.com) or via post to: Matilde Tobon, Aurecon Australasia PO Box 23061, Docklands, VIC, 8012 by 5pm on 19/07/2023.

### SITUATION VACANT



#### Support Services Assistants (Casual)

Alexandra District Health is looking for enthusiastic team members to join our catering and domestic services department.

The casual positions are responsible for assisting in the preparation of meals, the distribution of meals and the cleanliness of the kitchen ensuring food safety plan objectives are met at all times, maintenance of hygiene and cleanliness standards in the hospital, ensuring the work place is safe at all times for patients, clients, staff and the community. Successful applicants will be required to undergo a current National Criminal History Check, hold or be willing to undertake a Working with Children Check and have three COVID-19 and influenza vaccinations.

For further information regarding this role please contact Melissa Rigg, Support Services Manager 5772 0993 or email [Recruitment@adh.org.au](mailto:Recruitment@adh.org.au). Applications will be accepted immediately.

For further information or to apply visit [adh.org.au/careers/current-vacancies](http://adh.org.au/careers/current-vacancies).



#### QUALITY AND RISK COORDINATOR PERMANENT PART TIME 24 HOURS PER WEEK

Alexandra District Health is seeking an experienced office administrator to join our team as Quality and Risk Coordinator.

The Quality and Risk Coordinator is responsible for:

- Promoting customer service excellence.
- Acting as a quality champion across ADH, supporting managers, and staff to strengthen capacity of quality improvement within their teams.
- Maintaining the ADH incident reporting software, quality reporting systems, preparation and documentation of policies and procedures and governance documents.
- Assisting in the facilitation, coordination and education of all accreditation processes.

The successful applicant will demonstrate exemplary communication skills, will be focused on the provision of excellent customer service and patient safety, maintaining confidentiality and will exhibit an attention to detail whilst being able to juggle multiple tasks at once and have advanced computer skills. The successful applicant will have access to an extensive handover process. Please contact Juliana McCashney, Manager People and Culture, if you have any queries regarding the role 5772 0997.

For further information, position description and application details visit [adh.org.au/careers/current-vacancies](http://adh.org.au/careers/current-vacancies). Applications close Friday, July 14, 2023, close of business.

### SITUATION VACANT



#### Admin/sales support

FULL TIME

This is not a work from home role

Alexandra Newspapers Pty Ltd is one of the oldest newspapers in Victoria, and the oldest in the Murrindindi Shire, first publishing in June 1868. We publish *The Alexandra Standard* and *The Yea Chronicle*, across Murrindindi and beyond. We are looking for someone to fill a role in our administration department and to assist our sales department. You will need to have the ability to be able to take on a large and important part in our team.

#### What the job involves:

- All aspects of office administration
- Trades and classified advertising
- Assisting sales department as required
- Assisting with weekly paper distribution
- Organising commercial printing jobs

#### What you need:

- Dynamic customer service
- Excellent communication skills
- Excellent knowledge of all Microsoft programs
- To be friendly, helpful and motivated
- To be a great team player
- Able to follow written and verbal instruction
- Ability to work under the pressure of deadlines and multi task in a busy office.
- To be punctual and professional with a strong work ethic
- Have initiative and be well organised
- Be able to problem solve and brainstorm
- To be methodical and thorough, with attention to detail
- A willingness to learn many aspects of the business
- Previous admin experience is an advantage
- Drivers Licence

#### How to apply:

To be considered for this position, submit your resume and cover letter to [manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au](mailto:manager@alexandranewspapers.com.au)

Only applicants who are Australian residents or hold a relevant visa are eligible to apply.



Alexandra Newspapers is an independent newspaper and not affiliated with any other media outlet in the Murrindindi Shire.

## BOOK YOUR CLASSIFIED AD TODAY!

Deadline: NOON MONDAY

Phone: 5772 1002

or email

[reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au](mailto:reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au)

PLEASE NOTE: All classifieds MUST be paid by cash, cheque or credit card at the time of booking



Alexandra Newspapers

43 Grant St. Alexandra Vic. 3714

Phone 5772 1002

[reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au](mailto:reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au)

# Classifieds

# First Victorian team returns after a month fighting Canadian fires

## DEATH NOTICES

**TEKLEBURG,**  
Suzanne Elizabeth  
31/08/1939 – 26/06/2023  
Passed away at  
Box Hill Hospital.  
Loving wife of John for  
over 61 years. Mother  
to Stephen (dec.),  
Barry, Andrew, Phillip  
and Joanne. Nanna to  
Christine, Richard (dec.),  
Sarah, Katherine, Kyra,  
Nathan, Nicholas and  
William. Great Nan to  
Alexis, Elaina, Reid, Billie,  
Remi and Hallie.  
Fur mum to many four  
legged friends.  
Eternally free.

**Walters, Elizabeth**  
04/11/1931 – 23/06/2023  
Passed away peacefully  
at Darlingford Upper  
Goulburn Nursing  
Home, Friday, June  
23, 2023, aged 91  
years. Loved wife of  
Leonard (dec). Loved  
aunt (Betty) of Dawn  
and Lisa, sister of  
Geoffrey. Thank you to  
Darlingford for their  
care and kindness to  
Elizabeth.

**STACK (MAHON),**  
**Jacinta –**  
13/04/1962 - 25/06/2023  
Dearly loved daughter of  
Margaret and Jack (dec).  
Much loved sister of  
Gerard, Therese, Anthony,  
Monica, Lawrence (dec).  
Carmel, John and Paul.  
Always in our hearts.

## FUNERAL NOTICES

**TEKLEBURG,**  
The funeral service  
for Suzanne will be  
held at Alexandra  
Football Netball  
Club rooms on  
Thursday, July 6,  
2023 commencing at  
11am. Followed by a  
private Cremation.

McCormack  
FUNERALS  
Funerals & Cremations  
A.F.D.A. 1800 080 909  
www.mccormackfunerals.com.au

## FUNERAL NOTICES

**Walters**  
A private burial for  
Elizabeth will be  
held at Alexandra  
Lawn Cemetery on  
Friday, July 7, at  
11am.  
McCormack  
FUNERALS  
Funerals & Cremations  
A.F.D.A. 1800 080 909  
www.mccormackfunerals.com.au

## IN MEMORIAM

**RENFREY, GEORGE**  
My loving husband passed  
away 9/07/2021 two years  
ago. Father of four, Pa  
of eight. Always in our  
hearts. Bette and family.

## FOR HIRE

**FITNESS  
EQUIPMENT**  
Rental and Sales  
Alexandra  
Treadmills, X-trainers,  
exercise bikes, rowers  
and more.  
PH:0407 231 377

## MEETINGS

**MURRINDINDI EAST  
U3A AGM** will be held  
on Monday, July 17,  
10.30am at Alexandra  
Bowling Club, 4 Paynes  
Avenue. Guest speaker  
will be Bruce Hyatt,  
local MICA Paramedic,  
followed by a light lunch.  
Enquiries to secretary@  
murrindindieast3a.org.au.

## PETS & LIVESTOCK

**ISA BROWN LAYERS -**  
POL, \$27 each. Phone  
5798 1868. Pick-up in  
Alexandra or Yea.  
beckysfreerange@gmail.com

## PUBLIC NOTICES

**ALEXANDRA  
MASONIC LODGE**  
Wood raffle winner  
Wayne Miller, Alexandra.



Commissioner Andrew Crisp and some of the firefighters who were deployed to Canada to fight the bushfires. -S

A GROUP of 46 Victorians returned to Melbourne on Friday, June 30 after more than a month assisting Canadian emergency services and communities in their wildfire emergency.

The team, including 42 people from Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) and four people from Country Fire Authority (CFA), have spent the last 35 days providing much needed relief to exhausted Canadian crews.

Firefighters from FFMVic have been backburning areas not yet impacted in an effort to contain the fires. There are also several staff providing logistical, administrative and communications support behind the scenes.

A total of 115 Victorians have travelled to Canada since May 25, as part of a wider Australian and New Zealand response, with all Australian states sending specialist support. France has also been deployed from the United States, South Africa,

France, Chile, Costa Rica, Portugal and Spain.

The wildfires continue to challenge crews, with around 422 active fires across Canada. Those returning have received fantastic feedback from their Canadian counterparts and communities, praising their approach and professionalism.

Emergency Management Commissioner Andrew Crisp said it's great to welcome home the first contingent of our highly skilled crews who have provided invaluable support to their Canadian colleagues and their communities.

"This team of 46 have represented our state in the best possible way through helping our Canadian colleagues, as the Canadians supported us during the 2019/20 fires," he said.

Forest Fire Management Victoria Chief Fire Officer Chris Hardman said it was important to support Canada in its time of need, particularly after so many Canadian

firefighters helped Victoria during the devastating 2019/20 bushfire season.

"We have contributed 80 experienced campaign firefighters who have worked incredibly hard and made a real difference to the Canadian firefight. They've been supported by amazing incident management, vehicle support, logistics and communications personnel from our partner agencies across from Australia and New Zealand, who are working extremely well to integrate into the Canadian wildfire management system," he said.

CFA Acting Chief Officer Garry Cook said Victorians can be proud of the valuable contribution our members continue to make to help protect Canadian communities from wildfires.

"Our CFA personnel are highly trained to assist in a wide range of emergencies and I thank this group for showcasing their expertise internationally and helping communities abroad," he said.

## Citizen scientists concerned about tree geebung

CITIZEN scientists from Wildlife of the Central Highlands (WOTCH) and the Victorian Forest Alliance (VFA) have said that state-owned logging company VicForests has destroyed numerous endangered tree geebung while doing regeneration works. The area in question is within the Immediate Protection Areas announced by the state government in 2019.

The groups have reported logging of the endangered plant, calling for VicForests to be charged for violating state environment laws. The groups say that the the Environment Department's regulator said it doesn't have the power to act on the breach because the protection areas haven't been formalised.

Chris Schuringa, Victorian Forest Alliance Campaign Coordinator, said, "VicForests has once again been caught red-handed. The agency repeatedly flouts the law, while the regulator does nothing to stop them. Despite the government's plan to bring an earlier end to native forest logging, we hold grave concerns for forests and endangered species like the tree geebung, that are still under threat from VicForests destructive logging. VicForests needs to be wound up."

While the government has said they are phasing out native forest logging on January 1, no decision about the future of VicForests has been announced.

The tree geebung (*Persoonia arborea*) is a mid-story tree found only in the tall wet forests of Victoria's Central Highlands.

On October 26, 2022, Warburton Environment Inc won a Supreme Court case against VicForests over the agency's failure to protect tree geebung from logging. In his judgement, the Honourable Justice Garde stated, "...no attempt was made by VicForests to show that it was not reasonably practicable to protect the significant number of tree geebung... Given the evidence as to the past harvesting and burning practices of VicForests, it is highly likely that significant numbers of mature tree geebung have been lost in the Central Highlands in the past through harvesting and regeneration burning. The precise extent of the loss will

never be known, but on the basis of recent records it is likely to amount to many hundreds or even thousands of mature trees.

Wildlife of the Central Highlands (WOTCH) President Hayley Forster said, "The government must enact proper protections for forests, particularly after January 1, when logging is slated to end. Logging has had terrible impacts on forests over the last 50 years, and there's a lot of important ecological restoration work that needs to be done. But VicForests have shown that it cannot be trusted in that role."

VicForests were contacted for comment on the case. A spokesperson said, "VicForests has recently been made aware of this report and we are considering it."

## Time to book your stay in nature

ARE you keen to take a break? The 2023-24 Parks Victoria camping and accommodation bookings have opened for dates from September 2023 to October 6, 2024.

More information and full instructions on how to book are available on the Parks Victoria website at [parks.vic.gov.au/where-to-stay/booking-information](http://parks.vic.gov.au/where-to-stay/booking-information).

Parks Victoria has halved campsite fees at every bookable campground across Victoria, with more than 50,000 camping bookings made last summer, a 20 per cent increase compared to the summer before the program began.

The state government is also funding the construction of new and upgraded campgrounds across the state, as well as improvements to iconic 4WD routes.

**BOOK YOUR CLASSIFIED AD TODAY!**

**Deadline: NOON MONDAY**

**Phone: 5772 1002**  
or email  
[reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au](mailto:reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au)

**PLEASE NOTE:** All classifieds **MUST** be paid by cash, cheque or credit card at the time of booking

**ALEXANDRA EILDON HANVELL**  
**Standard**  
**The Hera Chronicle**

**Alexandra Newspapers**  
43 Grant St. Alexandra Vic. 3714  
**Phone 5772 1002**  
[reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au](mailto:reception@alexandranewspapers.com.au)



# Looking at pensions into the future

FOR decades, men expected to retire at 65 and receive the pension. For women, it was 60. The age of eligibility for women was increased over the ten years between 1995 and 2004 until they too reached the same qualifying age as men.

In 2009, the Rudd government lifted it to 67 for men and women, but it was phased in from 2015, with six month increases every two years, starting from July 1, 2017. Now we've arrived, after almost 30 years, at a pension age of 67.

"But it could have been worse," Ian Henschke, Chief Advocate of National Seniors Australia said. Almost 10 years ago, Treasurer Joe Hockey announced it would go to 70 by 2035. Mr Hockey said it was "highly probable a child born today would live to 150." This followed on from a report from the Commission of Audit, which recommended the qualifying age be linked to life expectancy. The thinking was, because Australians are living longer than their parents and grandparents, they should remain in the workforce longer. There was significant backlash to this, including a campaign led by National Seniors. A popular slogan at the time was: "Only someone who's worked in an office their whole life would think you can work until you're 70."

In the run up to the 2019 election Scott Morrison dropped the age 70 target as Liberal policy. His deputy, Nationals leader Michael McCormack, said it was "probably

a step too far" adding "I think if you're a tradie, or a brickie, or a shearer in rural and regional Australia you don't want some suit in Canberra telling you you're going to have to work until you're 70." National Seniors were pleased the government "backed away from the unpopular idea" and called the decision "a win for common sense".

Now a group of academics has revisited the statistics and released a report saying a further rise is warranted to ensure the country has a sufficient supply of workers into the future. Macquarie University Business School Professor Hanlin Shang and his co-authors say there should be three more pension-age increases over the next 27 years. They suggest 68 by 2030, rising to 69 in 2036, and 70 by 2050. Professor Shang says Australia's low birth rate is one of the key factors. "Less people in the working group and more in retirement will make the old age dependency ratio (OADR) higher," he said. "What this means is there is less working people to support elderly people. And with more elderly people in the population, this will create a burden for the government pension system."

Mr Henschke's response was, "Professor Shang and his team should read, or hopefully re-read, *The Age Pension in the 21st Century* by 2018 Actuary of the Year Michael Rice. He revealed the cost of the age pension as a per centage of GDP will fall, not rise in the decades to come. There will be far fewer full pensioners, and far more part pensioners and self-funded retirees."

# Young adults living with parents more than ever

A NEW report by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) has found that young people are increasingly living with their parents well into their late teens and early 20s. This is especially true of young men, with more than half (51 per cent) of men in their early twenties living with their parents in 2021, up from 46 per cent in 2006. 43 per cent of young women aged 20 to 24 were living with their parents in 2021, compared to 36 per cent in 2006.

In the largest increase by age group, 72 per cent of 19 year olds were living with their parents in 2021, a nine per cent increase since 2006.

Although young people living with their parents has been gradually increasing over many years, the 2016 to 2021 period showed the sharpest increase in recent decades.

"We can see this trend accelerating in the latest census, which might be an effect of COVID-19, or due to lack of affordable housing, or a combination of both," report co-author Dr Qu said.

"Although more marked for the late teens and early 20s, the pattern of more young people living with their parents applies to every age until the early 30s."

The report also showed a strong association between lower income and living with parents. Young men aged between 20 and 24 living with their parents were around twice as likely to have a personal income of under \$16,000 per year, compared to those not living with parents (28 per cent vs 15 per cent).

Among those living with parents between ages 25 to 29, 37 per cent had an income under \$34,000 per year compared to just 17 per cent of those who did not live with parents.

AIFS Research Director, Dr Rae Kaspiew, said it is important to be aware that while there can be many positives for people in their late teens and early twenties living with parents, it can also have unintended impacts.

"Leaving the parental home typically represents one of the main steps that young people make in the transition to an independent adult life," Dr Kaspiew said.

"In some cases, when a young person moving out is delayed by months or years, it may lead to more challenging parent child relationships, or an increase in conflict in the home.

"Differing opinions about habits and lifestyles, coupled with external pressures on the young person, for example, trying to save a house deposit, can all come into play," Dr Kaspiew said.

"It's important that communities and policymakers take into account the higher prevalence of this living arrangement, in terms of supporting families via strong mental health services, and other services they may need."

The report also found young Australian-born men and women from culturally diverse backgrounds such as Asia, Middle East, North Africa and Southern and Eastern Europe were more likely to live with their parents for longer.

Living with parents was more common for young people who had a disability, and those who were non-Indigenous.

## GMW releasing from Eildon to accommodate inflows

GOULBURN Murray Water (GMW) has announced that they are aiming to reduce the water levels in Eildon to 94 per cent by August 1. As of Tuesday, June 27, Lake Eildon's current storage level was 97.2 per cent.

They said that the current level of Lake Eildon can largely be attributed to the higher than average rainfall stemming from three consecutive La Niña events and a negative Indian Ocean Dipole.

The Eildon Dam collects water from 23 per cent of the Goulburn catchment. The remaining 77 per cent of the catchment includes significant creeks and rivers like the Rubicon River, Acheron River, Yea River, Sunday Creek, Seven Creeks and the Broken River.

GMW Water Resources Manager Dr Mark Bailey said GMW will continue to monitor weather and catchment conditions and adjust filling targets and release rates.

"GMW has reduced releases from 12,000ML per day in response to increased tributary flows.

"Releases are currently at 11,000ML per day (as of June 27) and are likely to resume at 12,000ML per day in the coming days after these tributaries fall.

"These releases are expected to continue through July. Minor adjustments will be made to accommodate any increased inflows downstream of Eildon and to minimise bank erosion."

Downstream impacts are a key consideration to any releases of water from Lake Eildon, particularly as private land is affected before the minor flood levels are reached. Due to a wet catchment and rainfall in June, GMW has moved to the wet operating scenario when determining its filling targets, in line with its obligations under the Victorian Water Act 1989.

The new scenario aims to have Eildon full by November 1 instead of October 1. Target filling points are set to protect the reliability of water entitlements, while offering some flood mitigation.

The framework set out under the Victorian Water Act 1989 requires target filling points be set so that Lake Eildon will reach full capacity with inflows that would be expected in 95 years out of 100, (it would only not fill in very dry years).

More information and the latest updates on Lake Eildon can be found at the GMW website [g-mwater.com.au/eildon-management](http://g-mwater.com.au/eildon-management)

## Reptile thought to be extinct rediscovered in Victoria

A SMALL reptile not seen in Victoria for over 50 years, and thought to be extinct in the wild, has been rediscovered.

The Australian and Victorian Governments announced the landmark discovery of a Victorian grassland earless dragon population, which provides renewed hope for the critically endangered species last sighted in 1969.

Once commonly found in native grasslands west of Melbourne, their numbers declined as a result of habitat loss and predators like foxes and feral cats.

To protect the habitat and the species, the location of the rediscovered population cannot be revealed, but surveys are ongoing at the rediscovery site to better understand the population size, with the state government working alongside the Australian Government and Zoos Victoria to establish a plan to ensure the species' recovery.

The governments are investing \$188,000 for a new project trialling the use of specially trained detection dogs to sniff out more populations of the dragon to help inform the level of conservation required. A conservation breeding program is also being established by Zoos Victoria to ensure the species is not lost again.

The Victorian grassland earless dragon is listed as critically endangered under the Victorian *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water Tanya Plibersek said, "I want to protect our precious creatures for our kids and grandkids. It's such exciting news that the Victorian grassland earless dragon has been rediscovered. It's a reminder about why it's so important to invest in habitat restoration and the eradication of feral species like cats and foxes.

"To best support the recovery of the Victorian grassland earless dragon, we have to know where they are. Detection dogs are an effective and non-invasive way to find this highly cryptic and critically endangered lizard in the wild.

"I'm so pleased to announce that the Federal Labor Government is investing \$98,000 for this project to find populations of the rare dragons."

Victorian Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt added, "This is an amazing discovery and offers an opportunity for us to recover a species once thought lost to our state and the world.

"With the help of our partners we will continue to fight the extinction of this critically endangered species, ensuring future generations can see and learn about this incredibly unique lizard.

"We will continue to work hard at protecting Victoria's most vulnerable creatures and secure their future for generations to come."

## Our history: Snow Sport at Marysville

*Alexandra and Yea Standard, Friday, May 2, 1930*

A NEW winter playground for Victoria, providing for every form of snow sports, will be ready by June on top of Lake Mountain, nine miles from Marysville. Eight workmen, employed by the Marysville and District Tourist and Progress Association, have been at work for more than two months, cutting a track to the snow field through the timber and undergrowth.

The task will occupy them another month at least.

The men are working to the specifications of a surveyor's chart, which was drafted some time ago. The field covers a large area on the summit of the mountain, 5000 feet above sea level, and is fairly bare of trees and shrubs. Some clearing will be necessary, but a great deal of work will not be involved.

The track, which leads off Woods Point Road, will be about five miles long. Half the distance has been cut already. It is four feet wide, and is built to carry parties on horseback. Later, it is hoped to provide for motor cars to travel over it. Shelters will be built on the field to accommodate skiing and tobogganing parties.

## Minimum wage increase

AS part of the Fair Work Commission's Annual Wage Review 2022-23, from July 1, the National Minimum Wage increases to \$882.80 per week or \$23.23 per hour. Award minimum wages increase by 5.75 per cent.

Other award wages, including junior, apprentice and supported wages that are based on adult minimum wages, will get a proportionate increase.

The increase applies from the first full pay period starting on or after July 1. Further information can be found at the Fair Work Ombudsman website.

From July 1, the superannuation guarantee will increase from 10.5 per cent to 11 per cent.



## SPORT

# Spotlight on term two sport at Alexandra Secondary College

by Ally Crouch

NINE boys from Years nine and 10 competed at the School Sport Victoria, Hume Region Intermediate Volleyball Finals in Albury. The boys finished runners-up which was a fantastic result. Next up, we had 14 students attend the Volleyball Victoria - School Volleyball Cup on Tuesday, May 9 at the State Volleyball Centre in Dandenong. Our students' skills prevailed and both the boys team and the girls team walked away with silver medals. Students from Years seven to 10 made up the Year 10 teams competing in division two.

On Tuesday May 16, over 90 students headed off in different directions to attend the Southern Ranges Round Robin competition, giving students an opportunity to compete against other schools in their chosen sport: Badminton, Netball or AFL. A special mention must go to Hamish Wilson, Aiden Campbell, Riley Galloway and Charlie Francis who won all their Badminton matches and will now progress the Hume Region Year 7 Badminton finals, later in the year.

Forty-four students attended the Southern Ranges Cross Country competition in Yea on Friday, June 2. The course was slippery and muddy and the students navigated all types of weather, with their hard work and determination helping them to conquer the course. Nineteen students progressed to the Hume Secondary Cross Country Regional Championships in Benalla where the competition was strong and the course was trickier. Despite the conditions, the students from ASC brought their A game and gave 100 per cent. We are extremely proud to announce that Aiden Campbell, Chelsea Webb, Danielle Nadj, Noah Campbell, Emelia Weeks, Kloe Morton, Callan Howell, Casey Collett and Nathan Hendricks have progressed to the State Cross Country Championships.

ASC would also like to celebrate the sporting achievements of several students outside of school. Brad Johnston trialled for the School Sport Victoria (SSV) Basketball U16 boys team after successfully training and playing with the Mansfield under 18 Gold Team in the Junior Country State Championships. Brad and Will Clarke played many representative basketball competitions in Wodonga, Bendigo, Wangaratta, and Shepparton progressing to finals in most tournaments.

Noah Campbell and Heath Sutcliffe were successful in gaining selection to represent the Goulbourn Murray Junior League Interleague in AFL.

Chelsea Webb trialled for the SSV girls volleyball team early in the term, attending the trials at Dandenong in U14, gaining experience in a top age trial in 2024. While she did not make the team, the experience showed her how close she is to that level. The Victorian Girls Team were crowned as Australian Champions in Canberra early June.

Danielle Nadj was selected to play in the Australian Beach Volleyball Championships on the Gold Coast, as part of the Victorian teams. Danielle and her partner came seventeenth in Australia in the U17 girls. She has since been selected for the Volleyball Victoria Indoor U17 State Squad of 16 players, with the final 10 to be selected over the coming holiday period.

Chloe and Ella Dean have had a standout 2022/2023 season at the National Barrel Horse Association. Ten athletes from each age group qualified to be on the NBHA teen world championship team in America. Ella qualified in the youth and Chloe in the teen age group.

Eliza Gesler is currently in the Victorian Netball League (VNL) U19 Aerials Development squad as well as the Mooropna Cats. Recently she attended a specialist training session coached by the VNL head coaches at the State Netball and Hockey Centre in Melbourne, focusing on both defending and attacking drills.

Ashley Dean is currently playing volleyball for the Maroondah Cobras U17s Gold Boys number one team, after trialling for the Boys U17 State team. Cobras is one of the top state league clubs and Ashley is planning on getting experience umpiring games through the organisation.

Dylan Jack is currently smashing the Golfing Circuit. He has been playing scratch in a pennant team, is a Murrindindi master winner, two times Junior Dalhousie winner, Secondary Hume Region runner up and he's part of the men's Dalhousie pennant team and the Foursomes winner at Lancefield.

Oscar Capes continues to be a competitive state level white water paddler while he completes his Year 12 studies, in preparation for further study and more white water in the future.

If you are driving past the Secondary College, you will see that the stadium is a hive of activity most days. Students at the Secondary College are often heading over to participate in the school Volleyball training sessions each lunchtime conducted by staff. This is a wonderful way our students are keeping fit, learning new skills, interacting across different year levels and building connections with education.

ASC would like to thank all the staff at the school as well as the parents who support of the sports program. Sport is a wonderful opportunity for students to engage in physical activity and is extremely beneficial for the mind, body and soul. Students are learning that not everyone can win in sport, but persistence, hard effort, failure and rejection are all part of the journey. It can be difficult to put yourself out there, the challenge is immense. However, the importance of trying again and again and again are lifelong lessons. Alexandra Secondary College students strive to be their best, and sporting success can be a many varied thing.



# Pony club takes the rail trail to Cheviot Tunnel

by Louis Hill, aged eight

ON a beautiful winter's day, the Alexandra Pony Club ventured out onto the rail trail for their July rally.

We went through the Cheviot Tunnel, which was dark and exciting. Everyone was spooked. Louis, Clay and Chase went on top of the tunnel to explore.

The weather was perfect. Some of the riders went on a shorter ride of six kilometres. The other children went 13km from Cheviot to Molesworth.

We finished at the Molesworth pub for lunch. It was a great day everyone loved it.





# Rebels host Warburton Millgrove



Brayden Norris. -S



Steve Steiner. -S



Harry Aikman. -S



Ashlee Francombe in the under 17s. -S



Felicity Conway in the under 17s. -S

## Marysville golf report

by Lesley Rundle

ON Saturday, July 1, a number of stoic golfers played a stroke round for the July monthly medal and round two of the Barton Shield. Conditions were challenging, with drizzle early on and wet ground throughout the course, but the players persisted and completed the eighteen holes. The ladies medal winner was Sabrina Stow (23) with nett 73, followed by Gail Leigh (11) with nett 76. The qualifiers for the Barton Shield final later in the year were Sabrina Stow and Beck Lee, who will join the winners of round one Margaret Blair and Gail Leigh. The men's medal winner was Ming Kuan (15) with 72 nett followed by Paul Martin (31) with nett 75. Sabrina Stow won the putting with 27 putts. The nearest the pins were won by Gail Leigh (2) and Connor McIntosh, a visitor from Melbourne.

Next Saturday, July 8 the men will play the second round of the Par Shield and the ladies will play Stableford. The mixed match play competition will begin on Saturday, July 15 and any members who wish to play in the event are asked to sign the list in the clubrooms or contact Yewls Kuan.

Members thank those who attended the working bee at the club on Thursday, 29 June. Another one is planned for later in the year. Thanks also to Kellan Fiske and the course volunteers for their hard work on the course in very challenging conditions.

## Alexandra Golf Club news

by Elizabeth Goss

The bitter weather, and a very wet course, deterred even the most intrepid golfers during the week and just a small field of eleven ventured out on Saturday, July 1. The course may have been very wet and heavy but none the less the top Saturday players excelled with Brendan Smith's (9) 40 points just beating Brad Kidd's (10) 39 points to win the day. Brendan's approach shots were also excellent, giving him nearest the pin on the fifth, eighth and twelfth greens, with Brad Kidd claiming the second and Corey Jack the eighteenth. Ball Run Down was won by Nick Emmerson and Shane McGorlick. The raffle was won by Corey Jack. Next Saturday, July 8 is scheduled as a Stableford round. Wednesday, July 12 is scheduled as American Foursomes.



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## Rebels host Warburton Millgrove

by Michelle Jack

THE Outer East League 2023 season round 10 saw the Rebels host Warburton Millgrove for two games of football and four games of netball.

### Football

#### Reserves

**Alexandra 4.0 - 24 defeated by Warburton Millgrove 9.10 - 64**

THE reserves, missing some regular players but assisted by some of the under 16 footballers, took on the undefeated top of the ladder Burras, who kicked three unanswered goals in the first quarter before the Rebels got back into the game with two goals to one in the second quarter. In a good contest, the Burras added two more goals in the third quarter before kicking three goals to two in the last quarter, the Rebels showing they can match it with the best. **Awards:** Shepparton Volkswagen - Sam Kid; Ampol fuel card - David Ray; Alex Sportspower - Callan Howell; Buxton Hotel - Jake Steyger.

#### Seniors

**Alexandra 9.8 - 62 defeated by Warburton Millgrove 11.8 - 74**

THE Seniors welcomed Riley Frankcombe for his first senior game at the club to take on the top of the table visitors, who kicked five goals to three in the first quarter with another three goals to one in the second quarter, to hold a handy lead at the main break. The Rebels won the second half with five goals to three but were unable to close the gap, falling short by twelve points. **Awards:** Incentives - Tom Massey, Tom Boots and Nick Meehan; Buxton Hotel - Harry Aikman; Yarck Hotel / Endeavour Petroleum volunteer award - Des Rasmussen. Raffle winners after the games, meat tray - Mitch Parker, wine - Taylor Kleinschmidt, gate raffle - Julie Steyger.

#### Netball

**A grade** lost 28 - 65: Incentive - Katherine Quinsee; Corner Hotel / Grant St Grocer - Ellie Hedger

**B grade** lost 30 - 44: Incentive - Lauren Benson; Corner Hotel / Grant St Grocer - Ash Creighton

**C grade** lost 8 - 47: Incentive - Mikaela Krijt; Corner Hotel / Grant St Grocer - Elly Gambrell

**Under 17** lost 9 - 17: Incentive - Emily Van Lierop; Corner Hotel / Grant St Grocer - Ashlee Frankcombe



Taking a leap into the ice. -S



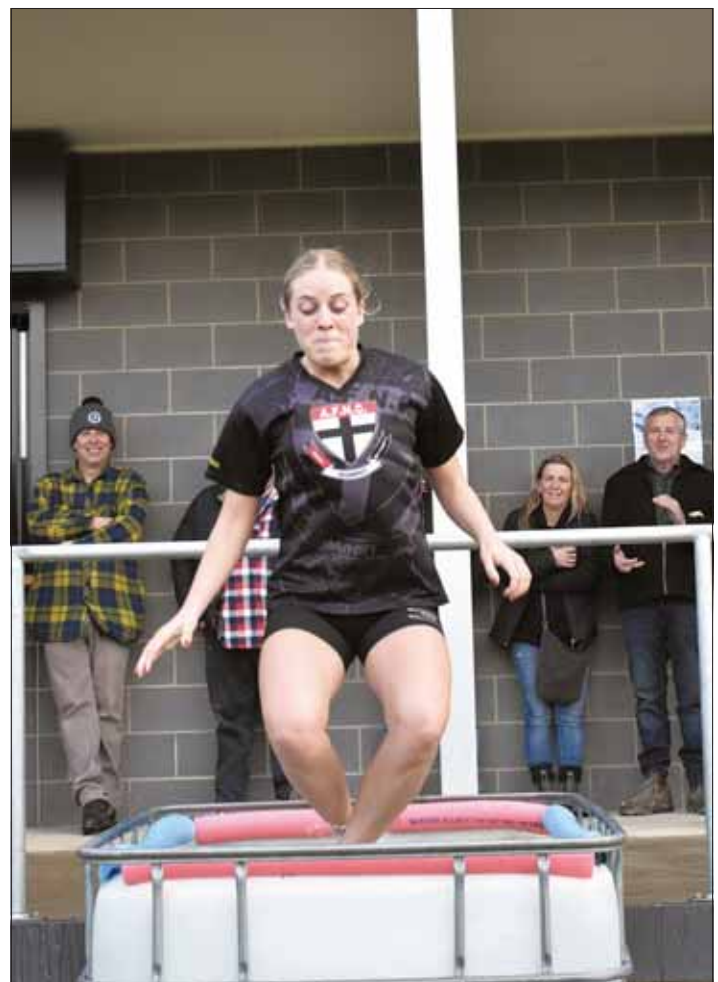
Superman taking a plunge into the icy water. -S

Thursday's Rebel Raffles continued last week, and we thank our sponsors Swenrick Constructions, Yarck Hotel, Reddrops Foodworks / Houseboat Sales Lake Eildon, Eildon Bakery / Yarck Meat and Produce, Alexandra Quality Meats / AFNC canteen, Yea Chinese Restaurant / Bailey Funerals with the winners Sam Kidd, Nat Gregg, Caitlan Haggis, Ben Cooper and Sharon Hedger. The Swenrick Constructions Joker Jackpot was not won and will be worth \$1,200 on Thursday, July 6 so come along for your chance to win a prize.

Last Saturday the club's social organisers ran a successful Yellowstone cowboy themed event with a big thank you to the girls who did an amazing job with the decorations and the night itself.

This coming Saturday, July 8 the senior club football and netball teams play two games of football and four games of netball away at Broadford, as part of First Nations round.

More images on page 19.



On Saturday, July 1, the Rebels had fun raising funds for motor neurone disease (MND) at half time. In addition to raising funds through the sale of MND beanies, many club members also took part in taking a icy dunk for a good cause. -S



Five shivering Rebels members who took part in the ice plunge, raising funds for MND. -S